



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

AT THE

OLUFUKO ANNUAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL OFFICIAL OPENING

BY

RIGHT HONOURABLE DR ELIJAH NGURARE

PRIME MINISTER

Friday, 27 June 2025

Outapi, Olufuko Centre

Check Against Delivery

- Director of Ceremonies; Mr Abisai Shaningwa and Rev. Jesaya Hanghuwo
- Cde. Sophia Shaningwa, Secretary general of the SWAPO party;
- Honourable Linda Mbware, Deputy Minister
- Former Health Ministers Dr Kalumbi Shangula and Dr Bernhard Haufiku
- Honorable, Erginus Endjala, Governor of Omusati Region;
- Hon. Andreas Shintama, Chairperson of the Omusati Regional Council and all Regional Councillors present such as councilor for Etayi, Oshikuku and others
- Her Worship, Selma Nelago Asino, Mayor of Outapi Town
- Your Excellency Consul General Andre Ventura of the Republic of Angola
- Your Excellency High Commissioner Stephen Katuka of the Republic of Zambia
- Tatekulu, Oswin Mukulu, Elenga Enene Lya Ombalantu Traditional Authority, oshowo Ootatekulu noomeekulu no Omalenga gopamuthigululwakalo muli mokati ketu;
- Tatekulu Johannes Mupiya, Omukwaniilwa gwo shitunda shaNgandjera
- Tatekulu Herman Ndilimani lipumbu, Chief of Uukwambi Traditional Authority & Chairperson of the North Eight Traditional Authorities
- Dr. Pendukeni Ilvula-Ithana, Deputy Chairperson of the Sam Nujoma Foundation
- Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
- Veterans of the Liberation Struggle,
- Distinguished Captains of Industry and Partners in Development,
- Tatekulu Ananias Nashilongo, CEO of Outapi Town Council
- Hon. Mathews Endjala Deputy Mayor of Outapi Town and other local authorities Councilors present;
- Rev. Dr. Tshapaka TshaKapolo;
- Youth leaders present;
- Aafuko 134
- Distinguished Invited Guests;
- Members of the Media;

- Ladies and Gentlemen.
- Meme Dr. Albertina Ngurare, my dear wife

A very good morning!

Before I begin with my statement, may we all rise to observe a Moment of Silence in Honour of Tatekulu omupresidente wetu go tango go Namibia ya manguluka the late Founding President H.E. Dr Sam Shafiishuna Nujoma, Patron of Olufuko Festival.

1. On the 4th of July 2023, we joined the late Founding President H.E. Dr Sam Shafiishuna Nujoma and Patron of the Olufuko Festival for a tree planting and official opening. As we can all remember on that day, he spoke about the significance of Olufuko, he spoke about hope and walked these grounds to plant trees signifying a seed planted on the waters of culture, tradition and self reliance. Mee Cornelia Iyambula and I were directors of ceremonies on that day. He remarked to us about the meaning of Olufuko and which as he said “must outlive all of us”.
2. Comrade Sophia Nahango Shaningwa explained very well that the historic common denominator to Olufuko was the support given by our late legendary Comrade Sam Nujoma. Cde Erginus Endjala equally spoke about the significance of Olufuko Festival. Tatekulu Oswin

Mukulu provided insight into the role of Traditional Authorities and their commitment to Olufuko Festival.

3. I am humbled therefore for the invitation to deliver an address at the 11th Olufuko Annual Cultural Festival. I commend the Organizers for their foresight and for hosting this year's event. Just like the UNAM-Ogongo Campus Mpadi Da Kare Cultural Group reminded us and the name of its group means the footprints of history must never be erased and must never be forgotten.
4. Dear Esteemed Olufuko Organising Committee, Your strength is being noticed today, because this is the first Olufuko Annual Cultural Festival without the physical presence of its devoted Patron, His Excellency Dr. Sam Shafiishuna Nujoma, May His Revolutionary Soul Rest In Eternal Peace. He is gone but not forgotten, his footprints, his teachings, his his voice resonates in every aspect of this event now and for always. He believed deeply in the power of culture to ground and guide a people. As he often reminded us, "*A nation without culture is like a tree without roots.*" Indeed, through his leadership and vision, Olufuko was revived and recognised as more than a ceremony, it became a national treasure. A space to connect generations. A bridge from tradition to transformation. A proud declaration of who we are and who we strive to be.
5. We are here not only to attend this event, but to reaffirm our commitment and dedications to the values that shape us as a nation

which are identity, heritage, and respect for those who came before us. Today, our footsteps echo with the memory of the late Founding President and Father of the Namibian Nation, His Excellency Dr. Sam Shafiishuna Nujoma, who served as the Olufuko Annual Cultural Festival Patron since its inception in 2012, until the time of his passing on.

6. Indeed, the Olufuko Annual Cultural Festival has a strong foundation of leadership, that is why it keeps on growing, and today, I am informed with pride that 138 young girls are ready take part in the Olufuko initiation, the highest number since this festival's inception in 2012. This is a powerful symbol of growth and commitment to cultural preservation in all 121 Constituencies and in all 14 Regions of our free and independent Namibia.
7. Yesterday after parliament when we informed Her Excellency President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah that we were coming here, she told us that during her childhood, she was an ardent supporter of Olufuko and that her late father who was a priest, used to encourage her to attend because culture and tradition is like the nucleus of life for which she must be proud. And proud she is to this day.
8. **Ladies and Gentlemen**, it is notable therefore that we pause to commend and congratulate the parents who are supporting Olufuko; the traditional authorities; the leaders of various religious denominations; the young people; the elderly, the business community,

the academic institutions, the OMAs and indeed all the people here present and beyond. You are the present and future of Olufuko.

Director of Ceremonies, Ladies and Gentlemen

9. The Government is equally committed to the notion of cultural preservation. That is why government fully recognize that culture and tradition are not peripheral to nationhood, they are central to sustainable development, unity, and social well-being. We remain steadfast in supporting the revival, preservation, and innovation of indigenous knowledge systems across all regions of Namibia. Through institutions such as the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sport Arts and Culture, the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development, and the National Heritage Council, the government continues to support cultural festivals, protect traditional sites, document indigenous languages, and empower traditional leaders as vital voices in our communities.
10. Moreover, we are committed to mainstreaming cultural education into our national curriculum, promoting arts-based livelihoods, and safeguarding customary practices under the protection of our Constitution. Article 19 of the Namibian Constitution guarantees every citizen the right to culture and we reaffirm today that this right shall be protected, nourished and passed on to future generations with pride.
11. I urge us all present here and those listening from far and near, to continue committing ourselves to the promotion of the Namibian

Culture. Let Olufuko be a symbol of that commitment. Let it remain a platform where tradition is celebrated, women are uplifted, and their identity affirmed.

12.This will assist us not forget our roots. The erosion of cultural values has contributed to rising social ills, including gender-based violence, substance abuse, and moral decay. By returning to the values of respect, humility and mutual care, we help rebuild stronger, safer communities.

13.One of the enduring legacy of the late Founding President is self reliance and projects which practically strengthen nation building. Our SWAPO Party Government has recently decided to reintroduce food for work and cash for work programs. We have written to all OMAs, Regional Councils and SOEs to implement same. I therefore wish to remind all our people especially unemployed youth and women to partake in this program by cleaning public institutions and or debushing in community areas. Similarly let us scale up small scale agricultural activities with a view of ensuring food security at village level. A nation that feeds itself will always remain victorious in culture, in economy, in education and in technology. The Founding President was unmistakeable in his resolve for food security, energy security and water security. Tatekulu Mukulu, Tatekulu Mupiya, Tatekulu Taapopi, Tatekulu lipumbu and other traditional leaders will testify that every time we visited at Etunda in Ongandjera, the topic of a water pipeline

16. With these words fellow Namibians, I declare the 11th Olufuko Annual Cultural Festival officially open.

I thank you.