

## Input

# Chief Petrus Simon Moses Kooper

## Nama Traditional Authority

Dear Moderator,

I want to start with a methodological comment about my intervention so that you will understand and know where I am coming from and the material conditions of the people that you are about to hear, and also why I have chosen this kind of discourse rather than some other kind. I therefore ask for your indulgence.

I'll briefly attend to the "why" question and answer it right away, thereafter attempt to give you a brief historicist view about the material conditions of the Nama people in Namibia and elsewhere:

We, from Namibia recognize and give importance to the fact that is equally important for the German tax paying public to hear and understand the prevailing situation and conditions in Namibia from the direct descendants of the victims and their leadership so that in the consideration of the ultimate sequencing of restorative activities it shall be designed in a manner, commensurate to overcome the current socio-economic and cultural impediments and realize the solution that we all are seeking for.

I suppose it is against this background that I was asked to speak on the topic of the second Resolution, which postulates: **The present Socio-economic situation and exclusion from government negotiations**". This question actually contains three separate sections of the ongoing debate on genocide: the social, the economic and the exclusion. And I'll attempt to give brief but broad overview on each of the subject matter.

As all of you are aware, the Nama and Herero people share a history full of incessant strife against hostile entrance into our territories by the German nation, and their decision to take our land by military action.

### **Socio-cultural conditions**

The socio-cultural changes, following the hostile take-over by the Germans, that our predecessors had to undergo was immense. Now that we understand the meaning assigned to "Attachment theory" which is a new branch of development psychology that shed light on importance of consistent, appropriate, and responsive two-way-communication- and why it is essential for empowering people

Any major changes, be it economic, political, or social, more often than not, necessitate corresponding changes in the social cultural environment of people affected by it.

Under normal circumstances the adaptive workings following such changes are understood to be self-organizing processes, which often summons into action, systems of coordinated activities fitting to meet new conditions.

Of importance in a situations of change, unless taking place under condition of force, is knowledge of, and reasons for the envisage change to those affected by it.

Our people were not given knowledge, neither the reason but expected to dismantle the whole social-organization, which sustained them until the advent of the German colonialists.

Growth of positive traditions, social institutions, and external contacts that could give rise to common social ideas was therefore unlikely to happen for our people. Having to encounter extreme harassment our cultures have suffered greatly and our social organization left in state of decay.

It is therefore understandable today that the state of social mind of our people demonstrate chronic unresponsiveness, a behavior identified as “anxious avoidance”, which is explained as a life pattern that features unquenchable anger, frustration, and aggressive violent behavior among the offspring of people having to endure such hardships.

This in a nutshell describes the socio-cultural challenges that any change theory should bear in mind before planning/designing developmental programs for communities that I represent.

### **Present economic situations**

I don't know if I will be able to say anything more from what you already have heard and will be hearing today from these delegations. However, poverty in my community is real, joblessness is real, powerlessness is real, landlessness is real, income disparity is real, school dropout is real, teenage pregnancies are real, juvenile delinquencies is real, resignation to fate is real, HIV and AIDS are real. Statistics on each of the elements mentioned is readily available and can be accessed through media.

My community is permeated by the existential lesson handed down by our predecessors, and has adopted a lifestyle that harbors obstinate techniques for survival, which has entered the cultural model or prototype and later developed into sub-cultures integrated into forming the traditions and the way of life for my people living in the southern enclave of Namibia.

It is therefore my devoted opinion that any solution not taking into consideration all of these aspects that I am mentioning here will be doomed to fail. It is for the latter reasons that I want to post the following questions to the German government and its people.

1. Does the German government want to commit their resources in, and, under a condition that is not conducive for delivering them the pardon that they want to obtain? Remember the descendants of the victims have difficulty to accept and/or give the pardon on ground of the prevailing anomalies.
2. Is the German government aware that those hand-picked individuals paraded as representatives of the descendants of the victims are actually member of the ruling party and not necessarily traditional leaders from the Name or the Herero communities and the legitimate leaders are left behind? If not, take note of that discrepancy in the Namibian approach!
3. Does the current Namibian position give the German government the assurance and satisfaction that whatever the Germans agree will be supported by the Namibian

people and by extension the descendants of the victims who suffered German brutality and losses? If so, note that you will be proven wrong in the end!

4. Does the current Namibian position demonstrate integrity for achieving appropriate reparations measures? Let me be categorical about this. There is no integrity measures in place to address even the most basic issue of common position in the approach of Namibian government.
5. And, finally, does the German tax paying public agree that their resources leave their country without them having the assurance that indeed, appropriate reparation measures are in place, and both the descendants and the German public are in agreement that available measures will deliver the required results and that nothing will end up in an unintended course. We doubt.

If the German people are not concerned about issues in my line of questioning and if they are not willing to listen to the voice, be rest assured that the PARDON is unlikely to be realized by all the current undertakings, because it is in absence of the representatives of the affected people and rather overshadowed by the supremacy of the so called sovereignties!

### **Exclusion from negotiations**

Exclusion in this case can become a two edge sword, and are likely to hurt German people more than the two governments. Because the resources that might be applied are coming from taxpayers and the question is whether they will allow their government to commit the resources in a condition where the German people do not have the assurance of obtaining a positive outcome?

This question is actually more pivotal for the German public than it would be for the Namibian government. I am therefore concluding by congratulating the organizers of this congress because you know the legitimate traditional leadership of the direct descendants of the victims are approaching the matter of genocide and restorative justice.

May I therefore rest my case...

I thank you