



**Nama Traditional Leaders Association  
Traditional Authority**



**OvaHerero**

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**NAMA AND OVAHERERO RESPOND TO ELEMENTS OF NAMIBIA'S  
STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS (SONA)**

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**United Nations Plaza**

**Katutura**

**“The World itself is Stolen Goods. All property is theft and those who have stolen most of it make the laws for the rest of us.” John Updike, Brazil**

Our nation has been treated to a litany of disinformation by the German and Namibian Governments. The latest of these came from Namibia’s Head of State when he addressed the joint session of Namibia’s Parliament on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2019. At the end of the President’s address, the leader of the Official Opposition, Honorable Mc Henry Venaani, asked him whether or not the Namibian Government will consider taking the German Government to the International Court of Justice in the event that no satisfactory agreement is reached during the current bilateral negotiations? This question remains unanswered, instead, President Geingob responded, inter alia, as follows:

1. Germany will not pay Reparations to “line up pockets” of individuals; they will only pay for Development Projects and that the victim communities must prepare for projects.
2. He wondered who is funding the appeal case of the Nama and Ovaherero filed against the Federal Republic of Germany in the Federal Court of Appeal in New York.

From the outset we put on record that President Geingob’s unprovoked broad daylight declaration of hostilities against the Nama and Ovaherero peoples of Namibia wherever they reside, by openly endorsing Germany’s “No Genocide and No Reparations” position towards the victim communities of Genocide and his Anti-Nama and Anti-Herero pronouncements, will live to haunt him to his grave. He had said these before, albeit clandestinely when he fumed in 2017, “what ancestral land are you talking about”.

President Geingob’s tirade in his 2019 SONA was intended to deliberately ridicule the Nama and Ovaherero case against Germany, implicitly endorsing the German position of “No Genocide and No Reparations”. Like an enlisted agent, he literally and faithfully campaigned in favor of the “Development Projects” model. In this process, President Geingob cited the Hosea Kutako dwelling in Aminuis as one of the potential candidates for such development aid, much to his looming disappointment. In addition, President Geingob cast aspersions on the integrity of our case against Germany by “wondering who is paying for their appeal”, as if he was ever interested in our case and knew our resourcefulness in the first place. In order to soothe his desperate consternation we can only confirm what the President already knows, namely that the 47 million dollars that were misappropriated through the Office of his Attorney General did not fund our case and the President knows comfortably where this money went.

We have all along tolerated the relegation of the Nama and Ovaherero people to a subservient status in the Namibian society by the Namibian Government. Had it not been for our vigilance and hard work, we would by now be starving or sweeping streets in places chosen for us by President Geingob and his predecessors. Our ancestral land is dished out to Chief Executive Officers, Ministers and top Civil Servants on a wholesale scale, who are not known to have lost land. Our ancestral land is sold to Russians and other foreign nationals while our three-some Presidents announced to the nation’s shock and consternation, that ancestral land will not be a subject for national debate, only to be bought by the state for clandestine government management. It is no coincidence that the Government is resolute on dodging any calls for an

audit of the resettlement program since independence in 1990; notwithstanding the fact that the Government agrees that resettlement since independence was bad news. The Government continues a warped resettlement program despite its own admittance that it is corruptly flawed. This effectively hands over our ancestral land at no price to the government's children born in wedlock with the concurrence of and under the supervision of President Geingob, who has remained unfazed and oblivious to the fact that he, President Geingob, is steadily fanning the flames of national tension through turning a blind eye on chaos, as well as through his loose, comic utterances while erratically conducting the business of state.

The Nama and Ovaherero leadership hold their followers on a short leash in order that they do not take matters in their hands and walk back to their respective ancestral lands. This is because we have all along believed that the German Government will come to its senses and implore its Namibian ally to effect a turnaround strategy. We want to believe that this can still happen one day, in order to reverse the already deteriorating situation back to the starting blocks. But given the consistency of Germany's position vis-à-vis Genocide and Reparations and, the fact that the Government of Namibia is increasingly impressed by German arrogance, we can only anticipate gloomy relations and braise for difficult days ahead between the victim communities of German Genocide and the two governments.

Suffice it to confirm that the symbiotic relations between the German and Namibian Governments against the best interest of the Nama and Ovaherero victims of German Genocide is not incidental to the current so-called German-Namibian negotiations. Indeed they come a long way. For instance, in 2004, the German Conrad Adenauer Foundation commissioned a study conducted by a Jan Grofe, which the foundation published in periodical style under the title "Analysis and Views" with the topic "The prospects of success for the Herero Lawsuit against the Deutsche Bank for the crimes committed during German colonial times." In this write-up the author reveals inter alia that the Namibian Government had agreed that continuing German development aid, together with the German Democratic Republic's aid to the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) during the struggle for Namibia's independence against Apartheid South Africa, made demands for the Genocide Reparations void. According to Grofe, Germany's development aid had reached Five Hundred Million Euros by 2004. On this sell-out, the two governments are sworn to silence, would respond to no queries and it is thus no coincidence that Namibia's Head of State has steadily emerged as Germany's top strategist and public relations mastermind par excellence.

When President Geingob went to Parliament for the first time during his reign, he said that he shall not discuss Genocide and Reparations for the Nama and Ovaherero because this is tantamount to discussing tribalism and, therefore, Government will not help. The President then proceeded to in conformity with his German allies; appoint Dr Zedekia Ngavirue as a "Special Envoy" to co- spearhead the so-called negotiations with a German-counterpart.

Dr Ngavirue was the first Director General of Namibia's National Planning Commission and must either have been conversant with or privy to the revelations of Jan Grofe. It is thus not incidental that Dr Ngavirue was selected to head the cover-up to the sell-out. That is why the leadership of the Nama and Ovaherero has no faith in Dr Ngavirue, not because we believe that he is not a Herero of standing as President Geingob wants the world to believe. But his assignment to spearhead the sell-out under masquerade made him the good, the bad and the poor child of the soil, torn between the devil and the national interest. For this reason, we as

leaders of his communities shall not be true to Dr Ngavirue if we continue to smile him to sleep, simply because President Geingob had on advice from his handlers, elected to appoint Dr Ngavirue to head the cover-up sell-out negotiations. So, President Geingob's persistent rationalization that Dr Ngavirue is Herero and therefore represents the victim communities in the sell-out negotiations is deeply rooted in intellectual dishonesty on the part of the Namibian Head of State. We may dare ask where the Herero Ngavirue's Nama counterpart in these negotiations is. As much as the Herero leaders never mandated him to speak on their behalf, so have the Nama leaders never mandated him to speak on their behalf. Namibia's democracy guarantees civil liberties that all Namibians have the right to freely choose their leaders cum representatives and not even the Head of State can appoint representatives for a football team, save for victim communities on issues as pertinent to this nation as Genocide and Reparations.

President Geingob wants the world to believe that Dr Ngavirue is a seasoned diplomat and that is not our problem for as long as that is not forced down our throats. The crux of the matter is that his perceived skillfulness read together with the statesmanship of the President are not able to help them understand that they are flouting the international legal provisions on Genocide and Atrocities. Article 9 of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention of Punishment of the Crime of Genocide , provides as follows: "Disputes between the Contracting Parties relating to the interpretation... shall be submitted to the International Court of Justice at the request of any of the parties to the dispute". This is where Honorable Venaani's question was relevant and the President either missed the implicit advice or is uninformed about some of these glaring provisions, or deliberately ignored the question.

President Geingob and the two envoys, Dr. Ngavirue and Polenz, should now return to the original letter and spirit of Namibia's National Assembly Resolution of 26<sup>th</sup> October 2006, read together with relevant International Conventions and Declarations on Genocide, latter to which the Namibian State is in any case signatory, to enlighten themselves on the Rights of the victims of Genocide. Once President Geingob and his allies resume this approach, they will never go wrong again.

The so-called "Development Projects" conceived by Germany and now spearheaded by President Geingob, is nothing new to the German-Namibian symbiotic relations as revealed by Jan Grofe. What is new is the robust, somewhat abrasive "take it or leave it" condescending tone of President Geingob, that is intended to bully the Nama and Ovaherero victims of German Genocide into succumbing to the darker side of the sell-out schemes. And the President erratically believes that the use of the dwelling of Hosea Kutako or the building of a museum in Gibeon, will help him rally Ovaherero and Nama around his sell-out schemes, so that he and his Government continue to collect cash from the German Government in the name of the victims of Genocide and continue to line up their pockets. Jan Grofe says that, this development aid has amounted to 500 million Euros in 2004, yet there is no trace of this money in areas where the Genocide victims reside. Now President Geingob want to go back to the same gramophone tone: he wants to mobilize the Nama and Ovaherero to rally behind his and his Government's aborted "Development Projects" trick.

On its part, the German Government has remained consistent with its "No Genocide and No Reparations" position and it is not surprising that Germany's Chancellor Mrs. Morkel, does not have a clue on the so-called negotiations as they have remained part of the public relations

exercise by Germany's Foreign Office. Because unlike the Namibian situation, the German Parliament has to date not endorsed the talks formally and has not passed the enabling legislation for negotiations with the Namibian Government as is conventional in interstate intercourse, thus relegating the Namibian state to a Banana Republic thriving on the welfare roll of Germany with its President dancing to the tune of the music of the Buntestag as is the case currently, to the point of being enlisted as top public relations agent. Who is fooling who?

Equally disturbing is some of the rhetoric emanating from Germany, also as articulated by Germany's top diplomat in Namibia, the seemingly untouchable resident German Ambassador, who was quoted in the local media as having said that Germany will apologize for the atrocities against the Nama and Ovaherero but, the Ambassador said that the killings were justified as they were committed in self-defense. These assertions were published in the Namibian Sun newspaper of 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018 and never formally refuted by the Ambassador. The Ambassador's remarks imply that contemporary German thinking thrives on the century old philosophy that killing for land and its wealth was justified as it provided Lebensraum, and in fact warranted no apology and no reparations, as also now confirmed by Namibia's Head of State on behalf of Germany, to the joint session of Namibia's Parliament. The Germans have remained resolute, much to the discomfort of the Namibian Head of State, who cannot escape the German puppet status in the eyes of international observers and the Namibian people in general. For how does a Head of State elect to be an advocate of a cause diametrically opposed to the best interests of the very people he endlessly boasts to have elected him with 87%, as if during the presidential elections, Genocide and Reparations issues ever featured prominently on his presidential election manifestos?

Given the historical backdrop as painted by Jan Grofe elsewhere, it has not been surprising that Namibia's Head of State has remained at best ambivalent ever since the start of his reign as President and has increasingly degenerated into the disciple, strategic marketing manager and principal apologist for the German regime, as can be seen from his nimble foot work. When President Geingob received the bible and whip of !Nanseb in Gibeon, he cunningly addressed the Germans using the words "Atrocities" and "Genocide" somewhat interchangeably. But during his last State of the Nation Address in Parliament, he was much less masqueraded and was brave.

He used the word "atrocities", overtly, made a case for German Development Aid Projects and went out of his way to appeal to victim communities in areas they populate, to prepare projects for German Development Aid, as Germany will not pay money for reparations to "line up pockets" of individuals. If President Geingob thinks that the Nama and Ovaherero are willing to sell their dignity for projects he certainly needs to rethink the basis for his analytical process.

The Namibian Government under the Geingob Regime has purposefully sold out the case of the victim communities of Germany's Genocide, Ovaherero and Nama, and these victim communities stand on their own. They are targeted for marginalization and subservient status in the land that once belonged to their forbearer. Needless to say, that the very Namibian Government came about as a result of contributions by their yesteryears' leaders like Jacob

Marenga, Hendrik Samuel Witbooi, Petrus Jod, Simon Koper, Samuel Maharero, Hosea Kutako, Frederik Maharero and many others. What a broad day-light betrayal by the Head of State, of descendants of the very victims of German Genocide, whose land is now being dished out to the government's children born in wedlock and business partners of top government millionaires. We know what is happening and why. But we have maintained our patience believing that God will one day prevail and bring our national leaders to some senses, while they are our leaders. But while we remain hopeful, this is increasingly becoming a far-cry.

Contrary to President Geingob's assertions, the Genocide resolution in Parliament did not come as a result of his discussions with Paramount Chief Kuaima Riruako. In fact President Geingob never supported the cause of the victim communities to spearhead demands for Germany's admission of guilt for Genocide and commitment to reparations. There were people from the leadership of the Government and the party SWAPO who showed concern and quietly engaged Paramount Chief Kuaima Riruako while developing the resolution in question. Equally the late Chief David Frederick engaged Nama and Ovaherero leaders to demand restorative justice. We shall for now withhold their names from the public domain for fear of reprisals from the President who is reputed for vengeance. In fact, the Hansard is there to provide evidence as to who contributed to the debate on the "Riruako Motion" in Parliament. At the time President Geingob was a back-bencher in Parliament and whatever he mumbled never added up to a paragraph.

We shall also, place it on record that the Government of the Republic of Namibia flouted the letter and spirit of the resolution in question. The said resolution emanated from a motion tabled by Paramount Chief Kuaima Riruako on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2006, then as President of the party NUDO and elected Parliamentarian. This motion was never brought to Parliament nor openly supported by President Geingob as he now wants the world to believe.

The resolution outlined four principles that formed the basis for charges against the German regime.

1. That what had happened to the Nama and Ovaherero during the 1904-1908 was a brutal act of Genocide sanctioned by the German Government of the day.
2. That the Nama and Ovaherero people are entitled to demand reparations from the German Government.
3. That the Namibian Government should be an interested party in any discussions between its nationals and the German Government on the issue of reparations.
4. That dialogue be convened between, on one hand, the Namibian Government and representatives of the affected parties, the victim communities, to try and resolve this matter amicably and thereby strengthen and solidify the excellent relationship between the two countries, Germany and Namibia.

This resolution was subsequently enhanced by Namibia's Minister of Foreign Relations, Utoni Nujoma, when he made a policy statement in Parliament on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2011. Nujoma assured the nation that the Government of Namibia will not do anything that was not in the best interest of the victim communities and that the Government would be eager to play a facilitating role in the anticipated negotiations. Nujoma said thus: "We see the role of the

Namibian Government as a mediator between the German Government and the affected communities and we do wish to facilitate a process of reconciliation. I do wish to reiterate that the Namibian Government cannot work against the interests of its people”.

Subsequent to these commitments President Geingob unilaterally appointed Dr. Ngavirue without consulting the victim communities, much to the confusion and distaste of the legislature and consternation of the victim communities. President Geingob then summoned the Ovaherero and Nama Genocide Committees, not the leadership of the said communities, and informed them that the Namibian Government had taken its cues from the German Government and appointed Dr. Ngavirue as envoy to lead negotiations with Germany. He made it clear in the said meeting that the Government would not need the leadership of the said communities and they would be consulted whenever need existed. Then followed painstaking attempts on the part of the leaders of the victim communities to vainly seek a meeting with the president and ultimately they got to meet with Vice President Nickey Iyambo, who reiterated the position of government. And it is after this course of developments that the leadership of the victim communities decided to take refuge to provisions of international law that enable communities that are victim to Genocide, to seek recourse to legal systems anywhere they prefer. This then is the backdrop to the arrival of our case in New York, whose appeal bothers the Namibian Head of State to the hilt.

Then on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017 President Geingob invited the leaders of the victim communities to State House for consultations on how best to proceed. During this meeting broad agreement was reached on issues such as, that a Namibian delegation consisting of a GRN component and a Victim’s Group component would be composed to enter negotiations with Germany as contemplated for by the noted resolution of Parliament and that the leaders of the victim communities would speak for themselves at the meeting with Germany. The ONLY sticking point during this meeting was that, President Geingob pleaded for the retention of Dr. Ngavirue as the overall Leader of the Namibian delegation. It was at this point that the President proposed that the meeting adjourn and resume after one week. In fact at this meeting, President Geingob said in front of ten of his ministers along with Dr Ngavirue and the Secretary to Cabinet: “Our Government does not question the Extermination Orders of the Herero’s and the Namas... there are collateral damages, of course, but we are talking about Genocide for the Hereros and the Namas. Government is accepting this position.” The same President at another occasion said that the Ovaherero and Nama victims of the same Genocide cannot be considered because they are foreigners and citizens of other countries. He further said that if we do not make this Genocide that is a Herero and Nama experience, a national issue, then the Government cannot assist. These double standards lead us to conclude that the President does not understand international statutes to which his government is signatory. He does not understand the definition of the United Nations Convention on Genocide, of 9<sup>th</sup> December 1948, which has ethicized Genocide when it talks of an “...intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national ethnical... group as such”. Hence the President’s double thinking as to whether there was Genocide for the Nama and Ovaherero or whether he believes that there was “National Genocide” for South West Africa” and, we stand to wonder what legal provisions does he invoke to validate whatever he believes in. On our part we were guided by some of these international legal provisions when we drafted the “Riruako Motion”. Only for us as the Namibian Nation to end up selecting to the highest office of state, someone who does not have a clue on how states interact and what it means for a

state to have been signatory to a convention or declaration of the United Nations. The President does not seem to know or to agree with international conventions that allow for victims of Genocide to represent themselves, or by a representative of their choice in any discussions concerning their reparations. Hence his unilateral appointment of Dr Ngavirue to the current sell-out negotiations and that cannot be right. He is in fact reducing the Nama and Herero Genocide negotiations to bilateral political gamble for development aid we know will never reach the victims of German Genocide.

There seems to be gaps in the thinking of President Geingob that makes us cast doubt on his professed scholarship. His consistent reference to the “so-called Genocide”, needs explanation. If he believes Genocide to be “so-called”, what then is he negotiating? The President cannot deny Genocide and profess to negotiate on our behalf, or pretend to support our cause. President Geingob comes forward as a scholar yet he struggles with the basic understanding of Genocide and challenges us to “bring your scholars” as if we purportedly lack scholarship from amongst our number. President Geingob parades himself as a scholar and yet he sarcastically challenges us, the ones he deems to be unscholarly, to define Genocide to him. His arrogance blinds him to the irony of his own words and renders him incapable of critical understanding of the issue at hand. On the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017 we took the leadership of the victim communities to State House on the President’s invitation. He was lost for words and had to agree on all the positions our scholarly leaders put forward, save for his manager of the sell-out, Dr Ngavirue, whom he pleaded to retain. Then he called for postponement of the meeting for a week, only for him to disappear to one of his globe-trotting missions and that was the last time we heard from the President and, our subsequent follow-up queries through the office of his Minister for Presidential Affairs yielded no results to this day.

Notwithstanding President Geingob’s scholarship, he struggles to understand that, in the context of Namibia of today, the Extermination of the Nama and Ovaherero and their concomitant land and wealth dispossessions are the structural causes of their poverty, exacerbated by the fact that there is a clandestine strategy on the part of the Namibian Government to relegate the victim communities to a subservient position in the Namibian society. This manifests itself through various means ranging from the Government’s reluctance to genuinely deal with the ancestral land conundrum, to having a resettlement modus operandi that fails to regard the victim communities as prominent candidates for resettlement deserving affirmative action provisions, when it is them whose land and wealth were taken by force and their people targeted for extinction by the German Government through its Extermination orders and exclusive Genocide. And this vindicates the opening statement above, borrowed from the Brazilian, John Updike.

There is no contradiction or uncertainty about Genocide and our demand for Reparations. The UN Conventions and Declarations are clear. We do not need to bring to the Office of the President scholars to validate our authentic claims against the German Government. If the President is not aware of these International Conventions and would rather believe expatriate scholars to clear his psychology, we shall refer him to all leading scholars on the holocaust, who confirm the killings and abuses against the Nama and Ovaherero as the First Genocide of the century. In fact the architects of Nazism were students of the Nama and Ovaherero

experience; the scholarly evidence is there and for ease of reference while the President is a scholar, he ought to please read “The Kaiser’s Holocaust” by Olusoga and Erichsen. Chapter one is sufficient for someone who lacks interest and thus has no time for our Genocide issues.

The Nama people have been facing the situation they face under the SWAPO Government every 200 years and they have never failed. In the 1400s Namas had to deal with the Portuguese, in the 1600s the Dutch, in the 1800s the Germans and then after choosing to join SWAPO for the liberation of their country in the 1900s the party conspired political marginalization by branding them South African spies and incarcerated them in Lubango Dungeons without any iota of evidence and now in the 2000s they are continuously facing open marginalization under the SWAPO Government. Ovaherero had to deal with the Germans in the 1800s and were stampeded in all directions. No sooner had they settled in Bechanaland and their children had to enlist for World War II. And, incidentally, this was the first generation of their children who were born in Botswana and it was an emotional experience warranting difficult decisions, one that almost led to a rebellion against the then British Government in Bechuanaland. During the 1960s and later, Ovaherero in Botswana consciously committed their children to fight and die alongside other children who were leaving South West Africa to join the SWAPO fighters. Among these were Hanganee Katjipuka (late) Kaleb Tjipuahura (late), Kavitundema Muhakaona (late), Mboroo Kahaka (late) and Ndanga Nganate, latter who currently lives in Gobabis, Namibia. Kaleb was among those freedom fighters who were captured in combat by the South African troops and spent over 17 years on Robben Island before he was released and died in Windhoek of kidney decease, while Ndanga Nganate was wounded in combat and laid off by SWAPO to recover. Many younger ones were committed by their parents including Kazenambo Kazenambo who joined SWAPO’s fighting forces at the tender age of 16 years and currently lives in Namibia. These children were all the time committed by their parents with the concurrence of Paramount Chief Hosea Kutako, the Father of Namibia’s Nationalism. It is the same Hosea Kutako who had master-minded the exit of President Sam Nuyoma so that he could go and reinforce the struggle internationally for the liberation of then South West Africa, so that the people of this land can regain their land and recreate its stolen wealth. Today Hosea Kutako turns in his grave endlessly at the thought of President Nujoma advocating the policy of the Hage Geingob Government, that holds that ancestral land will not feature on the national agenda and that all land bought by the state will be handed over to the Government to be managed in the same way. It seems that the President is denigrating our demand for restorative justice in order to maintain his political power base, yet he seems not to realize that he is dividing the very nation he is purporting to be building.

These are some of the experiences and observations that impel us as leaders of the victim communities, to stand firm against the policies of the Hage Geingob administration, for we have established to our satisfaction that the victim communities stand alone on the matter of demanding Reparations from Germany for our people who continue to toil in bondage, a decade after our flag independence. We have no illusions that the struggle will continue and that victory is certain.

To this effect and, having said this much, we want to finally, put the following on record:

1. We shall continue to smoke the Germans out of their ostrich mentality all the way to their senses, notwithstanding the fact that our President has enlisted as Germany's ally number one.
2. We shall remain resolute to regain our ancestral land, notwithstanding the tricks of the German and Namibian Government alliance, whose aim is to render our people perpetually landless and poverty stricken for good. German Genocide facilitated the structural loss of ancestral land by the victim communities and the two issues will not be separated as they are intrinsically connected. To this effect, a comprehensive forensic audit of Namibia's resettlement program since independence is critical.
3. We shall use all means at our disposal to prevail. The legal route we have pursued that gives the Namibian Head of State sleepless nights, is but one of the options at our disposal. We know where our ancestral land is and if nothing else works, we shall politely yet resolutely advise the Germans of our intentions to take back our land and request them to kindly remove their farms and their kith and kin from our land, notwithstanding their loot of the wealth of our fore-bearers. And we shall then develop our land to the best interest of our people.
4. In our book, ancestral land will remain the deal breaker to national unity and President Geingob holds the key: For his regime to resolve ancestral land honestly, or take responsibility for the looming disintegration of Namibia's first republic. The alternative is for President Geingob to give way to his handlers in the ruling party so that we can at once deal directly with whoever controls the chess board.

We advise both President Geingob and Chancellor Morkel that, the day shall come when all God's children shall be free to breathe the air of freedom. When that day shall come, no person, no matter how many tanks and armaments they command, will be in a position to reverse the course of events. And history is replete with examples. The choice is yours and the time is now.

**NAMA TRADITIONAL LEADERS ASSOCIATION (NTLA)**

**OVAHERERO TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY (OTA)**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Isaack \_\_\_\_\_

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**Nama Traditional Leaders**

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