



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

STATEMENT

BY

HON EVELYN !NAWASES-TAEYELE, MP

AT THE

THE OCCASION OF THE 128TH COMMEMORATION OF THE
BATTLE OF OTJUNDA THAT ENDED IN THE EXECUTION OF
KAHIMEMUA NGUVAUVA BY THE GERMAN SCHUTZTRUPPE
AT OKAHANDJA ON JUNE 12, 1896

16 JUNE 2024, OKAHANDJA

Thank you Director of Ceremonies;

- H.E. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah - Vice President of the Republic of Namibia;
- Ombara Eben Tjozohongo II Nguvauva, Chief of the OvaMbanderu Traditional Authority;
- Hon. James Uerikua – Governor of Otjozondjupa Region;
- Her Worship the Mayor of Okahandja - Hon Beatrice Kotungondo;
- Gaob Immanuel #Nu-Axa /Gaseb – Chairperson of the Council of Traditional Leaders;
- Members of the Diplomatic Corps Present;
- Members of Parliament Present;
- Regional and Local Authority Councillors Present;
- Ombara Manasse Zeraeua – Chief of the Zeraeua Royal Traditional Authority;
- Ombara Tjinaani Maharero – Chief of the Maharero Royal Traditional Authority;
- Omuhona Nguvauva Nguvauva of the OvaMbanderu Community - Boteti, Republic of Botswana;
- Omuhona Manuel Kungairi Nguvauva of the OvaMbanderu Community - Ngamiland, Republic of Botswana;
- Ozondangere (~~Divine Prophets~~);
- General Field Marshals of the Green Flag, Red Flag and White Flag;
- All Traditional Chiefs present and in absentia;
- Members of the OvaMbanderu Traditional Community;
- All Dignitaries and Invited Guests Present inclusive of Members of the Media;
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am delighted to be here with you to deliver remarks on behalf of the line Ministry responsible for traditional authority coordination as provided for under Act 25 of 2000 and so invited, at this important gathering that marks 128 years of remembrance of an extraordinary human being and true hero of the anti-colonial resistance against the German settler colonial era.

Allow me right from the onset state, that the theme for this year's commemoration I am made to understand is: *'Towards the Restoration of the OvaMbanderu people'*, and I find it very appropriate because we all as Namibian citizens must strive to celebrate and enjoy together our diverse traditions in order to be able to withstand pressure, together, when we find ourselves in times of adversity.

Tradition and culture are important as they serve as building blocks for the value systems for restoration of believes and believe systems for traditional communities. The restoration of a traditional community therefore is about believes, it is about the identity and a sense of belonging, it is about customs and cultural practices of a traditional community, it is about unity and the sense of feeling part of the bigger community and that comes with collective knowledge and experience of the value systems that restore the traditional architecture of a community.

I wish to emphasize that educating the communities on their value systems should not be reduced to cultural performances and dramas at official functions and traditional celebrations. Our cultural performances must come from a true sense of patriotism. The restoration of the OvaMbanderu people is possible through the true embodiment of the provisions of the customary law of the OvaMbanderu people.

Director of Ceremonies,

The late Kahimemua has left indelible footprints on this land, to his people and to this nation that has led to his execution by the German Schutztruppe under General Theodore G Leutwein. This tragic event offers us a renewed chance to appreciate the role of this legendary leader who paid the highest price, with his life, on the road to freedom and independence we enjoy today. It further compels us to observe our past in order to remind ourselves of the tremendous sacrifices and self-offering that made our present a reality.

As a nation, we are coming up against many challenges and the colonial legacy continues to weigh us down even as we struggle to forge a united nation out of the ashes of colonial oppression, dispossession and exploitation. This occasion therefore, will hopefully help us to re-dedicate ourselves to the struggle for social justice, freedom and equality of opportunity. Therefore, as much as we move to be closer to each other, barriers keep appearing that are dividing our people and impacts negatively on their way of life and standard of living and even on the growth of this nation.

Today, I appeal to the OvaMbanderu community and the Namibian people as a whole, to unite and to embark on a journey of reconciliation and healing for the sake of the future generation. Dating back in history, On 6 December 1894, the Germans at Okahandja concluded a draconian and unilateral treaty which outlined the establishment of a southern boundary, that prohibited cattle belonging to the OvaMbanderu, OvaHerero and the /Khausa Nama to move freely in search of grazing and water. Kahimemua, with some other Nama chiefs in the eastern parts of the country were not part of the negotiations and therefore rejected the treaty. Soon this resulted in war. Matters came to an intensity on Easter Sunday, 5 April 1896. It was on that fateful day that the Battle at Gobabis broke out and Otjunda became the first theatre of that war.

In that light, celebrating the life and death of the late Kahimemua, is a way of reminding ourselves of the importance of unity among ourselves. This day is a symbolic day in the history of the OvaMbanderu community and the unity that has brought us to this day should be strengthened further to ensure that your traditional authority and its leadership continue on the laid solid foundation to last forever and for the future generation.

Director of ceremonies,

As much as we are trying hard to unite the nation, the experience in the Ministry is that disputes within some of our traditional communities are still persisting and I will like to remind you on this day that Disputes not solved, on time, results in conflicts which are costly, it derails focus from serving the people, and disturbs peace and stability in the communities.

This counterproductive situations hampers developmental activities which greatly disadvantage the communities. In that view and going forward we should by all means avoid disputes and resolve any disturbing issue. I also urge the entire community of OvaMbanderu to always stand firm, unite and work together in the interest of the traditional community.

Having said that, allow me to assure the community of OvaMbanderu that our Government through the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development will always support our Traditional Authorities in the view that Traditional leaders, Chiefs and elders play an important role in the lives of our many communities as true representatives of their people, as accessible and respected leaders.

Director of Ceremony, Distinguish Invite Guests

Having said that, it is now my distinct honour to introduce our keynote speaker for this very notable commemoration. She is an extraordinary Namibian and renowned

for being compassionate and inclusive concerning the development of our country. She is a mother first and foremost and serves as a leader to her people, not only for the country but to her community and in her church as she grew up in a parsonage. After being born in Onamutai in Oshana, she left the country at a very young age to join the struggle for the freedom of Namibia. A qualified and capable individual who distinguished herself with the high level of integrity and high moral standards she upholds but at the same time she remains grounded in Namibian culture and its traditions.

Our Vice – President served Namibia and her people in various capacities over many years. As an steadfast advocate for women’s and children’s rights she became Minister of Woman Affairs and Child Welfare and served other ministerial portfolios in government. Our speaker is an exposed leader, both within our government and in particular the international arena she served as the longest serving Minister of International Relations and Cooperation.

As a peoples’ servant, our keynote speaker for today continue to break barriers and make history by becoming the first woman to serve in the capacity of Vice-President and yet she is readying herself to continue serve all the people of this country with the humility she avers.

Please join me in standing as welcome to the podium, our main speaker, the Vice-President of the Republic of Namibia, Her Excellency Netumbo Ndemupelila Nandi-Ndaitwah. Your Excellency please come address your people.

I thank you.