

STATEMENT BY ADV VEKUII RUKORO ON "GENOCIDE AND REPARATIONS", March 27, 2015

1. The State sponsored, legally proclaimed and officially executed genocide against the OVAHERERO people by the German authorities in 1904, constitutes the legal, political and moral basis for our people's claim to REPARATIONS against the German State and successive German Governments.
2. The German government must understand that on this issue of reparations, the OVAHERERO people and their various traditional and political leaders are totally united. No amount of divide and rule strategies or other diversionary tactics by Germany in the form of unsolicited "Special Initiatives" or even over generous State to state development co-operation assistance to the Namibian Government, will succeed to become a substitute for reparations to the affected communities - now or in the future!
3. The German authorities must also understand that no amount of discussions with the Namibian Government alone will be a substitute for direct engagement with the Paramount Chiefs and other Traditional Leaders of the Ovaherero and Nama Communities, who were the direct targets of General Von Trotha's Extermination Orders of 2 October 1904 and 22 April 1905.
4. The German Government must also appreciate that whilst development aid/co-operation is and remains a bilateral issue between two governments, Reparations is primarily a matter between itself and the affected communities, with our own Government playing a guardianship role to ensure that the interests of its citizens are adequately taken care of. That's why we are calling for a triologue involving both Governments and the affected communities rather than a dialogue confined to the two Governments only as has been the practice to date! As far as the Ovaherero People of Namibia is

concerned: "IT CANNOT BE ABOUT US, BUT WITHOUT US, THE TIME IS NOW TO INVOLVE AND ENGAGE US DIRECTLY!"

5. We seriously urge the FRG to follow the lead of its various Presidents in the cases of Poland and Israel by unambiguously and in simple German or Otjiherero, for that matter, to stand up in the Bundestag and to apologize to our people for the crimes against humanity committed by the German troops in the name of Kaiser Wilhelm II against our People!!! Having done that they must, as they have done elsewhere, proceed to engage us to discuss appropriate forms of compensation to make good the innocent blood of our ancestors, the massive loss of both movable and immovable property of our parents, the total destruction of our culture and way of life as well as the damage done to our peoples' dignity and psyche.

6. As HE knows the late PC has left a whole lot of things unfinished and my task is to continue with his legacy; from my side I shall attempt to do so in close consultation and collaboration with both the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany through your Office and our own Namibian Government.

7. I must emphasize that I would do so within the framework of mutual friendship, respect and accommodation as well as a sense of urgency and agreed deliverables or milestones.

Paramount Chief Adv Vekuii Rukoro.