

Director of Ceremonies
Honourable Karupu, Ndiona Constituency
Esteemed Traditional Leaders
Ladies and Gentlemen
Comrades and Friends
Fellow Namibians

At the very outset, I would like to kindly request you rise, so that we can all observe a minute of silence in honour of the late Comrade John Alfons Pandeni who passed away in a tragic vehicle accident on 14 March 2008. (I thank you, you may be seated).

Today, we celebrate the 18th Anniversary of the attainment of our nationhood. As we gather here today, we recall the heartening events of that historic day, when we hoisted our flag of freedom and sovereignty for the first time. We recall how we celebrated the lowering of the apartheid flag of oppression, in the knowledge that it would never again fly as a symbol of authority over our country. The events of that historic day are still vivid in our memories.

We can look back with pride at the many successes that were achieved after independence in many areas of social and economic development. We are proud, and rightly so, of the peace and stability that our country has enjoyed since that joyful day of 21 March 1990.

Freedom and independence has in many ways unleashed the potential of our people who have taken advantage of their liberty to make tangible contributions to the development of our country.