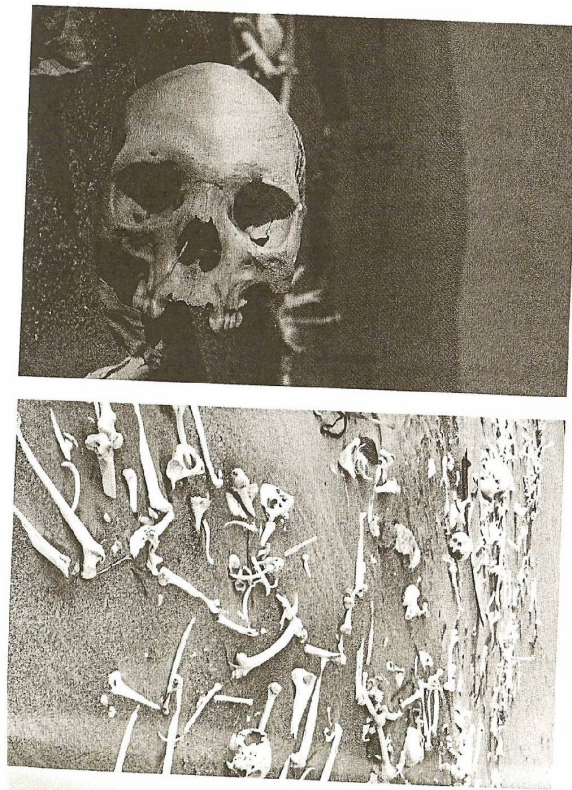




**STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE KAZENAMBO KAZENAMBO, MP  
MINISTER OF YOUTH, NATIONAL SERVICE, SPORT AND  
CULTURE, ON THE OCCASION OF THE REPATRIATION TO  
NAMIBIA OF HUMAN SKULLS OF NAMIBIAN ORIGIN FROM THE  
PERIOD OF GERMAN COLONIAL RULE**



*Picture shows the enormous graveyard of the concentration camps' victims  
in the south of Namibia near Shark Island*

The Government of the Republic of Namibia and indeed the people of Namibia will never forget the dark chapter of German Colonial period in the then German South West Africa, present day Namibia, which was characterised by repression and brutality against the indigenous population.

It is historically recorded that numerous atrocities were committed in Namibia during the German colonial period. These atrocities reached their peak when Theodor Leutwein, the commander of the Schutztruppe in the then German South–West Africa was replaced by General Adrian Dietrich Lothar von Trotha. Von Trotha had been a commander in German East Africa and had forged a reputation for ruthlessness. During the Wahehe uprising, von Trotha had unflinchingly ordered mass hangings and the summary execution of prisoners of war. He had burned down entire villages, sometimes with their inhabitants still inside. Von Trotha’s treatment of the local peoples was so extreme that it even drew opposition from Hermann von Wissmann, the Governor of German East Africa.

With the blessing of the German Colonial Government, Von Trotha issued the infamous extermination order against the OvaHerero, one of our communities in Namibia. The extermination order reads, in part as follows: **“I, the Great General of the German troops, sent this letter to the Herero... The Herero people must leave the land. If they do not do this I will force them with the Groot Rohr [Cannon]. Within the German borders every Herero, with or without a gun, with or without cattle, will be shot. I will no longer accept women and children, I will drive them back to their people or I will let them be shot at. These are my words to the Herero people. Signed: The Great General of the Mighty Kaiser, von Trotha.”**

In the same vein, the Namas who had also revolted a year after the Hereros were treated in a similar fashion and subsequently deported to the concentration camp on Shark Island.

It is recorded history that Von Trotha's barbaric actions in the then German South West Africa received praise from Kaiser Wilhelm in these words: **“You have entirely fulfilled my expectation when I named you commander of the colonial troops, and I take pleasure in expressing, once again my utter gratitude for your accomplishments so far.”**

The extermination order resulted in thousands of innocent indigenous Namibians being killed, tortured and injured. The majority of the victims were innocent civilians, mostly women and children. It is in this context that these human skulls which are about to be repatriated to Namibia were illegally brought from Namibia to Germany.

The return of these 20 skulls marks the first step in the repatriation of all Namibian human remains still kept in Germany.

On the occasion of the return of remains of our ancestors to Namibia, we pay tribute to the innocent victims of the war of genocide waged by the German colonial government in Namibia.

We will continue to cherish our policy of National Reconciliation but at the same time we will never forget what happened to our people during the colonial period, including apartheid colonialism. We will continue to promote national unity, peace and stability in our country. We will continue to reject negative tendencies such as racism, sexism, tribalism and regionalism. We will continue to promote the motto of ***ONE NAMIBIA ONE NATION***. Their blood waters our freedom!

I thank you.