



OPENING STATEMENT

BY

**HON. NETUMBO NANDI-NDAITWAH, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
AND MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND
COOPERATION**

DURING THE MEETING WITH

**HON. GEOFFREY ONYEAMA, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF
THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA,**

7 OCTOBER 2019 – WINDHOEK

Honourable Geoffrey Onyeama, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

Honourable Ministers

Honorable Deputy Minister

Special Advisor

H.E. Lilian Ijeukuwu Onoh - High Commissioner of Nigeria to Namibia

Senior Officials from Nigeria and Namibia

Members of the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Today we are honoured and privileged to have you, Honourable Minister amongst us. Your presence here is a reaffirmation of the excellent relations between our two sister countries. I therefore warmly welcome you honorable Minister and your delegation to Namibia. Please feel free at home away from home.

Honorable Minister, about a week ago, a Namibian delegation joined the family of late Ambassador Edward Aina in laying him at his final resting place. Ambassador Aina was not only the first High Commissioner of Nigeria to Namibia. He was a pillar for SWAPO during his tenure at the OAU Liberation Committee in Dar Es Salaam. In the same vein, we have learned with sadness the passing of the immediate former High Commissioner of Nigeria to Namibia, His Excellency Nathaniel Olorenfemi. We reiterate our condolences to the Government, families of the deceased and people of Nigeria.

Honorable Minister,

Our bilateral relations and cooperation are informed and guided first and foremost by the principled support and assistance rendered to the people of Namibia during the days of Namibia's liberation struggle for independence. Our relations are rooted in history. In spite of Nigeria's geographic location, the leadership still found it imperative to become an active member of what came to be known as the Frontline States + Nigeria, thus actively participating in all major activities in support of Namibia's decolonization process. We have realized our right to self-determination through the highest sacrifices of our people but complemented by the provision of moral, technical, logistical and financial assistance. Among others, the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria annually allocated money to the SWAPO operation mainly to the running of the SWAPO office in Lagos.

Nigeria hosted hundreds of young Namibians who were pursuing secondary and tertiary education in various federal states. Many such individuals are today senior managers, medical doctors, community leaders and senior civil servants. The bond of friendship continued when members of the Nigerian Defence Force became part of UNTAG.

Honorable Minister,

Our relations were further enhanced by the establishment of diplomatic relations, immediately after Namibia's independence on 21 March 1990. These relations were further strengthened by High Level Visits and the establishment the Joint Commission of Cooperation between the two countries including the MoU on Political and Diplomatic consultations signed in 2010. As a result, several agreements have been signed and are being implemented.

There remain immense potential in areas such as tourism and transport infrastructure, blue economy, agriculture in order to enhance trade and investment between our two countries. I am pleased to note that our trade relations are gradually improving. For example, the export of salt from Namibia to Nigeria is increasing, Nigerian companies involved in charcoal production are growing in number and discussion between IT services of the two countries are at a final stage of finalization.

There are several outstanding agreements and we expected these to be finalized during the next session of our Joint Commission for Cooperation.

Honorable Minister,

We just returned from the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, where we spoke in unison in defense of multilateralism. In

this context, let me once again congratulate the Federal Republic of Nigeria for presiding over the 74th Session in the name of Professor Tjijani Muhammad Bande. We have no doubt that he will spearhead our collective efforts in revitalizing the work of the UN General Assembly. I also take this opportunity to extend to Nigeria our heartfelt thanks and appreciation for having selected one of Namibia's ambassadors to form part of the Cabinet of the President of the 74th Session of the General Assembly.

Namibia remains committed to work with Nigeria at the multilateral front, especially at the African Union. We reiterate our commitment to strengthening these relations and remain optimistic about the future of our bilateral relations and cooperation, for the mutual benefit of our peoples.

With these brief remarks, I once again welcome you Honorable Minister and your delegation to Namibia.

I thank you!