

Namibia President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah 26 October 2015

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YouTube Subtitle Transcript

0:00

Great sons and daughters of Africa who

0:03

are listening today. I speak to you not

0:06

as a mere politician but as a servant of

0:10

our people. As a daughter of this soil

0:12

and as a leader who refuses to watch her

0:16

country's destiny be stolen by greed,

0:19

corruption and foreign manipulation.

0:22

Today I stand before you with a message

0:25

that will mark a new era for our beloved

0:28

Namibia. I have taken the bold and final

0:32

decision to assume full control of the

0:35

Ministry of Mines and Energy. Effective

0:38

immediately from this moment onward, the

0:41

resources beneath our feet, our

0:43

diamonds, our uranium, our oil, our

0:46

lithium, our copper will no longer be

0:49

treated as personal property by

0:51

politicians or playgrounds for foreign

0:54

companies. They belong to the people of

0:57

Namibia and no one else. And as of

1:00

today, I am announcing that the deputy

1:03

prime minister Natanguete,

1:05

who also served as Minister of Energy

1:07

and Mines, is hereby dismissed from his

1:10 position effective immediately. He has
1:13 betrayed the trust of the Namibian
1:15 people. He has placed personal greed
1:17 above national duty. He's engaged in
1:20 corrupt dealings that have undermined
1:23 the sovereignty of our country and the
1:25 dignity of our citizens. I will not
1:28 stand for it. Not under my watch. Mrs.
1:32 You will face a full and transparent
1:35 inquiry.
1:36 You will answer before the Nebian
1:39 people.
1:40 You will answer for every dollar, every
1:43 contract, every foreign handshake that
1:46 sought to sell our resources to
1:48 outsiders for your own benefit. We are
1:52 cleaning our house and no one no one is
1:57 above the law. Let me make this
2:00 absolutely clear to every minister,
2:02 every governor, every senior official
2:04 sitting comfortably in their offices. If
2:08 you are not working for the Namibian
2:10 people, you will be gone. If you think
2:13 you can use your position to enrich
2:16 yourself, to take bribes, to sign deals
2:19

behind closed doors with foreign

2:21

interests, then let me remind you, your

2:24

time is over. I was not elected to serve

2:28

foreign corporations. I was not chosen

2:31

by my people to be a puppet for the West

2:34

or for anyone else. I was elected to

2:37

serve Namibia and I will do exactly

2:41

that. For far too long, Africa has been

2:45

a continent of wealth, but a continent

2:48

of poor people.

2:50

A land blessed with treasures beyond

2:52

imagination,

2:54

yet burdened with poverty that should

2:56

never have existed.

2:59

From the sands of the Sahara to the

3:01

rivers of the Zambzi,

3:04

our soil hides riches that could

3:06

transform the world.

3:09

And yet the children of the soil go to

3:12

bed hungry. How can it be that a

3:15

continent so rich in gold, diamonds,

3:18

oil, copper, uranium, and fertile land

3:23

still has millions living in poverty?

3:27

How can it be that the very nations that

3:30

extract our resources live in abundance?

3:34

Why we are left with the dust of our own

3:37 inheritance. For far too long we have
3:39 watched foreign countries grow rich from
3:42 our diamonds, our gold, our oil, our
3:44 uranium, our rare earth minerals. While
3:48 our children sit in darkness. While our
3:51 farmers struggle to feed their families.
3:54 While our youth migrate because there
3:56 are no opportunities at home. This is
3:59 not destiny. This is design. It is a
4:02 system built to keep Africa poor and
4:05 dependent while others feast on our
4:08 labor, our resources and our silence.
4:11 And they come to us with contracts
4:13 written in fine print with promises of
4:16 development, investment and aid. But
4:20 behind those promises lie exploitation
4:23 and deceit. They tell us they will help
4:26 us build, yet they leave us with debt.
4:30 They promise to transfer knowledge, yet
4:32 they take our raw materials and give us
4:34 finished products at 10 times the cost.
4:37 They talk of partnership, but in truth
4:40 they want ownership. Ownership of our
4:43 minds, our ports, our energy, our very
4:46 sovereignty. and we for too long have
4:49

allowed it. We signed deals that made us

4:53

servants in our own homes. We celebrated

4:57

foreign investments that built nothing

4:59

but dependence.

5:01

We allowed leaders who bowed before

5:03

foreign interests to sign away our

5:06

future. But that error, that shameful

5:10

error must end. It must end because our

5:14

people are waking up. It must end

5:16

because we can no longer justify poverty

5:20

in the midst of such abundance. It must

5:23

end because every time an Namibian child

5:26

studies by Kendall light while a uranium

5:29

powers foreign cities, it is an insult

5:32

to our dignity. Every time our youth beg

5:36

for jobs while foreign companies control

5:40

our industries, it is a betrayal of our

5:43

sovereignty. Every time we watch our

5:45

minerals shipped out in raw form while

5:48

we import finished goods, it is a

5:51

reminder that we are still chained not

5:55

by guns but by greed and complacency.

6:00

This injustice must end. And it begins

6:04

here in Namibia. It begins with us

6:07

saying no more. No more signing away our

6:10

resources for empty promises. No more

6:13 watching others profit while our people

6:16 starve. No more leaders enriching

6:19 themselves while their people suffer. It

6:21 begins with us taking control, full

6:24 control of what is rightfully ours. We

6:28 cannot build our future on dependence.

6:31 We cannot build our prosperity on

6:33 exploitation.

6:35 The wealth beneath our feet must serve

6:38 the people who walk on it. Not foreign

6:41 corporations, not corrupt elites, not

6:44 outsiders who think Africa is theirs to

6:47 plunder. Namibia will be the line in the

6:50 sand. From this soil, a message will

6:53 rise. Africa will no longer be a victim

6:57 of its own wealth. The diamonds of

6:59 Namibia will shine for Namibians. The

7:03 oil of Namibia will power Namibian

7:05 homes. The uranium of Namibia will fuel

7:09 Namibian progress. The lithium of

7:12 Namibia will charge Namibian industries.

7:16 We will no longer allow the sweat of our

7:19 people to enrich others. We will no

7:23 longer let our resources be the reason

7:25 for our suffering. This is not just a

7:28

matter of economics. It is a matter of

7:30

dignity. For decades, Africa's wealth

7:33

has been a curse because it was

7:35

controlled by others. But today, we will

7:38

make it our blessing because it will be

7:41

controlled by us. We will turn our

7:43

natural riches into schools, hospitals,

7:46

factories, and opportunities. We will

7:49

make sure that every Namibian from the

7:52

minor in Sume to the fisherman in

7:54

Ludaritz feels the value of what this

7:57

nation hold. This fight is not just for

8:01

us. It is for every African nation that

8:04

has been robbed, deceived, and left

8:06

behind. Namibia will rise. And when we

8:10

rise, others will follow. We will prove

8:13

that the wealth of Africa can finally

8:15

make Africans rich. Not foreigners, not

8:18

corrupt elites, but ordinary men and

8:21

women who work, who dream, who build.

8:24

This injustice must end. And I declare

8:27

before the world it will end. Starting

8:29

here, starting now, starting with

8:32

Namibia. We sit on minerals worth

8:36

trillions of dollars. Trillions. Enough

8:40

to transform every corner of this

8:43 country from the deserts of the south to

8:46 the plains of the north.

8:49 Enough to build schools, hospitals,

8:53 factories, roads, and industries. Enough

8:57 to guarantee every Namibian child a
9:01 future filled with hope and dignity.

9:06 Yet for years these riches have been

9:09 stolen through corrupt deals,

9:13 through exploitative contracts,

9:16 and through leaders who bow before

9:18 foreign powers instead of standing tall

9:22 before their own people. That era ends

9:25 today. I will personally oversee the

9:28 Ministry of Mines and Energy. I will

9:30 ensure that every contract is reviewed,

9:33 that every foreign company operating in

9:36 Namibia respects our laws, our

9:38 environment and our people. I will

9:41 ensure that Namibian hands, Namibian

9:44 engineers, Namibian entrepreneurs, and

9:46 Namibian youth are the forefront of our

9:49 mining sector. We will no longer be

9:52 spectators in our own economy. We will

9:55 no longer allow others to determine the

9:58 price of our future. And let me say this

10:00

clearly. I will not accept any foreign

10:04

influence in my country. Those who come

10:07

to Namibia thinking they can dictate

10:10

terms, those who think they can buy our

10:13

leaders with their dollars and their

10:16

promises. I have one message for you.

10:20

Those days are gone.

10:22

Namibia is not for sale. Our

10:25

sovereignty is not negotiable. It is

10:27

here.

10:29

in Wuk, in Oshakati,

10:32

in Walves Bay, in the hands of our own

10:36

people. And to those who whisper behind

10:39

closed doors saying the president is

10:42

becoming too bold, I say yes, I am bold

10:47

because the time for timid leadership is

10:49

over. Africa needs boldness. Namibia

10:53

needs courage. Our people deserve

10:56

leaders who are not afraid to say no. No

10:59

to corruption. No to exploitation. No to

11:02

neocolonial control. I look across our

11:06

continent and I see hope rising. I see

11:09

leaders like Captain Ibrahim Traré in

11:12

Bkina Faso. A young man who has refused

11:15

to bow before Western powers. Who has

11:18

stood firm in the face of pressure. Who

11:21 has said Africa must own its destiny. I

11:24 salute him. He has shown the courage

11:28 that Africa has been waiting for.

11:31 The courage to take back control of our

11:33 gold, our land, our future. He has stood

11:37 tall and told the world no more looting

11:41 of Africa.

11:43 And here in Namibia, we will stand

11:46 beside him in that same spirit because

11:48 what they did to Bokina Faso, what they

11:51 did to Mali, to Niger, to the Congo, to

11:54 Libya, they also tried to do to us. They

11:58 came with their contracts, their aid,

12:00 their loans and their lies. They told us

12:03 we were too poor to manage our own

12:06 wealth. They told us we needed their

12:08 expertise. But their expertise has only

12:11 made them rich and kept us poor. Those

12:14 days are over. From this day forward,

12:18 Namibia will reclaim every inch of its

12:21 economic sovereignty. We will ensure

12:24 that every barrel of oil, every ton of

12:28 uranium, every ounce of lithium benefits

12:31 the Namibian people first. We will not

12:34 allow middlemen to sell our resources in

12:37

secret. We will establish transparent

12:40

systems where citizens can see where

12:43

their wealth is going. We will create

12:46

local industries to process our minerals

12:50

right here instead of shipping raw

12:53

materials abroad and buying them back at

12:57

10 times the price. And to my fellow

13:00

African leaders, this is your call as

13:03

well. Look around. Our continent is

13:06

bleeding wealth. Our people are rich in

13:09

soil, rich in minerals, rich in talent,

13:12

but poor in leadership that dares to

13:15

stand firm. We cannot continue signing

13:18

away our futures for crumbs. We cannot

13:21

continue allowing our countries to be

13:23

playgrounds for multinational

13:26

corporations that exploit and divide us.

13:29

Protect your mines. Protect your oil.

13:32

Protect your forests. Protect your

13:35

people. Africa must rise together or we

13:39

will remain exploited together. Let no

13:42

one misunderstand me. I am not against

13:45

partnership. Namibia is not closing its

13:48

doors to the world. We are not isolating

13:51

ourselves nor are we rejecting

13:54

cooperation or friendship. But let me be

13:57

clear, partnerships must be fair.

14:01

They must be grounded in mutual respect,

14:05

transparency, and equality.

14:07

They must be built on the foundation

14:09

that Namibia is a sovereign nation, not

14:12

a colony, a partner, not a pawn. For far

14:16

too long, we have been told that foreign

14:19

involvement is the only path to

14:21

progress.

14:22

We have been told that without their

14:24

aid, without their investors, without

14:28

their so-called experts, we cannot grow.

14:32

But history has shown us the truth.

14:35

Those who came claiming to help us often

14:38

helped themselves. They came as partners

14:42

but acted as masters. They came speaking

14:45

of cooperation but left us bound by

14:48

dependence in debt. That is not

14:50

partnership. that is exploitation dress

14:54

in diplomacy. When I speak of

14:56

partnership, I speak of cooperation that

14:58

uplifts both sides. Where the Namibian

15:02

worker earns fair wages, where engineers

15:06

gain real skills, where industries grow

15:10

and where profits are shared justly.

15:14

I speak of partnerships where foreign

15:16

investors see Namibia not as a resource

15:19

warehouse but as a nation of dignity,

15:22

innovation and opportunity. A fair

15:25

partnership is one where our laws are

15:27

respected not circumvented.

15:30

Where contracts are transparent, not

15:33

hidden behind boardroom doors. Where the

15:36

environment is protected, not destroyed

15:38

in the name of profit. where local

15:41

communities are developed, not

15:43

displaced. That is the kind of

15:46

relationship Namibia seeks. We will

15:48

welcome those who come to build with us,

15:51

not those who come to build on top of

15:53

us. We will open our hands to nations

15:57

that want to see Namibia strong and

16:00

self-reliant,

16:01

not those who wish to keep us dependent

16:04

and weak. We will collaborate with

16:06

countries that bring technology,

16:08

knowledge, and respect, not corruption,

16:12

manipulation, and control. Let it be

16:14

known to all corners of the world.

16:17

Namibia will no longer sign one-sided

16:20

deals. We will no longer tolerate

16:23 contracts that enrich a few and
16:25 impoverish the nation. Those days are
16:28 gone. Every partnership, every
16:31 investment, every trade agreement will
16:33 now serve the Namibian people first.
16:36 Every foreign company operating on our
16:38 land must understand that the era of
16:40 looting is over. This is the era of
16:43 fairness, the era of accountability. And
16:46 yes, we will still engage globally. We
16:48 will still trade. We will still
16:51 cooperate, but we will do it on our
16:53 terms. We will do it as equals, not as
16:57 beggars. We will sit at the table as
16:59 proud Africans, not as spectators
17:02 waiting for crumbs. The world must learn
17:05 to treat Africa and Namibia as an equal
17:09 voice, not an exploited resource. If you
17:13 come to Namibia, come with clean hands.
17:16 Come with respect. Come with a vision to
17:19 empower our people. Come ready to invest
17:23 in our youth, our infrastructure, our
17:27 future. Come to add value here, not to
17:30 extract it and ship it away. Come to
17:33 train our miners, our engineers, our
17:36

scientists. Come to share technology

17:39

that is strengthens our industries. That

17:42

is partnership. That is development.

17:45

That is cooperation worth having. But if

17:48

you come to steal, to deceive, to bribe,

17:51

or to take more than you give, then you

17:53

will find no home here. If you come

17:56

thinking you can manipulate our leaders

17:59

or divide our people, you will fail.

18:03

Namibia will not bow. We will not be

18:06

used. We will not be bought. Our

18:09

sovereignty is not a bargaining chip.

18:12

Our minerals are not giveaways. Our

18:14

people are not commodities.

18:16

This land belongs to Namibians and

18:19

whoever wishes to work with us must

18:22

understand that. So to our genuine

18:24

partners, to the nations that respect

18:27

Africa, that believe in true

18:30

collaboration, we extend our hand in

18:32

friendship. Let us build industries that

18:36

last generations.

18:38

Let us create opportunities that uplift

18:40

both our nations. Let us show the world

18:44

that partnership does not mean

18:46

exploitation. It means progress,

18:49 equality, and shared prosperity. To
18:51 those who still cling to the old ways,
18:55 who believe Africa can be bullied, who
18:58 believe we can be bought with aid and
19:01 promises. Hear me clearly. Those days
19:05 are over. Namibia stands tall and Africa
19:09 is awakening. We will engage with the
19:12 world but on equal ground. We will trade
19:17 but not surrender. We will partner but
19:20 never kneel because partnership without
19:23 respect is servitude. Partnership
19:26 without fairness is exploitation. And
19:28 Namibia will never again submit to
19:31 either. To our miners, our workers, our
19:35 families. You are the heartbeat of this
19:38 nation. I know the struggles you face. I
19:42 know what it means to work hard and
19:44 still feel forgotten. But I promise you,
19:47 help is coming. Not from outside, but
19:51 from within. We will make sure that the
19:54 wealth of this land flows to every
19:57 family, to every region, to every
20:00 generation. You will see change and you
20:04 will feel it in your lives. Into my
20:07 cabinet. Take this as your final
20:09

warning. Serve with honesty or step

20:13

aside. Walk for the people or prepare to

20:16

be dismissed. The era of untouchables is

20:20

over. I do not care about your

20:22

connections, your power, or your wealth.

20:25

If you are found corrupt, you will be

20:28

investigated, prosecuted, and removed.

20:31

Namibia deserves better. And I will not

20:34

betray my people's trust. We have a new

20:37

dawn ahead of us. One built not on

20:41

dependency but on strength, not on fear,

20:46

but on pride. Our children will no

20:50

longer look to foreign nations as their

20:53

saviors. They will look to themselves.

20:57

Because the greatness of Namibia lies in

21:00

the courage of its people, not the

21:03

generosity of outsiders. We have the

21:06

minerals, the energy, the minds, and the

21:09

will. Now we must have the unity and

21:13

discipline to make it real. I will lead

21:16

this charge. I will stand on the front

21:19

lines and I will not stop until every

21:23

Namibian feels the power and pride of

21:27

owning the nation's wealth. to the

21:30

corrupt, to the exploiters,

21:33

to the enemies of our people. Consider

21:37

this your notice. We are taking back

21:40

what is ours. The minds of Namibia

21:44

belong to Namibia. The wealth of Namibia

21:48

belongs to Namibians.

21:50

And the future of Namibia will be

21:52

written by Namibians.

21:54

The world is watching. Let them see a

21:57

nation that refuses to bow. Let them see

22:00

a people who have awakened. Let them see

22:03

a leader who stands for her people

22:06

fiercely, unapologetically, and with fire

22:09

in her heart. This is our time. This is

22:13

Namibia's time. And to those who have

22:15

looted Africa for centuries, I say

22:19

enough.

22:20

The era of exploitation is over. We

22:24

rise. We reclaim, we rebuild for our

22:28

ancestors, for our children, for Africa.

22:33