Happy 21st Birthday Namibia

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21 as a number can represent the maturity and the responsibility for an individual’s personal growth. That is to say that individual has attained the age of 21 years and has officially become an adult. In our society too worldwide, those who turn 21 years old receive KEYS in part of their birthday gifts. That is to say at 21 years old, one is considered old enough to be a keyholder to your family home, and thus hold a symbolically “senior” position in the family.

In other words, our free and independent Namibia has reached 21 years old and thus has become “old enough to be a keyholder” amongst the family of free nations of the world. This year (2011) therefore we celebrate the coming of age as a free nation and reflect on the journey travelled and strengthen the foundation of our nationhood beyond Vision 2030. That morning of 21st March 1990, all the people and all that makes Namibia stood and paused as the cloud of history was hovering the landscape of new Namibia. All Namibians hungered for leadership and yearned for a direction which was being announced at the independence stadium by H.E. Dr. Sam Nujoma, as 1st President of the free and independent Namibia. In his own words he proclaimed as follows: “To the Camarada Dr. Elhaji Ngurare, Namibian people, I would like to state, on this solemn and historic occasion, that our nation has been blessed with the truth to fulfill the freedom. It has risen to the feet. As from today, we are the masters of this vast land of our ancestors. The destiny of this country is now fully in our own hands. We should therefore, look forward to the future with confidence and hope…Our achievement of independence imposes upon us a heavy responsibility, not only to defend our hard-won liberty, but also to set for ourselves higher standards of equality; justice and opportunity for all, without regard to race, creed or colour. These are the standards from which all who seek to emulate us shall draw inspiration.”

In other words, for the past 21 years, Namibia and Namibians have been their own masters pursuing, with confidence and hope, the heavy responsibility of nation building in the interest of all Namibians. For example, it can be recalled that in 2009 Presidential and National Assembly Elections, a new generation of Namibians became first time voters and voted overwhelmingly for the SWAPO Party Presidential Candidate and SWAPO Party members of the National Assembly. These first time voters belong to the unique generation popularly known as “bornfree”.

These are amongst the collective offerings of a free Namibia who must take forward the celebration and preservation of our new Star (Namibia) which had arisen 2 years ago on the African continent and vowed to never again become a colony. We have a heavy responsibility to preserve the gains of a free and independent Namibia on all fronts: social/economic, cultural and political in the interest of all Namibians. It part of this heavy responsibility that must propel us to break the shackles of entitlements and arrogate of being more human than others.

We must demonstrate with humility and dignity to our fellow citizens especially the bornfree that today belongs to them too provided they do not compromise our sovereignty and territorial integrity of Namibia. We must further humble ourselves to the virtues of hard work, honesty, patriotism and practical national unity and equality. The gains of political independence must be juxtaposed with the political will to attain economic independence for the present and future generations. We must resolve that equality in free and independent Namibia must not be superfluous and should not be artificial but rather genuine and meaningful.

In his own words he stated “They (bornfree) have been their own masters pursuing, with confidence and hope, the heavy responsibility of nation building in the interest of all Namibians. For example, it can be recalled that in 2009 Presidential and National Assembly Elections, a new generation of Namibians became first time voters and voted overwhelmingly for the SWAPO Party Presidential Candidate and SWAPO Party members of the National Assembly. These first time voters belong to the unique generation popularly known as ‘bornfree’.”

But independence is more than lighting candles and sing happy birthday for our country. Let us be a Nation that has reached its maturity in the distribution of economic wealth of the country. The rural and poor national electorate must not feel excluded from the decisions of economic empowerment. The urban and rural poor must not feel their stagnation or hopelessness that there exist two societies: one rich and one poor under the political administration of metropolitan black elite.

We must strive for the maturation of one Namibia One Nation standards and values. For example, it can be noted that in 2009 Presidential Elections, voters and voted overwhelmingly for all Namibians regardless of the tribe, race, economic or ethnic origin. At 21 years, let us build the road that has turned congratulations into a keyholder to our country. We should, therefore, ask ourselves a question: what is it that makes me proud to be a Namibian? What can I do to better the life of my next door neighbor?

Finally, as we march forward towards Vision 2030, and with the maturity of 21 years of political stability and economic prosperity, let every Namibian exclaim with joy that indeed we have become an oasis of prosperity and economic development. We have encountered challenges along the way of reaching this far but thank you Lord for all that we are about to achieve for the future has been paved. It has become a tarred road of hope and a railway of dreams. We must harness the skills of the bornfree to produce medical doctors, scientists, engineers, lawyers, journalists, amongst others. It has expanded the horizons of transport and telecommunications as well as social grants to the elderly and vulnerable members of society. It has opened up the great opportunities of our nation the remains the resolve addendum to improve the living standard of all Namibians in rural and urban areas.

It is therefore the duty and patriotic responsibilities for all Namibians to ensure that our country has reached its year of maturity (2011) and having attained the adulthood of 21 years, the birthday gift is in the hands of the individuals, collectively: let each one reach one and hold hands to build and develop our motherland Namibia, and by doing so ensure that we are a railway of dreams, a tarred road of hope, a contrasting beauty which must forever hold high the banner of solidarity, freedom and justice.

NAMIBIA’S RITE OF PASSAGE at 21 on the 21st March 2011

Founding President, H.E. Dr. Sam Nujoma, recalls in his book at page 141 that he was “driven from his own Soekoutou, West Africa, the administrator’s house as a prisoner by his own people from his own country on the 21st March 1966 but 24 years later in 1990, we achieved our genuine freedom and independence on that specific day” and now 21 years later, we are celebrating our country’s independence day but also its rite of passage from adolescence into adulthood.

The rite of passage is a ritual event that marks a person’s progress from one status to another in a communal phenomenon which can show anthropologists what social hierarchies, values and beliefs are important in specific cultures. The concept as a general theory of socialization was first formally outlined by Arnold van Gennep. In his book of that name, he identifies rites marking the transitional phase between childhood and full inclusion into a tribe or social group. Rites of passage have three phases: separation, transition, and reincorporation, as van Gennep described. In the first phase, people withdraw from their current status and prepare to move to the new place or status to which they believe in the case of our country that happened on March the 21 1990 to 21 March 1997, that is to say almost seven years of independence. The transition (liminal) phase is the period between states, during which one has left one place or state but hasn’t yet entered or joined the next. This stage happened for Namibia between March 21, 1997 and March 21, 2004 after the first seven years of Independence. In the third phase (re-aggregation or reincorporation), having completed the rite and assumed their deeds for human abilities? Who can also deny the seven days in a week or the seven colours in the spectrum. Nevertheless, the pertinent question we must ask ourselves is: did we succeed with the transformation project of the nation? Did we empower the previously oppressed and exploited so that we create circumstances in which affirmative action will be long-term needed? As the South African Sunday Times’ Mondli Mchauya wanted to know, were the rights of the government simply exploited by forces within and without to their own advantage? In some circumstances the affirmative action policies of the government for themselves inducing a new consciousness of a new-found sense of insolvency of independence? The concept of the seven days in a week is the seven days of the week, and they have greater actuality. St. Augustine of Hippo (A.D. 354-430) wrote: “Numbers are the Unwritten Language offered by the deity to humans as confirmation of the truth.” Similar to Pythagoras, he too believed that everything had numerical relationships and it was up to the mind to seek and investigate the secrets of these relationships of the numbers and the numerical values. Who can deny that 3 is a number of divine perfection with three qualities of the universe of time, space and matter, each consisting of three elements of past, present and future, height, width and depth, as well as solid, liquid or gas and thought, words and