
GENOCIDE, APOLOGY AND REPARATION
MEETING WITH GERMAN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT
OKAHANDJA
REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**The Dichotomy of Historic Responsibility and the Quest for
Restorative Justice**

A PRESENTATION BY THE FORUM FOR THE
NAMA TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES ASSOCIATION AND THE
COUNCIL OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS ON GENOCIDE AND REPARATIONS of the various
Herero Traditional Authorities

25 MAY 2016

His Excellency Ambassador Schlaga,
Honourable Members of the Bundestag,
Esteemed Traditional Leaders,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow us to base our statement on the **historic responsibility** that the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany proudly acknowledges to have over Namibia, and **the design of a future** in which both nations will have an open cordial relationship based on a common understanding of the shared history.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany defines its bilateral relationship with Namibia as one that is based on its historic responsibility. This historic responsibility has its foundation, undoubtedly, in the brutal German colonial history in Namibia during which about 80,000 Herero and 20,000 Nama people were systematically killed through a deliberate policy explicitly stated in the following two para-phrases of Lothar von Trotha:

1. *“Clean out, hang up, shoot down till they are all gone”,*
2. *“I wipe out rebellious tribes with streams of blood and streams of money.”*

It was a well-thought policy and executed with the much-talked-about German Precision. The Extermination Orders of 02nd October 1904 and 22 April 1905 were in a nutshell motivated by the general German psychology of Super Race, Lebensborn and Neo-Darwinism of Survival of the Strongest. For the Germans of that time... *“These blacks have deserved death before God and man, not because they have murdered two hundred white farmers and have revolted against us, but because they have built no houses and dug no wells... God has let us conquer here because we are the nobler and more advanced people. That is not saying much in comparison with this black nation, but we must see to it that we became better and braver before all nations of the earth. To the nobler and more vigorous belongs the world. This is the justice of God.”*

That is our joint-history. It started here in Okahandja with the execution of

Paramount Chief Kahimemua Nguvauva and Nicodemus Kavikunua on the 12th June 1896.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany is guilty of a crime of genocide against the Herero and Nama people. And we, the Herero and Nama Leaders have no other business to discuss with German leaders, but and only the Official Recognition of the Crime of Genocides, the Rendering of an Official Apology to the Herero and Nama people of Namibia, South Africa, Botswana and elsewhere in the diaspora. This is the cornerstone that will reshape our historic ties and further truly build our friendship and lasting bilateral relations among the nations of the world.

However, if His Excellency Ambassador Schlaga wants to put blinkers on our face and thus predetermine our view of our history, of who we are, and how we should think, that is a gross mistake. We have absolutely no interest in discussing Germany and Namibia's bilateral agreements on development aid, after all this has by large not served the interest of our communities locally and in the diaspora – whose ancestors bore the brunt of Germany's campaign of terror and dispossession.

Honourable members, ladies and gentlemen:

We know way back before independence that GDR provided Assistance to Swapo and that after Namibia's independence the re-unified Germany continue to provide development aid to the Government of Namibia; furthermore, we came to know that this monetary assistance would constitute an agreement between Namibia and Germany to make reparation void. This agreement in itself constitutes an unlawful premeditated act, a breach of international law, to obstruct demands for restorative justice and it's *void ab initio!*

Honourable members of the Bundestag, your speaker Dr Norbert Lammert stated at a press conference on October 8th 2015 in Windhoek, that *"it was now necessary for the governments of Namibia and Germany as well as Herero and Nama representatives to sit down together and work out the details of reparation payments."* He further stated that the inclusion of the victim communities shall be left to the prerogative of the Namibian government.

As we speak, the Namibian government (through both the Vice President Dr. Nickey Iyambo and the Special Envoy Dr. Zed Ngavirue) blames the German Government for refusing to include the victim communities directly in the negotiation process. This is very perplexing. **How on earth can the perpetrator of such heinous crimes against humanity dictate such oppressive terms of negotiation against us Africans when it accommodated the Jewish Victim Groups along-side the State of Israel?**

We, the Traditional Leaders of the Victim Communities with the overwhelming support amongst our people, have been willing to negotiate all along, **at first** along-side our Government to work out an amicable configuration that will serve Namibia well in the negotiation; **and secondly**, we have also been willing to engage the German Government directly without our Government, if necessary as a second option, but your Government also remained quiet about this matter.

Now we are left with one other option – that is to take the route of arbitration at the International Tribunal in The Hague, and in addition to launch an international campaign to have Germany declared a pariah state in a similar fashion as the then notorious racist Apartheid South African Regime. We too shall intensify our local Programme of Action.

Honourable Members of the Bundestag:

As it is now, **the ball is squarely in your court**. Go home, rethink your Government's current mode of engagement with the Namibian Government – knowing that the Herero and Nama people in Namibia and in the diaspora will leave no stone unturned – and thus prepare for a change of paradigm to engage us. **There shall be no lasting solution negotiated about us without us**. All such negotiations on genocide, apology and reparation payments without our direct participation shall be rendered futile and a waste of resources. As elected representatives of the German people, you deserve to know that the so-called affected communities accommodated in the advisory structures of the Namibian Government do not even carry the support of 7% of the Herero and Nama Victim Communities affected by the genocides under discussion.

In conclusion Honourable Members of the Bundestag I wish you a safe journey back home with a clear mind about the needs and moods on this sacred

grounds of our ancestors. By the way, along-side Paramount Chief Hosea Kutako's grave there are two Nama leaders' graves – that of Chief Hendrina Afrikaner and Kaptein Jan Jonker Afrikaner. The Nama-Herero alliance is immortal!

Let me also take this opportunity to give you one copy of our position on the issue of Genocide, Apology and Reparation payments. This is a position we presented to our Government on the 4th of March 2016. We have also hand-delivered a copy of this to the German Embassy on the 10th of March 2016. Also find enclosed the following: invitation letter to this meeting, MoU between Nama and Herero traditional authorities.

I thank you for **this rare opportunity** granted to us – the Forum for the Nama Traditional Authorities Association and the Council of Traditional Leaders on Genocide and Reparations.

Signed:

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Adv. Vekuii Rukoro
Paramount Chief, Ovaherero
Traditional Authority

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Chief David Frederick
!Aman Traditional Authority

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Chief Aletha Nguvauva
Paramount Chief,
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