

Welcoming Statement

Councillor Salomon David Isaacs

Nama Traditional Authority

Dear Director of Ceremonies,

it is a privilege to welcome you all to this historic conference. The subject matter, genocide and reparation, is coming a long way, as it was tabled and discussed at several occasions by the German authorities and the descendants of the genocide victims, but because of the nature of this issue it was difficult to reach unity of purpose.

The genocide is a very sensitive issue, and needs mutual respect and responsibility from the stake holder parties. The participants of this conference, Germans, Hereros and the Namas are people from the new generation with a different approach and may contribute towards diligent proposals and recommendations.

We the Nama and Herero, descendants of the genocide victims, know the unmeasurable suffering our ancestors endured: the loss of precious lives of people, livestock, land and property. We have inherited poverty, lost human dignity and self-esteem. The most painful and unacceptable part, however, is the landlessness while large tracks of our ancestral land are in the possession of German and other white Namibians.

It is equally painful that some of the Namibians who were not included in the extermination orders and who were not direct targets are claiming to be genocide victims and that they are supported by the Namibian high command. The success of this conference hinges on prudent and objective dealing on the part of all the participants. I welcome and wish you all in the same spirit successful deliberations.

Thank you!!!