determination and independence. The white minority colonial apartheid regime of South Africa perpetuated colonial oppression against our people. It imposed apartheid policies such as,amental, together with Chief Hosea Kutako’s Heren Council, in organizing the national protest against the forced removal of our people from the Old Location to the present day Katutura.

On that fateful day, 10 December 1959, the majority white colonial police brutally killed more than 1,200 Namibians, including Kakanakaze Mungunda in cold blood and wounded 50 others. The Old Location Massacre signaled the turning point in the history of our National Liberation Struggle. In the following year, on 19 April 1960, we formed SWAPO as a Liberation Movement in order to fight for our genuine freedom and independence. SWAPO mobilized under its banner and drew together various progressive forces in Namibia such as the workers, youth, churches under the Council of Churches in Namibia and passmums and became the embodiment of their aspirations for genuine freedom.

SWAPO decided that political mobilization, as well as diplomatic and military efforts should be pursued concurrently. Therefore, the pronged strategy was adopted, namely; mass political mobilization inside Namibia, diplomatic offensive to isolate the minority white apartheid regime at the international level and armed liberation struggle.

Inside the country, mass political mobilization was intensified. Following the Tanga Consultative Conference in 1970, the National Union of Namibian Workers was established to mobilize the workers in order to paralyze the colonial economy. The SWAPO Party Youth League was also established to mobilize the youth of Namibia in order to participate actively in the national liberation struggle. Vil- and fearless SWAPO Party Youth leaders such as Comrades Jerry Ekandjo, Joseph Kashua, Martin Kupwada, Namhloko Taipauda and others demanded the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the illegal apartheid regime from Namibia.

In adhering to SWAPO’s clarion call, the workers turned their work places into battle grounds leading to the successful 1971 General Strike. Other anti-colonial forces such as progressive churches and students joined the struggle. In the same year, Bishop Leonard Auula of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Ovambo Kavango Region, Paulus Gouswe of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Southwest Africa wrote a letter of protest to John Vorster, the then Prime Minister of the minority white apartheid colonial regime of South Africa, condemning the evil system of apartheid colonization.

On the diplomatic front, SWAPO successfully mobilized the international community through the UN, Organization of African Unity (OAU), the former United Nations of the Non-Aligned Movement to isolate the apartheid regime. In 1971, the UN General Assembly recognized SWAPO as the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people and declared the presence of South Africa in Namibia illegal.

SWAPO gained friends and allies from all over the world who rendered political, diplomatic and material support to SWAPO. As Namibians, we will remain forever indebted to the selfless support and solidarity from friendly organization such as the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), the Polisario Front and progressive nations such as Tanzania, Zambia, Angola, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Egypt, Algeria, Congo Brazzaville, the then Soviet Union, Cuba, China, India and the rest of the international community that supported SWAPO during the difficult years of our national liberation struggle. We, thus, have a duty to extend the same support to various nations battling to establish peace and stability in their countries. We should therefore continue to work together with all peace loving nations of the world through the UN and other international organizations to promote the maintenance of world peace and security and ensure that human kind will live in peace without the threat of war.

On the military front, brave and heroic combattants of the People’s Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) carried out successful military operations against the enemy forces inside Namibia, inflicting heavy casualties to the South African colonial troops. The racist troops of South Africa were finally decisively defeated at the historic Battle of Cuito Cuanavale by the combined forces of Angolan national army-APLA, Cuban Internationalist Forces and SWAPO PLAN Comabattants, leading to the South African apartheid regime signing the ceasefire agreement with SWAPO and accepting the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 435 that paved the way for the genuine independence of Namibia.

As the youth of Namibia, you should always continue to pay tribute and respect the tested and outstanding PLAN combattants, political missionaries and combattants who fought for the freedom and independence that you enjoy today in Namibia. Some died during the Old Location Massacre in 1959, while others died in the Battle of Onagunda-Grootfontein and at other battles with the enemy forces or in foreign lands. Among them are Commanders Tobias Hainyeko, Peter Nzenya, Ernest Nangure, Jonathan Ndai, Wanezepho, Grootfontein Kaverez, Helao Nafidhi, Wilbard Tshinika Nakukati, David Mtango, Isack Shikongo Pondo, John Hamukolo, Augustus Nhagwara, Jonas Haiduwa, Perry Hashoongo, Peter Sibale, Mames Mhuretu, Jansen Simbwaye and others. Their exemplary deeds will continue to die and become a permanent source of inspiration in our second phase of the struggle for economic independence. Their blood flows our freedom.

Equally, you must continue to pay homage to our national lead- ers and Comrades who contributed immensely to our country’s free- dom, independence and nation building. They are: Anton Libowskii, Immanuel Shifidi, Moses Garoeb, Peter Mwesihanange, Patrik Nambo, perch, Isack Shikongo Pondo, John Hamukolo, Augustus Nhagwara, Jonas Haiduwa, Perry Hashoongo, Peter Sibale, Mames Mhuretu, Jansen Simbwaye and others. Their exemplary deeds will continue to die and become a permanent source of inspiration in our second phase of the struggle for economic independence. Their blood flows our freedom.