

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. HAGE G. GEINGOB,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, AT THE MEMORIAL
SERVICE OF THE LATE AMBASSADOR NORA SCHIMMING-
CHASE**

MARCH 16, 2018

PARLIAMENT GARDENS

WINDHOEK

Check against delivery

The Bereaved Family of the late Ambassador Nora Schimming-Chase,

Comrade Nangolo Mbumba – Vice President of the Republic of Namibia and Madam Mbumba,

Comrade Sam Shaafishuna Nujoma, Founding President and Father of the Namibian Nation and Madam Nujoma,

The Right Honourable Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila – Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia and Mr. Amadhila,

Honourable NetumboNandi Ndaitwah – Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation,

Speaker of the National Assembly - Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi,

Chairperson of the National Council, Honourable Margaret Mensah – Williams,

Your Lordship Peter Shivute, Chief Justice of the Republic of Namibia,

Honourable Cabinet Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Members of Parliament,

Honourable Regional Governors present,

Your Worship Cllr Muesee Kazapua – Mayor of Windhoek and mayors of other towns in Namibia present,

Honourable Regional and Local Authority Councillors,

Honourable leaders of the Traditional Council of Namibia,

Your Excellencies members of the Diplomatic Corps,

**Comrade Sophia Shaningwa – Secretary General of the SWAPO Party,
Honourable McHenry Venaani – Leader of the Official Opposition in the Parliament and other leaders of political parties present,
Senior Government Officials,
Service Chiefs,
Members of the media,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

How came bereavement to this house?

How came forlornness?

Grief fills our hearts.

We are lost in a wilderness of grief.

This poignant Sudanese poem, captures our mood today, as we gather here in remembrance of this valiant Sister of the Namibian Soil, who breathed her last breath on the morning of March 13, 2018. Her life is worth celebrating, even on this solemn occasion.

Ambassador Nora Schimming-Chase was part of a rare breed of leaders, whose innate capacity for diplomacy and intellect helped shape the path towards Namibia's independence. Nora, a comrade and family friend, continued to play an important role in different capacities.

When we think of the process of emancipation in Africa, we often focus on men as freedom fighters. Our women are the mothers of our society, therefore, lest we forget, they are fighters for freedom as well. Ambassador Schimming-Chase brought three children into this world; at the same time she formed part of a brave group of women who forewent personal comforts to ensure that our independence became a reality.

At a time in history when being a revolutionary extended beyond modern day idealism and combative rhetoric, Ambassador Schimming-Chase was one of the fearless and pioneering sisters who walked the talk, joining other gallant daughters of Namibia, such as Comrade Libertine Amathila and the late Putuse Appolus in Dar Es Salaam during the 1960's. Those were times fraught with dangers for those who dared to dream of a free Namibia. But Comrade Nora believed in freedom as emancipation. As an activist, she ventured out and actively sought to bring freedom to herself, her family and her beloved Namibia.

Her apprenticeship in diplomacy began at an early stage, when she was recalled by SWANU to Dar Es Salaam to head the Party offices in 1973, where she had formerly played the role of Secretary for Education. During her time in Tanzania she distinguished herself as a goal-oriented individual with robust leadership capabilities and political acumen.

By the time the dream of independence became a reality for Namibians, Ambassador Schimming-Chase commenced with her service to the Government of Namibia as Undersecretary for Multilateral Affairs in the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation, then known as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. By July 1992 she was appointed as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Namibia to the Federal Republic of Germany, a position she served with distinction as a consummate diplomat.

In 1999, Ambassador Schimming-Chase joined the newly founded Congress of Democrats. She was a vehement debater and always respectful of other people's views. Her impressive Curriculum Vitae is a reflection not only of her intellectual gifts, but her determined spirit and her will to make a difference in the lives of her countrymen and countrywomen continue to shed light on our democracy. Fellow mourners, Comrade Nora was born a fighter until the Lord decided to liberate her from the life of struggle.

Today, we look back at the life of this extraordinary patriot of the Republic of Namibia. Let us take solace in the fact that although this is indeed for all of us, a very somber occasion, we should find moments to pause, to appreciate and to celebrate the endeavors of a mother, a servant-leader, diplomat, colleague and friend, who rendered astonishing service to this country.

Chief Albert Luthuli once said, "When the women begin to take an active part in the struggle as they are doing now, no power on earth can stop us from achieving freedom in our lifetime."

In a few days' time we will be celebrating our 28th Year of Independence. We thank our valiant sister of the soil, Comrade Nora Schimming-Chase, for her active participation in the struggle. Due to her efforts, and those of many other gallant sons and daughters of Namibia, no power on earth could stop us from achieving freedom in our lifetime. Thus we are going to celebrate our 28th Independence Day at Tsumeb.

She has now departed from our midst and is in the company of the Lord.

To the children - be comforted by the book of Isaiah 41:10, which reads, "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous hand."

Finally, I extend my deepest sympathy to the family, comrades and friends.

May the soul of Comrade Nora Schimming-Chase, rest in eternal peace.