

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. HAGE G. GEINGOB, PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, AT THE COMMISSIONING CEREMONY FOR
NAVAL VESSELS (NS) BRUKKAROS AND (NS) DAURES

OCTOBER 27, 2017

WALVIS BAY

ERONGO REGION

Check against delivery

Directors of Ceremonies,
Honourable Penda Ya Ndakolo - Minister of Defence,
Air Vice Marshall Martin Pinehas - Air Force Commander,
Dr George Simataa - Secretary to Cabinet,
Major General Nestor Shali Shaluada - Army Commander,
Rear Admiral Sinsy Ndeshi Bamba Ngipandwa - Navy Commander,
Rear Admiral Peter Hafeni Vilho - Permanent Secretary of Defence,
His Excellency Zhang Yiming - Ambassador of the People's Republic of
China,
Mr. Sun Shihe - Assistant President of Poly Technologies Inc,
Honourable Cleopas Mutjavikua - Governor of Erongo Region and other
Governors present,
His Worship Alderman Immanuel Wilfred - Mayor of Walvis Bay and
other Mayors present,
Commissioner Nelumbu – NAMPOL Regional Commander Erongo
Region,
Defence Attachés accredited to the Republic of Namibia,
Chief Seth Kooitjie – Chief of Topnaar Community and other Traditional
leaders present,
Religious Leaders present,
Distinguished Invited Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Members of the Media

Chinese Philosopher and Military Advisor Sun Tzu once said, "The art of war teaches us to rely not on the likelihood of the enemy's not coming, but on our own readiness to receive him; not on the chance of his not attacking, but rather on the fact that we made our position unassailable."

Namibia has always espoused peace and diplomacy, both at regional and international level. We are a Child of International Solidarity; enemy to none and friend to all, unless our sovereignty is placed under threat. Although we are a peaceful nation, given the disturbing rate of flux in modern day geopolitics, we must always remain vigilant in terms of our national security. It is for this reason that we must constantly upgrade and our military hardware and train our military personnel to enable us to repel any threat to our sovereignty, whether aerial, terrestrial or marine.

It is for this reason that I am proud to be here this morning to officiate the Commissioning of these two offshore patrol ships. In boosting our naval capabilities, we will ensure that we are not relying on the likelihood of the enemy's not coming, but on our own readiness to receive him; not on the chance of his not attacking, but rather on the fact that we are making our position unassailable.

This is indeed a proud day for the Namibia Defence Force, most particularly the Namibian Navy. This year marks the 13th anniversary of

our Navy, having transformed itself from the level of a Wing into a fully-fledged Navy in 2004.

Although we are currently seized with mitigating the negative effects of the economic headwinds that we face, we remain committed to ensuring that we put in place a modern, capable and adequately equipped Defence Force. As Commander in Chief I would also like to challenge our Defence Minister, Chief of Defence and our Service Commanders, to develop innovative proposals for the funding of our military. Challenges force one to grow and therefore let us deal with the economic challenge by evolving our financing models. This will place us in good stead once our economy stabilizes.

Ladies and gentlemen,

On several occasions, I have alluded to the fact that our fight against poverty as well as our quest for shared prosperity will require a multifaceted approach, involving all stakeholders. In this respect, our Defence Force is not only responsible for protecting us from military threats but it also has an integral role to play in terms of safeguarding Namibia's economic resources and assets.

Our maritime economy is a major contributor to job creation and economic growth. Given our large coastline, the Navy faces a huge challenge in ensuring that it protects the country against any and all maritime threats. It is therefore of paramount importance that we

continue to increase our naval capabilities. Our Navy must be responsive to the challenges of maritime responsibility and our officers must at all times be ready to defend and protect Namibia's territorial waters and harbors, which are not only valuable assets to Namibia, but the SADC region as a whole, since they present a gateway into the region.

I commend the Navy leadership and the entire Navy family, for the progress you have made during the 13 years since your inception. I urge you to maintain your alertness and your vigilance at all times to ensure that Namibia's coastline and its maritime resources remain protected.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It has been said that, "It is better to have one loyal friend than a hundred fair-weather friends." In the People's Republic of China, Namibia has a loyal friend; an all – weather friend. The acquisition of these two ships came as a result of China's People's Liberation Army, which offered to donate to the NDF in 2014, two Submarine Chasers, with surface and undersurface targets attacking capability.

I am informed that delivery of the ships took place in August 2017. This process is a testament to the cordial and all-weather friendship that exists between the Republic of Namibia and the People's Republic of China, which is accentuated by the commitment of the Chinese Liberation Army to render support to the NDF in terms of training of

military personnel and supplying of military equipment. Ambassador Zhang Yiming, through you, I would like to thank the Government of the People's Republic of China, the People's Liberation Army and Polytechnologies Inc for this outstanding gesture of friendship and bilateral cooperation.

The delivery and incorporation of the two Submarine Chasers into our naval fleet will add tremendous value to Namibia's naval combat surface and under-surface capability, as well as augment the country's maritime patrol and surveillance capability.

In conclusion, let me congratulate all stakeholders involved in this project for a job well done. I also congratulate our young men and women of the Navy, who have completed their training and are ready to master these state of the art vessels. I wish you fair wind as you embark on your offshore duties. May you remember these words from George William Curtis, "It is not the ship so much as the skillful sailing that assures the prosperous voyage." May you hone your skills over the next months, so that it will be your abilities, combined with the state of the art technology on these ships that assures success for the Namibian Navy.

I now direct the Minister of Defence and the Chief of the Defence Force to proceed and place Navy Ships (NS) Brukkaros and (NS) Duares into Commission.