

## SWAPO

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most formidable armies in Africa. That army was brought to its knees by brave men and women, who simply said "No to colonialism and Apartheid Regime."

South African generals came and left, each promising to defeat SWAPO and "break the backbone" of its military wing, the People's Liberation Army of Namibia, PLAN.

They failed. In Dr Nujoma and his PLAN commanders, they found their equals. They stood up to them, and won the war under the banner of SWAPO. From its inception in 1960, Sam Nujoma led that liberation movement with a majestic sense of purpose. Even when challenges seemed insurmountable, Dr Nujoma showed the way. SWAPO was formed to unite all Namibians under its umbrella to fight for their inalienable rights to freedom, independence and self-determination. It replaced the Owambo People's Organization, OPO, whose main objectives, among others, were to end the contract labour system and unite all the people to gain freedom and independence.

But the name had a tribal connotation—hence the change to SWAPO, which represented all the people of South West Africa, as Namibia was then called. SWAPO's first strategy was to unite all Namibians irrespective of their tribal or ethnic origins.

It successfully mobilized Namibians to demand their independence from the apartheid colonial regime of South Africa, using peaceful means and petitions to the United Nations, UN.

Using underground networks, SWAPO leaders crisscrossed the length and breadth of the country, recruiting people to join SWAPO. Its message spread like wildfire all over the country. Within five years, SWAPO was a political force to reckon with, still using peaceful means to demand Namibia's independence.

But the SWAPO Party leadership immediately realized that peaceful petitions would not yield any result. South Africa simply ignored them while continuing to suppress and oppress the Namibian people.

The apartheid regime contin-

ued to exploit the country's natural resources just to benefit the white community and the western countries such as Britain, West German, France, the US and Canada.

SWAPO decided to wage the struggle through three fronts—political, diplomatic and military fronts. It launched the armed struggle on August 26, 1966, after all peaceful efforts to bring about Namibia's independence had failed.

SWAPO continued to mobilize the international community through the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, OAU, (now the African Union, AU), the Non-Aligned Movement, NAM, and other international platforms. The diplomatic efforts culminated in SWAPO being recognized by the UN as the "sole and authentic" representative of the Namibian people in the early 1970s.

As years went by, SWAPO stepped up its political mobilization inside the country, which resulted in many people fleeing their country to countries like Zambia, Tanzania, Botswana and later Angola. Diplomatic efforts were also intensified and the international community became more and more aware of the plight of the Namibian people.

As a result, SWAPO succeeded to have South Africa's presence in Namibia declared illegal by the UN, thus putting more pressure on the apartheid regime to accept Namibia's independence. Through sustained diplomatic efforts, South Africa became increasingly isolated by the international community.

The UN also imposed sanctions on the apartheid regime, but the western countries mentioned above defied such sanctions, thus delaying Namibia's independence and prolonging the suffering of the Namibian people.

The world body has also passed numerous resolutions condemning South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia. In 1978, the UN passed Resolution 435 which called for free and fair elections in Namibia, controlled and supervised by the UN.

That Resolution became the backbone of the negotiations between SWAPO Party, the apartheid South African regime, the Frontline States, and



Peaceful transfer of power: Founding President Dr Sam Nujoma handing over some of the documents to SWAPO Party President Hifikepunye Pohamba.

the Western Contact Group—made up Britain, West Germany, France, Canada and the US. It took ten years to have that resolution implemented.

But it was the People's Liberation Army of Namibia, PLAN, that gave South Africa nightmares. As South Africa

continued to defy the international community, PLAN combatants intensified the armed struggle, right inside Namibia. South African military bases were constantly attacked and their soldiers killed.

PLAN combatants relied on guerrilla warfare, using the "hit

and run tactics" which demoralized the South African soldiers. As the war intensified, South Africa sent in more troops to Namibia. It also set up some quasi army units such as the South West Africa Territorial Force, SWATF and Koevoet, with a view to

Namibianizing the war. These units were made up of local people, but their commanders were Boers.

PLAN combatants, however, retained the upper hand. The early and mid 1980s saw the intensification of the armed struggle, which culminated in the famous Battle of Quito Cuanaville in 1988. This battle forced South Africa to accept the implementation of Resolution 435 in November 1989, and eventually the independence of Namibia in 1990.

Between 1960 and 2010 lies 50 years of SWAPO's glorious history, a history of tested leadership, tested in the crucible of the struggle. The years to come will see SWAPO Party making inerasable marks on Namibia's political landscape.

Founding President Dr Nujoma aptly put it on Independence day in 1990: "Today our hearts are filled with great joy and jubilation because our deepest and longest yearning has been realized."

That is the history of SWAPO Party.



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

# Ministry of Mines and Energy



The Hon. Minister Isak Katali

**While being welcomed on board The Hon. Minister Isak Katali, The Deputy Minister Hon. Willem Isaacks, The Permanent Secretary, Joseph S. Iita and staff of the Ministry of Mines and Energy would like to congratulate The SWAPO Party on their Golden Jubilee Anniversary.**

Your leadership has touched the lives of so many people in a special way. You have paved way to our economic development. May you continue to become better with each celebration.



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**HAPPY Golden Jubilee SWAPO Party**



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