

**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**



**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR HAGE G. GEINGOB, ON THE  
OCCASION OF THE 30<sup>TH</sup> INDEPENDENCE DAY ANNIVERSARY AND  
INAUGURATION AS PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

*A PEOPLE UNITED FOR PROSPERITY*

**STATE HOUSE**

**WINDHOEK**

**MARCH 21, 2020**

*Check against delivery*

**Director of Proceedings;**

**Your Excellency João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola;**

**Your Excellency Emmerson Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe;**

**Your Excellency Mokgweetsi Masisi, President of the Republic of Botswana;**

**Your Excellency Dr. Nangolo Mbumba, Vice President of the Republic of Namibia and Madam Mbumba;**

**Your Excellency, Dr. Sam Nujoma, Founding President and Father of the Namibian Nation;**

**Your Excellency, Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba, Former President of the Republic of Namibia and Madam Pohamba;**

**Right Hon. Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia and Mr. Amadhila;**

**Hon. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Deputy Prime Minister and Lieutenant General (Rtd) Ndaitwah;**

**Hon. Peter Katjavivi, Speaker of the National Assembly and Madam Katjavivi;**

**Hon. Bernard Sibalatani, Chairperson of the National Council and Madam Sibalatani;**

**Your Lordship Peter Shivute, Chief Justice of the Republic of Namibia and Madam Judge Shivute;**

**Madam Monica Geingos, The First Lady of the Republic of Namibia;**

**Hon. Joseph Malanji, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Zambia;**

**Hon. Dr. Naledi Pandor, Minister of International Relations & Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa;**

**Hon. Members of Parliament of the Republic of Namibia;**

**Hon. Sophia Shaningwa, Secretary General of the SWAPO Party;**

**Hon. McHenry Venaani, Leader of the Official Opposition and other Political Parties;**

**SWAPO Stalwarts and Veterans of the Liberation Struggle;**

**Secretary to Cabinet and Executive Directors;**

**Distinguished Service Chiefs;**

**Members of the Diplomatic Corps;**

**Hon. Laura McLeod-Katjirua, Governor of the Khomas Region and other Governors;**

**SWAPO Party Regional Coordinators;**

**Chief Immanuel /Gaseb, Acting Chairperson of the Council of Traditional Leaders and other Traditional Leaders;**

**Bishop Sageus /Keib of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia and other Spiritual Leaders;**

**Your Worship, Madam Fransina Kahungu, Mayor of the City of Windhoek;**

**Distinguished Invited Guests;**

**Members of the Media;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen;**

**Fellow Namibians,**

**Once again, “*This is the day the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.*” Thanks be to God for this beautiful day. Thanks be to God for the liberty, unity, peace and stability that we enjoy every day in our country.**

**It was on this day, 30 years ago, that we witnessed the hoisting of the Namibian flag, symbolizing the birth of a Sovereign nation.**

**It is on this day that we celebrate the gift of freedom and the opportunity we have to pursue our common aspirations.**

**Five years ago on this day, I took a solemn oath, conscious of the invaluable sacrifice of those who paid the ultimate price for our independence.**

**Today, I took this solemn oath, cognizant of the urgent need to improve the livelihoods of our People.**

**In so doing, I recommit with all determination, to lead and to serve the people of Namibia, to achieve the goal of a more inclusive, united and prosperous Namibian House.**

**Excellencies,**

**Fellow Namibians,**

**I express profound appreciation to you my Brothers, Your Excellencies:**

- **João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço of the Republic of Angola;**
- **Emmerson Mnangagwa of the Republic of Zimbabwe; and**
- **Mokgweetsi Masisi of the Republic of Botswana.**

**Your presence here, in the face of the global Coronavirus pandemic, is a concrete demonstration of the Pan-African solidarity that binds the People of our Continent. Thank you very much.**

**I also recognize the presence of South African Minister of International Relations & Cooperation Hon. Naledi Pandor, and Zambian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Joseph Malanji. Thank you Minister Pandor for the congratulatory message delivered on behalf of His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa. Today our sister Republic, South Africa, is also commemorating the Sharpeville Massacre, which marked a painful moment in the history of our struggle against Apartheid.**

**When we were drafting our Constitution, we had to choose a date on which to commemorate our independence. We consciously selected 21 March, the day of the Sharpeville Massacre, symbolizing the unity of our struggle, and that of the People of**

**South Africa. I am glad you are here today to celebrate our shared victory over tyranny and oppression.**

**The independence of Namibia would not have been attained without the support and solidarity of the Frontline States and Nigeria, the Socialist and Scandinavian countries, and the rest of the international community, whose unwavering support paved the way to our independence.**

**As we honour our brave Sons and Daughters, who paid the ultimate price and whose blood waters our freedom, we also salute the selfless People of Angola and Cuba, whose children perished on the battle field. May their brave souls rest in eternal peace.**

**We also owe a debt of gratitude to the United Nations, which played an instrumental role in creating the necessary conditions for our first democratic elections. I pay tribute to the former late Secretary General of the United Nations, His Excellency Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, for his honesty, foresight and perseverance, as Secretary General of the United Nations, during the challenging period leading up to our first democratic elections.**

**May his soul rest in eternal peace.**

**Excellencies,**

**The global outbreak of COVID-19 is presenting humanity with one of the greatest challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. In the face of this pandemic, we are even more appreciative of our regional and**

**international friends represented here. You continue to be valuable partners in our common pursuit of development objectives. We are confident that humanity will prevail against this monumental challenge.**

**Fellow Namibians,**

**Irrespective of where you find yourself today across the length and breadth of our Republic, this day, 21 March, marks an important milestone in the birth of our democracy and national identity. As we reflect on the path traverse, we have covered significant ground together. We have matured in our Constitutional Democracy; we are stronger, more resilient and determined to prevail in this second phase of our struggle for economic emancipation. Indeed, we have come of age. Namibia today and Namibia at independence are miles apart.**

- **Over a period of 22 years, we have reduced poverty from a baseline of 70 percent down to 18 percent.**
- **95 percent of school age children attend school and the number of teachers has increased by 30 percent.**
- **The health system in Namibia has transformed from fragmented, racially segregated infrastructure into a more inclusive national service catering for the health and welfare of all Namibians.**
- **The bitumen road network has increased by 45 percent since independence.**

**Today, as we commemorate the milestone of our Pearl Jubilee, we do so with a sense of humility and introspection. We look up toward the horizon with hope and expectation. We look back with pride, at three decades of peace, unity and stability.**

**Fellow Namibians,**

- **We have to continue our journey of social cohesion, through the policy of National Reconciliation.**
- **We have to continue our journey of 'Representative Government' buttressed by a sound governance architecture, which upholds the principles of accountability and transparency.**
- **We have to continue to build on our gains in the fight for social progression, to uplift more Namibians out of poverty and inequality.**
- **We have to continue with determination to consolidate a robust macro-economic environment where the fundamentals for growth and development are in place.**

**Despite our achievements, we remain acutely aware of the social deficits that persist and continue to deny our people their right to dignity.**

**We have faced uncommon hardships over the past five years. Our experiences have made the enormity of the task before us more vivid:**



- **Segments of our population continue to live in deplorable conditions without access to basic amenities.**
- **There are Namibians who are at risk of hunger poverty and succumbing to treatable diseases.**
- **A worrying number of our young people cannot access employment opportunities.**
- **Corruption is eroding public trust and diverts scarce resources intended for development.**
- **Income disparities and inequalities still persist and addressing this, remains the most crucial, and urgent challenge of our time.**

**Any society that is structurally unequal - can never last. Although the odds appear to be stacked against us, we will summon the courage and ingenuity to continue the work we have commenced, with a sense of unity and common purpose.**

**Fellow Namibians,**

**Through democratic elections, you have once again placed your confidence in the SWAPO Party and I, to deliver on our national development objectives. We have entered into a social contract with you and this is the contract we will honour.**

**Our success depends on your active participation as citizens. You, have a responsibility to contribute towards the construct of a united, inclusive and prosperous House.**

**In the midst of challenging economic conditions, exacerbated by COVID-19, we will present an Economic Recovery Plan to mitigate anticipated negative impacts on our economy. The single-minded objective is to stimulate quality economic growth and generate more jobs. We will do whatever it takes to safeguard our economic sovereignty and human dignity.**

**Indeed, the emergence of COVID-19 places our economic recovery efforts in jeopardy. In the face of this threat to our way of life and future prosperity, all Namibians must embrace the spirit of unity. COVID-19 doesn't discriminate. It is a pernicious enemy that threatens all of us. In order to fight this invisible enemy, we must rise as one. We must emulate the brave deeds of thousands of Namibian men and women, who from all corners of our country, rose as one people to defeat the brutal Apartheid Regime. Although the enemies we face today may be different, the resolve of the Namibian people remains as strong as ever. We shall never waver. Together, we shall overcome.**

**Excellencies,**

**Fellow Namibians,**

**As we continue our march towards a common destiny, let us do so in a spirit of unity, galvanized by hope and perseverance. Let us not**

**forget that from a people who were divided, we have transformed this Nation into a gem of democratic stability and social harmony. Let us therefore continue in the spirit of our narrative of pulling together in the same direction, in order to build our Namibian House.**

**As President, I shall never depart from the narrative of Nation Building. I am cognizant that national pride and unity are the two cardinal pillars that bind the people of our country. Over the next five years we will reinforce these pillars to instill the values of national pride and patriotism.**

**Fellow Namibians,**

**As I assume my second and last term of Office, I call on the nation to perpetuate the narrative of One Namibia, One Nation. Let us own this narrative for it defines our identity and speaks to the spirit of our struggle for independence.**

**Those whose blood waters our freedom have entrusted us with this country. Their sacrifice has ensured that as a free people, we can pursue our aspirations. There can be no other home for us but Namibia. We might be from different regions, different races, different ethnic groups, but we are all Namibians. Together, we**

**have upheld our Unity, Liberty and Justice. Together, we can fulfill the promise that tomorrow holds.**

**No matter how daunting our challenges, no matter how difficult our path to prosperity, I intend to honour our social contract.**

**ONE NAMIBIA, ONE NATION**

**ONE AFRICA, ONE CONTINENT**

**ONE WORLD, ONE GLOBAL VILLAGE**

**LONG LIVE THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA.**