

STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE SOCIETY OF ADVOCATES OF NAMIBIA  
ON A MEDIA REPORT CONCERNING STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO THE  
SWAPO PRESIDENT, DR HAGE GEINGOB

MEDIA RELEASE | 20 OCTOBER 2020

The Society of Advocates of Namibia ("the Society") has noted a recent alarming media report concerning statements attributed to the SWAPO President, Dr Hage Geingob.

The media reported, inter alia, that the President – at the launch of SWAPO's campaign for the upcoming Regional Council and Local Authority elections –

- (a) expressed his **"concern"** about **"white Namibians"** registering themselves **"in big numbers"** to vote in the said elections;
- (b) stated that **"white Namibians"** have **"declared war"** against the ruling party, **"despite SWAPO making sure white people enjoy peace, unity and comfort"**;
- (c) stated that **"I have noted that and I will not forget that. People are declaring war against Swapo. Swapo who made them enjoy peace and unity, enjoy their comforts. The comforts they have enjoyed all this time and you declare war against Swapo. I heard you"**.

Increased participation by Namibian citizens in the democratic process should be encouraged and not decried. Of greater disquiet is what could be construed to be some form of veiled caution directed against those persons who do not signal their support for the ruling party. This approach is fundamentally at odds with the Namibian Constitution. Article 17 of the Namibian Constitution entrenches the rights of Namibian citizens to –

- (i) participate in peaceful political activity intended to influence the composition and policies of the Government; and

(ii) join political parties and to participate in the conduct of public affairs, whether directly or through freely chosen representatives.

Further, the statements attributed to the President –

(a) are irresponsible, disappointing and unbecoming, moreover in a democratic State founded upon the principles of democracy, the rule of law and justice for all;

(b) may serve to incite racial disharmony, have no place in a democratic Namibia and conflict with the constitutional guarantee of equality and freedom from racial discrimination as embodied in Article 10 of the Namibian Constitution;

(c) undermine the founding principles enshrined in the Preamble of the Namibian Constitution, which recognise the equal and unalienable rights of the individual to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, regardless of race, colour, ethnic origin, sex, religion, creed or social or economic status, and which unequivocally records that we, the people of Namibia **“will strive to achieve national reconciliation and to foster peace, unity and a common loyalty to a single state”** and **“committed to these principles, have resolved to constitute the Republic of Namibia as a sovereign, secular, democratic and unitary State securing to all our citizens justice, liberty, equality and fraternity”**.

The President is called upon to, at all times, respect the Namibian Constitution and its founding principles.

Adv. G Narib

President

Society of Advocates of Namibia

20 October 2020