By Dr. Elijah Ngurare, Secretary of SWAPO Party Youth League

On Thursday, 18th October 2007, I addressed a Press Conference at the National Headquarters advocating for the concept of guided democracy in anticipation for the Party Congress of 2007. At the time various candidates were vying for the top 4 positions with the exception of the President, where Comrade Hifikepunye Pohamba was an automatic candidate following the 2002 Extra-Ordinary Congress of the Party wherein he was elected as a Presidential candidate. By then the incumbents in the Top 4 leadership were the Dr. Sam Nujoma, President, Cde Hifikepunye Pohamba, Vice President, Dr. Ngarkatuke Tjirange, Secretary General and the late Cde John Pandeni, Deputy Secretary General respectively. In the run up to the 2007 SWAPO Party Congress, a number of names of senior cadres were surfacing to contest the position of the Vice Presidency, Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General respectively. The calls for guided democracy in addition to other considerations made it possible for the current Top 4 leadership to emerge as a compromise. Amongst our foremost critics at the time included the so-called human rights organization or be it activists and a selection of the media, as I recall, it was only New Era editorial and my brother Alfredo Hengari (The Namibian newspaper columnist) who gave us favourable consideration on the concept of guided democracy.

Eventually, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the 2007 Party Congress it was SPYL and NUNW that moved for a motion which led to a resolution making President Pohamba the sole Presidential Candidate of the Party in the 2007 Presidential and National Assembly elections. After the Congress it was SPYL which continued to insist for the seniority of the Top 4 albeit it is a platform that is not constitutionally provided for.

In good faith and senior leaders of the Party saw the historic need to direct for the formulation of what is now referred to as a succession plan document which was adopted at the Party Central Committee meeting in 2008 in full attendance of all members. It should be added at this point that the Top 4 leadership of the Party reflects H.E. Cde Pohamba, Dr Hage Geingob, Cde Pendukuni Iwala-Ithana and Cde Ngakolango Mbumba. Against this background it is pointless trying to question our concept of guided democracy.

The so-called human rights activists who have in recent past been pursuing an anti-SWAPO agenda have become converts of guided democracy. They are now mimicking the lexicography of some of our own cadres with eyes on the political throne. The natural question to ask is whether this development is evolving naturally or through a some kind of political telepathy. Why is the so-called activists not concerned about dirty camp politics or could it be because there is something in for them? Just asking.

I thought, we have gone through dirty camps politics before, we cannot forget that some became elevated to high positions in the Party on account of qualifications but on the basis of which camp they belonged. As part of the present dirty campaigns, it is being alleged that Lt Martin Shalim was forced into retirement by the Founding President and that Yours Truly is campaigning for Deputy SG position in the party. Others even have it that a