

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. HAGE G. GEINGOB,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, ON THE
OCCASION OF THE 18th SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE
AND GOVERNMENT OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT**

OCTOBER 25, 2019

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN

Your Excellency Ilham Aliev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Chairperson, of the 18th Non-Aligned Movement Summit;

Esteemed Heads of Delegation;

Distinguished Delegates,

Allow me from the onset, to express our appreciation to Your Excellency, the Government and people of Azerbaijan, for the warm hospitality extended to us since our arrival in this beautiful city of Baku. May I also use this opportunity to thank His Excellency Nicolas Maduro and people of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, for the leadership provided to the Movement over the past three years.

Our world is at a crossroads and the solidarity that has prevailed and provided an envelope of

protection and avenue of cooperation between our members states, faces an existential threat. Multilateralism is under attack, as the growing forces of unilateralism threaten to drive our world towards nationalism, unipolarism and eventual conflict. Given this grave scenario, the commitments and values espoused in the Bandung Principles, have an even more critical role to play, as we accentuate the relevance of these Principles, in providing adequate responses to the multifaceted challenges facing the contemporary world.

Among the key tenets of the Bandung Principles are:

- The respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all nations, large and small and**

- **The abstention from intervention or interference in the internal affairs of another country.**

These are the real challenges that confront members of the NAM. These are the same challenges that informed the debate we had at the General Debate of the 74th Session of the United Nations.

To this end, we should never lose our appreciation for the value of dialogue and negotiation as a means of settling differences and divergence on issues. On the one hand, we have made some progress in finding lasting solutions for conflict situations in many parts of the world. However, the volatile situation in the Middle East, remains a cause for concern.

Furthermore, we have witnessed the emergence of new conflicts or the non-resolution of longstanding conflicts. To solve them, we must stick to our commitment to multilateralism, which has proven to be an important mechanism in providing for both peacekeeping and peacebuilding in the world.

Your Excellencies,

Next year will mark 75 years since the establishment of the United Nations. As we reflect on the gains made on the multilateral front, we must also be prepared to face some daunting challenges if we are to bring about the realization of a fairer and more equitable world. In this regard, we are reminded of our common responsibility to remain unwavering in our resolve to advance our quest for equitable regional representation in the

membership of the United Nations Security Council to ensure that it reflects the interests and needs of both the developed and the developing world. To quote from our draft declaration: “to reform the United Nations Security Council in order to transform it into a more democratic, effective, efficient, transparent and representative body in line with contemporary geo-political realities”.

Your Excellencies,

Many of us present here today understand the significance of the principles of solidarity. In Namibia, whose independence was made possible through Pan-African and international solidarity, we view these principles as sacrosanct. This view is accentuated by the late Samora Machel, former President of the Republic of Mozambique who said,

“International solidarity is not an act of charity: It is an act of unity between allies fighting on different terrains toward the same objectives. The foremost of these objectives is to aid the development of humanity to the highest level possible.”

With this in mind, our solidarity with the People of Palestine and the Western Sahara is not an act of charity because we see them, as our brothers and sisters, as our allies, fighting on different terrains towards the same objectives. And foremost of this objective is to end the precarious inhumane situations under which they live so that they realize their human dignity. Thus, we are duty-bound to continue to support their inalienable right to self-determination and independence and in this regard, we wish to reiterate our call for the full implementation of all UN resolutions on Western Sahara and Palestine.

In this same spirit of solidarity, Namibia reiterates its longstanding call for the lifting of the economic embargo on Cuba, which continues to prevent the Cuban people from realizing their national potential and attaining economic prosperity. We also wish to pledge our support for the people of Venezuela. In the spirit of the Bandung Principles, we condemn the measures imposed on them as they do not show a regard for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and the non-interference in the affairs of sovereign states.

As members of the Southern African Development Community, we continue to witness the adverse effects of the economic sanctions imposed on the Republic of Zimbabwe. The sanctions have placed our Zimbabwean brothers and sisters under tremendous social and economic strain,

jeopardising the developmental aspirations of a country that holds tremendous potential.

The ramifications of these inhumane sanctions continue to reverberate across the entire SADC landscape, as Zimbabweans are forced to pursue economic migration, in search for survival opportunities.

As a Child of Pan African and International Solidarity, Namibia joins the SADC fraternity in calling for the immediate lifting of the illegal sanctions against Zimbabwe.

Your Excellencies,

The frequency and devastating impacts of hurricanes, floods and droughts remind us all of the reality of Climate Change. The developing world is most at risk from these adverse weather conditions, as we have witnessed over the past several years. Namibia is at present, experiencing the most severe drought in decades and as a result, declared a State of Emergency on account of drought. We wish to thank all the countries who heeded our call for assistance but we must also admit that more assistance is still required in order to bring much needed relief to those who are severely affected by the drought.

Our efforts to eradicate poverty and pursue sustainable development will not succeed if environmental degradation and natural resources depletion, including the loss of biodiversity continue unabated. Therefore, let us use this

platform to reaffirm our commitment towards tackling climate change, for the secure and prosperous future of our people.

Your Excellencies,

I wish to conclude by recalling the stirring words of the first President of Indonesia, Surkano, who at the opening of the Bandung Conference in 1955, said the following, "For many generations our peoples have been the voiceless ones in the world. We have been the unregarded, the peoples for whom decisions were made by others whose interests were paramount, the peoples who lived in poverty and humiliation. Then our nations demanded, nay fought for independence, and achieved independence, and with that independence came responsibility. We have heavy

responsibilities to ourselves, and to the world, and to the yet unborn generations.”

Our nations have come a long way since the days of our struggle for liberation. We are no longer voiceless and we are no longer the unregarded. We are free and sovereign people, united in solidarity and driven by a common cause to improve the lives of all human beings. We are our own liberators, masters of our own destinies. Through the Non-Aligned Movement, we have a platform at which we can speak with one voice, united in purpose and holding hands, to safeguard the interest of our people, today and for many years to come. Let us therefore, revive our movement and move forward towards global peace, renewed solidarity and shared prosperity.

I thank you.

