

Namibia and The Netherlands

350 Years of Relations

Edited by Huub Hendrix



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Koninkrijk der Nederlanden

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This book is dedicated to the memory of

Cees Arnold

Matthijs Everard

Heinrich Mapele

Lia van der Veen

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Namibia and the Netherlands, location, surface area and population.
Map by Bart Hendrix.

Foreword

Few Namibians or Dutch people realize that our relations reach back over three hundred and fifty years. When we think about the Dutch East India Company, we tend to think about Cape Town and do not imagine the impact which that contact had on our own country, particularly as the Dutch ships passed along the Namibian coastline.

This book is truly a fine indicator of relations, both remembered and lost in time, as well as a memorial to the many different kinds of contacts between Namibian and Dutch people on many levels and over a vast time span. It is also a wonderful education tool for us on what existed in our distant historical past.

My own memories of the Dutch “fraters” who taught me as a young man are many, and those of us who benefited from their teaching during a period when education was a pipe dream to most Namibians, will always be grateful for the opportunities we were granted. Many of Namibia’s leaders were educated by the Dutch, making their impact on our people indelible.

In addition, I believe many Namibians were aware of the work of the Holland Committee on Southern Africa, and the strength of the impact they made on the international arena in terms of exposing the suffering of the Namibian people under the Apartheid regime. We do need to pay homage to the work they did during a difficult period.

I also wish to express Namibian’s deepest gratitude to the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for the tremendous development assistance rendered over the past 16 years of our independence, and totaling over € 55 million. The assistance has covered areas such as capacity development in a number of sectors, but particularly the educational sector, emerging commercial farmers, job creation, HIV/AIDS, good governance and peace keeping, to name but a few.

While we are indeed saddened by the closure of the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Windhoek, we are certain that our two Honorary Consuls, together with all those who have worked to establish our mutually beneficial relations, are resolved to ensure that the Netherlands and Namibia will continue to find areas of cooperation to elaborate and concretize. May I invite all those who read this book to seek out new opportunities not only for trade and investment, but also for cultural interfacing. We do, after all, have a rich history upon which to base the next chapter of our interactions.



Marco Hausiku, MP
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of Namibia

Acknowledgements

The immediate reason to publish this book is the closure of the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Windhoek, which will take place on 30th June 2006. It seemed a good idea to collect and publish information about the relations between Namibia and our country to help and keep the flame of our relations burning. The embassy is also preparing a website about both countries and their relations. We hope that this website becomes a place for people who have an interest in Namibia and the Netherlands to exchange information. It may even lead to a second, more complete version of this book. When the website is online the text and illustrations can also be downloaded. Look for www.namibianederland.net

The book was produced in record time thanks to the enthusiastic co-operation of many. In the first place the authors of the articles who, in a matter of weeks, at most months, delivered their texts. But I also want to mention and thank some other persons and institutions. Carla Schuddeboom, who interviewed various persons in the Netherlands and Arjen de Boer who conducted interviews in Namibia. The National Archives of Namibia graciously allowed reproduction of illustrations and Kier Schuringa of NiZA was helpful to get many illustrations from the Netherlands. Cornélie van Waegeningh, the godmother of post independence Namibian-Dutch relations, commented on drafts, did suggestions and

supplied photographs. Bart Hendrix made the maps. Doris Kellner and Henning du Toit put the mass of texts and illustrations in an attractive format. The memory and cheerfulness of Rina Isaacs of the Embassy was indispensable to find and verify hundreds of facts.

This is not an official Netherlands government publication although the Dutch government financed the production and I was at the same time head of mission of the Netherlands Embassy in Windhoek and editor of this publication. It is probably also not a balanced publication. The perspective from which the history is described is more Dutch than Namibian. The views are those of the authors and other persons may have different views and information on some subjects although we have tried to be accurate where facts are concerned. Readers are invited to give their comments and additions on the website.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'H. Hendrix', written over a horizontal line.

Huub Hendrix

Windhoek, 28th March 2006

Introduction

This book is the first in which the relations between inhabitants of what is now Namibia and people from the Netherlands and also between the governments and other institutions of both countries are described. Most of the material was never published and some chapters are based on new research. But also the material that was already published is now summarized in single chapters and gets a new readership with this publication. The many illustrations are from a large variety of sources and many are published for the first time. The fact that the book contains so much new material also means that it has not yet benefited from review and criticism.

The first recorded contacts between inhabitants of what is now Namibia and people from the Netherlands were related to the presence of the Dutch East India Company or Vereenigde Oost Indische Compagnie (VOC) in the region, in particular the establishment of a VOC post at what is now the great city of Cape Town. The first chapter by Wolfram Hartmann is about a number of expeditions that were carried out at the orders of the VOC in the 17th and 18th century. The first official expedition by ship to explore the Atlantic coast of what is presently Namibia took place in 1670. From evidence available, it seems that the first of the land expeditions crossed into present day Namibia in 1760. Although the chapter is mainly based on available journals of these expeditions, it has to be quite speculative sometimes when these journals are incomplete or unclear to present day readers. The second chapter is by Bruno Werz who researched in the archives and in the field the identity and other information about a ship that was wrecked along Namibia's infamous Skeleton Coast. The reason for the investigation was the discovery of copper VOC coins on the coast between Sandwich Harbour and Lüderitz, that is mentioned in several publications. An expedition to Meob Bay was carried out with the help of the author, who is a marine archaeologist and the foremost authority on VOC shipwrecks in the region. A few hundred more coins and some other artefacts were found. It is nearly certain that the coins were carried by the vessel "Vlissingen" that perished near Meob Bay on its voyage to the Cape of Good Hope that started in

January 1747. Both chapters will hopefully lead to continued research and more detailed knowledge about what went on between two hundred and three hundred and fifty years ago.

The third chapter by Ernst Stals is about the origins of the Afrikaans language in Namibia. It appears that the use of Afrikaans as a lingua franca in Namibia is much older and was already much more widespread in Namibia than people often realise. Afrikaans got a bad reputation as the language of apartheid but seems to have overcome most of this stigma. It will be interesting to see if and how fast English will replace Afrikaans as the language spoken between people with different mother tongues.

Brother Hermenegildus Beris describes the activities of Dutch Catholic missionaries and Catholic brothers in chapter 4. They started to arrive in considerable numbers some years after the Second World War, when there was a shortage of German priests. Two main groups are identified: the priests of the Order of the Oblates of Mary, who ran mission stations or worked as parish priests all over the country. The second group arrived from 1963 onwards. They are the Brothers of the Congregation of Mary of Mercy or the Broeders van Tilburg as they are better known in the Netherlands. They specialize in education and worked particularly in secondary schools. They also helped to establish some new secondary schools that are still among the better known in the country.

Chapter 5 is the translation of an article in Afrikaans that appeared in 2002 in the Newsletter of the Namibia Scientific Society. It was written by Cor Leijenaar, who lived in Windhoek as a child. His father was one of quite a large group of Dutch masons, carpenters and other artisans who were recruited by the Dutch building contractor Steens. Steens was one of the first who helped build the modern Windhoek that we know today. Some of the workers later started their own companies although none of these exist anymore. Leijenaar, who now lives in South Africa, describes his experiences as a child in the "Steenskamp", in Windhoek.

In chapter 6 we move to the Dutch support to the independence struggle. This is the most extensive article in the book and is written by one of the icons of the Dutch anti-apartheid movement, Sietse Bosgra. Mr Bosgra's article begins at the time when the Dutch government was reluctant to support claims for self-government by the oppressed people in Southern Africa. It describes the pressure by civil society, especially the churches and the anti-apartheid movement to change these policies. Very interesting also are the frequent contacts between important members of the current Namibian leadership, who were at the time thirty years younger than they are now, and these activists. Together they plotted to convince the authorities to get their way and were often quite successful in that. This chapter should also be an eye-opener for readers who are interested in the effectiveness of civil society to push for change. It will certainly add to most readers' knowledge about the extent of this movement in the Netherlands. Other actors of this period may have different perceptions than Mr Bosgra's.

6 The last four chapters analyse the diplomatic relations from their beginnings in 1913 and the co-operation between the governments and other institutions in both countries after independence. The diplomatic relations until independence in Chapter 7 were researched and described by Michelle Gimbrère, who works in the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs. She made extensive use of the archives of the consulate general in Cape Town and the embassy in Pretoria. The author of the period after independence is Huub Hendrix, the current Head of Mission in Windhoek. Interesting in the pre-independence period is the widely different estimation by Dutch diplomats and honorary consuls of the potential for trade, investment and settlement for Dutch companies or individuals in South West Africa. The description of the post-independence period shows that the presence of an embassy stimulated and attracted new activities and exchanges in many sectors. It was also instrumental in a good number of high level visits in both directions.

Hans Poley who is head of development co-operation at the embassy, wrote chapter 8 about the bilateral development co-operation. His article is restricted to description and begs for a thorough and independent

evaluation to establish effectiveness and efficiency of 15 years development aid in various sectors. The article suggests that the quality of the programme benefited because it was designed and established by professionals, before an embassy with its more general responsibilities was opened. But it is also clear from the article that major policy changes in the content and volume of the co-operation that occurred later, were not the result of analysis and need, but resulted purely from changes in Dutch policy, mostly related to different priorities by subsequent Dutch governments.

The last two chapters are written by Marianne Ros, who is a historian and worked in Namibia for a number of years as a teacher. On the basis of interviews and material available in the Netherlands, she describes two examples of the many contacts between the two countries after independence. Chapter 9 is about the co-operation between universities and other institutions of learning. It shows that both the University of Namibia and the Polytechnic of Namibia made good use of a long-term and varied support by a number of Dutch institutions. Thousands of Namibian students in Windhoek and other places and hundreds of Namibians who went to the Netherlands benefited from this co-operation that also fostered intensive personal relations that continue in the present time. Another form of co-operation, which involves personal involvement of Dutch and Namibian participants are the partnerships between Namibian and Dutch municipalities which is the subject of chapter 10. Apart from official co-operation between the administrations of the towns, many ordinary inhabitants in the Netherlands and Namibia have become involved in these exchanges.

The book does not have a conclusion but this overview suggests that the relations between the two countries and their inhabitants have been surprisingly varied. There is also good reason to believe that the relations will continue to flourish, because most are not dependent on formal co-operation between the two governments. An important contribution to these contacts is made by Dutch citizens who worked in Namibia and Namibians who lived in the Netherlands for a while, mainly for studies. Even among the growing stream of Dutch tourists, several come back and establish more intensive links with Namibia and its people.

Chapter 1

Early Dutch-Namibian encounters

This article explores - preliminarily - the first encounters between explorers and indigenous people living north of the Orange River, in modern-day Namibia during the period that the Dutch East India Company (VOC) ruled at the Cape of Good Hope. Several sea-borne voyages and exploratory expeditions on land were organised during this period. The nature of these encounters was either cautiously reserved and sometimes openly violent on the side of the indigenous populations as these had been subject to manifold contacts with seafarers of many nations over the centuries.



Wolfram Hartmann

Dr Wolfram Hartmann, Namibian-born, holds degrees from Hamburg, London and Columbia Universities in theology and history. He teaches African history in the History Department of the University of Namibia and has published on the history of German colonialism and on historical colonial photography.

The research and description of early Dutch-Namibian contacts on the coast and in the interior of southwestern Africa that is modern-day Namibia disproves the myth of an untouched, quasi-virginal pre-colonial Africa, a time unencumbered by the presence of foreigners and their influence, positive as well as negative. It will demonstrate that even this remotest part of Africa, the most uninhabitable coast of Namibia, was of interest for the growing exploratory and commercial networks emanating from Europe from the late 15th century. Not all available sources for this aspect of southwestern African history could be consulted though; only the materials available in Namibia and South Africa were consulted. The findings of this article remain preliminary for this reason and the information contained in the secondary literature on the topic were used with great caution only.

After the Dutch East India Company (VOC) had established and consolidated the Cape of Good Hope as a victualling point for their India-bound vessels from the early 1650s, an interest to explore the hinterland soon arose. The exploration or 'discovery' of the northerly regions adjoining the Cape of Good Hope took two organisational forms. Early on the VOC dispatched sea-borne expeditions in a northerly direction along the western shores of southern Africa. Three such official expeditions that explored the coastline north of the Orange River are documented for the years 1670 (*Grundel*), 1677 (*Boode*) and 1793 (*Meermin*). As a matter of fact, however, there may have been more encounters between seafarers and indigenous populations on the shores of Namibia through shipwrecked, surviving individuals. However, of these we know next to nothing, as this kind of information could not have been reported and also, this history has not yet been systematically researched. As time progressed and the interior became gradually known, mainly through the successive appropriation of land from the indigenous Khoikhoi by the so-called *trekboers*, land-based expeditions were sent to the north and the east.

The main aim of these expeditions was to find out who was actually living in the remoter parts of the region, hence about ways and means of trade for victualling, and later hunting and settling purposes. Furthermore, this quest was propelled by the desire for precious ores.

Through the existing trade between Dutch and indigenous Khoikhoi, it was known that copper was available somewhere inland - Khoikhoi were often adorned with beads made of copper - the location and amounts of which, however, remained unknown. This metal was valued highly, as its rather slow oxidation made it ideal for military and naval purposes.

Sea voyages along the western coast 1668-1677

The first official expedition from the Cape up the western coast was decided upon in the higher echelons of the VOC already during 1668. The policy-making body of the VOC at the Cape dispatched the *Grundel* in 1670 under commander Gerrit Ridder Muijs to explore the *cust benoorden dese Caap tot op 30:2 a 33 graeden* with the instruction to *naeuwkeurigh sullen doen ondersoecken, mitsgaders wat luijden, negotie off handel van vee voor de Compe. aldaar nogte sijn de behaelen, en insonderheijt off daar niet eenige bequame plaatsen tot berginge van scheepen, neffens vers water &a. conde uijt te vinden sijn*. A cartographer, Sijbert Jansz Boon van Enckhuijsen, was hired in early March to accompany the team to record the coast. Both, Angra Pequena and modern-day Sandwich Harbour are recorded to have been ports of call. In Sandwich Harbour, people were encountered, who reacted aggressively, when approached by men from the ship. The latter retreated back to the ship. The nature of this encounter could suggest, that people living on the coast knew that arriving boats would not necessarily come with friendly designs. A couple of days to the north of Sandwich Harbour, the ship turned back, reporting mere sand dunes without any harbour or other inlet. In June 1670 the vessel's return to the Cape was reported.

A next expedition was sent in 1677, when the commander and detachment of the *Boode* was instructed to in '*t selve fatsoen als de Grundel jongst derwaerts is geweest (bij d'eerste bequame en daer toe overigen bodem) te doen hervatten om nader kennisse van alle bayen, inhammen, revieren en insonderheyt in de Grundelsbaaij te moogen bekoomen, en of op het eijlantje daer voor gelegen als mede of op alle andere in 't passant aandoende geen vers water, branthout soude te vin-*



VOC expeditions between 1690 and 1793

Some of the official expeditions from Cape Town carried out on the instructions of the administration of the Dutch East India Company at the Cape of Good Hope. Map by Bart Hendrix.

den, of aen de vaste kust te krijgen wesen, voorts wat voor anckergrondt voor groote en kleijne schepen en wat dies meer soude mogen wesen. The available material suggests that the *Grundel's* expedition had been considered largely unsuccessful; further that a place called Grundelsbaai (obviously another bay or inlet explored by the *Grundel* seven years earlier) had left the impression that a possibility existed for further trade and exploration. To the brief was added the request to survey the coast up until the Portuguese sphere of influence, that is to the north of the Cunene River, and to find out where the border between Khoi-speakers and Bantu-speakers was. Willem van Dieden, a free burgher and *gepriviligieerde traanbrander* joined the voyage, obviously to explore the possibilities of whaling.

Arriving on the coast at an unidentifiable little inlet, members of the crew went to investigate and came across a group of people; no acrimonious interaction was reported this time, as these were interrogated with the assistance of Khoi-speakers (who had been taken along from the Cape for this purpose) albeit with difficulties. Alcohol, provided as a gift, did indeed facilitate the conversation. What little information was obtained was about a neighbouring group with whom they were having an ongoing violent conflict over cattle. The information was clouded by the assumption that one may have understood things not correctly, however.

The experience made by the crew during their visit to the next inlet on the coast, Sandwich Harbour, however, was similar to the experience made by the crew of the *Grundel*. Aware that indigenous people might not be thrilled about alien visitors, the *Boode's* crew made an effort to not antagonize the few people they encountered. Negotiating this encounter over two days with cautious behaviour and the offer of gifts in the form of beads, tobacco and alcohol, a deal of two bartered cattle was struck. However, as the concluding part of this deal, the handing-over of the two beasts was to happen, the locals gave way with the animals. When the Dutch reacted with their guns, they were attacked with great courage with assegais and arrows, forcing them to retreat to their vessel.

Whether anybody was killed in this encounter could not be ascertained. What seems clear if not astounding, is

the fact that this poorly armed and economically deprived population by now had, obviously, a clear sense of the inherent and potential dangers brought by the seafarers. Repeated contact with by-passing Portuguese and Dutch ships on their way to the Cape and to India and vice versa, and American and British whaling boats with their groups of sexually voracious men must have led to this development on the southwestern African coast, particularly at the relatively safe haven of Sandwich Harbour, which during that century seems to have been less silted up. After making it into Angolan waters, the *Boode* returned to Cape Town in late May 1677.

Land voyages crossing the Orange River 1760-1795

The first important northwards sojourn on land was undertaken in the years 1685/6 under the auspices of the Dutch Governor at the Cape, Simon van der Stel. A report, *Dagregister en beschryvinge van de voyage gedaan naar het Amaquasland, onder het beleid van den Ed. heer Simon van der Stel, commandeur van Cabo de Boa Esperanca* relates the events of this trip to the north, which travelled to the *Koperberg*, the Copper Mountain near modern-day Springbok in the Northern Cape. Its main aim was to prospect for minerals and ore. Some copper was found eventually, though apparently not profitably exploitable. News about the land lying on the other side of a river situated to the north of the *Koperberg* would surely have circulated, as the indigenous pastoral and hunting Khoikhoi survived the harsh environment only because of transhumant mobility, enabling them to follow the seasonal availability of water and pasture.

Another 75 years passed before the first on-land expedition to cross the Orange River into modern-day Namibia was headed by one Jacobus Coetzé Jansz, a rather coincidental expedition though. He had applied to the authorities to leave the Cape of Good Hope in search for elephants in 1760. He and his group, consisting of 12 *Hottentots van de Gerigriquas natie*, that is, local Khoikhoi assistants (drivers, hunters et al.) in 2 wagons, started out in a northerly direction in July 1760, past Piquetberg. When the party had reached the above-



Namaqua Kraal

The illustration is part of the Gordon Collection and is reproduced from “Reizen in Zuid-Afrika in de Hollandse Tijd” by E.C Godée Molsbergen. The original caption mentions the saddled ox that is used by the Namaqua, to herd the fat-tailed sheep. It also points out that dancers in the picture are mainly women and children.



Giraffe hunt

The expedition of Jacob Coetzé Jansz in 1760 encountered the first giraffes, a few days after they had crossed the Groot Rivier, nowadays the Orange River, into present day Namibia. A year later Burger Capitein Hendrik Hop gives an extensive description of these new animals in his diary. He also sent the skin of a young giraffe to Professor Allamand in Leiden who had it prepared for exhibition in the “Cabinet for Natural Rarities of the Academy”. The illustration is part of the Gordon Collection.

mentioned *Coperbergen*, those which van der Stel had visited in the previous century, they had only been able to hunt down two elephants. For this reason the expedition was extended and travelled twelve days to the north, where it found and traversed the *grootte Rivier*, which had been *bevoorens door gene Europische Natie gepasseerd*. This great river was later given the name Orange River - a story that we will deal with further down.

The party then travelled along the banks of the *Leeuwen Rivier* (named after the many lions encountered and killed) for a few days before the country changed to grassy plains, described as *'t land der grootte Amacquas*. According to Coetzé, this population, the Great Namaqua, had moved here roughly 20 years earlier. This population movement, to be dated accordingly to c. 1760, could already have been spurred by displacement and marginalisation processes resulting from the above-mentioned, gradually moving, dispossession frontier of Cape-Dutch *trekboers*. Coetzé found it necessary to guard himself against this population as *zijne verscheijning aldaar niet sonder bevreesding wierdt aangesien* - a fact that suggests that this population was able to appreciate the armed presence of European hunters on account of former negative experience.

The conversation was conducted by Coetzé's assistants in the Khoekhoegowab variants spoken to the south of the river. This obviously facilitated the communication and must had a pacifying effect as the expedition was allowed to pursue its way past *een uijt de grond opwellende warme waterbron* - probably modern-day Warmbad - to a location termed *Swarte berg*, a mountain consisting of black rocks. The local population encountered here spoke a variant of the earlier experienced language; also, they seemed to be *vrij sagtsinniger* to the author of the report. Here the expedition learned of the presence of *Damrocquas*, living approximately another ten days of travel to the north. This term, reminiscent of the term *Damara* refers most probably to *Ovaherero* populations, who were termed Damara by their southern neighbours. A few ethnographic comparisons, the discovery of giraffe, which were unknown to the south of the *Grootte Rivier*, remarks on the flora of the area travelled, and the absence of elephant and rhinoceros conclude this report. Coetzé himself was ob-

viously an alphabet, as he signed with a cross.

Coetzé's report on his rather spontaneous sojourn across the Great River inspired the VOC-authorities to dispatch *Burger Capitein* Hendrik Hop on an explorative trip to facilitate the discovery of this northerly region in 1761. Organised in a way resembling contemporary public-private partnership, individuals interested in the possibility of trade and commerce contributed with their means to this pursuit, while the VOC made available three wagons, 30 draught oxen, arms and ammunition, a boat, tools and *snuisterijen*. The instruction required in particular that specimens of flora, fauna and minerals were to be collected. A gardener, a surveyor and a person knowledgeable in metallurgy were hired to accompany the party.

This trip lasted from July 1761 into early 1762. It followed the route taken by Coetzé the year before, most probably traversing the Great River at what today is known as Raman's Drift. For several weeks the party continued their trek to the north. A diary was kept minutely for presentation, together with a formal report, to the authorities. However, nothing remarkable nor spectacular was reported from this journey; the diary contains descriptions of the overwhelmingly difficult nature of the terrain travelled; lack of water compounded the difficulties. In early December, the party, after deliberating on the pros and cons of continuing with this trek, decided to return, following the same route. From the diary and report it is not clear altogether until where the party had been able to proceed. None of the aims of the exploration had been met thus, save for unconfirmed news of a people, whose houses were *op Paalen gebouwd, mitsg met Riet doorvlogten, en van binnen en buyten met een vermengsel van koemist en kley bestreken zijn, en dat derselver kleding wel meede van hyuden gemaakt wesende, ...mitsg een gantsch andere Taal, dan de Namacquas spreeken*. This refers most probably to the *Damrocquas* or *Tamacquas*, above-named *Ovaherero* populations.

The next batch of recorded news from the country to the north of the Great River comes from a Swede. Hendrik Jakob Wikar (1752-18??) had been hired by the VOC as a soldier in Amsterdam and arrived in the Cape in 1773. On account of gambling debts, which he

The Duyfken visits Walvis Bay

More than 200 years after the voyage of the Meermin, the last ship of the Dutch East India Company to visit Walvis Bay, the port welcomed a replica of a VOC vessel. From 11 to 16th December 2001, the Duyfken, an exact copy of an original sailing vessel that was built around 1595, visited Namibia's major port on its way from Australia to Texel in the Netherlands. The Namibian press and TV reported extensively about the visit and for two days the ship was open for visits by the general public.

The Duyfken was one of the smaller and faster ships of the East India Company. It weighed 110 ton and carried light armour. The Duyfken saw service in the Indonesian archipelago. On a voyage in 1606 in search of gold and other trade from the Indonesian island of Banda to New Guinea, the crew of the Duyfken found the northern coast of Australia, the first recorded visit by European visitors to this continent, more than 150 years before the 'official' discovery of Australia by Captain James Cook.

The replica of the ship was constructed 400 years later in Fremantle in Australia. 300 year old Latvian oak was used for the hull. The decks and masts were made from Portuguese pine, grown in Western Australia. The original 16th century construction techniques were applied.

The Duyfken was launched in 1999. It first retraced the journey that led to the 'discovery' of Australia. It later sailed the waters around Australia and left from Sydney in May 2001 on its 30,000 mile journey to Texel, where it's original predecessor was built.



Welcome for the Master of the Duyfken

On 11th December 2001, on day 221 of its voyage from Australia to the Netherlands, Master Glenn Williams manoeuvred the Duyfken safely into the harbour of Walvis Bay. Master Williams (left) is welcomed by Hans van der Veen of the Royal Netherlands Embassy and Mr. Uno Hengari, the Ports Operations Manager. Photo courtesy of Hans van der Veen

More information about the Duyfken project is available on the excellent website www.duyfken.com

could not pay, he deserted the military and roamed the country, hunting to the north of the advancing colonial frontier. He was clemenced, when his rather detailed observations, composed into detailed reports of his wanderings during 1778/9, found the interest of Governor Van Plettenberg. His reports are written in a language then spoken among people outside the official contexts of the colonial administration and the church. As such they resemble a rare example of early Cape Dutch, hence early Afrikaans.

His reports do not really contain much information on geological, faunal and floral particulars of the country that he travelled through, as he was not primarily an explorer, but a hunter who could only survive by blending in with the indigenous population. That he was able to do so is evidenced for instance when he explained to one of the folks he encountered near the Great River, that he was . . . *een inboorling deezes lands . . . , en dat ik graag met zijn gezelschap wilde meegaan om booven langs te groote rivier een plaats voor my te zoeken, daar hy om verblyd was, weetende dat hy my, by zig hebbende, beeter als anders voor roovers verzeekerd was*. Because of this rather uninhibited behaviour towards the locals, he was able to observe and report intimately and in rich detail on particularly ethnographic issues. In fact, his is the first thorough report about the people living to the north of the river; it also contains more detailed information on those Khoekhoegowab-speaking groups farthest away and it also refers to Damara and Herero. His rendition of local names, both toponymical and ethnonymical, makes for a difficult understanding though.

Robert Jacob Gordon (1743-1795) needs to be mentioned at least in passing. He arrived from Holland in the Cape in 1777, led an explorative party to the northeastern stretches of the Great River to modern-day Bethulie in 1779. An ardent patriot, he re-named this river on this occasion after the Dutch Royal House of Orange, *Oranje*. This name has since then replaced all other names of this river: *Gariëp* (literally Great or Groot Rivier) or *Ein*. Gordon was the last commander of the Dutch garrison, handing Cape Town over to British forces in 1795, whereupon he committed suicide.

Sea and land voyages towards the end of the VOC period

The early 1790s saw one last, yet concerted effort to explore what lay to the north of what now was officially called the Orange River. With the knowledge of the authorities, one Willem van Reenen ventured to the north, aiming to reach the Rhenius Mountain where the Damaras were living. During 1791/2 Van Reenen trekked with his party across the Orange River, following the route taken by Hendrik Hop through Warmbad to Modderfontein, today's Keetmanshoop, towards the Rhenius Mountain, where he arrived in January 1792. Here he found fertile land and a fountain with abundant, yet hot artesian water. It is not entirely clear, whether this could have been either present-day Rehoboth or Windhoek. It seems certain, however, that he had reached the vicinity of these places, somewhere near the Auas Mountains; the report also mentions rumours of rich copper deposits, but fails to locate these more precisely. The descriptions of the people he encountered, leaves one wondering, whether he had met Ovaherero or Damara. His over all impression was one of abject poverty; this may have been the result of a long period of drought during the early 1790s, to which he repeatedly refers as the main hindrance for his journey, causing the loss of most of his oxen. On account of this, he was not able to pursue his journey in northerly direction. Instead he sent his co-traveller Pieter Brand with what little draught animals were still available in a northerly direction. But even this did not deliver the hoped for discovery of people, rich in cattle, i.e. Ovaherero. He subsequently returned to the Cape. Of interest might be the fact that he mentions one Guillaume Visagie as a resident at Modderfontein, referring to him as one that *heeft mij veel plaisier aangedaan*. Visagie was, obviously, of great help to Van Reenen, and the suggestion is that they were compatriots. This would make him the first European settler in Namibia.

In January 1793 a brother of Van Reenen, Sebastiaan Valentijn, undertook the last official venture to the north. This expedition was sea-borne and carried by the *Meermin*, between early January and early April and was under the command of Captain Duminy. Aside another Van Reenen brother, Dirk, the team consisted of one Pieter Pienaar, and additional Khoikhoi servants (*een*



The “*Duyfken*” entering Walvis Bay harbour under full sail on 11th December 2001. *Photo courtesy of Hans van der Veen*

knegt en Hottentots en twee lijffongens). The voyage surely was connected to the land-based trip undertaken just the year before. The report of this journey, even though quite detailed in some respects, requires quite some conjecture as no official briefing orders from the Cape authorities have been left; that there had been such orders is clear, as Captain Duminy did, indeed, formally declare the two harbours that were visited, to be henceforth under Dutch rule. Lüderitz and Walvis Bay were officially considered Dutch possessions as from January 1793 - a fact corroborated when the British after their take-over at the Cape of Good Hope, affirmed these claims in their own interest.

Also, the report suggests that more detailed information on the country had been received and there is an indication that two European men, Barend Vreyn and Wysman, were present to the north of the Orange River. These were to be met on the coast, at Walvis Bay, from where they would accompany Van Reenen and his party to what seems to have been motivating this expedition: the quest for copper and the promise of large (Ovaherero) cattle herds. As the previous trip had been unsuccessful on account of the difficult terrain and the problematic climatic situation, it was thought that maybe one could approach both, copper and cattle, easier from the sea.

On its way along the coast, the vessel encountered some difficult weather conditions. It also met with substantial numbers of American whalers on some of the islands off the coast. This actually attests to the

fact that the indigenous population had been subject to the presence of Europeans all along. Finally the vessel anchored at Walvisbay for about a month. During this period the coast was explored, while Pieter Pienaar undertook the exploration inland. Pienaar's attempt to explore what lay inland, was, however, fraught by thirst, as it had not rained for the last five years. He travelled up country along the course of a dry river, most probably the Swakop valley for twelve days before he decided to return as there were no real prospects of ever reaching either the copper deposits or the cattle herds without seriously endangering his party for lack of water - *de natie zeide meede dat het hier in geen vijff jaren gered had en men van hier niet na de mijnen kost komen*. While under way, the report relates the presence of large herds of rhinoceros, elephant, antelope, buffalo and lion in the Swakop River valley. An exploration of the mouth of the Swakop river was undertaken as well, from which fresh water, traces of former British or American whaling activities, but no navigable harbour were reported. Finally, just before the ship's return to the Cape, Captain Duminy *liet de baken ten zuyden van de baay steeken, vernoemde dezelve de Walvischbaay*. The vessel was back in the Cape in early April.

Chapter 2

The *Vlissingen*

A Dutch East India Company ship that perished along the Namibian shore in 1747

On 9 January 1747, the United Dutch East India Company (VOC) ship *Vlissingen* left the Rammekens roads, near the town of Vlissingen in the province of Zeeland, for its fifth journey. Unfortunately for the Company and the crew aboard, the vessel was never to return. Ship and people perished some time after departure -under circumstances that remain a mystery to this day- and nothing was heard of them any more. Nobody at the time could imagine that more than 250 years later, the *Vlissingen* would become the subject for a new search.

This article describes some of the results of preliminary archival research that focused on the history of the fateful ship and her unlucky crew. This information provides an historical framework that is essential for a future maritime archaeological investigation. The article will also briefly touch on preliminary field work that was undertaken during September 2001 in Meob Bay, Namibia, the place where the vessel in all probability found its last resting place.



Bruno E.J.S. Werz

Dr Bruno Werz studied history at the University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands and received his PhD at the University of Groningen for a study on theoretical aspects of maritime archeology. In 1988 he moved to Cape Town and is currently permanent resident of South Africa. He is an internationally acclaimed authority in the field of maritime archeology and specializes on the inter-disciplinary approach to the study of shipwrecks, with an emphasis on Dutch East India Company ships. He lectures and publishes widely.



A VOC ship

This is an engraving of a Dutch East India Company ship of the class of the "Vlissingen". It's length was about 36.4 metres with a width of about 9.10 metres. A ship of this class carried often more than 200 persons (seafarers, military personnel and craftsmen) and measured about 650 tons. Source: Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague. Archief Radermacher, RAD 98: Gedrukte en geschreven ladinglijsten van de retourschepen (...) 1737-1796.

The Vlissingen, historical background

Information pertaining to the construction of the *Vlissingen*, is scanty. A first reference to the ship can be found in the resolutions of meetings of *Heren XVII*, the directors of the Dutch East India Company. During the morning of Saturday 1 March 1732, it was decided that eleven new ships had to be constructed for that year, including the *Vlissingen* of 130 feet.

Five-and-a-half months later, it was recorded that the ship was under construction under the supervision of the regional VOC office of Zeeland. It measured 130 feet, with a displacement of 100 *last* or 200 tons. One week later, it seemed that the ship was nearing completion and the *Vlissingen* was earmarked to leave the Dutch Republic as part of an outward-bound fleet in the months to come.

During the course of the eighteenth century, the VOC generally built four classes of ships. The *Vlissingen* measured approximately 650 tons and, according to this classification, was therefore a ship of the third rate (500-800 tons). Its length, from stem to stern but excluding the bow sprit, was about 130 Amsterdam feet. From this information it can be deduced that its metric length was approximately 36.40 metres, with a width of approximately 9.10m and a holte of about 3.65m. This last measurement was the height between the keel and the underside of the main deck.

Previous journeys, 1734-1745.

The first outward-bound journey started from the roadstead of Rammekens under the command of Levinus de Heere on 21 January 1734. The ship arrived at Batavia (Djakarta) on 25 July 1734 and 123 seafarers, 51 military personnel and seven craftsmen were aboard. Already two-and-a-half months later, on 7 October 1734, the *Vlissingen* left Batavia under command of Jan de Roper. More than nine months later, on 17 July 1735, Rammekens was reached with a cargo to the value of F111, 574.

The second journey started on 3 January 1736, when the ship left under the command of Pieter Bruis with

116 seafarers, 63 military personnel and 15 craftsmen. Batavia was reached on 11 September 1736. The vessel left this place on 2 November 1737 and arrived in *patria* on 6 June 1738. The merchandise that was transported amounted to a value of F153, 214.

On 29 September 1738, Rammekens was left once again. This time, the *Vlissingen* was under the command of Anthonie Uiterschouw. The ship arrived at Batavia seven months later, on 2 May 1739. As during all of its voyages, the ship sailed for the Zeeland office of the VOC and carried cargo for the same. After arrival, the *Vlissingen* was dispatched to Bengal, as she left this place on 25 November 1739. The ship arrived on 10 July 1740, with 85 people on board. The estimated value of the cargo was F417, 182.

The fourth and last successful journey of the *Vlissingen* started on 22 May 1741, under command of Huibert Tiebout. This time, the journey to Batavia took more than a year. On 12 June 1742, the ship reached the headquarters of the VOC in the Dutch East Indies. Obviously, she was engaged in inter-Asiatic shipping soon thereafter, as the vessel departed from Bengal on 1 February 1745, still under the command of Tiebout. After a journey of nearly nine months, the roads were reached on 22 October 1745. On this last homeward-bound voyage, the *Vlissingen* carried cargo to the value of F642, 945.

The last journey of the Vlissingen, 1747.

During the course of 1746, an inventory was compiled of the ships that were available for the fleets that had to be dispatched in the months to come. This included the *Vlissingen*, as part of the so-called 141st. *equipage*. The various tasks necessary to prepare the ship were executed under the overall supervision of Director Schorer of the Zeeland office of the VOC. Parallel to the preparations that were necessary to equip the vessels of the outward-bound fleet, other tasks were also executed. These included the engagement of officers and crew. Already on 3 February of that year, the master of the *Vlissingen* was signed on by Director Matthias: "Voorts sijn aangesteld de volgende schippers als [...] Adriaan Cakelaar van Middelburg op [de] *Vlissingen*..."



The VOC shipyard in Middelburg

This engraving from 1778 depicts the shipyard at Middelburg, the seat of the Zeeland Chamber of the VOC. This was probably the place where the Vlissingen was constructed in 1732. From Middelburg the ship was towed to the roadstead at Rammekens, a few kilometers away, where its first voyage to the East started on 21st January 1734. Collection Bodel Nijenhuis, University Library, Leiden

Only shortly before the planned departure, the crew was engaged in order to reduce wages and to prevent desertion. During a meeting on Thursday 15 December, it was approved to select prospective seamen the week following. Nevertheless, there were some problems as far as personnel were concerned. In the case of the *Vlissingen*, no senior sail maker could be found to travel with the ship. Finally, a suitable candidate was selected, but this person had to return immediately to the Dutch Republic after arrival in Batavia. In another case, a person who travelled with the vessel, only to start working in Ceylon as an assayer, applied to the directors for permission to transport extra personal belongings. This was unanimously declined. A rather critical comment in the minutes of the meeting of 2 January 1747 reads that this person, Loijs Herze, acted: "... as if he was a junior-merchant".

In the meantime, the *Vlissingen* had already been towed from Middelburg to the roadstead. Permission for this was granted on Monday 31 October 1746. On the roadstead, the crew was taken aboard, together with additional equipment and money for the East. For security reasons, this was only done shortly before departure. In the minutes of the meetings it is recorded that on Thursday 29 December 1746, the treasurers were allowed to dispatch F50,000 with the *Vlissingen*. This money may have been used as part payment for the deficit that the Zeeland office had in contributing to the so-called *Eijsch der contanten*. This was an annual request from the Asiatic offices of the VOC that indicated the shortfall of currency during specific periods. The resolutions of the meetings of the *Heren XVII*, of 13 March, 28 August and 1 September 1747, indicate that especially Zeeland had a serious shortfall. It is therefore not illogical to assume that the *Vlissingen* may have carried a substantial amount of coinage, and this can explain the reason why large quantities of copper *duiten* have been found in the Meob Bay area over the years.

Exactly one week later, final preparations for departure were approved. The pilot Pieter Joossen had been selected to guide the *Vlissingen* through the English Channel, and some of the directors of the Zeeland chamber had been chosen to bid farewell to the officers and crew of the vessel. At 08.00hrs during the morn-

ing of 9 January 1747, the ship finally raised anchor and headed for the open sea.

Two days after departure, the *Vlissingen* had passed the English Channel and was sailing in the northern part of the Atlantic Ocean. On that day, Master Adriaan Kakeelaar wrote to the directors of the Zeeland office to report that after the ship had left the roads, he had found that two able seamen, or *bosschieters*, were missing. He had therefore entered three new crew members on the muster roll as replacements. It was also reported that pilot Pieter Joossen had left the ship near the Scilly Isles. Kakeelaar concluded his letter with: "... all is well...".

Some time after this message, fate struck although it is not clear what exactly happened to the *Vlissingen* and its crew. An anonymous and undated reference in one of the shipping lists states that the ship, while outward-bound, "sprang" in the English Channel. This indicates that material damage was done to the vessel, possibly due to its age or as a result of collision with a sand bank. The poor state of ship and crew was confirmed in a letter from the officers on board, who wrote to the Zeeland chamber on 13 March. At the time, not much progress had been made and the *Vlissingen* was still in the North Atlantic.

As a result of this, the Zeeland office dispatched a vessel to render assistance, but no further reference to this mission could be traced. On 4 May, a letter from the VOC correspondent in England, Gerard Bolwerk, was received. From this, it becomes clear that the ship took over an English pilot, probably because the vessel was having severe problems. The next day, the directors answered to Bolwerk that he was allowed to pay out the pilot, Mr Bowden, the salary that he had requested. It may be assumed that some time before, the *Vlissingen* had entered an English port. This is confirmed by correspondence from the governor at the Cape of Good Hope to the governor-general and council in Batavia, dated 6 October 1747. In this missive, reference is made to the bad condition of the ship: "... after having endured a lot ...".

What happened afterwards is not known, but it is clear that the *Vlissingen* sailed once more. It might be that repairs were undertaken while in port, but at



Archeological excavation at Meob Bay

Marine archeologist Bruno Werz with a member of the Namibian Underwater Federation busy on a beach survey near the place where the "Vlissingen" must have sunk. Photo by Frank Wittneben



Coins found, originating from the Vlissingen

These coins were found on the beach at Meob Bay, most of them at a depth of 2 - 20 cm. From 17th to 21st September 2001 a total of 243 copper coins were found. All these were so-called "duiten" struck in 1746 in Middelburg, the seat of the Zeeland chamber, that owned the "Vlissingen" Photo by Tommy Kellner

some stage her master decided to continue the voyage. Nothing more was heard of the ship and people started becoming worried. Soon, rumours developed and a reference to this is given in correspondence between the governor at the Cape, Hendrik Swellengrebel, to the governor-general and council in Batavia. In this letter, Swellengrebel refers to the fact that he had received news from the arriving ship Baarsande that had left the Netherlands one-and-a-half month after the Vlissingen. He was told that a rumour was spreading in the Dutch Republic that the Vlissingen had exploded.

Other references only make mention of the fact that the Vlissingen was missing. Letters from the Cape of Good Hope to the Heren XVII and the Amsterdam office, as well as to the Zeeland Chamber, refer to this fact. Nearly two years later, the Vlissingen was not yet erased from memory. On 31 December 1748, the governor-general and council in Batavia wrote to the Heren XVII, stating that the ship had not arrived at its destination. Finally, the directors of the VOC gave up all hope that the Vlissingen and its crew would ever be seen again. Although no further references to the vessel were found, other documents provide information that indicate possible reasons for its loss.

On the same day that the ship departed the roadstead at Rammekens, the governor and council at the Cape wrote to the governor-general and council in Batavia. They stated that aboard the ships calling at Table Bay in 1746 were many sick, while a great number of deaths had occurred during the journeys. The same applied to many ships during 1747. An example is the Oud Berkenroode, arriving with 30 sick, while 70 of the crew had died on the way to the Cape. This ship had left two days before the Vlissingen, from the roadstead at Texel. Bearing in mind that the Vlissingen reported that many of its crew were already in a bad shape when still in the North Atlantic, it may be assumed that illness and death played a role in the demise of the vessel, besides the structural damage that the ship had obviously incurred.

Another contributing factor might have been bad weather at the time that the Vlissingen crossed the Atlantic. An indication of this is given in further correspondence from the Cape. In here, it is mentioned that

during the evening of 1 June 1747, a ship was observed near Robben Island. Two days later, the people in the Cape Castle received a letter, informing them that the vessel was the Westhoven. The people aboard had first sighted the African mainland on 3 May and from this observation it turned out that they were close to Cape Agulhas. Shortly thereafter, a storm picked up from the NNE and NNW, as a result of which they set out to sea under a westerly course. The Westhoven had to stay at sea for several weeks before the bad weather conditions abated, and only on 31 May it approached the shore again, this time near Table Bay.

The Vlissingen surfaces again

In January 1993, the author was approached by a Namibian archaeologist, Dr Dieter Noli, who showed him some copper coins. According to Dr Noli, these had been recovered from a stretch of beach near Meob Bay, Namibia, near the high water line. The origin of the coins was unknown and the author was requested to identify them. Preliminary research enabled identification of the coins as copper duiten, minted specifically for the Zeeland Chamber of the Dutch East India Company. The coins were struck in 1746, in the town of Middelburg, and all were identical.

This basic information allowed for some preliminary conclusions. First of all, it was logical to assume that the coins ended up on the beach as a result of a shipping disaster. This was substantiated by Dr Noli's information on the distribution of the coins. It was also possible to establish that the unknown ship had been on its outward-bound voyage, from the Dutch Republic to Table Bay and from there to the Dutch East Indies. Due to the nature of VOC trade, it was common practice that outward-bound vessels carried coins and bar metal that was used as currency to obtain Asiatic goods. Homeward-bound ships carried mainly oriental products, such as spices, textiles and porcelain, and certainly no large quantities of Dutch coins. Another vital clue was presented by the year in which the coins were struck and their quantity. This indicated that they had probably not been in circulation and were shipped out in bulk to supply Dutch trading posts in the East. On the basis of these leads, the author scrutinized rel-

Namibian Treasure Hunters



Mr Gunter von Schumann

Being a direct descendant from the Dutch buccaneer Jacob van Heemskerck, ships and the ocean are in Gunter von Schumann's blood. Throughout the ages his forefathers sailed the world's oceans or build ships making it no surprise that the Namibian with a diploma in marine archeology took a special liking to the mystery of the disappearance of the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC) merchant vessel Vlissingen.

Reading old diamond mining reports from the early twentieth century he found records of silver and copper coins found scattered along a part of the Namibian coast near Meob Bay. The old coins originated from Mexico when this was still a Spanish colony and were used by the VOC to trade in the East Indies. "I knew then that a Dutch ship must have sunk there, but at that stage in 1970 I didn't know it could be the Vlissingen," Von Schumann remembers.

In March and April of 1993 Von Schumann, in daily life a librarian at the Namibia Scientific Society, and a team of fellow archeologists travelled with 4x4 cars through the desert for two days to reach the research area at Meob Bay. "We divided ourselves into groups for a visual survey and walked along the beach covering 20 kilometers of coastline stretching 200 meters inland. Then we divided the area into ten search grids and searched some grids with metal detectors. Wherever we picked up coins or something else like a shoe buckle we recorded the find." In total the researcher and his team discovered more than a hundred different coins of the more than 100.000 that must have washed ashore when the Vlissingen shipwrecked in 1748.

It was the Dutch historian and marine archeologist Bruno Werz who pointed out the coins might be from the Vlissingen. The Dutch Embassy supported a trip by Werz and Von Schumann to The Netherlands to search the National Archives. There they found evidence linking the coins found on the Namibian shore to the Vlissingen.

Over the years four more survey trips were made to that desolate area and every discovery exhilarated Von Schumann. "We plan another trip in 2006. We would like to do more research, but then we need a sponsor to finance the trip and provide us with sophisticated electronic equipment." The latter is especially important to pinpoint the exact location of the Vlissingen by looking for its cannons. These heavy weapons sink straight to the bottom marking the exact spot.

For Von Schumann finding that spot is important since all evidence points towards the Vlissingen but the real undisputable evidence still hasn't been found yet. "It is a part of Namibian coastal marine history. Who were those people, when did they come here and why? Were there survivors?" It's these remaining questions that inspire the archeologists to return to Meob Bay extending the search area further South. Von Schumann wants to prove once and for all that the Vlissingen has its last resting place near the Namibian coastline and solve the mystery beyond doubt.

Interview and photo by Arjen de Boer

event records that contain information on the shipping movements of the VOC, whereby the focus was on the period 1746 to 1758. Although the records indicated several VOC shipping disasters during this period, by far most of these could be eliminated. Of the ships that foundered during this time, most belonged to other regional VOC offices and the approximate place of many such incidents had been noted. Of others, it was at least recorded that they were either on the homeward-bound voyage, or that they went missing after having called at Table Bay. On the basis of this information, it seemed most likely that the Meob Bay coins originate from the *Vlissingen* and for that reason preliminary archival research focused on this ship.

Besides the archival research, a fieldwork project was undertaken in the Meob Bay area in 2001. This exploration focused on the distribution pattern of VOC coins on the beach. The results of this survey allowed for the identification of an area off-shore that in all probability contains what is left of the wreck of the *Vlissingen*. The project was undertaken with the assistance of the

Namibian National Monuments Council, the Scientific Society, the Namibia Underwater Federation, national museums and others.

The project represents the first scientific exercise in Maritime Archaeology in Namibia and may result in further development of the field.

It can be concluded that many questions related to the shipwreck at Meob Bay are still left unanswered. Further research may well provide some of the answers to the many aspects that are not clear as yet. These relate to the reasons for foundering, the exact location where the incident took place, the items that were transported by the vessel, and what happened to those crew members who might have survived the wrecking. At the moment, it seems highly likely that the shipwreck is that of the *Vlissingen* and no information has been found to dispute this identification. This, together with the information extracted from the documentary sources to date, already signifies a major step forward that will surely enhance the relevance of future fieldwork.

Chapter 3

How did Afrikaans come to Namibia?

There has been a widespread perception that the Afrikaans language was imposed upon Namibia – or South West Africa, as the country was formerly known – by the South African regime after the South Africans took control in 1915. This is not correct as it became clear through recent research that the language took root in this part of the world much earlier, as a matter of fact already by the middle of the 18th century.



Ernst L.P. Stals

Professor Ernst Stals received his training as historian at the University of Stellenbosch and taught at that university and the Rand Afrikaans University in Johannesburg. Between 1978 and 1992 he was involved in teaching and research at the Windhoek Teachers' College and the University of Namibia. He has been doing research in Namibia over a period of more than four decades and lives in Windhoek. His publications cover various themes in Namibian history, amongst which the book *Só het Afrikaans na Namibië gekom* (Thus came Afrikaans to Namibia), with professor F.A. Ponelis as co-author, in 2001.



Distribution of Afrikaans in Namibia before 1884

Source: Stals ELP and F.A. Ponis, *Só het Afrikaans na Namibië gekom*, Windhoek, 2001. Map by Bart Hendrix.

The origin of a language.

Afrikaans is an offspring of 17th century Dutch, which was brought to the Cape of Good Hope after the Dutch East India Company (VOC) established a refreshment post in Table Bay in 1652. It gradually attained an own character through the influence of French Huguenots, who fled from religious persecution in their home country to Holland and found a new future as colonists of the VOC. More inputs came from the language of the Khoi (known as 'Hottentots' at the time), as well as the vernaculars spoken by slaves from Malaysia, which carried a strong Portuguese heritage from earlier colonial days. Last but not least an internal process of indigenization by the middle of the 18th century resulted in sufficient local flavour and vocabulary for outsiders to observe that a new dialect of Dutch was being spoken at the Cape. Apart from new words and expressions which differed from Dutch, colonists and their servants simplified the spoken word by dropping or contracting the ending of words. This occurred especially at the level of basic communication among employers and employees. Cape Dutch was born and bred in the first place at the lower levels of society, though it also filtered upwards into the ranks of the middle class. Formal High Dutch, however, remained the language of government, church and education.

The VOC ruled the Cape Colony for nearly a century and a half. Not being an agent for development in the first place, it nevertheless saw the transformation of the Cape settlement from a mere refreshment station for passing trading vessels to an agricultural colony and, from the beginning of the 18th century, also an expanding society of hunters and sheep and cattle farmers. This forced the government repeatedly to shift the colony's frontiers further and further into the interior. A frontier society, consisting of farmers and their servants, intermixing with individuals and small groups of San (Bushmen), Khoi (Namaqua) and gradually also elements of mixed origin (called Oorlams and Basters), occupied an open frontier zone. The language which they spoke, and in many ways helped to form, was a variation of Cape Dutch, now being characterised as *Afrikaans-Hollands*, which literally meant the Dutch spoken in Africa. Gradually, as this dialect increasingly took on its own character (including grammatical construction), it was referred to as merely *Afrikaans*.

Afrikaans expands into Namibia.

As a result of the vast distances which separated frontier societies eastwards and northwards from Cape Town the variation of Afrikaans spoken by people in the Sandveld and Little Namaqualand up to the Gariep, or Grootrivier (Great River), certainly contained words, expressions and pronunciations of its own. White farmers, but especially Khoi, Oorlams and Basters, steadily moved northwards, for reasons like restrictive laws, occupation of land for farming purposes, and a strong sense of freedom and independence. Early in the 18th century already the vicinity of the lower Gariep became occupied by people using Afrikaans, alongside the Khoi language as indigenous mother tongue, partly as mother tongue, but also as language of general communication. Thus, one of the earliest functions of this language was the bridging of ethnic and cultural barriers between the various peoples of the region.

The language moved with the people. At first individuals or small groups reached and crossed the splendid valley of the Gariep into the sparsely inhabited plains lying north of it. The territory of present day Namibia was at that time occupied by a variety of peoples, living separately from each other: Owambo in the north, Herero and Damara in the central parts and Nama mainly in the south. Each of these entities at different stages in the course of the 17th and 18th centuries came from elsewhere to occupy their new homes, bringing with them their own languages. It was onto this scene that Afrikaans gradually intruded as speakers of the language moved in.

Although Afrikaans speakers certainly came to Nama country at an earlier stage, the first record of their presence dates back to the year 1738, after which hunters, traders and curious travellers increasingly visited the country, while Namaqua families and others settled in the area. Robert Gordon, an officer of the VOC, named the Gariep the Orange River in 1777, after the royal House of Orange of the Netherlands. During the 1780's three Dutch-Afrikaner farmers settled temporarily as far north as Swartmodder, the present day Keetmanshoop. By 1796 a large group of Oorlams, who called themselves Afrikaners, settled just north of the Orange River in the south-eastern corner of today's Namibia. Part of



Nama settlement

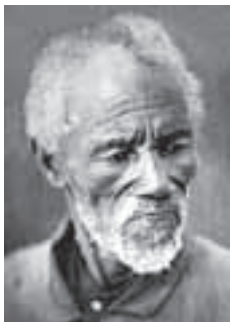
Picture of a Nama community along the Orange River in 1836. Dutch-Afrikaans took root in small communities like this since the 18th century. J.E. Alexander: *An expedition of discovery into the interior of Africa*, 1, p. 82, courtesy of National Archives of Namibia.

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Otjimbingwe

Otjimbingwe in 1865, where Herero, Nama, Damara, Basters and white people met. Dutch-Afrikaans was mainly the common language in which they communicated. Afrikaans was a medium of instruction at the Augustineum, which was established there in 1864. *Rheinische Missionstraktate*, 33 (2), courtesy of National Archives of Namibia.



Moses Witbooi (Gibeon)

Moses Witbooi, leader of the Witboois at Gibeon, where Afrikaans was the common every day language amongst the people. *Palgrave album*, National Archives, Namibia.

this Afrikaans speaking community later in 1835 would emigrate northwards to establish their home at Aigams and name it Windhoek, which from 1890 would serve as capital of the new German colony South West Africa and now independent Namibia.

Other Oorlam groups from the Cape Colony, which was conquered by the British in 1806, followed over time to settle at places like Bethany, Gibeon and Naosanabis (near Gobabis), thus spreading their language over practically the whole southern part of Namibia. Since the 1820's increasing numbers of Basters from the Colony also found a new home in Namaland, as far as Walvis Bay at the coast. Their main concentrations were at places like Rehoboth south of Windhoek and Rietfontein on the fringe of the Kalahari Desert in the east. As with most of the Oorlams, Afrikaans was the Basters' mother tongue.

Meanwhile certain developments created a need for a medium of general and wider communication in the hinterland of the only feasible harbour along the Namibian coast, Walvis Bay. The bay was known by this name as early as 1793. Due to the dominant position of the Afrikaner-Oorlams of Windhoek, as well as the presence of Afrikaans speaking elements along the Swakop River, which was the main route between the coast and the interior, Afrikaans became something of a necessity for travellers, traders and hunters visiting Herero and Damara country. Travellers like Sir Francis Galton, Charles John Andersson, James Chapman and William Coates Palgrave needed the services of interpreters conversant in Afrikaans to get around the country.

The use and status of Afrikaans in Namibia during the 19th century were enhanced by several factors. Missionary societies like the London, Wesleyan and Rhenish Missionary Society consecutively introduced the Christian faith in the southern (since 1805) and central (since 1842) parts of Namibia. While endeavouring to master and use indigenous languages like Nama and Herero in their teaching and spiritual labour, everyone of these societies found it prudent to employ Afrikaans, or Dutch, in their work and intercourse with people. This also happened at the training institution, the Augustineum, which was established in 1864 at Otjimbingwe, the hub of intercultural mixing on the bank of

the Swakop River. Nama captains like David Christiaan of Bethany and Oorlam leaders like Jonker Afrikaner (Windhoek) and Moses Wibooi (Gibeon) insisted that Afrikaans ("Hollands") should be taught to the children by the missionaries. Another factor was the fact that trade took place mainly through Afrikaans, thus making it the lifeblood of commerce. Jonker Afrikaner, leader of the Oorlams at Windhoek, played an important role to enhance trade, for example by building good roads to traverse the mountainous parts of the Auas and Khomas Highlands surrounding his capital. A third factor which strengthened the status of Afrikaans showed itself in the fact that not only higher functions like education and religion were conducted in it, but also formal negotiations and treaties. Important peace treaties between Nama, Oorlam, Baster and Herero parties were written in Dutch/Afrikaans and so were documents of land sales. In the south government by captains and their councils was conducted in Afrikaans. In a way Afrikaans informally took on the status and function of an official language in a period preceding colonisation. It also operated as mother tongue and language of common intercourse, education and religion over two thirds of present day Namibia.

While a number of traders, mostly of English origin, settled at various places throughout the country, Afrikaans speaking whites, also known as Afrikaner-Boers, gradually infiltrated from the south from 1885 onwards. They would become part of Namibia's population through hiring and buying land from Nama, Oorlams and Basters and settling permanently in the country as farmers.

The era of language policies.

It can truly be said that Namibia's linguistic pattern developed largely in a natural and unforced manner during the 18th and most of the 19th century. New forces, however, came with the colonial period, which was introduced when Germany took possession of the country lying between the Kunene River in the north, the Orange River in the south, the Kalahari Desert in the east and the Atlantic Ocean in the west. This was accomplished by means of a treaty system through which indigenous groups subjected themselves to the

Afrikaans is 'here to stay'



When at independence English became the official language of Namibia, the former official language Afrikaans was denounced by some as the mother tongue of the South African occupier. "Back then Afrikaans became a victim of politics," reflects Chris Jacobie, chief editor of the Windhoek-based Afrikaans daily newspaper *Die Republikein*. "Now Afrikaans is no longer the official language and being stripped of its privileges, the stigma has gone benefiting the language." In fact, claims the editor, the position of Afrikaans in Namibia is stronger than ever. To make his point he mentions the increased number of Afrikaans broadcasting stations and print media.

But the recent and future evolution of Afrikaans is more complicated. On the one hand the language is "flourishing" on grassroots level, explains the head of the Afrikaans Department at the University of Namibia (UNAM) Chrisna Beuke-Muir. On the other hand she sees Afrikaans has all but disappeared from the official levels like courts and politics. "In a certain sense Afrikaans is not stronger. Even the young generation of mother tongue Afrikaans speakers can write nor speak Afrikaans properly anymore. In school English has a more privileged position. I doubt if Afrikaans will remain the lingua franca, the language that the majority uses to communicate, for the younger generation."

Although her colleague Professor Aldo Behrens, former dean of the Humanities Department at UNAM, acknowledges that Afrikaans will be spoken less and less in the future, he highlights that the language is booming in the religious and artistic sectors. "There are more publications, books, articles, and theatre pieces in Afrikaans. Religious communities across Namibia continue to worship in Afrikaans."

With approximately 75 percent of the Namibian population speaking and understanding Afrikaans it is still the second language in the country. "They want to speak it," says newspaper editor Jacobie. The notion that Afrikaans still is regarded as the language of the oppressor is too far fetched according to him. "When someone speaks Afrikaans it doesn't mean that person is a white man or oppressor. Most often he or she will be black or brown." To make his point the editor picks up a copy of his newspaper and flips through the pages. He points out the photographs where people of all colours are featured, he points at the letters page where readers have written in Afrikaans as well as in English. And finally Jacobie shows the classifieds page with congratulations and death notices where a cross section of the Namibian society is displayed. Furthermore, he argues, Afrikaans is still an important business language. Namibia's main business partner is South Africa where Afrikaans still is one of the official languages. "At the moment most Namibians don't speak English. And to inform a society you must use a language people can understand otherwise the information is useless."



Even though English has been gaining ground since independence and will continue to do so, Afrikaans will never disappear. The language might eventually be spoken by less people and even evolve into another, more modern form of Afrikaans due to English influences. Says Beuke-Muir: "It's a pity that the language is not needed any longer in the higher functions. I'm sorry that people are no longer forced to think in Afrikaans. But as a school subject it will never disappear and the number of students learning Afrikaans at UNAM is still growing. There's still a market to train for." Afrikaans is "strong enough to stand on its own", concludes her colleague Behrens. "I am proud to be an Afrikaans speaker. We just have to be innovative in keeping the language alive."

Interview and photos by Arjen de Boer

German Emperor and accepted his protection in turn. Some of the communities, like the Oorlams under Witbooi and Koper and Herero in the Gobabis area, resisted German rule, but by 1894 the colonial administration was established over the whole of the country south of the Etosha Pan.

Although it was part of the new rulers' policy to give the country a specific German character by establishing German-like institutions and encouraging Germans to settle as colonists, it was acknowledged during the early years that Afrikaans could be used in official matters like correspondence, negotiations and even contracts and agreements. By the turn of the century, however, German officials were instructed to further the cause of German as only official language and to demand that the missionaries of the Rhenish Missionary Society replace Afrikaans with German in their schools. While introducing German as a subject, missionaries strongly advised that it would not only be pedagogically wrong to enforce a foreign language as means of instruction, but also unwise to discard a language which had long been established in all walks of life.

Language manipulation, therefore, proved to be a matter to be handled with care, not only during the German period (1884-1915), but also after the colony was taken over by the adjacent Union of South Africa as a

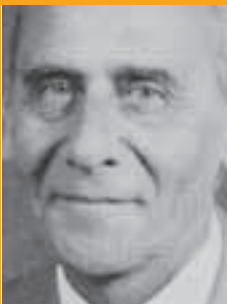
mandated territory under the League of Nations after World War I. As was the case in South Africa, both Dutch and English were proclaimed official languages in the territory of South West Africa. Initially, up till the 1920's, mainly English was used by the new authorities in their administration, after which Afrikaans, which replaced Dutch as official language after 1925, increasingly came into use. During the three decades roughly between 1948 and 1978, when under South African rule, Afrikaans in Namibia became associated with the *apartheid* policy of racial discrimination. This was not necessarily a true reflection of the sentiments of the people in the country speaking the language.

Afrikaans lost its status as official language when Namibia became independent in 1990. In 1991, out of a total literate population of 765 000 in the country nearly half were literate in Afrikaans. The population census of 2001 showed that the language, always spoken by many more non-white than white people in the country, remained vibrant and token of an early heritage of Dutch forebears as well as an indigenous cultural and genealogical admixture. The vibrancy is also illustrated by the fact that the Afrikaans daily newspaper *Die Republikein* is the largest selling newspaper after the English language *The Namibian* and the *Namibia Broadcasting Corporation* continues an Afrikaans service.

Chapter 4

Dutch Catholic Missionaries in Namibia

About 30 Dutch Catholic missionaries lived and worked in what is currently Namibia. Fathers of the Oblates of St Francis de Sales to the south of Windhoek and Fathers of the Oblates of Mary the Immaculate in the north, were parish priests and pastoral workers started primary schools and were involved in various development projects. Most of them were invited by the Roman Catholic Mission after the Second World War to fill a shortage of German and Austrian missionaries. In the early 1960's they were followed by a group of Brothers of the Congregation of the Movement of Mercy (CMM). In Dutch they were called 'Broeders van Tilburg'. This congregation concentrates on education and was responsible for the establishment of a number of secondary schools in Namibia. The work of the Catholic missionaries and brothers was also appreciated by the Netherlands government: 12 of them received a royal decoration.



Fr. Hermenegildus Beris

Adrianus Beris joined the Congregation of the Movement of Mercy in 1946 and took his vows in 1951, when he took the name Brother Hermenegildus. He has various academic qualifications in teaching and history and received his PhD in 1996 with a dissertation on the history of the Catholic Church in Namibia. He came to Namibia in 1962 and was director of St Paul's College in Windhoek from 1966 to 1989. Later he worked for the National Catholic Development Commission until his retirement. He lives in Windhoek.



Some of the places where Dutch missionaries worked between 1948 and 2006. Map by Bart Hendrix.

The first Dutch missionary who worked in Namibia was Father Hubert van 't Westeinde. He had joined the Oblates of St Francis de Sales. He worked in the Apostolic Vicariate of Pella/Keimoes in the Northern Cape province of South Africa. In 1896 he was transferred to the farm Heirachabis near Ariamsvlei in the south of Namibia. Bishop Simon of Pella had bought this farm to get a foothold in Great Namaqualand (the south of Namibia). After that appointment it would take more than fifty years before he was succeeded by other Dutch priests. The reason was that the missionary jurisdiction of this territory had been handed over to the Austrian Province of the Oblates of St Francis de Sales in the south and to the German Province of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in the north.

In the aftermath of World War II the Catholic Mission in Namibia was in a difficult plight. No new missionaries could reach the country since 1938 and sickness and death had demanded its toll. It was also clear that the German Province of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and the Austrian Province of the Oblates of St Francis de Sales were not in a position to send new personnel. They had lost many of their members in the war. The war was also responsible for a lack of new vocations and most of the available priests were needed in Germany itself.

The Oblates of Mary the Immaculate in the north

The German Province of Oblates looked to their neighbours in the Netherlands. Though that country had been occupied and had been involved in the war, studies for the priesthood had continued on and new priests had been ordained. Until the end of the war they could not leave the country, but as soon as the war was over these young missionaries were eager to be sent overseas to mission territories. As the Dutch were part of the Allied Forces it was easier for them to obtain visas than for citizens of former enemy countries. Around 1948 transport became available for ordinary travelers. The first Dutch Oblates entered Namibia during the years 1949 and 1950 to strengthen the ranks of the remaining German missionaries.

In Andara at the border between Kavango and Caprivi, Father Jan Theunissen started assisting the well-known Father Abba Fröhlich. Father Bernard van Roosmalen was assigned to the station of Sambyu where Father Hartmann was the leader. Father van Roosmalen, also known as the “Muruti” or “Mudama”, was manager of that station between 1976 and 1998. He earned respect among his people for the support and protection he gave them, often illegally, during the South African occupation. When in 1998 the Salesian Fathers of Don Bosco took over he retired to Nyangana. He died in September 2005.

Father Matthieu Baetsen was sent to Nyangana, the first station in Kavango. Father Baetsen introduced the africanisation of church music. This was not so easy. The older missionaries and the older members of the community disapproved strongly. Fortunately Father Schlag, the Rector, supported him. After the former died quite suddenly, Father Baetsen was entrusted with the leadership of Nyangana in 1957. Around the same time Father Harry Baeten was also assigned to Kavango. He served at a variety of places and eventually ended up at Bunya where he became the rector.

In Owamboland the station of Ombalantu was entrusted to two Dutch fathers, Martin Blondé and Father Jan Mensink. The young Jan Mensink delivered lectures during which he introduced a proper system of working with catechists and a school to train them. Martin Blondé left the church after he married a local lady. They moved to Tilburg in the Netherlands.

Father Heimerickx started at Okatana, but when the rector of Oshikuku died he was appointed as rector. Oshikuku, was the main station in the centre of Owambo. Father Heimerickx was another staunch defender of the rights of the indigenous Namibians against their occupiers. When it was found that he had smuggled photos of murdered parishioners abroad, he was placed on the list of wanted people by the South African secret police and army. The Vicar-General recalled him and sent him immediately overseas, just before he was going to be arrested. From Europe Father Heimerickx went to Lusaka and worked in the SWAPO camps in Angola and Zambia. He was the only white spiritual leader who collaborated in the camps with his black Namibian coun-



Catholic Church in Oshikuku

*Oshikuku was the main Catholic mission station in Northern regions before Independence. It was the place where Father Gerard Heimerickx was rector when he had to flee the country because of his anti South African activities. Photo reproduced from *Zwischen Namib und Kalahari, 25 Jahre katholische Mission in Südwestafrika*, Windhoek 1976*



Catholic Church in Tsumeb

*Tsumeb, one of the mining centres of Namibia, was for many years the place where Father Lamm of the Oblates of Mary the Immaculate was parish priest. Photo reproduced from *Zwischen Namib und Kalahari, 25 Jahre katholische Mission in Südwestafrika*, Windhoek, 1976*

terparts in providing spiritual guidance for the Catholics. He was highly appreciated and after independence he returned to Namibia with great honour.

Further to the south we found the popular Father Lamm as parish priest of Tsumeb, where he served for a very long time. His work was different from that in the mission stations in the north. It looked more like the work in a modern city parish. Tsumeb has a pretty little church in the centre, built in 1913, and a big church with a school in the suburbs.

Father Schramm was the assistant of the famous Father Morgenschweiz in Walvis Bay. While Father Morgenschweiz was parish priest of the central parish, the Fathers Schramm and Eisenreef took care of Narraville and Kuiseb Mund. Right in the centre of the country in Windhoek was Father Ellenbroek (Piep) who was the priest-in-charge in Khomasdal for the “coloured” population. Here he built a big church, which today is a real landmark in the suburb of Khomasdal.

The Oblates of St Francis the Sales in the south

The development of the Vicariate of Keetmanshoop followed a different pattern, but in the end it led to the same result. When after the war the Austrian Province was unable to provide staff, the Vicar-Apostolic became quite impatient. The shortage of priests in the south was much more critical than in the north. It was Bishop Heinrich Thünemann of Keimoes (Northern Cape), who made the suggestion to the General Chapter of the Oblates of St Francis to accept a policy of making all the Provinces of the Congregation responsible for the mission territories. The result was that the Italian, Swiss, north American and Dutch Provinces started to send members to Keetmanshoop. Because the common and liturgical language in the south was Afrikaans, it was much easier to transfer priests and brothers than in the north where so many languages were used, that every transfer meant learning another language. The administration in Keetmanshoop could therefore be much more flexible than in the north and could transfer personnel many more times. We will find the Dutch Fathers regularly transferred from one station to the oth-

er. The Dutch missionaries worked all over the Vicariate, but especially in the rural areas. We will mention those stations where these Fathers spent a considerable period of time or where they placed a personal mark on such a station.

Father Groos will be remembered as the priest of Aroab in the middle of the Kalahari. On the other side of the country on the Atlantic coast at Lüderitz Father Groenendijk and Father Bokern looked after the two churches in the town as well as the out stations of Oranjemund and Aus. Father Jansen spent most of his time at Keetmanshoop, where he was the parish priest of Krönlein, the township of Keetmanshoop. He built a wonderful spacious church as well as a new hospital. He also established a Catholic Secondary School, St Thomas Aquinas. Later this school would be taken over by the Government under the name of Suiderlig. Father Jansen was the contact person between the Church and Government for the Catholic schools and he served a period as Regional Superior of the Oblates of St Francis.

Father Rütten was the priest-in-charge of Stampriet, also situated in the Kalahari. He founded the Marianum, intended to be a Minor Seminary and High School. Unfortunately, it never came well off the ground as it was virtually impossible to get teachers in that out of the way place. Father Martin van den Avoirt was also Provincial for a term and, after serving at various stations, he settled at Karasburg as parish priest. From Karasburg he went out to Warmbad, Noordoever and Aussenkehr and many more stations. Br Fidelis Gielen was the manager of Tses with a primary and secondary school and hostels for quite a while. Father Bergkamp was, for a long time, the manager of Heirachabis and therefore also farmer of that place. Heirachabis is situated in the far South near Ariamsvlei. The station had a primary school. Nowadays Father Bergkamp works in the parish of Mariental.

The brothers of the Congregation of the Movement of Mercy (CMM)

In 1958 the two first brothers CMM travelled to South West Africa on the “Grote Beer”. In Walvis Bay they were



Brothers CMM in Namibia 1992

Back row from left: Emeric Goossens, Wouterus van den Hout, Egidius de Laat, Toon Minton, Piet Dilissen, Silverius Brekelmans. Middel: Paul Schalken, Patricio Smolders, Frans Janssen, Hermenegildus Beris, Justinianus Moeskops. Seated: Gregoor van de Ven, Frans vande Meulengraaf, Sebastianus van Seters, Giovanni Simons. From Mission between Deserts, History of the Fratres CMM in Namibia, Windhoek, 1994.



Herero Chief Visit to Döbra

Visit to St. Joseph's Catholic Mission, Döbra, by the paramount Chief of the Herero, Hosea Kutako, in 1959. Chief Hosea Kutako is shown in the centre of the photograph. To his right are Father Henning and Brother Gregor van de Ven. Photos reproduced from Mission between Deserts: History of the Fratres CMM in Namibia, Windhoek, 1994.

welcomed by Father Morgenschweisz, the parish priest. From there Br Gregoor van de Ven and Br Arnulf van de Nieuwenhuizen were taken to the station of Döbra, at 25 km distance from Windhoek. Here they would take over St Joseph's Teacher Training College of the Roman Catholic Church at Döbra near Windhoek. It had started in 1924 and for all these years members of the Order of OMI and the Sisters of the Holy Cross were responsible. But the Bishop saw that he would not have sufficient staff for this highly important school. Therefore he had tried several Congregations. Every time the reaction had been negative. Then Father van Roosmalen pointed to the Brothers CMM. The Bishop asked him to travel overseas and visit the General Board of the Brothers where his cousin was a member of that Board. All together 15 Dutch and Belgian brothers taught at the school and worked for the hostel. The Teacher Training Centre and High School of St Joseph's developed into an important centre for the training of professionals for the future state of Namibia. Many current leaders received at least part of their education at Döbra.

When the Catholic parents in Windhoek heard that brothers had started teaching at Döbra they approached Bishop Rudolph Koppmann and insisted that the Catholic boys in Windhoek should also have a school of their own. Since 1906 the Catholic girls had their school in the Convent. It was time that also the boys would receive their centre of education. After deliberations that took more than three years, the General Board of CMM agreed and in January 1962 the brothers Ernestus Smulders and Sebastianus van Seters started a brand-new school in Klein Windhoek, St Paul's College. The school would cater for primary and secondary school pupils. In the course of the years twelve brothers taught at the school and two took care of the hostel for boys. Br Hermenegildus Beris was principal of the school from 1966 until 1989. St Paul's College is in the mean time almost 44 years old and has grown into the top school of Namibia.

Döbra had catered throughout these years for students from all over the country but the Odendaal Plan, which also introduced apartheid in education, did not allow students from the north coming to study in "white" areas. The Government had built a Teacher's Training Centre in Ongwediva. But the Catholic Church decided

to open a Training College for Teachers and a High School of their own. It was not easy to register the school, because the fledging Government of Owamboland, wanted to protect its own College and did not want competition. It took quite some deliberations to obtain permission and then it was accompanied with all kinds of conditions. As Br Gregoor had finished his term of office at Döbra, he was asked to prepare this new school and become its first principal. The school provisionally started in Okatana in 1971. The following year when the buildings were ready it moved to Ombalantu, under the name of Canisianum. Br Gregoor van de Ven, Hildebertus van Gompel and Faustus Dilissen worked at the school, assisted by some Sisters and lay teachers. Unfortunately, the school had to be closed in 1977 because of the liberation war. Teachers and some students were withdrawn to Döbra.

For a long time the school buildings stood empty, but after 1990 the Government opened a junior secondary school in the existing buildings. The Cheshire Home for Handicapped Children made use of the hostel. But the people of Owambo called on the Church to establish for them a school similar to the one in Kavango. The Archbishop finally listened to their call and after lengthy negotiations the State returned the school to the Church in 2003. From the beginning of 2004 the Canisianum is again a private Catholic school. From 2006 onwards the school will be extended to grade 11 and 12. In the agreement stood that the school would concentrate on Mathematics, Physics and Biology, which is being realized. In addition to the existing staff three Sisters are teaching at the school and one Father of the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales. Unfortunately, at this moment no brothers are available, but the Congregation CMM promised to support the school financially every year.

In 1985 the Congregation decided to open a house in Katutura. The special work of the brothers would be social and pastoral. The first three brothers who started this work were Br Justinianus Moeskops, Br Arnulf van de Nieuwenhuizen and Br Wouterus van den Hout. Br Justinianus would work in the church office and in addition remain contact official between Administration and Church for the schools and hostels. He was also responsible for the various bursary schemes at schools and universities. Br Wouterus would take care of the

Knights of the Order of Orange-Nassau

The work and devotion of the Dutch missionaries and religious brothers were also noticed by the Dutch authorities. From 1994 to 1996, eleven were made Knights of the Order of Orange-Nassau. Another recipient was Toos van Helvoort, who was a well-known and courageous health worker before and after independence.

The first was Father Emeric, in 1994 Father Heimerix and Father van Roosmalen were honoured and in 1995 the following priests and religious brothers: Martinus van de Avoird, Nic Bergkamp, Hermenegildus Beris, Johannes Bokern, Bernardus Giling, Quirinus Groenendijk, Egidius de Laat and Johannes Mensink. In 1996 it was the turn of Brother Sebastianus van Seters.

Six of the eight missionaries who were honoured in 1995 received their decoration during the Queen's Day celebration in Windhoek on 28th April. This was a special celebration because 1995 was the year that the Miss Universe pageant was held in Windhoek. The Chargé d'Affaires, Cornélie van Waegeningh, was assisted by the four most beautiful young ladies in the Kingdom of the Netherlands coming from Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao and The Netherlands. Namibia's Miss Universe 1992, Michelle McLean was also present. Perhaps it was these special guests who attracted an unusually large number of Namibian Cabinet Ministers to the reception.



Celebration of Queen's Day 1995

The beauty queens from the four parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and three of the eight recipients of royal decorations listen to the speech of Chargé d'Affaires, Cornélie van Waegeningh. The new Knights of the Order of Orange-Nassau in the photograph are from left Father Nic Bergkamp, Brother Egidius de Laat and Father Johannes Bokern. Photo courtesy of Cornélie van Waegeningh

youth movement such as Jongwag, the St Vincent de Paul Organisation for disadvantaged people and other church clubs. Br Arnulf was responsible for the house and the church choir. When later Br Claudius joined he remained teacher at Döbra. The house was also intended as formation house for young people who wanted to join the Congregation.

At the end of 1989 Br Hermenegildus left St Paul's and started his sabbatical years in the USA. After his return at the end of 1991 he was asked to build up a Department for Education for the Church as part of NACADEC (Namibian Catholic Development Commission). In the course of 1992 he visited all the Catholic schools and hostels to build up the infrastructure. During one of those meetings at Sambyu in Kavango, 110 Catholic teachers had assembled. One of their requests was for the Church to become again involved in education. Education was very much neglected in that region, the existing High Schools did not produce the requested results and discipline was deplorable in the hostels. In response to that request meetings were held between 1992 and 1994. A steering committee had been set up and that committee met with the Regional Office of Education, representatives of the General Board of the Brothers CMM and finally with the Ministry of Education. In December 1993 the Ministry approved the new school in Kavango at Sambyu mission station. At that

stage it would have to operate without subsidy. Fortunately, another meeting in June brought about that the Ministry agreed to pay the teachers' salaries. St Boniface College was opened on 17 January 1995.

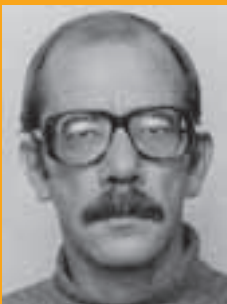
The school started with two grade 8 classes while the hostel was scattered over various old buildings. The building programme commenced in that year and was carried on during 1996, 1997 and 1998. The official opening took place in March 1998 by Archbishop Bonifatius Haushiku, who blessed the school and Director Kantema of the Regional Office, who in the name of the Minister officially inaugurated St. Boniface College. Br Piet Dilissen was appointed as principal and Br Sebastinaus van Seters as administrator. Br Justinianus Moeskops and Br Wouterus van den Hout taught various subjects. Two Sisters and two volunteers completed the staff.

Ten years of existence of St Boniface College was celebrated in 2005. Two Ministers were among the many guests and friends; the Minister of Home Affairs and the Minister of Education, both from Kavango. Like the other Catholic schools St Boniface has progressed well and in 2004 the school came second in the national grade 10 examinations and number three in the HIGCSE results. The people of Kavango are proud of their school and it is already too small to accommodate all the applications.

Chapter 5

Windhoek's small Dutch "Colony" of the 1950's

The Dutch building contractor L. A. Steens, was instrumental in building the modern city of Windhoek. His contracted Dutch masons, carpenters, other artisans and their families were accommodated in the Steenskamp. Cor Leijenaar describes his experiences – and provides poignant reminiscences of the lifestyles of the residents of Windhoek's Steenskamp in the 1950s as seen through the eyes of a child.



Cor Leijenaar

Cor Leijenaar was born in The Hague in 1941. His family immigrated to South West Africa in 1949, where his father worked in the construction industry. Mr Leijenaar started his career as a journalist, mainly sportswriter, with *Die Suidwes-Afrikaner*, *Die Suidwester* and *Beeld*. He moved to Pretoria in 1978 and continued his journalistic career in South Africa. In 1984 he became public relations consultant. He retired in 2003 but remains active as mentor and consultant for young journalists.



Wood workshop and joinery at the Steenskamp

L.Steens was a Dutch contractor who established himself in Windhoek towards the end of the 1940's. He engaged a good number of artisans from the Netherlands, who moved to Windhoek with their families. Photo courtesy of Cor Leijenaar.

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Residents of the Steenskamp in traditional Dutch costumes

The people in this photo are Dutch employees of L.A. Steens, although a few may be Afrikaners from South Africa, who lived with them in the same compound. The photo is taken in the 1950's. It is interesting to see that the traditional costumes of several Dutch towns and regions are represented in this picture. Photo courtesy of Cor Leijenaar.

According to any city map of Windhoek there is open terrain a stone's throw southwest from where the Gammams River in Windhoek flows under the railroad bridge en route to Gobabis. Today there are no traces of the vibrant community that thrived there fifty years ago – a group of people that would play a decisive role in the establishment of Windhoek as a modern city.

The *Steenskamp* has not existed for many years and there are virtually no indications that it ever did. But since the late 1940s many of Windhoek's well-known landmarks are linked to this fenced-in "camp" with its prefabricated houses and massive joinery and wood stores.

The *Steenskamp* is named after building contractor L. A. Steens who contracted most of his skilled craftsmen from the Netherlands. The Second World War had dampened employment prospects in Europe and many artisans eagerly faced the unknown in the hope of a new life. The *Steenskamp* did indeed serve as springboard for a new and prosperous life for many of the Dutch families who, after a few years of having moved to the camp with their meager belongings, were able to afford better accommodation. Many started their own successful enterprises in the building industry, some settled elsewhere in Namibia, whilst others returned to the Netherlands after a number of years.

In addition to the large joinery that manufactured all wood products required for numerous buildings in the city, the *Steenskamp* also featured four large prefabricated asbestos apartment buildings that stood head to head. Each building housed four families in four spacious rooms each. The ablution facilities were, however, outside and separate to the apartments. A fifth apartment building was added later.

Fifty years ago, one would have said that the *Steenskamp* was virtually on the southern point of Windhoek. Besides a few buildings, residences and Eros airport, there was little else further south. Looking at a map of Windhoek today, the *Steenskamp* was probably closer to the center of the city than the suburbs that lie further to the south. Getting there today is also vastly different than in those early days, when it also depended on whether you were one of the few who could afford a car.

Most travelled by foot; the shortest route from town was to walk along the bumpy, narrow tarred road bordered by gravel on either side today known as Mandume Ndemufayo Road, to just before the three railway tracks that lead to Gobabis (in those days there was no bridge over the tracks). There we would turn right (west) and walk next to the railway tracks for a good kilometer on a well-worn and dusty footpath to just before the Gammams River where we'd cross the tracks and walk through the dry river bed to the camp. The footpath was later widened as times improved and more people could afford the occasional taxi ride home. Windhoek's only taxi driver, Sampie Nel, could however only take his fares to the point where his path was blocked by the railway tracks.

The route was a good kilometer longer for those who could travel to the camp by car; about a kilometer further after the railway tracks in Republic Road before turning right and arching on a gravel road through the bush for another kilometer.

Where pedestrians reached the camp from the east, motorists visiting the factory did so from the south. This road was later extended so that it curled around the western part of the camp and provided residents access to the north between the second- and last apartment buildings. Thus, to the north was the railway track, to the east the Gammams River, to the south bush and to the west, more bush.

A current map of Windhoek will, directly west of where the train track crosses the Gammams River where the *Steenskamp* used to be, indicate nothing. The closest roads indicated are Diesel Street, virtually south, and Joules Street, slightly southwest, of where the *Steenskamp* used to be.

Although most undoubtedly saw it as a challenge, life in the camp itself was probably a trial for the adults. For us children it was certainly the best time of our youth. Where adults certainly would have missed pre-war luxuries, the children were untouched by what they did not know.

The Dutch held celebrations at the camp that attested to their roots, like the annual *Sinterklaasfeest* in early



Celebration of Sinterklaas at the Steenskamp

Between 30 and 40 children of primary school age lived at the Steenskamp in the 1950's. Most were Dutch, while the others were South African. Afrikaans was their common language, although the Dutch traditions, such as Sinterklaas on 5th December, were celebrated by all. Photo courtesy of Cor Leijenaar.

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New immigrants are welcomed at Windhoek railway station

New arrivals at the Steenskamp were welcomed by everybody. Normally husbands travelled ahead of their families from the Netherlands to start work and to prepare the arrival of their families. The normal journey was by ship from Rotterdam to Walvis Bay or Cape Town and then onwards by train to Windhoek. Photo courtesy of Cor Leijenaar.

December, which was celebrated by on a grander scale than Christmas a few weeks later. Other events were similarly tackled with enthusiasm and even a birthday was cause for celebration. There were between 30 and 40 children at a time with 80% very close in age to each other. There were many playmates and play areas – the sand, the river (which virtually never had water), the wood stores (if we weren't caught out), the bush, the train bridge and much more.

Although most Dutch children initially attended the English/German medium convent, we quickly assimilated Afrikaans due to the Afrikaans families in the camp. In turn, many Afrikaans children assimilated Dutch culture, something that a chance encounter will attest to even years later.

I was seven years old in May 1949 when I strode ashore from the *Athlone Castle* in Cape Town with my mother, brother and sister, and boarded a train for the three-day journey to Windhoek where we were heartily welcomed by the Dutch upon arrival. The welcoming reception continued at the *Steenskamp*. My father had arrived six months earlier in order to prepare for our arrival.

We lived at the *Steenskamp* for about five years before moving to better accommodations – four single rooms of the old airport hotel less than 200m from Eros Airport's northern point of the runway.

Our days at the *Steenskamp* and the people we met

there, however, are indelibly etched in my memory. My parents remained in contact with most of them; the same of which cannot be said of the children. Most of the adults have passed away and their children are certainly spread throughout the country. But I recall most of who lived there – the Afrikaans families Esterhuizen, van Schalkwyk, Hall, Grobbelaar, Schrader and Schonken and the Dutch families Tuit, R Van der Salm, Segboer, C Leijenaar, J van der Salm, Ebenau, van der Klei, van Langerak, Kerkstra, Nederlof, Mollier, K de Groot, A Leijenaar, Heerschap, van Asperen, P de Groot, Van Es.

I tried in vain to track the old accommodations several times in later years. Perhaps I shouldn't have tried by car as I invariably encountered fences and other obstructions. Perhaps I should rather have attempted to walk the old footpath next to the railway tracks that I and numerous other Dutch had walked hundreds of times. But times have changed in fifty years. Why walk when you can drive?

The *Steenskamp* may be nonexistent on a city map of Windhoek, but the buildings for which the residents in the service of L.A. Steens - and later as own enterprises or for other companies - were responsible, grace the city and are their testament. Two of the most well-known buildings in Windhoek for which L.A. Steens' people were responsible are the main post office and the church of the Nederduits Gereformeerde community.

Chapter 6

The Netherlands and the struggle for the liberation of Namibia

The struggle for the independence of Namibia was not only fought by the Namibian population; in many countries there were people who stood by the Namibians. It was through pressure by the churches, the anti-apartheid and anti-colonial movement which gained ground in the 1960s and the formation of a coalition government led by the social democrat prime minister, Joop den Uyl, in 1973 that made the Netherlands a supporter of the independence movement in Namibia. The Dutch Committee on Southern Africa, KZA, was one of the kingpins of this movement. This chapter describes the development of support from political activism, fund-raising and lobbying to fully-fledged diplomatic relations between two independent countries. Several actors who played a role in this story recount their recollections of this period.



Sietse Bosgra

Sietse Bosgra was born 1935 in the Netherlands. He studied physics in Amsterdam and graduated in nuclear physics. As a student he became active in the anti-colonial movement. In April 1961 he was one of the founders of the Dutch “Angola Committee” in Amsterdam. This committee became the support organization in the Netherlands for the liberation movements of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau/Cape Verde: MPLA, Frelimo and PAIGC. After the liberation of the Portuguese colonies the name of the Angola Comite changed in Komitee Zuidelijk Afrika (Holland Committee on Southern Africa). He continues to be involved in Southern Africa carrying out assignments for the Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa (NiZA).

Peter Katjavivi



After having been kept waiting for a while in deep armchairs we suddenly see him at the top of the staircase. Tall, distinguished, elegant and greying. Peter Katjavivi, Namibia's Ambassador to the European Commission, Belgium and the Netherlands, with whom we shared our cheese sandwiches more than thirty years ago. Arms wide and beaming, ready to embrace some friends from the time of the liberation struggle.

At the start of the conversation the ambassador declares: *'Of course African students in Europe in the sixties played their role in making the European people aware about colonialism and apartheid. When I came for the first time to Holland, I also met Portuguese young men who did not want to fight in Africa, the conscientious objectors, and they were important as well. But I am convinced that the support to our struggle had its origins in a strong urge never again to repeat the racism and the terrible errors of World War II.'*

'In 1968 I was sent to London by the SWAPO president, after a massive process against SWAPO leaders in 1967, that had caused many to be sent to Robben Island. I had to establish an office in London that was to cover the whole of western Europe. Quite a challenge, you can imagine, as I was a student as well.

In 1969 I went to Holland for the first time and found the youth groups of the reformed churches very interested in our cause. We were also introduced to the AABN (Anti Apartheids Movement Netherlands) and the Angola Committee, who would become the vital links for us. In Holland I found the Angola Committee an important point of reference for people who wanted to commit themselves to our cause, even though at the time it was working for the peoples in the Portuguese colonies.

My main role was to link up with the labour movements: the TUC in Britain and the Industrial Labour Union NVV in the Netherlands. This was because at a SWAPO Congress in Tanzania in 1969 the decision had been taken that the labour movement in our country would have to be organized. We did not want sabotage, we wanted our industries and infrastructure to be intact in a free Namibia. So I worked with the Industrial Union, they were the main support. ...Ja..Arie Groeneveld...This is the biggest joy for me... it was 30 years ago and we always remained friends with them. The whole period I never slept in a hotel. I was always invited at home, sometimes I slept on the floor. You know, the old NUNW, the Namibian Labour Union, was born out of this experience. We got financial support, educational materials, leaflets, everything. The whole concept of having an umbrella union - like your NVV - came from that.

In those years the World Council of Churches was discussing the role of violence in the liberation struggle. The Special Programme to Combat Racism was borne from that discussion, with its director Sjollema. The churches became another important actor in the work of consciousness raising. South Africa had expelled important and outspoken church people from Namibia, including a young student, David de Beer. While I was working with the labour movement, his presence became essential in the churches.

The Dutch government seemed to be ambivalent. I recall one visit in 1973, organised by the Catholic Church, where our president Sam Nujoma met the minister for Development Co-operation, Berend Jan Udink, somewhere outside Utrecht. There was uneasiness. On the one hand he agreed with our point of view, with our struggle for justice and freedom. On the other hand he wanted to protect certain economic interests. The United Nations was taking a strong stance at that time. From that moment on the political situation intensified and the solidarity movements pushed hard. Later, Minister Jan Pronk wanted extended humanitarian aid for the Namibian refugees, channelled

The Netherlands and the United Nations

After the Second World War the United Nations (UN) constituted the first international battlefield in the struggle for the independence of Namibia. Ever since the first session of the UN General Assembly in 1946, Namibia was a recurrent point on the agenda. Year after year South Africa was condemned because it refused to accept the UN mandate over Namibia. In 1967 the UN General Assembly formally decided to end the South African mandate over Namibia and to transfer the mandate to the UN Council for Namibia.

After the Second World War, the Netherlands was itself still a colonial power with possessions in South America and fighting a colonial war in Indonesia. In those years the Netherlands was, like the other Western countries, a friend of the regime in South Africa. Moreover the Netherlands had a special relationship with South Africa, because an important part of the white population – the Afrikaners – were regarded to be of Dutch origin and many more Dutch families had emigrated to South Africa after the war and in the early 1950's.

So in the United Nations the Netherlands voted again and again against resolutions to end the South African occupation of Namibia. For example in 1954 there were 40 countries voting in support of the resolution, 11 abstentions and only 3 against. One of these three was the Netherlands.

But in the 1960's the Netherlands slowly changed its policy as there was growing indignation about the apartheid policy of South Africa. The Dutch government also feared to become internationally isolated as a friend of apartheid-South Africa. In 1966 the Dutch representative at the UN supported a resolution to deprive South Africa of the mandate over Namibia. And ten years later the Netherlands recognized the authority of the UN Council for Namibia to decide about the export of Namibia's natural resources. Amongst the member countries of what was then the European Community this was exceptional: only Denmark and Ireland took a similar position.

But the Netherlands has never given its support to UN resolutions on Namibia when paragraphs were included

in which SWAPO was recognized as the only authentic representative of the Namibian people and in which the armed liberation struggle was endorsed. Originally the Dutch government had not much sympathy for SWAPO because of its contacts with the communist world and its use of violence. This changed suddenly in 1973, when the Den Uyl-government led by the Social Democrats came into power. A few years later the Dutch government would start its financial assistance to SWAPO. There was now a broad acceptance of this policy in Dutch public opinion.

The Dutch Southern Africa solidarity organisations and Namibia

At the end of the 1960's and in the 1970's a sort of political-cultural revolution took place in the Netherlands and in other West-European countries. The hard and sober times of the reconstruction of the country after the destruction of the Second World War were over. There was optimism of building a better world with peace and justice. Those were also the years of the large demonstrations against the American war in Vietnam and some years later against stationing of nuclear missiles on Dutch soil. And the interest in the third world countries and the sympathy for their liberation movements increased. In this climate, solidarity organisations with the peoples of southern Africa were founded. They aimed to support the liberation struggle, convince public opinion of their views and change government policy.

In 1961 the "Angola Comité" was founded to support the liberation struggle in the Portuguese colonies. Particularly the liberation movement FRELIMO of Mozambique became very popular. In 1969 it became the first liberation movement to receive funds from the Dutch government. After the liberation of the Portuguese colonies the "Angola Comité" supported SWAPO and the other liberation movements in southern Africa under its new name "Komitee Zuidelijk Afrika" (KZA).

Two other anti-apartheid organisations were founded that would support SWAPO, the "Anti-Apartheids Beweging Nederland" (AABN) in 1971 and Kairos (Christians against Apartheid) in 1970. These three organisa-

through Novib. Yes, Herman van der Made...they did a fantastic job, also inside the country for legal defence of the political opponents of the South Africans.

After all, the Dutch government was not much different from other governments. When it came to solidarity support and humanitarian assistance we cannot complain. Every year in the SWAPO Annual Meeting Communiqué the appreciation for the assistance from The Netherlands is expressed. Great credit is given to the invisible people, who did so much to create this atmosphere of a common purpose to fight apartheid in which the credibility of the South African regime was weakened. The South Africans were opening up through the economy, through business, but they had no moral stand. In the end we prevailed because justice was on our side.

Eventually I went back to university in 1979. I did my masters in Birmingham and I went to Oxford to do my PhD. In 1989, I went back home, after 27 years, with my head held up, in dignity. That was what we had struggled for. You know, when I was still a student in Namibia, one night we were walking home from the place where we were working. It was after nine o'clock and we were arrested because we were not allowed to be in a white area after nine. We pleaded that we were just students, doing no harm to anybody and they asked us questions to make us prove that we were students. "When did Jan van Riebeeck land at the Cape?" they asked. "In 1652", we yelled and we could go.

I became Member of Parliament and I participated in drafting the constitution. Then I was assigned to set up the University of Namibia, which again has strong links with your country: with the ISS, the University of Utrecht, the Free University of Amsterdam and the University of Maastricht. Our university has now 9000 students.

For me there is something special about being here as the Namibian ambassador for the Benelux countries. Now that we have achieved what we have worked for, we have an obligation to keep the ties strong. What we got was achieved through hard work. Young people must know something about this support and solidarity and we should also be in the forefront of the struggle elsewhere. We share so much. I can even understand your language. What can we do to build on that? We, people from my generation, will always react with a certain warmth when we hear you come from the Netherlands. Young people don't understand that. Therefore this book is good for the record.'

Interview by Carla Schuddeboom

tions have considerably contributed to a shift in Dutch public opinion away from the old feelings of loyalty with the South African white population. Peter Katjavivi, the London representative of SWAPO, became a regular visitor to the Netherlands. As a guest of the anti-apartheid organisations he gave numerous interviews and lectures.

It was a Dutch trade union that started the first large public campaign for Namibia. SWAPO originated in the 1960's from the struggle of the contract workers in Namibia, and it was still closely connected with its affiliated trade union NUNW. In September 1972 the SWAPO Secretary of Labour, Solomon Mifima, visited the Netherlands and was brought into contact with the trade unions. The result of this visit was that the large Dutch Industrial Union NVV started a publicity and fundraising campaign for the political and organisational work of SWAPO amongst the black workers of Namibia in 1974. At its 1975 congress the union handed € 100.000 symbolically to Mifima. Also a four-week training course in the Netherlands was organized for three SWAPO trade union activists.

During the first years after its foundation in 1971 the "Anti-Apartheids Beweging Nederland" (AABN) was the support organisation for SWAPO in the Netherlands. It had introduced SWAPO with the trade union NVV, and was involved in the trade union training course. It organized several trips of SWAPO delegations to the Netherlands and collected funds from the public for SWAPO. But most of the AABN support went to ANC and SACTU and to the liberation movements of Zimbabwe.

When in 1975 Angola became independent, SWAPO moved there and used the long border between the two countries for attacks on the South African occupation army in Namibia. The "Komitee Zuidelijk Afrika" (KZA) started to send part of its material assistance for Angola to the SWAPO office in the Angolan capital Luanda. In 1974-75 the three Dutch anti-apartheid organisations started a common information campaign for SWAPO in which they published a first book on the liberation struggle in Namibia, "Namibië, Zuidwest Afrika bevrijd". From 1976 Kairos became the basis for a full-time Namibia worker, David de Beer.

Soon the support for the liberation struggle in Namibia would shift from the AABN to KZA and Kairos. After a meeting with a SWAPO delegation in May 1978 the AABN concluded: "The members of the delegation showed hardly any interest in the political solidarity we have organized in the Netherlands. They are more interested in material assistance, and there KZA means of course much more for them than we." The annual report of AABN over 1979 said: "The activities of the AABN concerning Namibia are for the greatest part limited to information about the developments in that country in our magazine."

"Namibia free, support SWAPO", 1976 to 1978

The first large public campaign in support of the liberation struggle in Namibia was started in 1976. In October 1976 it would be ten years since the mandate on Namibia was taken away from South Africa and transferred to the UN Council for Namibia. To commemorate that important event the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches asked their member churches to participate in an International Week of Solidarity with the People of Namibia, to be held in October 1976. The youth organisations of the two largest Protestant Churches and of the Catholic Church in the Netherlands contacted KZA and Kairos to discuss possible common activities.

The three church youth organisations, the organisation of Third World Shops, KZA and Kairos agreed to start a common campaign "Namibia Free, Support SWAPO", that would continue from the autumn of 1976 until spring 1978. Two other organisations would later join the campaign, the large development organisation Novib and the youth organisation of a Protestant political party, ARJOS. The AABN declined to work with the church organisations and with Novib.

KZA, which was the largest of the three Dutch solidarity organisations with the liberation struggle in southern Africa, became the central address of the Namibia campaign. From 1974 to the spring of 1976, all its activities had focused on supporting Angola in its war against the South African invasion that was aimed at install-



Dutch government starts talking to SWAPO

In September 1976 an official SWAPO delegation was received by Dutch cabinet ministers. This was one of several high level contacts with members of the Den Uyl government and the beginning of Dutch government support to the liberation of Namibia. From left to right: Dutch foreign minister Max van der Stoel, Peter Katjavivi, Dutch minister for Development Co-operation Jan Pronk, Peter Muesihange and Mishake Muyongo. Photo: KZA Collection at the National Archives of Namibia

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Den Uyl and Nujoma meet

Dutch prime minister Joop den Uyl (left) meets SWAPO president Sam Nujoma in the summer of 1977. To their right is Paul Staal, a leading activist of the Dutch anti-colonial and anti-apartheid movement of the time. In the background are posters and cartoons that were used to inform the Dutch public about the situation in southern Africa and appeal for their support. Photo courtesy of NiZA

ing a puppet government. KZA sent large quantities of goods to Angola in those years to support MPLA. But SWAPO in Angola needed the same goods, so from the start some of it was donated to SWAPO.

After the eviction of the South African army from Angola in 1976, KZA decided to focus on support for SWAPO. There was a special reason why KZA was eager to campaign for the liberation of Namibia: as long as Namibia was not free from South African occupation it would constitute a basis for new South African aggression against Angola. With this argument KZA hoped at the same time to convince the many people in the Netherlands that had in the past backed the freedom struggle in Angola and Mozambique to continue their support for the liberation of the other countries in southern Africa that were still under white rule.

The campaigning organisations adopted a clear political line concerning Namibia. Their first demand to the Dutch political parties and the Dutch government read: "The Dutch government must recognize SWAPO as the only authentic representative of Namibia and must give direct assistance to SWAPO without any conditions attached". The funds collected during their own campaign were for unconditional support to SWAPO too. The Dutch state intelligence agency BVD sounded the alarm about these activities, and classified them as "indirect terrorism support". "KZA refuses consistently to verify how the liberation movements spend the money they receive", the service complained. "Even the 'Dutch Interchurch Aid' and the youth organisations of the Protestant churches cooperate with KZA to raise unconditional support for these communist liberation movements."

That the Dutch church organisations had a different opinion of SWAPO was the result of the public support of the Namibian Council of Churches for the liberation struggle and for SWAPO. In the Dutch political situation the support of the church-related organisations for SWAPO was important. The Christian-Democratic Party was often a decisive factor in the formation of a Dutch government as it was always in the centre of political power. The aim of KZA and Kairos was to win this party –like the Social Democrat Party- over to a more critical attitude towards apartheid, to support sanctions

against South Africa and to continue the Dutch government assistance to SWAPO.

As part of the campaign "Liturgical suggestions for a Namibia Sunday" were sent to the local churches, complete with poetry, texts and prayers for both SWAPO and the Namibian churches. Moreover a special Namibia Newspaper with a circulation of 100,000 copies was distributed in the churches. More than 200 local groups and organisations were involved in collecting the funds. The total proceeds of the fundraising for SWAPO were € 130,000. David de Beer concluded; "The involvement of the religious youth councils gave the campaign a new political dimension, and the political input of the KZA contributed to a sharper campaign towards the church circles."

Contacts with external SWAPO

The campaign led to in further contacts between SWAPO and the Dutch government. In September 1976 Muyongo, Katjavivi and Mueshihange had discussions with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Development Co-operation, Van der Stoep and Pronk. In June 1977 a delegation under the leadership of SWAPO President Sam Nujoma was received by the same two ministers and by Prime Minister Den Uyl. They also met members of the Dutch parliament. One of the most important points of discussion at these meetings was assistance of the Dutch government to SWAPO. The Embassy of Nigeria promised to organise a diplomatic reception in honour of the SWAPO president, but that did not materialize.

The SWAPO delegations also had discussions with the Dutch church organisations and the development NGO's, mainly about humanitarian aid to the refugees under the responsibility of SWAPO. Few people in the Netherlands realized that SWAPO in Zambia and Angola was in fact responsible for the lives of large numbers of Namibians who had fled their country. During the first years there were about 10,000 refugees in SWAPO camps, but at the end of the liberation war the number had increased to 80,000. Much money was needed for education, health care, nutrition, agricultural projects etc. In retrospect it is amazing how much time and



Visit by the internal SWAPO

SWAPO was one of the few liberation organisations in southern Africa that was allowed to operate in the country for a while, although often obstructed by the South African government. A delegation of internal SWAPO, consisting of its chairman Daniel Tjongarero and education secretary Hendrik Witbooi joined SWAPO president Sam Nujoma on a visit to the Netherlands to discuss support in February 1978. In this photo they are addressing a press conference. Photo KZA collection in the National Archives of Namibia.

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Sam Nujoma in Utrecht

SWAPO president Sam Nujoma addressing a public meeting at Hoog Brabant hotel in the centre of Utrecht on 8th May 1977. Third from left is Kapuka Nanyala and on the right Paul Staal, one of the Dutch anti-apartheid activists, who would later spearhead Namibia's lobby for European support in Brussels. Photo courtesy of NiZA.

energy the leadership of SWAPO had to spend on the refugees, while these were also urgently needed for the political, diplomatic and military battle against South Africa.

In their discussions with KZA, the SWAPO delegations focused on their other needs. The headquarters of SWAPO outside Namibia were originally in the Zambian capital Lusaka, but after the independence of Angola in 1975 it had moved to the Angolan capital Luanda. SWAPO urgently needed support to organise its services and institutions in Angola. Moreover it had offices in Tanzania, Egypt, Algeria, Senegal, Sweden, England, Finland and the United States. It was impossible to get support from humanitarian relief organisations for the expenses of the organisational, political and diplomatic work and for the communication and travel expenses. For these expenses SWAPO and the other liberation movements in southern Africa hoped for support from the solidarity organisations.

The needs of the movements were enormous. So fundraising from the public for unconditional support to SWAPO was the leading activity during the campaign “Namibia free, support SWAPO”. Because Kairos had promised to the Dutch church organisations that it would not start raising funds for the liberation movements, this was a task for KZA.

Support for SWAPO inside Namibia

Of all the liberation movements of southern Africa, SWAPO was the only one that also existed inside the country as a legal political organisation with a board and regional branches. In February 1978 the chairman of the internal SWAPO, Daniel Tjongarero and its secretary for education Rev. Hendrik Witbooi were guests of the Namibia campaign in the Netherlands.

Tjongarero and Witbooi informed the Dutch organisations that a small SWAPO office had been opened in Windhoek, and that the aim was to open also offices in other parts of the country. They needed office equipment, cars, money for publications, salaries and the running costs of the organisation. Moreover SWAPO had some schools in Namibia, plans for medical assis-

tance to the population and for an agricultural project. But the work of SWAPO inside Namibia was constantly intimidated and hindered by police raids and imprisonment. In 1978 the SWAPO office was closed by the South African government and many SWAPO leaders were arrested. Funds were needed for the defense of these political prisoners. About 40 SWAPO leaders served long-term sentences on Robben Island, and finances were needed to make it possible for their families to visit them.

After the visit of the two SWAPO leaders, KZA not only supported SWAPO outside Namibia, but also SWAPO inside the country.

Fundraising by KZA for SWAPO

The “Namibia free, support SWAPO” campaign and the discussions with the SWAPO delegations started 15 years of material support of KZA to SWAPO. In 1977 a special department of KZA was set up for this task, the “Foundation Liberation Fund” with a separate financial administration.

As a result of its large-scale campaigns for Angola and Mozambique in the past, the KZA had a register of some 40,000 donors. Through annual mailings they were asked to contribute for “unconditional support” to the liberation movements. It was explained that the movements had a lot of costs which nobody was willing to pay, costs for the offices, but also costs for underground activities in their countries.

Donors who did not react were removed from the register after some years. In this way recurrent fund raising campaigns under the public were not only necessary to obtain their contributions but also to keep the list of donors up to date. The aim was to get them involved in local activities, make them subscribers to the magazine or make them regular contributors.

In addition to its regular donors and the yearly public fundraising campaigns, KZA had still a third source of money. Whenever a request for humanitarian aid was received from the liberation movements KZA tried to find a NGO, usually Dutch, that was willing to pay for



Four sources of funding

The material support of KZA for the liberation movements in southern Africa came about equally from four sources: the Dutch public, NGO's, the Dutch government and the European Community. After the independence of Zimbabwe in 1980 the contributions for ZANU and ZAPU stopped. KZA continued its support for Zimbabwe by having 50 to 80 Dutch professionals in education and health care under a contract with the Zimbabwe government for a number of years.

During the years 1988 and 1989 there were signs of a changing climate in southern Africa as the Pretoria government spoke about a possible release of Mandela and accepted free elections in Namibia. These developments had influence on the assistance KZA could give to ANC, to external SWAPO and to the organisations inside South Africa and Namibia. For instance the assistance to SWAPO dropped from € 926,000 in 1988 to € 141,00 in 1989 as a consequence of the ending of the funding by the Dutch government. At the same time assistance to activities inside Namibia increased from € 186,000 in 1988 to € 2,347,000 in 1989.

the project or goods. There were many dozens of sources that could be tapped, organisations for children, for education, for medical aid, church or development organisations, the special campaigns to fight hunger in Africa etc. Trade unions were willing to support the Namibian trade union NUNW, the Evert Vermeer Foundation donated € 2,500 for the first of May celebrations, the Dutch broadcasting organisations VPRO and NOS supported the SWAPO radio station “Voice of Namibia”, the city of Dordrecht donated € 30,000 for the “working brigades” of SWAPO etc.

Support for SWAPO by the Dutch government

Another consequence of the political-cultural revolution in the Netherlands of the 1960's was that in the Dutch Social Democrat Party a “New Left” movement was founded. The young generation in the party revolted against the old guard whose main focus was the cold war with the Soviet Union. This “New Left” movement led in 1973 to the most progressive government the Netherlands has ever known. It was headed by Prime Minister Joop den Uyl. The new Minister for Development Co-operation Jan Pronk represented the New Left; the Minister of Foreign Affairs Van der Stoel was a typical representative of the old generation.

The KZA/Angola Comité had already in 1969 succeeded in convincing the Dutch parliament and government to give financial support to the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies. In its declaration of policy the new Den Uyl government announced: “Liberation movements in the colonial territories in southern Africa will be supported. This assistance –preferably through multilateral and regional organisations- will be aimed at humanitarian development projects in the field of education and health care in the liberated areas.” The government was at that time only thinking of the liberation movements in Angola and Mozambique, which already controlled large liberated areas. While Dutch government aid to the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies had until then only been a few hundred thousand euro a year, Pronk reserved not less than € 6 million in the 1974 budget. In the 1975 budget the amount rose to € 9 million.

Two months after the declaration of policy of the new government, SWAPO knocked on the door. Sam Nujoma was received at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1975 the annual donations of € 700,000 to SWAPO started, to be sent in the form of goods from the Netherlands. Officially the government booked the money as “support to Namibian refugees through SWAPO”. But when the plans were announced, the South African government protested and accused the Dutch government of “supporting terrorists”

In addition, government funds went to international organisations like the UNHCR, the Red Cross, and the World Council of Churches. From 1973 on, also the UN Fund for Namibia and the UN Namibia Institute in Lusaka were supported. A considerable part of these funds would also go to SWAPO.

After the progressive cabinet Den Uyl (1973-1977) more conservative governments would rule the Netherlands. The policy towards Namibia and SWAPO became more reserved. While SWAPO president Nujoma was received by Prime-Minister Den Uyl and the ministers Pronk and Van der Stoel in the summer of 1977, a year later he met only the new Ministers of Foreign Affairs and his colleague for Development Co-operation but not the Prime Minister. And in 1980 only the Minister for Development Aid had time for Nujoma. The annual assistance to SWAPO decreased from € 700,000 to € 450,000 in 1978, to € 225,000 in 1979 and 1980, and stabilized on € 350,000 during the years 1981-1989. Apart from this, SWAPO continued to benefit from large Dutch contributions to the UN Trust Fund, the UN Educational and Training Fund for Southern Africa, the UN Nationhood Programme for Namibia and the Namibia Extension Unit. The solidarity organisations pleaded in vain to increase the annual assistance to SWAPO.

The Dutch Christian Democrat government also offered assistance to SWAPO-Democrats and the Namibian National Front for the repatriation of refugees. The Dutch solidarity movements and SWAPO protested and pointed out that these movements were supported by South Africa. But the repatriation did not take place in 1980 and only a few thousand euros were spent. The Dutch government had to conclude that there was no alternative for SWAPO, as it was the only organisation

1977/11/19

South West Africa People's Organisation
Solidarity — Freedom — Justice
 Rua Coronel Arthur de Paiva No.6
 P.O. Box 955
 Luanda
 People's Republic of Angola

Ref. N° _____

17th December, 1976

Angola Committee
 De Costestraat, 68
 Postbus 1615/6
 ROTTERDAM
 Holland

Dear Comrades,

Please see if you can find for us the following items:

- (a) 700 military belts
- (b) 2000 military magazine sacks
- (c) 700 military kit bags
- (d) 700 provision bags (military folder sack)
- (e) 4000 military boots (with high lense, but not sackin boots)
- (f) 7000 rain coats (cheaper ones)

These items are urgently needed, and if possible, send them by air mail.

Yours for the common cause,
Hamatou Kalouza
 Hamatou Kalouza



On the way to the camps in Angola

A container of goods destined for SWAPO in Angola is trucked to the port of Rotterdam to be shipped to the port of Luanda. The sender and the destination are unmistakable to the Dutch public who saw this transport. This container contained 25 tons of goods and left on 19th September 1977 from Rotterdam. Photo KZA collection at National Archives of Namibia.



Can Land Rovers also be used for military purposes?

The clear choice of the Namibia Council of Churches in support of SWAPO convinced most Dutch churches that SWAPO should decide on how they wanted to use the Dutch support funds. They lobbied the government to accept this policy. In true Dutch polder style it was agreed that government aid could not be used for military purposes and equipment but after a while the Angola Committee (later KZA) was given the responsibility to buy and ship the supplies that were requested "because they were more flexible to react quickly to requests than the government bureaucracy".

This meant at the least that KZA supplies freed money for other purposes and the empathy of the anti-apartheid movement with the freedom fighters was certainly greater than that of civil servants. Photo KZA collection at National Archives of Namibia

that was actively fighting for an independent Namibia and possessed an enormous prestige both in the country and internationally.

Dutch government assistance through KZA

The assistance to the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies in the early 1970's had created practical problems for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The government bureaucracy was not equipped to buy small quantities of different goods and then ship them to various places in Africa. The liberation movements were also unhappy with this system. For that reason the government accepted a proposal from SWAPO, and later also from ANC, ZAPU and ZANU, that the Dutch government money should be given to KZA, who would buy and ship the requested goods. This arrangement, accepted by Minister Pronk, was continued in the later years under more conservative Dutch governments.

This created an ideal situation. The bills for humanitarian goods were settled with the government grant, so that the money received from the public could be spent for the more difficult and controversial requests from the liberation movements. Initially trucks were excluded from the government money as they could be used for military transports, but in 1981 this restriction was lifted. KZA could normally send the requested goods within a few weeks, also if the list involved small quantities of the many different products. One of the first requests was to print birth certificates for the newly born Namibians and to produce a documentation files system for the SWAPO president. During the first years, the goods that were sent to Angola were transported free of charge by the Angolan shipping line Angonave, that regularly docked at the port of Rotterdam.

The Dutch government also supported projects inside Namibia through Dutch so-called co-financing organisations in these years. The Protestant organisation ICCO supported projects of the Council of Churches of Namibia, such as the Legal Aid Fund, with annually about € 100,000. ICCO also contributed € 1,400,000 from the government for CCN projects such as a drinking-water project, vegetable gardens and the Namibian Communication Centre. The Catholic co-financing institution

CEBEMO supported the Compassion Fund Windhoek for Legal Assistance, founded in 1981 by the vicariate Windhoek. The secular organisation Novib contributed considerable amounts, both for SWAPO, NUNW and emergency aid for the Namibian refugees.

The Dutch churches and Namibia

The first time that the word Namibia was mentioned in the minutes of the Dutch Council of Churches was in 1976. In those days most attention went to South Africa. Namibia was not seen as a separate case. The World Council of Churches had appealed to all churches to support the International Week of Solidarity with Namibia in October 1976 and to intensify the campaigns against military and economic cooperation with South Africa. The three church youth councils, who organized with KZA and Kairos the campaign "Free Namibia, support SWAPO" in 1976, appealed to the Council of Churches to come with a firm statement on Namibia. But the result was disappointing. No word about the Western military and economic cooperation with South Africa. SWAPO was not even mentioned. After this statement a long period of silence about Namibia followed again. In 1982 a delegation of the Council of Churches of Namibia (CCN) visited the Dutch Council of Churches. When the following year the Dutch Council was asked to send an official church-delegation to Namibia, the Council decided to delegate a mixed Protestant and Catholic delegation. But when the South African government refused to give the required visa to the two Protestant members of the delegation only the Catholic member visited Namibia. The CCN sent a new invitation to the Dutch Council and once more it applied for visa. Then the South African Embassy came with a long list of conditions that were unacceptable for the Dutch Council of Churches. In order to make a discussion on Namibia possible the Dutch Council invited the CCN to send a delegation to the Netherlands. The delegation met with its Dutch hosts in Amersfoort in 1986. The recommendations from this meeting mentioned SWAPO as the leading force in the liberation struggle, the enrichment of Namibian uranium in the Netherlands was condemned, but again nothing was said about sanctions against South Africa.

Namibia Posters

Posters were a popular medium for communication in the 1960's and 1970's. On these pages a selection of the posters related to the liberation of Namibia are reproduced. The posters were distributed in thousands and displayed in universities, schools, churches and many other places. Especially in university towns, activists went out and pasted them on all sorts of surfaces. Each of the six posters below and on the facing page displays (in Dutch) one of the Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a picture showing the violation of this right and a citation from letters or books from southern Africa related to the Article. From the KZA collection in the National Archives of Namibia.



namibië

Artikel 6 Niemand zal onmenselijke of vernederende behandeling of bestraffing.



De overheden van Namibië, de provincies en de gemeenten zijn verantwoordelijk voor het voorkomen van de schending van artikel 6. Het is de verantwoordelijkheid van de overheden om te voorkomen dat de overheden of hun functionarissen de schending van artikel 6 veroorzaken of toestaan.



NATIONALE MENSELIJKE RECHTEN COMMISSIE
NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

PO BOX 11111 WINDHUK NAMIBIA
TEL: +264 61 200 1111 FAX: +264 61 200 1112
WWW.NHRC.NA

namibië

Artikel 8 Niemand zal onderworpen worden aan willekeurige arrestatie, detentie of verbanning.



De overheden van Namibië, de provincies en de gemeenten zijn verantwoordelijk voor het voorkomen van de schending van artikel 8. Het is de verantwoordelijkheid van de overheden om te voorkomen dat de overheden of hun functionarissen de schending van artikel 8 veroorzaken of toestaan.



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namibië

Artikel 13 Een ieder heeft het recht zich vrijelijk te verplaatsen en te verblijven binnen de grenzen van elke Staat.



De overheden van Namibië, de provincies en de gemeenten zijn verantwoordelijk voor het voorkomen van de schending van artikel 13. Het is de verantwoordelijkheid van de overheden om te voorkomen dat de overheden of hun functionarissen de schending van artikel 13 veroorzaken of toestaan.



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namibië

Artikel 22 Een ieder heeft het recht van de gemeenschap (19-19-20) rechtsonverschillen te bevoordelen.



De overheden van Namibië, de provincies en de gemeenten zijn verantwoordelijk voor het voorkomen van de schending van artikel 22. Het is de verantwoordelijkheid van de overheden om te voorkomen dat de overheden of hun functionarissen de schending van artikel 22 veroorzaken of toestaan.



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David de Beer, the Namibia man.



David de Beer has been the face of Namibia and of the independence struggle of SWAPO in the Dutch Protestant Churches for many years. To prepare this interview he had stacked his table with a full meter of files, archive boxes and pamphlets in which he still finds his way without hesitation. On a number of files the word URENCO is written in large letters. “*More than enough for an interesting thesis*”, he smiles. “*A very interesting case.*” How did he become so involved in these matters?

“As a young South African I wanted to work in one of the then “black areas” after my Management Science studies. I ended up in the north of Namibia, near the Angolan border, where I worked in 1969 as an administrator in a hospital of the Anglican Church. After a week I was expelled by the South African administration. I worked the next three years in Windhoek as

an assistant to the Anglican Bishop Colin Winter, who organised support to contract labourers from the north, who worked in Windhoek and elsewhere.

After the decision of the International Court of Justice in 1971 that the South African occupation of Namibia was illegal the Namibian churches started to support the struggle for independence. When the secretary-general of the UN Kurt Waldheim visited Namibia in early 1972, the South African authorities wanted to prevent him to meet people like Colin Winter. We were both expelled from Namibia. Colin Winter left for London and I started to work in South Africa at the Christian Institute of Beyers Naudé. But within a month I had a “banning order”, a kind of house arrest.

In 1974 I left for London to join Colin Winter who supported the Namibian liberation struggle from there. It was bishop Winter who had organized the visit of SWAPO president Sam Nujoma to the Netherlands in September 1973, two months after the new Den Uyl administration was installed. In January 1974 he once more travelled to the Netherlands to repeat his plea for Dutch government aid to SWAPO in a meeting with Minister Pronk. I also made several trips from London to the Netherlands until I was asked by Cor Groenendijk of Kairos to stay there to work for Namibia. After the two large Protestant churches and the NCO, at the suggestion of Jone Bos, were willing to pay me a salary I settled in the Netherlands in 1976.

I would continue that work for 16 years, until 1992. I was in a way the Kairos worker for Namibia. I was always welcome in the Dutch Protestant churches because SWAPO had good connections with the Namibian churches. In fact the support by the protestant churches in Namibia has been very important for the so-called “Internal SWAPO” movement. I estimate that I have addressed about 2000 public meetings on the liberation struggle in southern Africa. When I arrived in 1976 I was immediately involved in the campaign “Freedom for Namibia, support SWAPO”.

In 1977 the Dutch anti-nuclear movement started campaigning against the uranium enrichment plant URENCO in Almelo. URENCO was a joint British-German-Dutch project. When I raised the question if the uranium could come from Namibia, Ruurd Huisman, a researcher, offered to find out.

In 1977 Minister of Economic Affairs Lubbers stated in parliament that “imports of Namibian uranium for use in the Netherlands would be undesirable” and he denied that URENCO used uranium from Namibia. But Ruurd Huisman had found that Namibian uranium was exported to France where it was mixed with uranium from other sources and supplied to URENCO. A spokesman of URENCO admitted that this was probably correct. A majority in Dutch parliament reacted by asking the government to terminate all Dutch involvement in the processing of Namibian uranium.

This was the start of a prolonged lobby campaign to stop this trade. Relus ter Beek, Jacques Wallage and Ineke Lambers-Hacquebard regularly asked parliamentary questions. The Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs defended a strange position. He recognized

Of the different member churches of the Dutch Council the Dutch Reformed Church (Hervormde kerk) was the most outspoken. In 1982 it asked the Dutch government “to promote the taking of sanctions-measures internationally if South Africa is not co-operating before 31 March 1983” In 1983 the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Gereformeerde kerk) asked the government to take initiatives in order to come to a realization of UN resolution 435. Both large Protestant churches supported the Namibian Council of Churches with about € 70,000 a year. The Lutherans and Remonstrants both mentioned in 1984 the need for pressure on South Africa to implement UN resolution 435.

The Catholic Church and the liberation struggle

When the first black Roman Catholic bishop of Namibia, Haushiku, visited the Netherlands in 1988 as a guest of the Pax Christi organisation, he had a message for the Dutch Catholic Church: “The first duty of the Church in the Netherlands is to show that our struggle is also your struggle, that there is solidarity between the Dutch and the Namibian churches. And that solidarity must lead to action. You will have to work for the independence of Namibia. We are of the opinion that sanctions can force South Africa to peaceful changes and to give independence to Namibia.”

While the Catholic organisations Pax Christi and Justitia et Pax were active for Namibia, the Dutch bishops had shown little interest to put pressure on Pretoria until that moment. When the South African bishops asked for economic sanctions against the white regime in 1986, the Dutch bishops only declared their sympathy with the appeal. Only in 1988 they asked the Dutch government to boycott the import of coal from South Africa, a stop on flights and on loans. In their letter the bishops admitted that until that moment they had been “restrained”.

The Roman Catholic Church was the only Dutch church that was involved in missionary work in Namibia. “The Catholic black population in Namibia is not very radical. I blame this on the moderate attitude of the missionaries. The black members of the Lutheran and Anglican Church are much more active. They are nearly

all members or sympathizers of SWAPO.” Friar Kees Vugs was acquainted with the role of the Catholic mission in Namibia from experience inside Namibia. As a missionary of the Fraters van Tilburg (Brothers CMM) he worked from 1968 to 1975 in Namibia as the director of a school. He had to leave the country in order to be able to marry his Damara bride.

His view is supported in the report of the mission of the British Council of Churches to Namibia : “We saw the Roman Catholic Church as an example of a church that disseminates old conceptions. It is the only church that still works with a large number of white missionaries. They receive reactionary documentation from Germany and South Africa, and they see the communist element in SWAPO as a total contradiction with Christianity. But there are others who try to express the black opinions.”

Kees Vugs was one of the more enlightened missionaries. “We must warn the churches, and especially the Catholic Church that it must end its white image. There are only four black priests in Namibia. They must make unambiguous choices or the black population will reject them. The Catholic Church should give more support to SWAPO, especially abroad. Let them follow the example of the Anglican and Lutheran bishops and priests.”

The Dutch missionary Gerard Heimerikx was also one of the few Catholic missionaries that came to the conclusion during his stay in Namibia that he had to act. He worked for 31 years in the north of Namibia, near the border with Angola. When that country became independent in 1975 the border area became a war zone. “Only then I fully grasped what apartheid means. The South African government laid its crimes against the population at SWAPO’s door.” Again and again father Heimerikx made these pertinent lies publicly known. He secretly made photos of the massacres and distributed them internationally to the press, to SWAPO and to the offices of the United Nations. The South African authorities started to hate him. In 1983 bishop Haushiku informed him that his life was in danger and that he had to leave the country. “I asked the bishop’s opinion about crossing the Angolan border at night and join SWAPO. The bishop agreed. And SWAPO was happy with my arrival. So I arrived as a refugee with SWAPO,

that the Council for Namibia was entitled to issue the so-called Decree No 1, which made trade in Namibian uranium illegal, but he did not accept that the Dutch state had the obligation to comply with its enforcement. Another argument of the Dutch government was that the URENCO partners Germany and Britain refused to exclude Namibian uranium.

In 1980 Ruurd Huisman, Ineke Lambers-Hacquebard and I testified in New York at a hearing of the UN Council for Namibia about the illegal exploitation of Namibian uranium. Moreover we performed a self-written playlet for three persons: the minister, the member of parliament and a narrator. We pleaded for a court case against the State of the Netherlands. At a hearing of the International Court of Justice in 1981 two Dutch experts on international law, Verheul and Schermers, had the same message. In parliament the Dutch government had to admit that the Council for Namibia -as the legitimate administrator of Namibia- had, like any other government, the right to start at any time a court case against the Netherlands.

But the Council reacted very slowly. It took four years until it was decided that judicial action could be taken against the import of stolen commodities such as uranium through the national courts of the countries concerned. In fact the Council was only thinking of the Netherlands because that was the only country where a court case could be won. The UN Council for Namibia engaged a firm of Dutch lawyers to institute legal action against URENCO for contravening Decree No 1. At the same time KZA and Kairos started an information campaign in the Netherlands about Namibia. The UN Council for Namibia began legal proceedings against URENCO and the State of the Netherlands in 1987 at the District Court of The Hague. Summonses were handed over to URENCO and the Dutch State. In 1988 URENCO and the State of the Netherlands submitted their Statement of Defence claiming that there was no binding obligation in international law. Although the UN supervised plan for the independence of Namibia commenced on 1st April 1989 the lawyers acting for the UN Council of Namibia submitted their Statement of Reply to the District Court in The Hague in June 1989. But the next year the UN Council for Namibia was dissolved; its mandate was transferred to the lawful government of Namibia. The court case was never resolved.

I don't know why it took that long, why the Council of Namibia hesitated so long to follow the juridical course. Also SWAPO was not too keen about a lawsuit. Perhaps it was because it would cost a lot of money and some preferred to use it for other purposes. Maybe also the material assistance of the Netherlands for SWAPO played a role.

At the end of 1992 I stopped my work for Namibia. I had made my contribution. Especially on the URENCO case I look back with satisfaction as our doubts could end in a comprehensive court case. No, I did not return to Namibia. I did not want to live in limbo anymore. I also thought it better for SWAPO and the Namibians to take responsibility for the development of an independent Namibia. Some may have resented my continued involvement.

But we are proud of Namibia. There are problems, but which country is without? There is a stable political system, the Gross National Product grows and the welfare of the population measured for instance in the level of education and health care increases. Our confidence in SWAPO has certainly been justified."

Interview by Carla Schuddeboom

the first Catholic priest for the refugee community, a white Catholic because we had no black priest in Ovamboland.”

Father Heimerikx worked in SWAPO’s refugee camps in Angola and Zambia in a unique form of co-operation between the different denominations. With his black colleagues of the Anglican and Evangelical-Lutheran churches he worked for an ecumenical community. Religious services and tasks of the three churches were combined. They received a prefabricated church for the large refugee camp in Kwanza Sul. But when it arrived during November 1988 they decided to keep it in the containers. After the independence of Namibia it would be the first ecumenical church building of Namibia.

Father Heimerikx was glad that the Catholic church in Namibia joined the Council of Churches of Namibia (CCN) in 1982 “*As a result of the war you started to feel closer together, I think that was the motive of the Catholic Church –which in general is rather conservative- to become a full member of CCN. To have a strong joint position towards the South African government. And the CCN supports SWAPO because we as churches have very clearly seen that SWAPO fights a war for a just cause.*”

Public opinion and Dutch government foreign policy

The anti-apartheid organisations in the Netherlands became the largest in the Western countries, partly because a big part of their salaries and activities were paid by the Dutch government and by the European Union. During the second half of the 1980’s about 20 full-time and low paid people worked at KZA, in addition to the many volunteers.

Fundraising for the liberation movements was a heavy task for the anti-apartheid organisations, but just as much energy went into activities to isolate South Africa. For both of these aims it was necessary to inform the Dutch public about the situation in Namibia and win their sympathy. Books and posters were published, and with financial support of the Council of Namibia KZA was involved in the production of three TV-films about

Namibia, that were broadcasted in the Netherlands and in some other countries.

Each year the Dutch parliament discussed the situation in Namibia, and, little by little, the Dutch government became more critical of South Africa. It recognized that the South African occupation was illegal. In 1978 it stated that Walvis Bay must for economic and political reasons be part of an independent Namibia. In 1979 it rejected the one-sided activities of South Africa to give Namibia independence under a puppet government. Moreover the Dutch government rejected the American linkage of the Namibian independence to the withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola.

Slowly the Dutch public was won for sanctions against South Africa. Arguments for the economic boycott were in the first place the apartheid in South Africa but the illegal occupation of Namibia. From 1973 onwards the government and a large majority in parliament supported international sanctions against South Africa. But in the United Nations international boycott measures were blocked by Britain and the United States, and in the European Community (EC) by Britain and West Germany. Denmark, Ireland and the Netherlands were the only active supporters of common sanctions in the EC. As international sanctions were blocked, the struggle in the Netherlands focused soon on unilateral Dutch sanctions. It was clear that unilateral sanctions would be less effective than international sanctions, and they might well do more harm to the Dutch economy than to South Africa. But opinion polls showed that amongst the Dutch public there was a majority willing to accept the negative consequences of a unilateral boycott.

In parliament there was a majority for a unilateral Dutch oil boycott of South Africa from 1979 to 1983. But the governments of the time were strongly opposed to unilateral sanctions. These confrontations between the parliament and the government led nearly to the fall of the government in 1982.

Only the Den Uyl government took a unilateral step against South Africa. In 1977 KZA sent a telex message to the government with the request not to agree to rent out a Fokker F-28 civil aircraft to South Africa for use in Namibia. The committee warned that the plane could



Father Gerard Heimerikx

Father Gerard Heimerikx was rector of the Catholic mission at Oshikuku in the north of Namibia. His support for the cause of his oppressed parishioners was unwavering. He had to flee the country when he smuggled photos of atrocities by the South Africans to the press. He later worked in the refugee camps in Zambia and returned with great honour to Namibia after independence. He received the decoration of the Order of Orange Nassau for exemplary courage in 1993.

Military recommendations from the former Director of the Royal Netherlands Military Academy

A large Namibia conference was organized in Paris in 1980. To contribute to the discussions at the conference KZA and Kairos asked the former director of the Dutch Royal Military Academy, Von Meyenfeldt, to use his experience in the NATO forces, to assess SWAPO's chances and strategy of the military struggle:

"I do not view the liberation through military action an impossible task. The military policy of the liberation movement of Namibia (SWAPO) shall, in a general sense have to aim at making the price for South Africa as high as possible by forcing South Africa to such a degree of mobilization as to pose a serious threat to its economy, by undermining the morale of the white population, by making the continued existence of South Africa dependent on the participation of the black population that changes become essential, by corrosion of the potential fighting force of its military."

Major General von Meyenfeldt also stated for Dutch radio *"I consider military violence in certain situations, such as in southern Africa, absolutely justified, also morally. In my opinion it is very hypocritical to judge about others and to say that they may not use violence"*. Arms deliveries by the Western countries to SWAPO were on the short term not likely, *"but I would support it, yes"*.

be used for military transports, and that it had informed the United Nations and African governments. The Dutch government finally decided to block the transaction.

Preparing for elections in Namibia

In 1988 the South African invasion forces in the south of Angola suffered a crushing defeat. The South African government was by then willing to accept a withdrawal from Namibia in exchange for the withdrawal of the Cuban troops from Angola. It was agreed that the South African government would hand over power in Namibia to a government elected by the Namibian people. The perseverance of the Namibian people and the international isolation of South Africa were finally successful. However it was to be expected that during the election period South Africa would give all support to the puppet government it had installed in Namibia. This meant for KZA and Kairos that in 1989 all energy had to go to strengthening SWAPO and the other organisations working towards an independent Namibia.

KZA organized a meeting for the West European solidarity organisations on 27-28 January 1989 in Amsterdam at the request of SWAPO. The aim was to discuss in what way they could support SWAPO in the election year. At the meeting it was decided that the Swedish organisation AGIS would coordinate the Scandinavian activities, and KZA would be the coordinator for the other West European countries. But with the exception of Scandinavian and British organisations, the support from the other solidarity organisations proved rather limited.

The KZA decided that it would start a fundraising and information campaign in April 1989 under the slogan "Namibia today, South Africa tomorrow". With advertisements, mailings and activities of local groups, money was collected to help SWAPO win the elections. All 260,000 readers of the daily "deVolkskrant" received a letter in their newspaper asking for a donation. All 150,000 members of the leftist political parties received a letter. Mailings went to all clients of the ASN Bank. All readers of *Vice Versa*, *de Groene Amsterdammer*, *Vrij Nederland* and *Hervormd Nederland* were asked to do-

nate, the Catholic monthly *Bijeen* came with a special annex about Namibia.

It soon became clear that the interest in Namibia of the public and of the news media was much less than for South Africa. Many people thought that the problem Namibia was solved when South Africa had accepted to leave the country. Moreover a planned visit of President Nujoma was cancelled at the last moment. Only 30 local groups were active for the Namibia campaign, while for South Africa campaigns there were on average 200. The financial result of the campaign during the spring of 1989 was only € 160,000.

In addition to the above mentioned campaign a youth campaign was organized in the spring of 1989. The year before an umbrella group "Youth against Apartheid" had been formed to support the South African youth movement SAYCO. In 1989 these organisations decided to support a KZA campaign for NANSO, the Namibian Student Organisation. As part of the programme a NANSO delegation visited the Netherlands. It was politically important that the youth organisations of all political parties, from the left to the right, participated in this campaign.

The Broad Namibia Forum

Early in 1989 the Dutch church-related development organisations discussed ways to support Namibia in the election year. They reacted to appeals from the Council of Churches of Namibia, from the Lutheran World Federation and from the World Council of Churches. They decided to form an umbrella organisation called the Broad Namibia Forum (BNF), just as they had done before the independence of Zimbabwe. The aim was not only to exchange information but also to coordinate their activities and form one contact point for the Namibian partner organisations. The common activities included spreading information among the Dutch public, enable Dutch journalists to visit Namibia, send monitors for the elections, collect funds and monitor the Dutch government policy.

There was one ugly duck for some members of the Forum, namely KZA. KZA had no religious ambitions.



A printing press for SWAPO in Zambia

The Dutch NGO Novib was another channel for support to SWAPO. Novib financed the purchase of a printing press to serve SWAPO in Zambia and other hospitable countries and to print for the United Nations Institute for Namibia in Lusaka. Photo KZA collection at National Archives of Namibia.



A quick and simple meal between negotiations

Lucas Hifkipunye Pohamba (right), one of his SWAPO colleagues and Corrie de Roeper of KZA (centre) eat their simple meal between the discussions about the needs in the SWAPO camps and the possibilities for KZA to provide the necessary inputs. Corrie de Roeper, who had joined KZA in 1985, visited the SWAPO camps in Kwanza Sul and Kwanza Nord every year until 1991. In those years Mr Pohamba also visited KZA in the Netherlands annually to discuss progress, reports etc. This photo was probably taken in Mr Pohamba's house in Luanda. Photo KZA collection at National Archives of Namibia.

Kairos was welcome, as it was a Christian anti-apartheid organisation, but some organisations refused to accept KZA. They thought KZA was a too outspoken political organisation and was too closely linked with liberation movements that used violence. But at that time KZA had framed good working relations with those church organisations that were involved in the EC “Programme for the Victims of Apartheid”. It even implemented a number of projects on their behalf. Thus KZA was finally accepted.

For KZA and Kairos it was a precondition that in common fundraising activities part of the money would go to SWAPO. Although all were agreed that it would be a disaster for Namibia if SWAPO would not get two thirds of the votes necessary to abolish the apartheid laws, the same organisations that wanted to exclude KZA were also opposed to collect money in their churches for SWAPO. The issue was resolved because the Namibian Council of Churches was so closely connected to the liberation struggle: the funds raised would go to the Council of Churches of Namibia, to the Namibia Development Trust and to SWAPO.

Most of the work concerning the journalists and election monitors was done by KZA with the support of David de Beer of Kairos. In total about 25 election observers went to Namibia, some for six months, others –mostly VIP’s- shorter. The number of journalists that visited Namibia during different periods was about the same. The government-funded organisation PSO agreed to pay the cost of the monitors, until the right-wing daily de Telegraaf started a smear campaign against the decision. Under the pressure of right-wing parliamentarians the Minister for Development Co-operation reversed the decision.

The main role of the Dutch church organisations was to activate the local church communities. It was decided that 19 November would be a “Namibia Sunday” in all Dutch churches. Liturgical suggestions were produced, together with 200,000 Namibia Newspapers. During the same period public fundraising would take place in the streets, through spots on radio and TV, through advertisements etc.

In August 1989, Novib joined the cooperating organisations. Novib was the largest of the so-called co-funding organisations in the Netherlands. These are Dutch NGOs that receive considerable government funding for development co-operation. Novib was not church related. Much of the money spent by KZA in Namibia came from Novib. It was finally decided that half of the collected funds would go to the Council of Churches of Namibia, one quarter through Novib to the Namibia Development Trust and the remaining quarter would go to KZA for SWAPO projects.

The Broad Namibia Forum was a useful umbrella to widen the support for the campaign. Its long-term aim was that the Dutch government would start a programme of development co-operation with Namibia after independence. But the Minister for Development Co-operation, Mr Bukman, refused to commit himself. His arguments were the relative prosperity of Namibia compared to other countries in the region, the expected assistance from other donor countries, especially Germany and lack of uncommitted cash. When the Broad Namibia Forum was dissolved in May 1990, this negative attitude of the government was deplored. But just in time Bukman was replaced by Minister Pronk, who was more positive to continue the development relations with Namibia.

The SWAPO prisoners

Suddenly, in the summer of 1989 information about the maltreatment, torture and killing of SWAPO prisoners emerged in the press. The friends of SWAPO in the Netherlands were grilled by the media. There was enormous confusion amongst the church organisation of the Broad Namibia Forum. It was clear that the November campaign was in great danger. Letters were written to SWAPO and to the Namibian churches to ask for information and for an explanation. David de Beer went to Africa and came back with the message that SWAPO would only fully react after independence.

After some weeks the storm in the Dutch press was dying down but it suddenly sprang up again when Novib announced that it withdrew from the Broad Namibia Forum and would stop all support to SWAPO. In the

Rosalinde Blondé-Nguluu, the effective ambassador of Namibian women



Rosalinde Nguluu, born in the north of Namibia in 1945, was a teacher in her home area, where she met and married Martin Blondé, a Dutch Catholic missionary. Her husband abandoned his ministry because of their marriage. They ended up in the Netherlands where Rosalinde became a very active and vocal advocate for the people in Namibia and the refugees in Angola and Zambia, especially women. She gave hundreds of talks and lectures to all sorts of groups in the Netherlands and explained the Namibian cause in the Dutch newspapers, on radio and television. In 1983 she returned to southern Africa to visit refugee camps in Angola, which inspired her

to become even more active. After she returned from her first visit to her home country in 1989, she wrote a moving letter to her family, printed below. Rosalinde Blondé-Nguluu died suddenly in 2003. The “Relief Fund Swapo Namibian Women” that she founded is continued by relatives and friends.

I'm now two weeks back in the Netherlands, but I have not yet unpacked my suitcase. I have a feeling that I will never unpack as it is full of things that belong to you. I would prefer to take the plane straightaway back. I want to be with you, with father, among all of you. I would again teach the children on the playground to dance and sing our songs about freedom and about our beautiful country.

I have many friends here in Holland that have through the many years supported us. I'm here already more than ten years and suddenly I feel that I have become a stranger to my own people. I think about our brother Theobold. First eight years in Angola and Zambia. And then our leaders arranged that he could study in Czechoslovakia. And then two more years in Angola. Father was so happy to see him back. But it was painful to see how difficult Daddy and Theobold understood each other.

I ask you, my dear brother, do everything to help them. If you remember what they did to us and how difficult it will be for our country. Daddy, during fifteen years he had to live outside his country, frightened, in combat, at a white school abroad where he was not respected. He had to work hard. But you too, you maybe even more. We all need each other, there should be no disharmony amongst us.

Please understand me well, my dear brother, I only think of our new future and I'm not blaming anyone. Only few people understand what it means after such a long, difficult and painful period to have to work together for a common future.”...

While I look at my locked suitcase I imagine how much will have to be done and how much support and friendship we will need. It will take years before all Namibians understand and trust each other after this long period of repression and humiliation. Our leader Sam Nujoma has promised to pardon everybody, also if he was fighting against us together with the South Africans. It will not be easy. I have discussed this with people here in the Netherlands. They have some understanding as they also lived five years under German occupation.

You know what is said about our camps in Angola. How there was distrust, how there were spies. And how people were suspected of spying who were maybe not at all involved. I visited the camps and I saw how they watched me. With the damned South African army you could not be too cautious. When I discuss this with my Dutch friends they understand it and say: just like here in Holland fifty years ago. But I doubt if they understand what living in the jungle meant, surrounded by the enemy and by spies. You could find them behind each tree and you suspected even your best friends.

Probably awful things have happened in the camps, also with people we know. How should we handle this? Some of our SWAPO people have misbehaved. For the good cause, but that is not an excuse. But if you pardon the Namibians who collaborated with the South Africans, who were the cause of all misery, how can you then prosecute and punish these people. What should we do, people here in Europe ask clarifications. But I hold the view that SWAPO should be sensible and not rush this case.”

South African and Namibian press the decision of Novib was also the topic of the day: “The Netherlands’ stop support to SWAPO”. Novib would very soon deplore this step.

When the 17 South African partners that received support from Novib learned about the news they decided to break off all relations with their Dutch partner. A few days later, at a meeting in Harare, all organisations in the whole of Southern Africa working with Novib decided to cut all ties with Novib. Rev. Beyers Naudé flew from South Africa to the Netherlands to explain to the Dutch church organisations and to Novib the position of the South African Council of Churches and the UDF. Novib moderated its tone in the publicity. It deplored that South Africa had exploited its decision to damage SWAPO before the elections. Novib also deplored that it had damaged the reputation of SWAPO in several Western countries, and especially in the Netherlands, and that it caused harm to the fundraising campaign. It accepted that it had made a serious mistake by not consulting its southern African partners before taking a decision. Novib also apologized for acting without discussing its intentions with its Dutch partners in the Namibia Forum. After months of discussions with its African partners the conflict ran out.

For KZA and Kairos, it was painful that they were in this context also attacked by the third anti-apartheid movement in the Netherlands, the AABN. In the AABN magazine, the news about the treatment of SWAPO prisoners was compared with the revelations about the millions that were killed by Stalin. The AABN was reprimanded by the leadership of the ANC.

The church organisations in the campaign were very unhappy with the decision of Novib and with all the negative publicity. One possibility was to stop the campaign for Namibia, another to exclude SWAPO from the fundraising. But that would give more negative publicity in the press, and it would give the impression that the decision of Novib was correct. It was decided to phone the secretary general of the Council of Churches of Namibia (CCN), dr. Shejvali. His reaction was that support through all three chosen channels was support for the Namibian people, and that the aim of CCN in this stage was reconciliation. Finally as a way out it was

accepted to continue the fundraising for SWAPO projects as far as there were no objections of the CCN and the Namibia Development Trust (NDT). It was decided that the proceeds for NDT would

Paul Staal, an anti-apartheid activist, looked back on this period that was painful and difficult for all supporters of SWAPO:

“I later reproached myself that we were too much focused on the anti-colonial struggle and had too little attention for the awful side-effects of a liberation war. In later years I asked myself why I did not know what had happened in the SWAPO camps, as I was one of the few people that came there regularly. Maybe the victims did not trust me as I was on familiar terms with the leadership or they were too frightened. Maybe one explanation is that I was in contact with Peter Nanyemba, the military commander who unfortunately died in a car accident. I assume that under the command of this man it would not have happened”.

“I do not know if SWAPO President Nujoma knew about it. At a certain moment I have raised the human rights violations with him. He had just arrived from Angola in Katutura. He always trusted me, he had entrusted me with large amounts of money that I brought from Angola to Geneva to be changed in Rands, and then to Windhoek for SWAPO inside Namibia, just in my handbag. But in spite of all the support we had given to SWAPO, which was unparalleled, President Nujoma was furious: ‘that you of all people drag up that story. No. this should wait until after the elections.’ It was a big dilemma. Step out of the common campaign for a free Namibia, like Novib did, was a nasty trick.”

Buying SWAPO property in Namibia

In March 1988 Russell Hay was contracted by KZA for a full year to work in Namibia as the permanent KZA representative. One of his first tasks was to rent a house in Windhoek where also the election monitors and journalists could stay. Also a car was bought that could be used by the visitors. But his most important task was to buy properties for SWAPO.

Paul Staal and the Lobby for European Involvement



Paul Staal was involved in the attempts to get European Community support for the victims of apartheid in Namibia. On 10th September 1985, the foreign ministers of the European Community (EC) announced a large "Special Programme for the Victims of Apartheid". This move was clearly aimed at easing the public pressure on the Community to introduce economic sanctions against South Africa. Two days after the announcement of the "Special Programme", a conference was held in Amsterdam under the title "Apartheid and Southern Africa, the West European Response", organized by the KZA in cooperation with AWEPA and Novib. Present were about 60 European members of parliament, representatives of the European Commission, European NGO's, the ANC and President Nujoma of SWAPO. European Commissioner Claude Cheysson and officials explained the objectives and procedures of the new multi-million "Special Programme". Immediately the KZA decided to contract Paul Staal to investigate what the intentions behind this programme were and how it could be used for maximum benefit. Paul Staal had the time of his life.

"This was one of our biggest deals ever. We finally succeeded to bypass all those shrewd European diplomats. Our aim was that all those millions of the EC would only be channelled to the churches and to organisations that supported ANC and SWAPO and to exclude the puppets. At that time I had much contact with Beyers Naudé. A few days after the conference in Amsterdam I met him in Copenhagen and a week later I travelled together with David de Beer to southern Africa to consult with the leadership of ANC, SACTU and SWAPO, and once more with Beyers and Shejvali, the respective secretaries-general of the South African and the Namibian Council of Churches (SACC and CCN). After internal consultations in South Africa and Namibia a "code of conduct" for the Special Programme was drafted, which was supported by the CCN, the SACC and the South African Catholic Bishops Conference (SACBC). The most important condition for accepting EC money was that no money would go to South African Government-related programmes, to homeland governments or tribal organisations. The EC was forced to accept these conditions as the churches were at that time the main channels to reach the victims of apartheid.

When Beyers Naudé and Shejvali came to Brussels to present to the European Commission a letter containing the "Conditions and Principles" we used their visit to organise a meeting with 16 European funding agencies that were in favour of these conditions. At this meeting a Standing Committee was formed to coordinate the European side of the operation and to keep a watchful eye on the EC implementation of the Special Programme. Moreover a consortium of NGO's was formed called SA/NAM. (South Africa/Namibia) for the non-church projects. SA/NAM and the Standing Committee got a common secretariat, based at our KZA office in Amsterdam and I became the secretary of both institutions. The Komitee Zuidelijk Afrika (KZA) was the only European anti-apartheid movement that was accepted as partner of the EC programme.

From the start the governments of Britain and Germany wanted to exclude Namibia from the EC programme. But the South African partners and the European NGOs considered it politically important that the people of Namibia were also recognized as victims of apartheid and that Namibia should be included in the programme. Finally the EC conceded to the pressure from southern Africa and a small amount (€ 200,000) was set aside for projects in Namibia.

In March 1986 KZA organized a first meeting for the Namibians to discuss the EC assistance, in Brussels. From inside Namibia Mr. Shejvali, bishop Kauluma and Mr. Esau from the Anglican diocese were present, from SWAPO Pohamba and Kaukungua. But when in July 1986 the South Africans submitted their first 22 projects the Council of Churches of Namibia had no projects. Then we organised a training course in Harare for CCN and SWAPO in November 1986 about theory and practice of the Special Programme. But by

SWAPO was confident that the movement would soon return to Namibia to fight an election campaign. That meant SWAPO needed houses and farms in and around Windhoek. It wanted to bring its own garage and printing press from Angola to Namibia, as it expected that many firms would boycott SWAPO. SWAPO had the funds, but it could not openly buy the property. Real estate agents would refuse to do business, prices would be raised. For that reason SWAPO asked KZA to help under a false name. The trade union related bank of KZA, HKB (Hollandsche Koopmans Bank) made a trust with an innocent name available for the operation, the Amsterdam Standard Trust Company (ASTC). As foreign investors could make use of the “financial rand” exchange rate, the value of their money doubled. In total 2.5 million dollars were spent by Russell Hay to buy eight properties, among them a home for the president, a garage and a farm outside the town. Paul Staal remembers: “I had to collect the money from SWAPO in London, cash, handbags full of notes of a hundred dollars. I was never really searched at the border, just pure luck,”

Another larger operation was the creation of an independent news agency in Namibia. Hundreds of journalists would come to Namibia in the transitional period. In the large Kalahari Sands Hotel there was a large 24-hours press centre, run by the South Africans, which could offer the journalists everything they needed: telephone and telex connections, information, cars, complete trips, arranged meetings etc. All dailies, with the exception of the Namibian, radio and TV were controlled by the South Africans. There was only a small press office of the churches but that was unable to counterbalance the South African operation. The trade union NUNW and the youth organisation NANSO had offices far away in Katutura, without telex.

To counter-balance the sophisticated South African press service, journalists of the Namibian, the trade union NUNW, the Legal Assistance Centre etc took the initiative to found a press centre, the Namibia News Service (NNS). Two Namibian journalists, Mark Verbaan and Chris Shipanga, moved from the Namibian to NNS. KZA arranged the financing of this initiative with money from Novib. And it contracted an old friend, the British journalist Michael Wolfers to work for a year in Namibia.

ia. In addition to writing articles for the international press, he helped the Department of Information and Publicity of SWAPO with the publication of the SWAPO newspaper Namibia Today, he supported the Council of Churches of Namibia, the Namibian and the Namibia News Service, by installing computers, with writing and the lay-out of articles, the training of inexperienced journalists, he was active in establishing contacts with visiting foreign journalists. And he helped SWAPO’s information bureau NAMPA to move from Angola to Windhoek. In 1990 the Namibia News Service was integrated with NAMPA, which became the Namibian Press Agency.

Preparing Namibia’s future relations with the European Community

Through its involvement in the EC “Programme for the Victims of Apartheid” KZA became interested in possible other EC funds for ANC and SWAPO to support the South African and Namibian refugees in the neighbouring states. But the use of the so-called Lomé funds had to wait until the independence of Namibia.

Together with the Belgian organisation FOS, KZA contracted a British researcher living in Brussels, Paul Goodison, to study and promote profitable arrangements with the EC for an independent Namibia. Goodison worked during 1989 and 1990 as a full-time lobbyist in close contact with SWAPO’s Economic Affairs Spokesman and later the Ministry of Trade and Industry of Namibia. At the request of SWAPO, Goodison wrote a 100 page study “Namibia and the EC, a lobby strategy”. The other work of Goodison for KZA and FOS was an assessment of the EC policy towards South Africa.

The aim of the work on Namibia was to ensure that next round of EC funds would accommodate the needs of a newly independent Namibia. Goodison managed to have two provisions inserted into the Fourth Lomé to avoid the kind of delays in the accession of an independent Namibia which had occurred after Zimbabwe’s independence. This was quite successful: it took Zimbabwe 21 months and Namibia only 9 months. Moreover it was decided that any beef quota allocated to Namibia would be additional to the quotas offered under nor-

February 1988 only three poorly formulated funding proposals had been received from Namibia.

We agreed with SWAPO in Luanda to organise another consultation in March 1988 in Lusaka. Russell Hay was sent to Namibia in the weeks before the consultation to brief the bishops, the trade unions, internal SWAPO and other interested organisations and invite them for the consultation. Beyers Naudé came tot the consultation in Lusaka to explain how under the EC programme millions were already spent in South Africa. In order to overcome this stagnation in Namibia the possibility was discussed to set up a Trust to organise projects from that country.

With the support of Russell Hay the Namibia Development Trust (NDT) in Windhoek was founded at the end of 1988 as the only channel for the EC money to Namibia. In the board of the Trust participated representatives of the churches, the trade unions, human rights lawyers etc. The EC had agreed to make € 20 million available for projects in Namibia for 1989. But also NDT did not become a success story. Before it was well organised there were elections in Namibia and after independence Namibia was excluded from the EC Special Programme.”

KZA channelled € 15 million EC money to projects in South Africa. But in Namibia only the weekly “The Namibian” would benefit on a large scale from the EC millions. The Namibian was founded by Gwen Lister, a journalist who was fired by the Windhoek Observer as she was considered too critical. The Namibian was the only periodical that stood up against the South African occupation of Namibia; the other three dailies, the radio and TV were pro-South Africa. Its offices were several times the target of attacks and arson, whilst Gwen Lister, who received several international press awards, was imprisoned several times and members of the staff beaten up. KZA had in November 1987 submitted a first proposal for a two-year grant to the EC, co-sponsored by the Dutch Bishops’ Lenten Campaign (Vastenactie) and the Protestant organisation ICCO. In total the Namibian received € 700,000.

Other projects supported through KZA with EC money were Rape Crisis; the Tsumeb Community Centre/Vocational School, a centre for legal assistance and employment for former political prisoners and later for women; and training of former political prisoners.

Interview Carla Schuddeboom



The transfer of the KZA archives

During his official visit to the Netherlands in 1998, president Dr Sam Nujoma received the documents to transfer from the archives of the Komitee Zuidelijk Afrika (Holland Committee for Southern Africa) to the National Archives of Namibia from Mr Sietse Bosgra. The ceremony took place in Nieuwegein, the sister town of Rundu in Namibia. Photo courtesy of NiZa.

mal Protocol 7 and that any assistance during the transitional period would not strengthen the South African controlled internal settlement structures in Namibia.

After the core funding by KZA and FOS an EC contract for Goodison was secured for a study "Possible future utilisation of EC development assistance to Namibia". In a brochure "Namibia, the Challenge of Independence" a number of issues were identified which would need to be addressed in Namibia's Lomé Convention negotiations:

realistic beef quota under the Lomé beef protocol; extending STABEX coverage to the export of Karakul skins; according Namibia least development country status; arrangements for Namibian sheep meat export to the EC questions relating to the fisheries sector were included in the material on future EC-Namibian relations.

Before Namibia's independence several resolutions on these issues were submitted and passed in the European Parliament and the ACP-EC Joint Assembly, and several background briefings were produced for journalists.

At the end of 1989, Goodison went to Namibia at the invitation of the Constitutional Assembly. During July and August 1990 he organised workshops about the Lomé Convention for Namibian government officials, and background dossiers were prepared for the different government departments. In addition there were seven workshops for the private sector under the auspices of the Namibian National Chamber of Commerce. This activity was funded by KZA, FOS and the German Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

KZA support after independence

KZA had supported Zimbabwe after its independence in 1980 by sending 40 teachers to that country. After

its independence Namibia would also need technical assistance, and in 1992 KZA sent a first water driller to train the development brigades of former SWAPO combatants. In 1993 a contract between KZA and the Ministry of Education and Culture was signed for the recruitment in the Netherlands of vocational training instructors and other operational personnel. After an advertisement in "de Volkskrant" a hundred applicants reacted. Two computer experts and five vocational trainers with impressive CV's were recruited to start in Namibia in January 1994. But the project failed: the Ministry declared it had not reserved the necessary funds for the local salaries.

KZA lobbied in Brussels to counter South Africa's claim on the European Commission concerning Namibia's fishing rights. In 1993 it organized in co-operation with the Amsterdam World Trade Center a seminar "South Africa and Namibia: a Challenge to Dutch Enterprise". Together with SANEC (South Africa-Netherlands Chamber of Commerce) a similar meeting in The Hague was organised in 1995 to promote investments in Namibia. Speakers were the Namibian Minister of Foreign Affairs Theo-Ben Gurirab and Mr. R. Kukuri of the Ministry of Finance. At that occasion a meeting took place for all persons and organisations interested in Namibia in the Town Hall of Nieuwegein. Discussions were started with the Fair Trade organisation of the Netherlands to increase its imports from Namibia. Also in 1995 a meeting was organized in The Hague for all local authorities from the Netherlands and Flanders which had a relationship with Namibian communities. In the Africa Museum in Berg en Dal, KZA helped organize the exposition "a View of Namibia" during four weeks of 1997 to promote tourism, in co-operation with Namibia Contact, Namibia Tourism Board and Air Namibia.

KZA, which had by then become part of the Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa, NIZA, was also involved in the programme for the 1998 visit to the Netherlands of President Nujoma.

Chapter 7

From honorary consul to honorary consul, nearly one century of Dutch representation in Namibia*

The archives of the Dutch embassies and consulates general in Pretoria, Harare and Cape Town are the main sources of information for the description of Dutch diplomatic representation in Namibia or South West Africa as it was known for a long time. The period after independence is described on the basis of the archives of the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Windhoek. The Netherlands had honorary consuls in Swakopmund and later Windhoek from 1911 to 1970 and again from 1992 to 1994. The embassy was opened in July 1993 and will close on 30th June 2006, after which the Netherlands will again have a honorary consul in Windhoek.



Michelle Gimbrère

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* The main part of this article is a translation from Dutch. Detailed source references were omitted in the translation to improve readability.



Walvis Bay in 1896

This picture, showing Walvis Bay in the background, was taken in 1896. There was no harbour yet; ships anchored off-shore. The Dutch Contracting Company dredged the harbour and built a quay in 1927. Postcard courtesy of Wolfram Hartmann.



View of the pier in Swakopmund in 1907

*This picture was taken a few years before Dutch representatives started to take an interest in the coast of South West Africa. Opinions about the use of a permanent representation differed widely. From *Deutsch Südwest Afrika, Kriegs un Friedensbilder*, Windhoek, 1907*

The first contacts - a cautious beginning

Direct diplomatic relations between the Netherlands and Namibia came into being at the beginning of the 20th century. Around that time the Dutch representation in South Africa started to investigate the possibilities for a presence in the German colony of Süd West Afrika. Opinions regarding the development of this colony during the first two decades differed widely. The Dutch consul of the Witwatersrand, sent a report to consul general Knobel of Pretoria, on 9 April 1908 in which he expressed the following positive point of view:

“Under such circumstances and with powerful government measures like these, it does look as if the country is capable of a fairly speedy development in a good direction. Admittedly the government especially encourages a country that can sustain itself regarding its first necessities of life, but with that, in my opinion, they provide an opportunity for the establishment of a strong agricultural, mining and trading population, and, consequently, a secure market for our country’s manufactured articles. The figures prove that German South West Africa is already well on its way.

This opinion was, however not shared by everybody. This becomes clear from a report that was compiled by a Dutchman who visited Swakopmund at the request of the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce in Pretoria. His report, dated 3 February 1907, mentioned among other things the following:

“Following your request regarding information about the situation in this country, I shall comply with it to the best of my abilities. When the ship arrived in Swakopmund nobody could disembark before a police officer questioned each person, and although I had no satisfactory permit to begin working, I just had to deposit 7 pounds not to be sent back to Cape Town. The passengers were taken ashore in a boat towed by a tug. On our arrival nobody could form a high opinion of the pier, which consisted of planks to walk on, lying crookedly alongside each other. Entry into the town to the customs office is definitely not a pretty sight due to the dirty, loose sand. The officers also take their tasks very lightly. We were 18 passengers and nobody had to

open anything. Officials asked whether anybody had alcohol or fire arms with them. When we all answered in the negative, this authority was quite happy and we could leave. The houses do not create a bad impression, and some of the hotels are outstanding buildings. Furthermore, the post office that is under construction is really splendid. There is sand everywhere, so that people very soon acquire the gait of a seaman. Here and there are strips in front of the houses, but they are crumbled and neglected. Transport by wagon, cab or car is non-existent. There are rails throughout the town on which transport takes place. The government track almost looks like an exhibition in a toyshop. How the Germans came to build such a line for more than 300 km of such materials, should amaze even an ignorant railway man. What will become of this place, is enshrouded in the dark. That business was good during the war is clear from the many hotels and pubs, now, however, everything is dead.”

Negative opinions

The writer was equally negative about the local Bantu population:

“If the natives in Transvaal, ‘after the war’ are insolent, here they are recklessly stupid. I have seen natives in the street opening bottles and emptying them. Regarding the prisoners, a very strange system is in practice. A prisoner must pay for his own food, and can then work for it, even for the public. I once saw a number of prisoners being transported to the Frank. They could enter the shops right and left to provide for their needs while the troop moved on. The native women smoke their pipes all day long, yet in general they are better dressed than those in Transvaal. A thick fog covers Swakopmund in the mornings and evenings and the water is totally unusable. Anyone who drinks it inevitably contracts diarrhoea, a disease that is so indigenous here that it has already acquired the popular name of ‘Swakopmunder’.”

The compiler of the report concluded his account by discouraging any other Dutch people to visit the area, not to mention settling here:



Dr Theodoor Lorentz, the first honorary consul of the Netherlands in Windhoek.

Theodoor Lorentz was a lawyer, educated in the Netherlands, who immigrated first to South Africa. From there he came to Windhoek, where he founded the law firm Lorentz & Bone in 1919. He was appointed first honorary consul of the Netherlands in Windhoek in 1927 on the recommendation of his brother, who was the Dutch consul general. The relationship between the Dutch government and Lorentz & Bone was re-established in 1993, when the current embassy building was rented from one of the senior partners of this firm, Mr Claus Jürgen Hinrichsen. Photo from The story of Lorentz & Bone 1919-2001, Windhoek 2001.

“It hardly ever rains in Swakopmund, up here much more. Kilometre lengths of railway lines are regularly washed away, water drainage is poorly looked after. There is an excellent market for canned food. Especially cans with cooked food would be popular at average prices. Good tobacco would also be a relief. I must definitely advise anybody against coming here ‘at present’, there is nothing to do. There is quite some talk about another war with the Ovambos, but it is not yet certain. One should not come here and speak English. It struck me with how much hatred the Germans regard the English. There is only one working here, and also they (Germans) have the habit of referring to us Dutch as ‘foreigners’. Regarding the postal services, it is a disgrace, worse than a disgrace. I could relate incidents about this which would sound unbelievable, but then I would have to become personal, and discretion has always been the better part of valour.”

A Consulate at the coast

But the Dutch government still found enough reason to open a consulate in Swakopmund in 1911. At the beginning of the previous century consular activities were also undertaken in Lüderitzbucht, the coastal town south of Swakopmund. The main argument for this was the strengthening of trade relations between the Netherlands and this region.

During the First World War South African troops occupied the German colony and after this war the League of Nations gave South Africa mandate over South West Africa. In this period the activities of the Dutch consulate in Swakopmund consisted mainly of assistance to the crews of Dutch ships that sporadically entered the harbour of Walvis Bay, and giving help, where possible, to the Dutch nationals who were mainly artisans involved in harbour activities round and in Walvis Bay. In 1898 a pier was erected. The Dutch Contracting Company dredged the harbour in 1927 and built a quay in comparable style to the quay that the company was to construct in Cape Town later.

The job opportunities provided by the dredging company attracted Dutch staff -mainly artisans – but they remained relatively few. This in spite of ardent at-

tempts by among others the Land and Agricultural Bank of South West Africa (situated in Windhoek) to attract Dutch immigrants. The director of this bank conducted a lively correspondence about this with the consul general of the Netherlands in Pretoria, as can be seen from an account by him dated 31 March 1924. Here he stated the following:

“It is possible that there are many young Dutch people in the Netherlands with limited capital who are eager to come and practise cattle farming in this country. Such persons would undoubtedly welcome the opportunity to acquire farm property in this country on easy terms and to settle here as colonists.

“.....I am therefore writing to you to inform you that the Land and Agricultural Bank can offer a fair number of development farms in the area to long-sighted settlers, at reasonable prices and in instalments extending over a long range of years.”

The then consul general, H.A. Lorentz, also realised that South West Africa at that time was not the promised land for Dutch immigrants. As early as 1923 he wrote that the region certainly was not the country of the future for anybody without money.

“For somebody who has money the matter is of course totally different; so to speak, every farm can be bought cash with little money. But this is only to be recommended if people come here to update themselves about the conditions here. It should not be forgotten that many farms are 100 to 150 kilometres and more from anywhere, with neighbours 20 to 25 kilometres away. These are living conditions that one has to consider seriously and should certainly investigate personally.”

The consul general also felt pessimistic about Dutch trade perspectives in the 1920s. In his opinion, especially the big trading houses for agricultural articles and provisions were in a difficult position. They were often obliged to take over farms in order to cover their claims. And farms at that stage had a low nominal value due to low cattle prices and taxes. The consul general advised Dutch trading houses that intended to expand their



The "Dutchman" in the guano industry

On this photo from the National Archives of Namibia, taken in 1934, was scribbled that it represented one of the guano platforms along the Atlantic coast of Namibia. Guano, the droppings of birds that roost together in very large numbers, was a valuable export product before artificial fertilizer replaced it. The gentleman on the left, according to the notes on the photo, was the "Dutchman". He was probably one of the former employees of the Dutch Contracting Company who had stayed on after the dredging work in Walvis Bay was finished. National Archives of Namibia

field of activity to this part of the world to obtain information first and not to make hasty decisions.

Windhoek as new location

In 1927 the Dutch Contracting Company completed its activities in the port of Walvis Bay. 30 years would pass before the same company would start operations in the area again when in 1957 the harbour of Walvis Bay would be dredged again. Walvis Bay, and together with it, Swakopmund, lost relevance for the Dutch in the 1920s. After completion of the harbour only a few Dutch nationals were still living in Walvis Bay. Once in a while a Dutch ship entered the harbour, but the port was not put on the regular sailing schedules for Dutch ships. Walvis Bay was also too far away from Swakopmund, so the consulate in Swakopmund would have no real use for the Dutch shipping industry.

On top of this the Dutch consulate in Swakopmund also experienced a personnel change in 1927. From 1924 Mr Van Kretschmar van Veen Esq. had acted satisfactorily as Dutch consul there. In April 1927 he announced that, because he was leaving Swakopmund, he was obliged to lay down his post. Consul general H.A. Lorentz conferred about succession. It had not passed his notice that Swakopmund had forfeited some of its importance. Besides, the situation that the administrator of the mandated territory South West Africa had his headquarters in Windhoek, played a part in his consideration. In the meantime Germany had also appointed a consul in that city.

This gave consul general Lorentz sufficient argument to propose to The Hague that the consulate be transferred from Swakopmund to Windhoek. Regarding the successor of Mr Van Kretschmar van Veen the consul general made a proposal. He said the following:

“My brother, Mr T. Lorentz, member of the firm Lorentz & Bone, lawyers and notaries in Windhoek, has declared himself willing to accept the possible nomination as consul of the Netherlands for South West Africa. Regarding the possible vice-consulate in Swakopmund yet to be formed, I permit myself, on the recommendation of Mr Van Kretschmar van Veen, to ask Your Excellency to consider Mr W. Riesle, lawyer in that town, who is

currently handling the interests of the consulate there, for the nomination of vice-consul of the Netherlands in Swakopmund.”

The proposal of H.A. Lorentz was accepted by the department and it thus happened that a consulate for the Netherlands was established in Windhoek under Royal Decree of 30 July 1927, while the consulate of the Netherlands in Swakopmund was demoted to a vice-consulate of the Netherlands. Under the same Royal Decree Mr Theodoor Lorentz was nominated as honorary consul of the Netherlands in Windhoek, and Mr W. Riesle as honorary vice-consul of the Netherlands in Swakopmund.

The war years and its after-effects in South West Africa

During the 1930s and early 1940s Southern Africa was experiencing growing national-socialistic influences. South West Africa, as former German protectorate and colony, was home to quite a number of Germans. South Africa as mandatory of South West Africa held the reins tightly and gave people with Nazi sympathies in the region no room at all. Nevertheless, according to temporary secretary of consulate general in Cape Town, Van Lennep, there were a number of inhabitants of German origin in South West Africa who were of the opinion that their homeland could still regain its colonial inheritance. He wrote this in a report, dated 8th November 1940, entitled “Nazi propaganda in the Union including South West Africa”:

“The situation in the mandated territory of South West Africa has always been very difficult and complicated. All unpleasant happenings in this territory were due to the inciting agitation of the Nazis and the unprecedented influence of the German Nazi institutions. In a revolutionary way and by unlawful means this Nazi incitement was carried on from year to year, until in the end a lot of very incriminating material for the Nazis was found during a search carried out by the South African Police in Windhoek. Even today there are many German inhabitants of this territory who, as far as their political conceptions are concerned, are quite confused as they are under the entirely wrong impression that the mandated territory can and will very soon be returned to the Reich.”

“Everything is lekker here”



“Change is the only constant in our existence,” a famous proverb goes. But not everything changes when one listens to the story of Ria Olivier-Bertens. Her story starts as an eleven-year-old girl living in the southern Dutch city of Tilburg. The Second World War ended five years ago and left The Netherlands in ruins; not a place to bring up children. Her parents Janus and Riet decided it was best to emigrate and leave the war torn country behind to find a better living overseas. “First they thought of emigrating to Argentina, but there we would have to learn Spanish,”

Ria Olivier Bertens looks back 55 years later in her house in the Namibian capital Windhoek. “My father then travelled ahead of us to Cape Town in South Africa. He was a construction overseer, but he couldn’t find work in South Africa and ended up in Windhoek where many Dutch immigrants worked in construction.” With backbreaking labour Janus saved enough money in a short space of time to pay for his family to come over to Namibia and change their lives forever.

The date of 20 June 1950 is set in stone in Ria’s memory. In the Amsterdam harbour the emigration ship the Johan van Oldenbarneveldt was docked to make an unique journey. Never before had the Indonesia bound vessel docked at the coastal towns of Swakopmund and Walvis Bay in Namibia. This would be the first and only time. “The voyage was very nice,” remembers Ria. “We swam, played tennis. On board were embroidery clubs for the girls and woodwork clubs for the boys. But I was seasick. According to my mother I was the most sick of all people on board.” After a three-week voyage the Van Oldenbarneveldt dropped anchor in front of the harbour town of Walvis Bay. The 11-year-old Ria stood on the deck looking at the small town and the desert surrounding it, she was looking at her new homeland. “It was also the first time I saw black people,” remembers Ria.

The adaptation to a new home, unknown African cultures and a different climate were easy, says Ria. The same day she and her family arrived in Namibia they went to their new home in Swakopmund some 30 kilometers north of Walvis Bay. And the young girl was enrolled in school. “I had to learn Afrikaans and English there. That was easy for me. I still can understand Dutch, every word. But if I have to speak it myself, I have to think hard.” Soon she went to school in Windhoek where eventually she ended up settling with her husband Rene, starting a family and working as a typist and de facto solicitor. Although

Vice-consulate Swakopmund dissolved, consulate Windhoek continues

During the years of Second World War the interests of the Netherlands were handled by acting consul Dr P. Jorissen. In this period there were hardly any Dutch initiatives in South West. A few years after the war some interest from the Dutch side surfaced again. In August 1949, the ambassador in Pretoria sent Mr J.D. van Karnebeek Esq. to Windhoek. The aims of the visit were two-fold. On the one hand he visited the authorities there, because for many years nobody from the embassy, not to mention the ambassador himself, had been there. It was said that the administrator of South West Africa, Colonel P.J. Hoogenhout, was sensitive about visits from foreign authorities to his area as well as to himself. Secondly Mr Van Karnebeek was instructed to look into the interests of the Dutch consulate, because the then acting consul, Dr P. Jorissen, was 78 years old, and had already indicated more than once that, because of his health, he would not be able to run the consulate for much longer.

Mr Van Karnebeek deliberately announced his visit in the local media in order to see if any Dutch people would request to see a representative of the embassy. Two Dutch citizens did so. Van Karnebeek mentioned in his report that "... there were dozens of Dutch people living in Windhoek, but they were mostly labourers in service of the ex-Dutch contractor Steens in Cape Town, who carried out big building activities in South West Africa and Windhoek".

He continued his report as follows:

"Migration of Dutch people to South West Africa is virtually non-existent (80 in 4 years, labourers of Steens included). I could not deduce any feeling of unity or attachment to the Netherlands from conversations. Neither is there anybody to take the initiative and one cannot expect this from Dr Jorissen. There are very few consular activities and these are limited to passport matters and now and then to the supplying of trade information. From a commercial point of view South West Africa is of little importance to the Netherlands; a total population of 30 000 whites over the vast area does not present any significant market for Dutch products. Moreover, the current import restrictions of the

Union (the Union of South Africa) also apply, which do not allow for the import of new articles.

Because of the above-mentioned reasons it would definitely not be justifiable to place a career consular official in Windhoek. An honorary consul would be more than enough, but the problem is to find a suitable person as Dr Jorissen is withdrawing. The only countries that have consular representatives in Windhoek are Denmark and France. By order of his government the Belgian consul in Cape Town is also going to Windhoek for a 'visite d'orientation' to see if it is important for Belgium to open a consular office there. The Belgian government, however, is not thinking of sending a career official. I asked the consul if he would notify me of the result of his visit. Perhaps Mr Van Lede does find somebody whom he would seem fit to act as honorary consul for Belgium, in which case this person may be willing to handle the Dutch interests at the same time. This would also answer to the Benelux idea."

At the same time the replacement of the outgoing vice-consul in Swakopmund, Mr W.J. Riesle, caused a second problem. The Dutch consul general from Cape Town, Dr H.J. Levelt, who was responsible for this matter of succession, realised that he was dealing with a difficult situation. To find people with consular skills, who had an amiable character and were at the same time willing to handle the Netherlands' affairs, had never in the past been an easy task. Besides, Dr Levelt wondered "...if there still was sufficient reason to keep a vice-consulate going in Swakopmund".

With this in mind he left for South West Africa in November 1951 to ascertain for himself what the situation was. His findings were "... that most Dutch people in Windhoek were building artisans who were recruited by the contractor L.A. Steens from the Netherlands for the building of a post office and a church. The construction of these two buildings had been completed in the meantime and since then most of the building artisans had left Windhoek. There is no active Dutch colony in Windhoek whatsoever", stated Dr Levelt.

Dr Levelt was somewhat disdainful in his remarks about Swakopmund:

"My visit to Swakopmund convinced me that the continued existence of the vice-consulate makes no sense

her older brother Martin, her two younger sisters Toos and Rianneke and father Janus settled in well, her mother Riet became homesick. She never left Namibia for good but decided to visit the Netherlands more regularly.

“I don’t know much about Holland anymore,” says Ria. “But a small piece always remains.” Looking around her house in the Windhoek suburb of Eros the evidence can clearly be seen. Plates and vases of Delft porcelain, hand made embroideries of a windmill and a fisherman clinging a pipe between his lips. Ria stands up and walks over to a cupboard to take out a cookie box; an orange cookie box with photographs of the royal family. “I was born on the same day as queen Beatrix,” explains 67-year-old Ria. Her mother brought her all these gifts after trips to the Netherlands. But Ria has never been back, never felt the need actually. Maybe now she would like to see her mother country. “But what reason is there for me to go back. I don’t know anyone there. I know the clients I used to work for better than my family in Holland.”

It is funny how things change, reflects Ria. Just after the Second World War people wanted to leave the war torn country to seek a better and possibly prosperous life overseas. “Now it’s the other way around. Children here are leaving to live in London and the rest of Europe.” Ria has decided to stay in Windhoek. She states this is her home now. She prefers living in the Namibian capital even above a luxurious house at the coast. “Everything is lekker here. People are nice to me and I’ve established a good reputation.” No, Namibia is her motherland now with a little space in her heart for the country where she was born. That never changes.

Interview and photo by Arjen de Boer.

whatsoever. *Swakopmund is a place of about one square mile, built in the sand of the coast. When one leaves the town, one stands in the middle of a desert. It is a typical German place, and the roundabout 1200 Europeans comprise 90% German speakers, who, according to Mr Riesle, have not yet discarded their Nazi sympathies. There are four Dutch families in Swakopmund. Except for a small tannery for sealskins, there are no industries in Swakopmund. Swakopmund is but a small bathing place with a few not too bad hotels, where the inhabitants of the hot central areas of South West Africa go during the summer months to cool down.*"

After this report of his negative findings the consul general could hardly do anything else than advise the ambassador in Pretoria to close down the vice-consulate in Swakopmund and place it under the jurisdiction of the consulate in Windhoek. The ambassador, in turn, gave the Minister of Foreign Affairs this advice for consideration, and under the Royal Decree of 22 January 1952 the vice-consulate in Swakopmund was closed.

New Dutch initiative at the end of the 1950s

Consul general, Mr N.A.C. Slotemaker de Bruïne, showed renewed interest regarding South West Africa. In May 1959 he visited the area and herewith followed in the footsteps of the honorary consul, Mr J.G. Beekman, who had already in 1956 investigated the possibilities for expansion of Dutch exports to the Windhoek area. Mr N.A.C. Slotemaker de Bruïne had not visited the region since 1953 and wanted to re-acquaint himself with the developments in especially Walvis Bay, seeing that the Dutch Contracting Company had signed a new contract to do dredging work in the harbour and to deepen the approach canal deeper. This meant that the company again sent labourers to Walvis Bay. Once again the question arose whether it was not time to establish a vice-consulate in Walvis Bay (at the same time including Swakopmund). Some Dutch people in Walvis Bay had suggested such a decision. Mr Slotemaker de Bruïne was of the opinion that the suggestion deserved support if a suitable person for the position of vice-consul could be found. In the report on his official journey to South West he raised the following arguments, pleading for the opening of a vice-consulate in Walvis Bay:

"Walvis Bay is expanding fast, it is estimated that the population will double every 6 to 8 years. In 1953 the population was about 3 000, currently it is 6000, a population of 12 000 inhabitants is expected in 1967;

Three or four times a year a Dutch ship calls at the Walvis Bay harbour, apart from passing emigrant ships that call irregularly;

Now and then there are incidents for which consular assistance is necessary. Up to now advice or assistance has been rendered by the firm Mann George, which has a young Dutchman, Mr Pracht in its service. But this is not sufficient;

Whether the expansion of the harbour will bring more Dutch ships to Walvis Bay, is a question, but one should pay attention to the possibility;

Norway, Finland and Belgium have an (honorary) vice-consul in Walvis Bay, and France has a consular agent. In a few months Sweden will also open a vice-consulate;

Since October 1958 Walvis Bay has had its own magistrate. In the past it fell under the jurisdiction of Swakopmund."

In spite of this strong plea, the ministry decided not to re-open a vice-consulate on the coast.

Windhoek remained the only Dutch representation in South West Africa. Although the big wave of migration from the Netherlands to the area remained wanting, a few Dutch people set off for South West in the middle fifties, mainly for work in the mines at Tsumeb and Oranjemund. It seemed as if the Dutch community in South West felt at home and were happy with the opportunities offered by the country. This at least emerges from a report compiled by Cape Town consul general D. van Eysinga about his official journey to South West Africa in September 1964.

That the mutual contact between the Dutch people living in and near to Windhoek became closer appears from the fact that a local Dutch Club saw the light in 1959. The association undertook activities on social-cultural level, dance and film evenings were organised and members' meetings were arranged so that the committee could keep the members updated with all the matters of interest concerning the Dutch people in the region. 83 members were mentioned in 1962, the number referring only to family heads.

Consul's claim for immunity is turned down

Sometimes incidents with honorary consuls happened. These newspaper cuttings from South African newspapers report that Dutch honorary consul in Windhoek, Johan van Zyl claimed diplomatic immunity from prosecution for reckless and negligent driving. The claim by Mr van Zyl, who was a South African citizen, was not accepted and he was eventually sentenced. Cuttings from the archives of the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs.

in The STAR *20-2-64*

Consul not immune from prosecution

AN EXCEPTION taken on behalf of the Netherlands Consul for South West Africa on the grounds that he had diplomatic immunity against criminal charges was dismissed by Mr. K. G. Steenkamp in the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court today.

The court ruled that while consuls could be given certain privileges and immunities by means of international agreements the post as such did not confer immunity from the jurisdiction of local courts.

Johannes Hendrik van Zyl (42) of Flamingo Court Hillbrow, was appearing on a charge of driving under the influence of liquor or alternatively of reckless and negligent driving.

Today the State called Mr. A. F. Drake, a foreign service officer in the protocol section of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

He said the department kept a register of the names of persons entitled to diplomatic immunity. Van Zyl's name was not in the register and had never been in it.

Replying to Van Zyl's counsel, Mr. G. Fourie, he said consular officers were not listed.

Mr. Fourie argued that the fact that a name did not appear in the register was not conclusive proof that it was not entitled to be there.

In his judgment, the magistrate said the posts enjoying immunity under the Act were well defined and he could not accept that a consul fell under the post "diplomatic agent" as argued by the defence.

Mr. Steenkamp said that Van Zyl was a citizen of South Africa, and the authorities were clear that where a consul who is a national of a receiving country is appointed as consul of another country, he has virtually no privilege at all.

The case was adjourned till March 24.

20 Februarie 1964

Saak teen Nederlandse konsul uitgestel

'n twee-en-veertigjarige Nederlandse konsul vir Suidwes-Afrika, Johannes Hendrik van Zyl, van Flamingohof, Hillbrow, het gister in die Johannesburgse landdroshof voor mnr. K. G. C. Steenkamp verskyn op 'n aanklag dat hy 'n motor onder die invloed van sterk drank bestuur het.

Beuk se prokureur, mnr. J. S. G. Coetzee, het aangevoer dat Van Zyl diplomatieke immunitet geniet en dus nie aan kriminele vervolging onderworpe is nie.

GOEDGEKEUR

Van Zyl is op 8 Junie 1958 reeds aangestel as die Nederlandse konsul vir Suidwes-Afrika. Suid-Afrika was destyds nog 'n lid van die Statebond en sy aanstelling is in 1959 deur die koningin goedgekeur.

Die goedkeuringstifikaat is, ook deur die destydse Minister van Buitelandse Sake, mnr. Eric Louw, onderteken. Ingevolge die Wet op Privilegie van 1951 mag hy dus nie in enige hof binne die grense van die Republiek vervolgt word nie, het mnr. Coetzee gesê.

Geen getuënis is voorgelê nie en die saak is uitgestel tot 20 Februarie. Mnr. F. Nel tree namens die Staat op.

The consulate in Windhoek had acquired a firmer foundation since the Dutch Bank of South Africa opened an office there. During the 1960s the bank would often make one of its employees available to fill the position of consul. The consuls in succeeded each other at short intervals in the 1950s and 1960s. On average a consul remained in his post for about three years after which he, mostly due to transfer, had to hand over to a successor. The quest for a suitable successor regularly caused problems for the consul general in Cape Town. Although the Dutch community consisted of approximately 500 people in the middle 1960s, it was, according to different file notes, a difficult task every time to come up with the right person for the position.

The choice was not always a good one. This happened in 1963. In September of that year Mr J.H. van Zijl laid down his position as consul. When he was arrested on 16 November 1963 for driving under the influence, he had the audacity to claim diplomatic immunity. This matter came to the attention of the media which naturally caused a blemish on Mr Van Zijl's character. Besides, Van Zijl brought shame to the Netherlands with his action, that, according to some people " ... meant a slur on the Dutch authority in South West Africa and of the Dutch people there". This incident ended with an official statement was issued from the Dutch side, which said:

"In accordance with the law on diplomatic privileges of 1951 career nor honorary consular officials do enjoy any diplomatic immunity, the same as officials attached to diplomatic missions who have South African nationality. Mr J. van Zijl, who moreover is a South African citizen, can therefore not claim diplomatic immunity."

Succession crisis in Windhoek

Finding a suitable person for the position of consul in Windhoek was therefore not always easy. Especially the succession of Mr E.J. Sparrius in 1970 was an arduous process. The consul general from Cape Town wrote to the ambassador in Pretoria that the Dutch colony could not provide any suitable candidate. The only suggestion was to appoint Mr Horst Oppel, owner of a prestigious travel agency in Windhoek. He was a German national and spoke Dutch fluently as he had been employed by KLM in Frankfurt for five years. The consul general was positive about Mr Horst Oppel, but there was too much resistance to allow a person of German descent to handle Dutch interests in Windhoek. The ambassador in Pretoria wrote that in view of possible economic espionage he objected to the appointment of Mr Horst Oppel. Although the consul general could smooth away most of the ambassador's misgivings, it did not end with the appointment of the only available candidate.

That this succession crisis would have serious consequences is clear from the fact that the Dutch consulate in Windhoek officially closed its doors on 1 January 1970. It would be twenty years before there was again mention of representation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in South West Africa.

This did not mean that there was no Dutch involvement with South West Africa during this period. To the contrary. The growing criticism in Dutch society of colonialism and apartheid in Southern Africa and the changes this also brought to Dutch government policy are described elsewhere in this publication. But nearly all of this took place in the Netherlands.

Independence and an office for development cooperation

For a number of years the Dutch government hesitated to support United Nations resolutions for the independence of Namibia. In the 1960's this policy gradually changed and in 1966 the Dutch representative at the UN supported for the first time a resolution to end the South African control of Namibia. After a while the Dutch government also indicated that it was willing to



Cornélie van Waegeningh, Chargé d'Affaires of the Netherlands in December 1993 with three of the men in her life. From left Dutch ambassador Johan Leeffmans from Harare, Namibian minister of Foreign Affairs Theo-Ben Gurirab and Hans Gompelman, her partner. Photo reproduced from Tempo, 6th December 1993

Fifteen years ago she considered the political and economic development of Namibia to be her working field. Nowadays she feels as much responsible for the protection of the typical Dutch countryside around her provincial hometown of Woerden against the unlimited expansion of industrial sites. Cornélie van Waegeningh welcomes her visitor in a redecorated old country cottage, where Namibian music is playing. Offering a glass of Amarula liqueur she starts digging in her memories.

'During a United Nations conference, Dutch minister for Development Co-operation, Jan Pronk, had pledged Netherlands support including a development office in the newly independent Namibia. He wanted to support the newly independent country. At the time, I had worked in the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs and international aid organisations for a number of years. I happened to see the vacancy notice for the Development Office Co-ordinator in a magazine and I applied for the position. The Netherlands did have no intention to give diplomatic status to the representation. The ambassador in Harare was accredited to Namibia. It was also this embassy that was arranging for my coming to Namibia. Waiting in Holland, one day the Head of the Personnel Department asked me: "What are you waiting for? Do you have a diplomatic passport and do you want to go?" "Yes", I said and so I went, with a cheque of USD 10,000 in my pocket.'

'Namibia was vibrant when I arrived in 1992. The economy was expanding continuously. My position was peculiar and exceptional in diplomatic terms as I was going to run a 'development co-operation office', without an official status, though paid for by the Netherlands Government while I was holding a diplomatic passport. It was my main task to set up a regular development programme and since the office was not a diplomatic

representation of the Netherlands, I could work in relative calm and anonymity. I also did not always wait for The Hague. Whenever I needed formal agreement from the ministry, my lines of communication were very short: I rang somebody I knew, they advised me and I went ahead. I got a lot of room to manoeuvre and I took it all. Sometimes I felt the tension between the requirements of The Hague and the interests of Namibia. For example between the need for the Netherlands minister to spend his annual budget, as he wanted to 'score' you might say, and the time needed for the Namibians to allow their ideas to mature. I did everything possible to provide the Namibians the room they needed and so I did not spend my budget during that first period. I felt I had to do it that way. Ultimately The Netherlands has invested a lot of money in a very thoroughly prepared water programme with community involvement – pipelines, purification works etc. – in the north, followed later by a nation-wide and huge Adult Literacy Programme.'

'The Ministry had initially envisaged that I would rent a house and have my office at home, but after some time I had to look for a separate office and for staff. I did everything on my own: setting up a financial system and a filing system, buying furniture, organising computers, etc. etc. My husband and I recruited the staff: marvellous people, they are all still there, except one who has passed away. We deliberately looked for a secretary who spoke Afrikaans, for the communication with The Hague and in case the office would be upgraded into an Embassy office. However, the government did not have this intention; in this period the Dutch were much more interested in Eastern Europe.'

'So I had a lot of liberty. On the other hand I did not fit in the normal flow of communication and procedures of The Hague. I remember attending a Round Table pledging conference for donors organised by the Namibian National Planning Commission, when the whole of southern Africa was hit by a severe drought. It was shortly after my arrival and I was thanked for a large amount already donated by the Netherlands that I was not aware of. I was flabbergasted to learn this and remember apologising for my ignorance by saying that my fax was not yet working. The Hague had simply forgotten about me. Not on purpose: the director of the personnel department in the ministry of Foreign Affairs, whom I knew well, kept on sending me little postcards with the message: 'Keep it up, we are working on it'. This lasted for more than a year. I did everything using my personal network. This also meant that I had a better connection with the 'civil society' in Holland (the KZA, the churches, DOG, COV), than with the Dutch government.'

'The Namibians on the other hand were really very pleased with the Dutch representation and they supported me a lot. In the first week of my presence I spoke to a senior member of staff of the National Planning Commission who said: "For us you are the ambassador, since the head of the Swedish development cooperation office SIDA is also the ambassador of Sweden."'

'The first half year the workload grew by the day and so I unfortunately ended up in hospital, it was too much work. In December 1992 I got assistance from the Ministry. A temporary Head of Administration arrived, a very experienced and dedicated man, by far my senior in all respects. When we went to the airport to collect him my husband reminded me that I was supposed to be the boss, which was a new phase in my co-ordinatorship. I am afraid I had become a rather unconventional diplomat.'

'After one year and a half the office acquired the status of embassy. I became 'Chargé

d'affaires a.i.' (Tijdelijk Zaakgelastigde) and finally we were fully mainstreamed in the circuits of The Hague. This meant that we could benefit now from all support and other services applicable to all diplomatic missions. The Namibian staff got better contracts, official procedures were introduced, security got stricter and a few months later we started handling passports and visa. By now we also received all other information needed for the work, including Dutch newspapers. After the one-and-a-half years of 'non status' we all were very happy about this, despite the stricter rules that had come with the promotion. The pioneering period was over. In the co-operation efforts we continued to give the Namibians the opportunity to develop and implement their own plans, like the adult literacy programme, and the environmental profiling. The new University of Namibia also received a lot of support from the Netherlands.'

'Although Minister Pronk had wanted to invest in the bilateral co-operation with Namibia for 20-25 years, this viewpoint changed when Minister Herfkens took over. She considered Namibia "too rich" and restricted the programme to mainly support for good governance. Namibia never got the status of a "least developed country". Yes indeed, the overall figures for the average income per head are too high, but the distribution of wealth between the ethnic groups is still very much askew. Looking at macro-figures only has been detrimental for Namibia's relationships with donors, many of them are gradually withdrawing.'

'But Namibia is still vulnerable: in its infrastructure, in its transport, to drought and in terms of health.' At this point in time Cornélie van Waegeningh gets passionate about the donor oriented way of arguing: 'Just look at the region! Why not be honest and admit that historical ties between Namibia and the Netherlands are strong! Not only the linguistic ties, and the 'apartheid' legacy, but also the fact that Namibia's legal system is based upon the Roman Dutch law principles. Or take into account the personal relationships that have been forged during the liberation struggle, the contacts between churches, the NGOs, and volunteers who have been working in the country. Even the attitude of the "boers" of Namibia betrays their Dutch roots. Southern Africa is a huge and vulnerable region, particularly Namibia, which is over 22 times the size of the Netherlands. What representation will we have to provide political, socio-economic and environmental analyses?'

'After Namibia I went back to the Netherlands, first to the ministry and after three years I left the public service and started my own consultancy company. However, Namibia was not forgotten. Two years later, in 1997, at an exhibition of photographs from Namibia, I met some people from my time in Windhoek and we all appeared interested to do something about Namibia. We got together, and though it started like a reunion, with biltong and the like, we decided to establish an organisation called 'Namibia Contact'

Last but not least, two years ago Cornélie was asked to become one of two Honorary Consuls of Namibia in the Netherlands. She is consulted by the Namibian embassy in Brussels mainly on developmental and other relationships between the two countries. Namibia is part of her life.

Interview by Carla Schuddeboom

provide personnel to UN missions. The initial discussion was about medical staff. But it was not until 1989 that the UN approached the Dutch government with a request to supply police officers for the period of one year to be involved in the organisation and security of the pre-independence election. Because of a re-organisation of the Dutch police force at the time, the government decided to provide military police personnel. The main contingent of Dutch military police to be attached to the CIVPOL (civilian police) in Namibia arrived in the country on 15th April 1989. Between July 1989 and March 1990 there were permanently about 60 Dutch officers in the country. The last left nearly a month after the independence celebrations.

During the transition to the independence the Netherlands had to think about whether and in which way how it wanted to be officially represented during transition and after independence. In March 1989 the Netherlands sought advice from her partners in the European Political Cooperation group. It appeared that some European countries would establish an observation mission for the transitional period. These included Denmark, the German Federal Republic, Spain, France, Italy, Portugal and the United Kingdom). A number of countries, including the Netherlands, decided against it (Belgium, Greece, Ireland and Luxembourg). Most countries had not yet decided what to do after independence.

The decision taken by the Netherlands was laid down in a memo of the Directorate Africa and Middle-East, dated 1 February 1990:

“The conclusion is co-accreditation from Harare, with the possible opening an office locally if in the future a substantial development co-operation relationship with Namibia is entered into.”

On 21st March 1990 Namibia became independent. The Dutch government was represented by Mr M. van der Stoep (former Minister of Foreign Affairs), Mr J.G.W. Faber (Ambassador in Harare), Mr E. Roell Esq. (director for Africa and Middle East) and Dr R.H. Cohen (first embassy secretary in Pretoria).

In June 1992, the Dutch consulate in Windhoek was reopened and Mr P.K. Riddle, a British Shell manager, was appointed honorary consul. Some months earlier,

in February 1992, an office for development cooperation was opened in Windhoek, headed by Mrs C.M. van Waegeningh. After operating for a while from the home of Mrs Van Waegeningh, an office was rented on the corner of Crohnstreet and Bahnhof Street. It was officially opened on 2nd November 1992 by the minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Theo-Ben Gurirab. In the meantime, the ambassador in Harare remained co-accredited in Namibia. Nearly two years a situation existed where consular matters were handled by the honorary consul, development co-operation by the head of the new office and diplomatic matters directly by the embassy in Harare.

On 1st July 2003 the office for development co-operation was elevated to the status of embassy through a retroactive Royal Decree, dated 6th September 1993. Mrs Van Waegeningh was appointed Chargé d’Affaires a.i.. Initially the authority of the new embassy remained restricted to development co-operation and “limited authority for political matters”. The ambassador in Harare continued close supervision of the Windhoek office and consular matters remained the responsibility of the honorary consul. The relations between these three parties were not always smooth and co-operative. Namibians but also Dutch residents got sometimes confused when they wanted to deal with the Netherlands representation. Clarity increased when honorary consul Mr PK Riddle left the country and handed in his resignation. On 1st October 1994, the honorary consulate in Windhoek was closed down to open the way for a full-fledged embassy. The situation was finally resolved when on 23rd December 1994 the ministry authorised the new embassy to deal also with consular matters and trade promotion.

The Netherlands embassy in Windhoek 1994-2006

Over time the number of staff at the embassy increased to eight persons. Soon after her arrival in Namibia, Mrs Van Waegeningh recruited a driver, a secretary and a cleaning lady. All three continued to work for the embassy until the closure in 2006. They were joined in 1997 by a financial officer and in 2002 by a part-time consular and visa officer. With respect to Dutch staff, the minis-



From development co-operation office to embassy

The official Coat of Arms for the new embassy has arrived with the diplomatic pouch. The two persons on the left are Rina Isaacs and Michael Afrikaner, who both still work at the embassy. Photo courtesy of Cornélie van Waegeningh.



Tree planting to commemorate the opening of the embassy

Minister of Foreign Affairs Theo-Ben Gurirab (left) is seen planting an Ebony tree with ambassador Johan Leefmans from Harare (right) in the embassy compound. Second from left is Cornélie van Waegeningh. She was promoted from Head of the development co-operation office to Chargé d'Affaires of the Netherlands and Head of Mission at the establishment of a Netherlands embassy on 1st July 1993. Photo by Hans Gompelman.



Toos van Helvoort and the Queen of Kayengona

This picture shows Toos van Helvoort (right) on a courtesy visit in 1995 to Angeline Matumbo waNankali, Queen of Kayengona in Kavango (left) during a tour to the north of Namibia. Toos van Helvoort, who worked in Namibia from 1985 to 1996, received the decoration of Knight in the Order of Orange-Nassau in 1995 for her courageous support to the health programme of the Catholic Church in Ombalantu, often confronting the South African authorities. Photo courtesy of Cornélie van Waegeningh.



Co-operation minister Jan Pronk visiting projects in Namibia

In May 1996 minister for Development Co-operation Jan Pronk visited Namibia. In this photo, taken in Oshakati, he is accompanied by Nangolo Mbumba, minister of Agriculture (and Water Affairs) and Desirée Bonis, the Head of Mission of the Royal Netherlands Embassy. The visit was during Mr Pronk's second term as minister for Development Co-operation. Pronk was also one of the key persons in the Dutch government from 1973 to 1977 to change the Dutch position towards South Africa. This opened the way for contacts with SWAPO and support for the liberation movement in Namibia. Photo courtesy of Desirée Bonis.



The Pelican, a Dutch tugboat for the port of Lüderitz

The tugboat Pelican was supplied in 1993 by shipyard Damen from the Netherlands to TransNamib to serve the port of Lüderitz. The transaction was financed by a soft loan through the ORET programme, in support of economic development. Photo by Hans Gompelman.

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Heineken, brewed in Windhoek

In 2002 Heineken Brewers from the Netherlands bought 15% of the shares of Namibia Breweries which became the distributor of the Dutch brand in Southern Africa. After a special production line was installed, Heineken Export beer is now brewed in Windhoek. The photo was taken on 4th September 2004, when the first batch of the new brand was bottled. Photo by Henrick van Asch van Wijck.

try of Foreign Affairs posted an administrative officer in 1992 and in 1997 a first embassy secretary, who would also be deputy head of mission. While the Dutch ambassador in Harare remained co-accredited to Namibia and usually visited the country once or twice per year, Windhoek operated in practice as an independent embassy, also in contacts with The Hague and the government of Namibia.

Most of the work of the embassy was related to the programme for development co-operation, that is described in some detail in an other chapter in this book. After 1996, when the ministry delegated most responsibility for bilateral development co-operation to the Dutch embassies in partner countries, the embassy staff had the authority to manage the development activities from inception to closure. The Head of Mission could commit aid funds on the basis of approved annual plans without further referring to The Hague. The speed and flexibility with which Dutch aid could be made available was soon discovered and made the embassy a popular partner for many Namibian and international institutions. Apart from larger contributions to mainstream projects, the embassy supported hundreds of small activities of local NGO's and developed thus an extensive network in Namibian society.

Promotion of trade and investment between Namibia and the Netherlands has also been an aspect of the work of the embassy. It increased in importance when grant aid was reduced and the motto became "trade, not aid for development". Although modest successes can be claimed, this was never easy, due to the small market Namibia provides, its limited offer of export products and the competition of big neighbour South Africa. Total trade between the two countries presently does not amount to much more than about € 5 million of import goods from the Netherlands into Namibia and about € 15 million exports from Namibia to the Netherlands. Nearly all exports are food products from game meat to grapes. This excludes the income Namibia gets from the increasing number of Dutch tourists. In 2003 the Dutch were the third largest number of overseas visitors to Namibia, after those from Germany and the United Kingdom.

Trade promotion took many forms such as provision of

trade information by telephone, e-mail and publications to interested parties. Practical help and information was supplied to potential Dutch investors who approached the embassy. The embassy also financed expertise , studies and meetings to try to enlarge Namibia's exports to the European Union. Of a different nature is the PUM programme. Since a number of years PUM provides annually ten or more experienced advisers or managers year for short missions to advise Namibian SME's, normally in the private sector. The programme is represented in Windhoek by a Dutch entrepreneur.

Two meetings were organised where potential investors and trade partners could meet with Namibian business representatives. The first of these was in March 1998 parallel to the visit of President Sam Nujoma to the Netherlands. The second Namibia-Netherlands Business Forum was organised in Zoeterwoude in November 2005 through the Namibian embassy in Brussels and the Southern Africa Netherlands Economic Co-operation organisation (SANEC). The host was Heineken, the beer brewers. As part of its strategy to increase its share of the southern African beer market, Heineken bought about 15% of the Namibia Breweries shares in 2003. After a period when Dutch Heineken beer was only distributed from Windhoek, the famous brand is now brewed in Windhoek, alongside the local brands. Heineken is the largest Dutch investor in Namibia. Other Dutch investments are relatively small and are mainly related to tourism. An important instrument for Dutch investment in Namibia and Namibian investment in the Netherlands is the Agreement on Encouragement and Reciprocal Protection of Investments that was signed on 26th November 2002 and later ratified by the parliaments of both countries.

The availability of consular and visa services at the embassy has been a useful facility for Dutch passport holders and Namibians and other residents wanting to travel to Europe. The embassy also handled visa for the European partners Belgium, Luxemburg and Greece, who have no embassy in the country. About 400 visa were issued annually.



President Nujoma received by Queen Beatrix

Mr Sam Nujoma had visited the Netherlands several times. Initially he came as a guest of the anti-apartheid movement, lobbying for support for the Namibian cause. From 1973 onwards he was received by the Dutch government and held discussions with cabinet ministers and prime minister Den Uyl. This photo was taken on 26th March 1998 during his official visit to the Netherlands as President of Namibia when he was received by Queen Beatrix. On the left is Prince Willem Alexander and on the right Prince Claus, the husband of Queen Beatrix. Photo by Tabby Moyo.

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PRINCE WITH A CAUSE ... Prince Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands (centre) paid a two-day visit to Namibia on Monday and Tuesday to assess the situation of arid countries and the limitations and opportunities this offers for the sustainable management of scarce water resources. He also had closed discussions with Agriculture Minister Helmut Angula before proceeding to South Africa. The Prince is scheduled to chair the second World Water Forum to be held in the Hague, The Netherlands, from March 17 to 22. Photo: Tabby Moyo

The water management Prince visits Namibia

This newspaper cutting is from the Namibian which reported on the visit by Prince Willem-Alexander to Namibia in March 2000. On the left is ambassador Beatrix Ambags from Harare, on the right Bert Diphoom from the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs. Reproduced from The Namibian.

Official visits

The presence of an Embassy as a symbol of enhanced relations and activities probably also contributed to an increasing number of official visits in both directions. The most important of these was the visit of president Dr Sam Nujoma to the Netherlands from 25th to 29th March 1998. As SWAPO president, Dr Nujoma had of course visited the Netherlands several times in the 1970's and 1980's. He already knew a number of Dutch politicians and the leadership of the anti-apartheid movement in the Netherlands.

This time he came as Head of State with a delegation of three cabinet ministers and other dignitaries. Parallel to the official visit an economic delegation of 14 persons visited the Netherlands. The newspapers reported successful talks and announced even direct flights between Amsterdam by Air Namibia. They were probably too optimistic because such flights never took place.

President Nujoma was received by Queen Beatrix. He and his delegation visited a modern dairy farm, he toured the harbour of Rotterdam, one of the large container terminals there and visited an off-shore oil drilling platform. There were also various meetings with the minister for Development Co-operation and the minister for International Trade, members of parliament and representatives of the financial sector. And of course the old friends of Namibia were not forgotten. A meeting and various other manifestations were held in the town of Nieuwegein, partner of Rundu in Namibia. During the meeting documents about the Dutch support to the liberation of Namibia and SWAPO in particular were handed over by the Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa, which is a merger of the various anti-colonial and anti-apartheid organisations in the country.

Several other official visits are recorded in the files of the embassy. Mr Theo-Ben Gurirab visited the country twice, once as minister of Foreign Affairs, once as Prime Minister. Also Hidipo Hamutenya and Immanuel Ngatjizeko went to the Netherlands as ministers for Trade and Industry to promote economic co-operation. Mr Hamutenya even received the 2003 FDI Personality of the year award in Amsterdam. This prestigious award is bestowed by the London Financial Times

The independence of Namibia and the establishment of the embassy also opened the way for official Dutch visits to Namibia. In 1996 both the minister for Development Co-operation, Jan Pronk and the minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van Mierlo visited Namibia. Mr Pronk came in May and spent three days in the country. He flew to the north and visited water projects in Ruacana and Oshakati, He was received by president Nujoma and met several ministers. In October Mr Hans van Mierlo participated in the SADC-EU ministerial conference that was held in Windhoek. He also used the opportunity to visit some projects that received Dutch support.

A royal visitor who came to Namibia twice was Willem Alexander, the Prince of Orange. Both visits were related to his special interest in water management. In preparation for the Second World Water Forum in 2000, that would be chaired by the Prince, he visited southern African countries. He arrived in Namibia from Victoria Falls on 6th March 2000 and spent two days travelling by car, helicopter and airplane to visit and observe water catchments and water projects and talk to stakeholders in the sector. The second visit was in November 2004, when the Prince participated in meetings of water management researchers and practitioners from Southern Africa. A last royal visitor was Princess Margriet who was in Namibia from 27th to 31st March 2006. She was the guest of the Red Cross Society of Namibia and visited Red Cross activities in Windhoek and the Caprivi Region.

Closure of the embassy and return to a honorary consulate

The council of ministers of the Dutch government in its meeting of 24th June 2005 decided to close the embassy in Windhoek. This followed on the reduction of the number of partner countries for development co-operation from more than 60 to 39. This decision had been taken in 2003 and communicated to the government of Namibia. On account of its relatively high income, Namibia was among the countries where bilateral aid was to be stopped. An exit programme was drafted and implemented in 2004 and 2005. The first half year of 2006 was used to wind up business and transfer visa services to the German embassy. It was decided to



Celebration of ten years Royal Netherlands Embassy in Windhoek.

On 26th November 2002 the ten-year anniversary of the opening of the office at Crohn Street was celebrated. Guest of Honour was Namibia's minister of Foreign Affairs, Hidipo Hamutenya, standing in the centre in this photo. To the right is Willem Aalmans, Head of Mission of the embassy from 2000 to 2004. On the same day Namibia and the Netherlands signed an agreement about reciprocal encouragement and protection of investments. Photo by Gerard Botha.



The embassy team in 2006

The Royal Netherlands Embassy in Windhoek had eight members of staff in 2006. From left to right; Anne-Eva Thiadens (head of consular and general affairs), Rosy Boois (household), Marlies van Velsen (consular officer) Miller Reinecke (financial and administrative officer), Hans Poley (deputy head of mission), Rina Isaacs (secretary), Huub Hendrix (head of mission) and Michael Afrikaner (driver). Photo by Steven van den Berg.

change the co-accreditation of the Netherlands ambassador to Namibia from Harare to Pretoria and re-open a honorary consulate in Windhoek. The official date of closure of the embassy is 30th June 2006. At the time of printing, the opening date of the honorary consulate was not yet known.

Chapter 8

Bilateral development co-operation 1991 - 2006

About 55 million euro was spent on bilateral development cooperation between 1991 and 2005. Rural water supply, education, environment, support to ex-combatants and good governance were sectors and subjects in which the two countries co-operated productively. In 2003 the Dutch government decided to reduce the number of partner countries for bilateral aid. As a result, the programme in Namibia was wound up by the end of 2005. Considerable Dutch support through multilateral agencies, regional programmes and NGO's will continue. Dutch policy, much more than Namibian preferences was responsible for major changes and the eventual disappearance of the bilateral programme.



Hans Poley

Hans Poley studied sociology of non-western countries at the University of Leiden. He worked for UNDP on assignments in Latin America, before joining the ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1979. After several positions in the Directorate General for International Co-operation, he was posted to Burkina Faso in 1996, followed by Rwanda and Namibia. He is Deputy Head of Mission and head of development co-operation at the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Windhoek.



President Sam Nujoma inspects water project

President Sam Nujoma visits the site of the Oshakati-Omakongo water pipeline in March 1992. Among the officials accompanying the president are the director general for Water Development (with necktie) Pedro Maritz. The lady in the group is Cornélie van Waegeningh, at the time head of the Dutch development co-operation office. Development of drinking water facilities was the first priority sector in the bilateral co-operation programme between Namibia and the Netherlands. Photo by Hans Goetze, DWA.



Community participation in water development

The project strategy for the water supply schemes included community contributions by helping to dig the trenches for the pipes. It also included the operation of the new systems through water point committees. An important part of the projects was the training of these committees and of technicians. Photo by Hans Goetze, DWA.

An overview of 15 years of bilateral aid

Dutch bilateral development involvement in Southern Africa began in the 1960s in Zambia. The Netherlands government has generally supported the newly independent states with the reconstruction of their infrastructure, institutions and societies following years of armed liberation struggle. Angola and Mozambique were aided after 1975 and Zimbabwe from 1980 onwards. After supporting the anti-apartheid movement for decades through non-governmental channels until 1990 in Namibia and until 1994 in South Africa, the regime changes in Windhoek and Pretoria opened the way for official Dutch support.

Namibia at independence in 1990 was a popular country among donors: the latest to be decolonised, with a modern and firm constitution, in a region where apartheid was showing cracks but was nonetheless very much prevalent. According to the going standards, Namibia was a lower middle-income country. This picture of relative affluence was marred however by an income distribution which was extremely skewed. Rich Namibians live in the globalized first world whereas the mass of poor Namibians live in a fourth world of their own. Most donors arrived in Namibia with the message that they were happy to join in a transition from apartheid to a democratic society, but that they would be around for that transitional period only. Over time poorer countries would regain priority.

In February 1992 the Netherlands opened a development co-operation office in Windhoek. It was agreed with the National Planning Commission that during the transition period the Dutch would support the creation of access to basic services, in particular rural water supply and basic education for adults. These sectors have effectively formed the core of the Dutch programme around which other activities such as environmental projects and co-operation with the Universities developed. Over time, the character of the programme shifted from the financing of construction activities and equipment to capacity building and institutional development.

From the outset the relationship was based on Namibian 'ownership' of projects and programmes. The Na-

mibian authorities managed the implementation of the development activities to which the Dutch contributed. On the basis of a proven track record Namibia was one of the first countries in which a successful transition was achieved from project aid to sectoral budget support.

Developments in the bilateral aid programme had to follow the general policy shifts in Dutch development co-operation. While these at first had facilitated the opening and build-up of a significant programme in Namibia, around the turn of the century successive governments carried through significant cutbacks.

In 1998 the Dutch Government reduced bilateral development relations from a varied group of eighty countries to a core group of about twenty countries and about forty countries with a limited co-operation programme. The criteria applied were: national income and need for aid, sound socio-economic policies and proper governance arrangements. The review had an impact on the partner countries in the Southern African region. Only Mozambique and Zambia remained in the core group. Angola had always been relying on emergency aid and Zimbabwe got access to the good governance programme. A special development relationship with South Africa was established.

Despite its many poor, it was clear from the outset that Namibia, due to its score on the first criterion, would also be relegated to the category where only limited co-operation in the form of a programme for good governance would continue. It implied that the sectoral budget support programmes in rural water supply and education were to be phased out. Also the programme for ex-combatants was to be discontinued. With a new zeal, identification was started for activities to be supported under the Good Governance programme. Annual expenses of € 1.5 million were projected for activities both with government and civil society.

In 2003 a new Dutch government carried out further reviews and reduced the number of countries to be supported by the Netherlands even more. South Africa was promoted to the list of core-countries, while the special Good Governance programme to which Namibia and Zimbabwe had access, was discontinued. Middle-income countries like Namibia were removed from the



Visit from Harare

Dutch ambassador Wim Wessels from Harare (right), who was also accredited to Namibia, joined Windhoek head of mission Cornélie van Waegeningh on a visit to the water committees in the North in 1993. Mr. Wessels is welcomed by the committee members of the Ongongo-Okalongo scheme. Photo by Hans Gompelman.

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The taps are not always flowing...

The water point is tested. The maintenance of the water schemes proved a difficult challenge that required long-term support and training. The complications were partly caused by repeated reorganisations and policy changes in the water department. Photo by Hans Gompelman.

list of countries that classified for structural bilateral development aid. An exit strategy was implemented during 2004 and 2005 to close the Dutch programme effectively by mid 2006.

This article focuses on bilateral relations and does not take into account the activities funded by the Netherlands from regional budget lines. Nor is Dutch support through the multilateral system (United Nations, European Commission, African Development Bank etc.) and through Dutch NGO's included in the description below. It also means that these forms of Dutch support will continue after the bilateral project has ended. Other chapters pay attention to co-operation between universities and municipalities, often with direct or indirect government funding.

Over the years, total external assistance for Namibia has been at a level of five per cent of GDP. In 2004, EU and member states contributed € 91.9 million. The USA contributed US\$ 33 million in that year.

During the period 1990-2006 the Netherlands has contributed an amount of nearly US\$ 80 million to development in Namibia (about € 55 million), with as main components rural water supply (€ 20 million) and education (€ 15 million) and from 2002 – 2005 governance (€ 5 million). All Dutch development assistance was offered in the form of grants.

As was indicated earlier, over time the priorities in the programme of co-operation followed the political and policy changes mainly in the Netherlands and to a lesser extent in Namibia. The sequence of the various subjects in this chapter - from rural water supply, education, environment, ex combatants, good governance and HIV/AIDS - mirrors these developments.

In a summary like this, only major trends and programmes can be highlighted. Many other contributions to improve the infrastructure and service delivery in Namibia, a diverse spectrum from the support to postal services to the supply of a tugboat for the harbour of Lüderitz, cannot be described in detail. The same goes for the technical assistance that has been provided by many organisations, both over longer periods and in the form of short backstopping missions.

Rural water supply

At independence 60% of the population, concentrated in the northern part of the country, had no access to safe water supply. The Namibian government is committed to have this figure reduced to 10% by 2010, and as far as the basic infrastructure is concerned, it has taken important steps to reach that target. The Netherlands co-operation has funded investment activities and assisted with the institutional reorganisation of the sector.

During the years 1992-97 Dutch assistance funded investment projects of drinking water and irrigation in northern Namibia. The Ogongo-Okalongo and the Os-hakati-Omakango rural water schemes were constructed in the Cuvelai river basin. The works on the Calueque dam in the Kunene river implied even activities in war-torn Angola. The works were realised by the Directorate of Rural Water Supply with Dutch technical assistance.

This aid modality of providing financial assistance with increasing own allocation margins for the Directorate and limited technical assistance worked well. Over time it was felt that the Namibian government provided a case for programme rather than project aid. Policies were in place, administrative procedures were sufficient, and in this sector there was implementation capacity over and above financial resources. This resulted in offering subsectoral budget support for the first time at the end of 1997. The consistency of government input and increased programme performance served as main monitoring criteria.

During these years the government sector went through a number of institutional re-organising exercises during which the quality of the existing capacity had to be maintained and the services had to be extended at the same time. In the early years of independence, the Department of Water Affairs underwent firstly a number of changes away from colonial arrangements. Service delivery in the whole country had to be brought together in comprehensive systems under central control to overcome the effects of segregation. Then, the system had to be decentralised to achieve sustainable management of the drinking water supply systems based on cost recovery policies. The decade saw a systematic ex-



On the site of the future Jan Ligthart Centre

Site meeting at the future Jan Ligthart Centre at the Rössing Foundation complex in Khomasdal. The construction and equipment of this adult learning centre was part of the co-operation in education. The picture was taken in 1995, when construction started. From left to right are David Godfrey, director Rössing Foundation, a staff member of the architect's office, Len le Roux of Rössing Foundation, Matthijs Everard and Cornélie van Waegeningh of the embassy, David Macharia of the Ministry of Education and the architect Kerry McNamara. Photo courtesy of Cornélie van Waegeningh.

ercise to develop a legal and institutional framework for the water sector. In 1997 the Community Based Management Programme, a 10-year effort to decentralise responsibility for water supply, came into effect.

Local responsibility by Water Point Committees also found its drawbacks and limitations. An environmental study in 1998 showed that supply of water in communal areas, intended for human consumption and other uses at household level, was 'leaking away' to cater for the needs of herds of cattle. This resulted in tightening the budget support to the Directorate's Community-based management programme and in renewed efforts to enforce environmental criteria. Yet, animal husbandry is the mainstay of society and as a result cattle wealth is considered a priority in economic as well as in social terms. Water became increasingly a potential source for conflict. Coordinated efforts to increase institutional capacity and leadership at all levels proved to be very important factors in the cooperation over time.

After 10 years of cooperation in Rural Water Supply it can be concluded that a substantial contribution was realised in basic infrastructure for water supply. Equally important, from the perspective of sustainability, is that the management and maintenance of the local systems was transferred to water users committees. This means that the end user is in control and is less dependent of central government institutions for the supply of this important service.

Education

At independence adult basic education was an important priority for Namibia's government. Literacy skills are considered a crucial ingredient to build a sustainable democratic society, and a target was set of 80% adult literates within the decade.

In 1994 the Dutch joined the Swedish SIDA, the main sponsor in this area. The Netherlands committed to the programme for five years, with the option of an extension of another five years. As in the Rural Water Supply-sector, Dutch involvement consisted of two parts: infrastructure and institutional development. The 'hardware' part consisted of the construction of a

training centre for adults at the Rössing Foundation's premises in Khomasdal. This centre carries the name of Jan Ligthart, a Dutch educationist.

The 'software' part consisted of support to the National Literacy Programme of Namibia. The adult literacy curriculum was designed in three phases for the lower primary levels, with the Dutch assisting in capacity building and development of learning materials for the intermediate phase.

The Dutch input was supported by external review and advisory missions, with a joint Namibian-Dutch membership and led by Namibian publisher Jane Katjavivi. It was found that the programme, through its literacy promoters and district literacy organisers, did reach the target groups. The diversity of languages and the limited translating capacity, however, did make the development of learning materials a complicated affair.

An evaluation conducted in 1999 was critical with regard to programme performance, but the 80%-target was declared accomplished (although any definition of literacy is debatable). On this basis attention of the programme could now shift to the upper primary levels as well as to the concept of lifelong learning.

Over time, the Dutch had also developed a parallel interest for the formal education system. In 1993 the Namibian government had published its policy paper, 'Toward education for all'. This paper singled out four priorities -access, equity, quality and democracy- that remain basically unchanged in 2006. Throughout the years, the government has dedicated a substantial part of its budget to basic education, in 2004/2005 still over 23%. In 1996 minister Pronk visited Namibia and approved the broadening of Dutch support for basic education from the adult (informal) to the regular formal education system.

Dutch development assistance has looked for possibilities to assist in the north where the bulk of the population lives. One aspect hampering the delivery of education in that area was the inherited backlog in both quality and quantity of physical infrastructure. A first contribution in this connection was made 1997 for teachers' housing. As in the water sector successive



Europe visits Dutch projects

A visit to projects financed by the European co-operation. On the right is Hanja May-Weggen, a Dutch member of the European parliament, next to her is Spanish ambassador to Namibia, Germán Zurita Y Sáenz de Navarrete. They are listening to the welcoming committee. Photo courtesy of Cornélie van Waegeningh.



Welcoming the visitors

This is the way European visitors are welcomed in the north of Namibia. Photo courtesy of Cornélie van Waegeningh.

contributions to the infrastructure programme proved a stepping-stone to subsectoral budget support, which in this case had two interesting characteristics. The process was handled by the Ministry of Basic Education, and the donors involved co-ordinated their contribution. Furthermore, the major part of the assistance, from Sweden and the Netherlands, was channelled through the State Revenue Fund. The British DFID managed its funds, for technical assistance, separately.

In 1999 a Presidential commission was tasked with producing a review and recommending the way forward. The commission, with a broad-based membership and an open working method, delivered its report to president Nujoma. Main conclusions were that the policy of creating access had been successful and now the focus should shift to issues of equity and quality.

In November 2000 new agreements between Namibia and the Netherlands were signed, committing an amount of N\$ 64 million in support of the Education sector programme. Based on the various main divisions of the ministry's budget and a draft strategic plan, financing gaps were identified. Physical infrastructure remained the major component, with additional support for adult education, teacher training and the application of a focus on marginalised children. As to institutional strengthening provisions were made to support the strategic planning exercise and policy formulation efforts.

In Basic Education, the same problems were encountered as in Rural Water Supply. The implementation of the physical infrastructure programmes was sufficiently routine to absorb the additional funds, but in the areas of capacity building and policy strengthening output was rather disappointing. Monitoring and reporting on the basis of regular internal procedures proved to be difficult as well.

Because of the reorientation of Dutch policy to Namibia the support for the education sector had to be phased out. After March 2002 the programme continued to be supported by SIDA, and the EC took the place of the Netherlands as budget supporter.

Both in Namibia and in the Netherlands mixed feelings remained about the departure of the Netherlands from the education sector. Developments in the Netherlands' budget and the creation of the concept of silent partnerships in education made it possible to consider renewed support, even without an embassy in Windhoek to monitor the programme.

During 2004 a major appraisal of the education sector (ETSIP) in Namibia was done with a view to achieve the necessary fundamental overhaul in a comprehensive manner. This programme can form the basis for harmonised donor support to an integrated education sector. The Netherlands decided to re-enter the education sector as of 2006, if a silent partnership could be worked out with the EC.

Continued support on a substantial scale is recognition of the fact that the problems of the education sector in access, equity and quality are enduring and that the Namibian Government takes the difficult but fundamental decisions to tackle these. It will take a major prolonged effort however to envisage Namibia as a Knowledge Economy, as foreseen in the longer term plans of the Government's Vision 2030.

Environment

In a smaller way, but worth highlighting, Dutch development money has been provided for projects in support of sustainable use of the Namibian environment. Capacity was developed to produce environmental profiles.

Initial support was given to a project to develop an environmental profile of the Caprivi Region of Namibia. The Caprivi Profile was produced and has proven a highly successful instrument, both in printed and digital format. It is being used both within the country and as part of transboundary planning. Work on this profile allowed Namibian scientists to build their capacity to handle large productions, based on Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

The Caprivi profile was followed by a second one, of the north-central part of Namibia, which was also financed

by the Netherlands government and done with virtually no external technical support. This product was even more advanced than the Caprivi profile and set international standards for environmental profiles. On this basis later additional profiles were made of the Okavango region and the eastern (Otjozondjupa and Omaheke) regions.

Other innovative small-scale projects were supported through the Namibia Nature Foundation and newsletters by Desert Research Foundation of Namibia were facilitated. The Dutch Commission on Environmental Assessment (MER) assisted the formulation of sector-specific guidelines for environmental assessment. For the Water Sector a Water Decision Makers' Guide was facilitated together with the Swedes.

Ex-combatants

In 1995 Namibia raised the issue of reintegration of ex-combatants in the economy. For a vocal minority this was still a persistent problem, with potentially political connotations. The Netherlands and the European Commission agreed to assist, but it turned out to be an issue more of study and debate than of robust interventions at the operational level. At the end of 1997 support was agreed to the construction of latrines at rural schools by building-teams of ex-combatants, but by 2000 the programme had to be suspended due to lack of progress. As a result of a government recruitment campaign in 1999 the dwindling supply of unemployed ex-combatants had made the programme in some ways redundant as well.

In 2002 a final effort was started to put the outstanding balance of funds to good use, while the EC-funds were at last released, in support of a more generally defined employment programme. A Multipurpose Youth Centre was built and equipped at Eenhana.

Even during the 1990s support to ex-combatants was already seen as an essential element of reconciliation, peace building and the achievement of national unity. In that sense the programme was a forerunner of the later Governance-programme. Within this Governance programme support to the psychosocial care for ex-

combatants by the PEACE Centre was financed (which confirmed the fact known from other conflicts that it takes generations to overcome the effects of armed struggle).

Good governance

As was indicated in the introduction, from 2000 to 2005 Namibia has had access to funding from the 'Human Rights and Good Governance Programme' (Governance-programme for short) of the Netherlands Development Co-operation Budget.

In theory, the Namibian Constitution with its separation of powers, its protection of fundamental human rights, its constitutional organs, gender equality and the principles of state policy embodied in the Constitution provide a suitable framework for good governance. In practice there are however limitations arising from Namibia's historic legacy, which warrant institutional strengthening of the social environment as the core domain to enhance good governance in Namibia. As a result the programme concentrates in Namibia on the support to selected public services and elements from civil society on the interface between state and civil society.

In the public domain, oversight institutions were targeted for support. Together with other likeminded donors like Sweden and Finland, programmes were developed with the Electoral Commission of Namibia and the Office of the Ombudsman that had the purpose to effectively reach out to broad sections of the population. From 2000 to 2004, covering a number of elections, the ECN was supported in the execution of voter registration and voter education activities. The Office of the Ombudsman was assisted in the execution of a capacity building project that aims at not only strengthening the central organization, but specifically enables the Ombudsman to establish regional offices in Oshakati and Keetmanshoop to improve accessibility. A human rights training programme for the Namibian Police aims to disseminate Human Rights concepts to the rank and file and their immediate supervisors and to reduce violations of human rights in the delivery of service by the Namibian Police.



Eenhana Multi-purpose Youth Resource Centre

The construction of this centre is an example of the flexibility of Dutch aid. When the implementation of projects for ex-combatants of the liberation war was not depleting the funds made available, it was decided to switch part of the money to pay for the construction of this centre, which was completed in 2005. Photo Royal Netherlands Embassy.

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From Condor to Condom

One of over one hundred small embassy projects. This project entailed transport for Ombetja Yehinga, one of the many non-governmental organisations fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Namibia. A used Toyota Condor was made available and colourfully decorated by the Dutch artist Helene Verwey. Henceforth it was known as the Toyota Condom. Photo Royal Netherlands Embassy.

For the support to civil society the central theme is the improvement of access to information as a means for empowerment. The ulterior goal is to build a sustainable democracy with evident Namibian roots. Expressions of local culture are used as building bricks of identity and national unity. The programme focuses on organisations that work on the raising of awareness and participation in rural areas.

Among the organisations that were supported priority was given to advocacy for human rights issues. Direct or indirect support was given to the fundamental human rights, gender rights and the rights of lesbian, gay, bi- and transsexual people. Organisations combating violence against women and children, considered a national curse in Namibia, were supported.

The organisations involved were assisted in carrying out in depth Institutional Sector and Organisational Analyses, which not only improved their performance but also were instrumental in attracting additional sponsors for their activities.

Throughout the years the Netherlands Embassy at Windhoek has also supported cultural activities in Namibia. Namibians often used to demonstrate a low opinion of the products of their own culture, compared to those of foreign origin. This tendency was compounded by the ethnic divide and rule policy of the apartheid regime. Collective self-confidence can be strengthened by the development of an own, cultural life. The programme intended to help bring about a Namibian society that respects the ethnic diversity of the country, minorities and the diversity of possible expressions of culture. Where strengthening of the cultural identity helps reconciliation and democratisation. Where culture functions as cement for this fragile society, where democratic principles still have to take a firm Namibian root.

A contribution was made to the National Art Gallery of Namibia for upgrading the collections and their management by providing training courses, facilitating the purchase of Namibian artworks, provision of basic equipment and infrastructure, with a view of bringing local art closer to the people. Likewise, the College of the Arts was enabled to develop the production and

distribution process of student work and multi-media products. The capacity of the Media Arts Technology Studies department to produce and distribute various media products was upgraded in the process.

Governance, decentralisation and local democracy are encompassing themes. Capacity building, the operational capacity of government and the fight against corruption are major challenges. Participation and the macroeconomic and cultural framework within which the activities take place, require a comprehensive approach. Concentration on certain themes and the cross-cutting character of the issues imply that donor coordination is of utmost importance. More on this theme is said in the next section of this chapter.

Donor coordination

Led by the European Commission, 'Europe' is the dominating development partner of Namibia. Although regular EU-meetings are held on Development Co-operation, the main co-ordination work is done at sector-specific level with the limited group of partners involved in a sector, including also the multilateral agencies. On special occasions, for instance when requesting technical assistance in the preparation of the second National Development Plan (NDP II), the National Planning Commission approached the EU as a whole.

For the Education sector the Education Sector Policy Advisory Group (ESPAG) has developed into a regular platform for exchange and coordination shared by the Government and its partners. The European Commission co-ordinates the budget support for the sector with Sweden and the Netherlands (as of 2006) as silent partners.

With regard to HIV/AIDS in Namibia the government and its partners adhere to the three Ones ("one agency, one plan, one monitoring system"), which guide interventions in this area. The Netherlands participates in the Partnership Forum, that brings together in quarterly meetings the government, the multilateral and bilateral donors, and representatives of the NGO- and business communities. This participation can lead to representation to other bodies in this area like from

Official Netherlands Development Assistance to Namibia, 1991-2004, annual disbursement US dollar x1000

1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
1.40	2.62	10.31	6.71	7.17	5.01	8.09

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
9.74	7.48	3.15	4.94	4.78	2.94	4.15

Source: OECD/DAC, International Development Statistics on line

2004 – 2006 to NACCATUM, the country co-ordinating mechanism for the Global Fund on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

The Netherlands policy to limit the number of core-countries for development co-operation made it difficult to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic affecting the whole region. Therefore, a regional programme was established, which was at first run from the Dutch embassy in Harare and later from Pretoria. The programme includes nine countries, among them Namibia. Financial support is made available to NGO's and UN-agencies, which run programmes in most of these nine coun-

tries. In 2006 a programme was started at SADC-level in which Namibia will participate.

A separate group in which the Netherlands participates is Partners in Democracy, which includes USAID and UNICEF and pursues a light but useful coordination mechanism.

In the execution of the Governance programme a very close co-ordination and harmonisation developed among the embassies of Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands. Basket funding was achieved in many shared activities. Several activities were funded through a silent partnership with Finland.

Chapter 9

Higher Education Co-operation

Several Dutch universities and institutes for higher education have supported tertiary training and education in Namibia, starting before independence and continuing until the present day. The programmes were financed from various sources, most through one of many Dutch government programmes. The activities varied greatly: staff development and staff exchange; development of programmes, curricula and teaching materials; diploma, Masters and PhD degrees for hundreds of Namibians. The main subjects were gender and development, public administration, business management, land management, media technology and in service training for science teachers.



Marianne Ros

Marianne Ros studied History at the Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen. In 1994 she came to Namibia. She lived in Nyangana and taught History at the newly established St. Boniface College in Sambyu until 1998. With her husband she then moved to Windhoek where she became part of the founding team of Catholic AIDS Action (CAA). Developing its Prevention Office, she co-ordinated the My Future is My Choice programme for CAA, in collaboration with UNICEF and various Ministries, until 2001. She now lives in the Netherlands and works for a Foundation that aims to stimulate integration processes within Dutch society.

“People make a good relationship”



Land distribution and land management are hot topics across southern Africa. The expropriations and subsequent underutilisation of farms in Zimbabwe have made headlines throughout the world. To a lesser degree South Africa, Namibia and Angola face the similar problems regarding redistribution of land to what is referred to as ‘the previously disadvantaged’ black farmers.

Recognising the need for trained professionals in land management Dr. Tjama Tjivikua decided to start a programme in land management at the Polytechnic of Namibia. “We started with 22 students in 1997 and in 2005 there were 240 students,” says the Rector. The programme has attracted students from across southern Africa because of its relevance, uniqueness and high standards.

“But without the help of the Dutch government and ITC this would have never happened.” A close co-operation started in 1996 which took Tjivikua to the Netherlands at least twice. Dutch specialists travelled to the Namibian capital Windhoek to train staff and advise on curriculum design and implementation. “I realized that if we don’t manage this properly it might fail and that would reflect badly on the students, the Polytechnic and donors. Actually, if one doesn’t do something properly, one shouldn’t do it at all.”

The Dutch government invested significantly into the new course with which the Polytechnic wished to distinguish itself from others, for instance the University of Namibia. “What makes a partnership work are the people involved. Other things like money or infrastructure are complementary. We didn’t have a lot of money but it was good money since the human relationship was right.” The initial project almost failed, remembers the Rector vividly pointing out difficulties with protocols and procedures that had to be observed between the governments. “But the relationship with ITC was so good that we could continue.”

Besides the land management courses, an intensive co-operation was established with the Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa (NiZA) to fully implement a journalism and media technology programme. Their financial and expert assistance was “really valuable”, says Dr. Tjivikua. “I pushed the establishment of a Media Technology Department from the beginning, but didn’t initially sense full support when others realized that it would be very expensive. But in my vision, the media are quite important and nowadays all about technology.”

Through co-operation both the programmes in land management and media technology are now established in departments at the Polytechnic. But donor funding for the Polytechnic is decreasing. “With respect to the land management department, for instance, two funding cycles have ended. As I see it, seed funding is there to create something and from there onwards a programme should run on its own. An institute like the Polytechnic then has to care for its own baby.”

Interview and photo by Arjen de Boer

Higher education in Namibia

Higher education in Namibia started in 1980, when the Academy of Tertiary Education was established. Prior to this, students pursuing higher education went abroad, mainly to South Africa. The Academy offered classes in Teacher Training and Secretarial Courses. In 1985 higher education was split up in three: The Academy of Tertiary Education, a university component, organised around faculties of social science, education, nursing and teacher training; Technikon Namibia (offering diploma and certificate courses) and The College for Out of School Training. Shortly after independence it was decided to divide these three components into two independent higher education institutions: The University of Namibia (UNAM) and the Polytechnic of Namibia (PoN).

Namibia's university, UNAM, was established by an act of Parliament in 1992, headed by a Chancellor (being the Head of State) and a Vice Chancellor for day-to-day management. Professor Peter Katjavivi was founding Vice Chancellor until 2003, when he was appointed Namibia's ambassador in Brussels and is also accredited in the Netherlands. UNAM's heraldic motto reads "Education, Service and Development"; its programmes are to meet national human resources requirements through quality teaching, research, consultancy, and community services. In the course of the years UNAM went through a number of major transformations, such as switching from Afrikaans to English as a medium of instruction, and reorganisation of the various faculties. UNAM has currently seven faculties, has developed nine outreach centres for distance education, and a Northern Campus at Oshakati. Nowadays approximately nine thousand students are registered.

In 1994 Technikon Namibia and the College for Out of School Training merged to become the Polytechnic of Namibia. Vocational training courses were gradually phased out and today it is a university of professional education. Its mission is to contribute to sustainable national development through excellence in technologically oriented career education and training, applied research and service. At the time of its inception only 2 500 students were enrolled, currently it hosts about 6 300 students. Polytechnic's four Schools offer approximately 200 courses.

Since Namibia's independence several Dutch higher education institutions (both regular universities and so-called International Education institutes) responded to requests from the young Namibian counterparts to assist them in their development, focusing mainly on strengthening the capacity and quality of organisation and staff. This resulted in a considerable number of university co-operation programmes, financially supported through various donors amongst them UNESCO, the European Commission and SAIL (on behalf of Netherlands Government). SAIL, Stichting Samenwerkingsverband IO-instellingen en LUW, was founded in 1994 to unite Netherlands' five institutes for International Education plus Landbouw Universiteit Wageningen (amongst them MSM, ISS and ITC, which are mentioned in this Chapter). SAIL funded by, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, implemented international activities in the field of higher education. Four of these programmes are presented below.

Also some Dutch NGOs entered into education co-operation such as the Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa, with the Polytechnic. Altogether hundreds of Namibians studied in the Netherlands. They were financed through projects or the Netherlands Fellowship Programme. This last programme is executed on behalf of the Netherlands Government by the Netherlands Organization for International Co-operation in Higher Education (NUFFIC) in The Hague.

UNAM and UNITWIN

Ties between Utrecht University (UU) and UNAM commenced in the year UNAM was established, 1992. The UU is a large university in the centre of the Netherlands, with almost 27 000 students, over 8 000 staff members and 176 academic programmes. Initiated by UU, four universities in western Europe and four in southern Africa, including UNAM, established the University Twinning (UNITWIN) Network for Southern Africa. UNESCO chaired the UNITWIN Network. It is a university twinning and networking scheme aimed at developing interuniversity co-operation by promoting transfer of knowledge and academic solidarity across the world. Through this network, some bilateral projects between selected faculties of UU and UNAM were realised.

A life time experience for a Namibian ambassador

One of the UNAM lecturers, who did his PhD, Dr. Samuel K. Mbambo, is now Namibia's Ambassador in the Russian Federation. Looking back on his time in Utrecht he recalls:

"I enjoyed every moment of my stay. It was an eye opening life experience to me. Coming from an apartheid system where humanity was based on skin colour; it was the first time in my life to share educational environment and facilities as a student with the apartheid most 'sacred colour': white. After my stay in Utrecht I went back to Namibia with another look at people: we are all the same irrespective of our different appearances."

A life time experience for Dutch anthropologists

During these almost ten years of co-operation about fifty Dutch anthropology students did their MA research in Namibia, mostly the Kavango and Caprivi Region. Not much anthropological research had been done here before. Living with host families the students studied among other issues teenage pregnancy, alcoholism and health (often in the context of traditional and cosmopolitan medicine), ecology and development.

To share the results on a wider scale in Namibia a special UNITWIN series of these MA theses was published, while the students themselves organised a photo exhibition on their experiences in both the Netherlands and Namibia.



Graduation ceremony at the Maastricht School of Management

The course for Master of Business Administration is an outreach programme at the University of Namibia in Windhoek. At the end of course the students travel to Maastricht to defend their thesis. The photo shows Namibian ambassador to the Netherlands, Dr Peter Katjavivi, surrounded by happy graduates. Dr Katjavivi was the Vice-chancellor of UNAM, when the agreement was signed with the Maastricht School of Management. Photo by Regina Moen.

One of these projects was carried out by the Utrecht Department of Cultural Anthropology and UNAM (International Office, Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, Multi Disciplinary Research Centre). Contemporary social problems and topics indicated as relevant by the Namibian partners were studied in the field.

Besides this research also staff development took place by supporting two UNAM lecturers in obtaining a PhD in a “sandwich model” studying partly in Utrecht, partly in Namibia. Other co-operation pertained to the appointment of a UNAM Professor of Religion and Theology Dr. Christo Lombard as UNESCO Africa Chair in Utrecht in 1999, and the collaboration between the Law Faculties of UU and UNAM.

UNAM and ISS supported through SAIL

The Institute of Social Studies’ (ISS) involvement with Namibia dates back to pre-independence times when in the mid-1980’s ten SWAPO women attended a Woman and Development diploma course, specially designed for them, at ISS. Later two of them obtained an MA degree in this field at this institute. The commitment was prolonged in 1997 when the ISS, through SAIL, entered into an agreement with UNAM’s Multidisciplinary Research Centre (MRC) to develop the Gender Training and Research Programme, aiming at interfaculty and interdisciplinary curricula and research and promoting gender awareness among the general public. Besides ISS, involved until 2004, other donors contributed to the programme as well.

Activities ranged from grassroots level interventions, drama workshops to sensitise communities, training army and policemen as well as domestic workers on women’s issues, to development of academic staff capacity in teaching, research and analysis. ISS staff went on short-term assignments to Namibia, while Namibian colleagues came to the Netherlands to attend tailor made and regular MA and PhD courses.

At present the diploma course of the Centre is well established, and is assisted by (amongst others) two PhD - and eight MA graduates in Gender and Development. Moreover, ‘Gender’ has been made part of the

compulsory ‘Social Contemporary Issues’ course for all first year UNAM students. The MRC wants to extend its curriculum with an MA programme.

Under another programme, financed through other funds, UNAM and ISS introduced the MA programme in Public Policy and Administration (MPPA) at the Faculty of Economics and Management Science (FEMS) in 1999. It addresses the need of training civil servants and NGO-staff in good governance. With FEMS infrastructure and facilities for successful delivery of the MPPA in place, ISS is at present gradually withdrawing its share.

UNAM and Maastricht School of Management

Enhancing management capacity lies at the root of the collaboration agreement between UNAM and the Maastricht School of Management (MSM) signed in 1999. Through a Masters of Business Administration Outreach programme at the University campus in Windhoek students are provided with management training.

This MBA programme was designed for executives, having a Bachelors degree and several years of working experience as manager in e.g. government or semi-government, or commercial sectors. MBA students attend evening classes for a period of 18 months. The average age of the students is 38 years.

Towards the end of the programme, students go to Maastricht for a two-week visit to defend their research paper. Nearly one hundred, mainly Namibian, students have graduated since 1999, amongst them the wife of a former Prime Minister and a former mayor of Windhoek.

Ministry of Basic Education and Free University Amsterdam (VU)

Following its original charter, the VU aims to be inspiring, innovative and involved. In this context it has been active in development co-operation for many years.

Strengthening science and mathematics education

On this and the facing page a number of photos show how, during a workshop in Katimo Mulilo, teachers are taught to use readily available objects and materials to explain scientific principles to their pupils. The In-service Training and Assistance to Namibian Teachers (INSTANT) project ran from 1991 to 1997 and was funded by the European Commission. The implementing agencies were the Ministry of Basic Education, Culture Youth and Sport and the Free University of Amsterdam. Photos by Ian Macfarlane.

Amsterdam Free University

The 'Vrije Universiteit' (VU) Amsterdam' was established in 1880 by orthodox protestants.

'Vrije Universiteit' means 'Free University', referring to freedom from both state and church interference. It comprises twelve faculties and has teaching facilities for 18,000 students. It is one of two Amsterdam based universities.



Working with scales and weights



Workshop for measuring the volume of a container



Testing of roofing materials



After theory, the physics parameters of the car of an official of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports are determined.



An experiment to determine the strength of various grasses.



Determining the strength of a locally fired brick

The ITC, established in 1950 under the name International Training Centre for Aerial Survey (hence ITC), is an autonomous institute for Higher Education, nowadays called the Institute of Geo-science and Earth Observation. Situated in Enschede in the eastern part of the Netherlands, it is the oldest and largest International Education institute in the Netherlands. It aims at capacity building and institutional development specifically in countries that are economically and/or technologically less developed.



Future technicians for land reform

The co-operation between the Polytechnic of Namibia and the International Training Centre for Aerial Survey in Enschede is one of the most comprehensive collaboration projects in higher education between Namibia and the Netherlands. ITC helped establish a number of courses related to land management that also attract students from other Southern African countries. The photo shows fieldwork in a low cost housing area. Photo courtesy of Polytechnic of Namibia.

Field work in Land Management

Land reform is an important issue for the development of southern Africa. The transfer of commercial land to indigenous farmers and the modernisation of land ownership in communal areas need well-trained professionals. The picture was taken during field work of land surveyors. Photo courtesy of Polytechnic of Namibia.

From 1991 to 1997 it was the main implementing partner of the EU funded INSTANT project (IN Service Training and Assistance for Namibian Teachers) in Namibia, in collaboration with the Ministry of Basic Education, Culture, Youth and Sport (MBEC)

Strengthening science and mathematics education, was the main focus of the project, and regarded as one of the priorities within the education sector at that time, considering that these subjects were severely neglected before independence while the majority of teachers were inadequately or inappropriately qualified for their task. The project provided a sizeable team of VU experts who worked together with Namibian science and mathematics teachers, in guiding the educational reforms in science and mathematics in secondary education.

Activities concerned mainly curriculum- and teacher development. In-service education and training workshops were provided across the country; teacher support materials were developed and implemented; text books for schools were written; practical equipment for school science experiments provided and science fairs organised. INSTANT managed to play an important part in ensuring that within a few years science and mathematics became more prominent subjects available to all, and with a much more practical and experimental approach.

The INSTANT teacher-training workshops ultimately led to the establishment of the Namibian Mathematics and Science Teachers Association (NAMSTA).

After completion of INSTANT in 1997, the VU remained involved, on a smaller scale, in a follow up project called 'The Mathematics and Science Teachers' Extension Programme (MASTEP, 1999-2004). Together with INSTANT-trained local mathematics and science educationalists, 300 mathematics, biology and physical science teachers were upgraded to IGCSE-level teachers. This was achieved through a national in-service distance programme organised by the Centre for External Studies at UNAM.

From 1994 to 1996 the VU also assisted UNAM's Multidisciplinary Research Centre Social Sciences Division (SSD). The applied social sciences services section of the

SSD worked together with the Ministry of Wildlife and Tourism on the LIFE programme (Living in a Finite Environment). Funded by USAID and with technical support from the Worldwide Fund for Nature, LIFE focussed on community-based natural resource management and the emerging conservancy movement. In addition there were a number of students of the VU who undertook research projects in Namibia as part of their MA-degree programme.

Polytechnic of Namibia and ITC, supported through SAIL

Among the many changes Namibia's independence brought about, were also new constitutional provisions, laws and policies on land reform. Land managing institutions consequently faced the immense task of implementation. At the same time the country lacked cadre including suitably trained and educated land managers. The Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (MLRR) found a partner in the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (ITC) which resulted in an ad hoc diploma course in land use planning being organised in Namibia by MLRR between 1995 –1996 and funded through SAIL.

Recognising the need to strengthen the capacity of land managing institutions as well MLRR and ITC sought a partner for the development of a comprehensive educational programme in Land Management. The Polytechnic welcomed this initiative, and from 1996, a series of educational and training programmes in Land Management were developed, funded under SAIL as well. The collaboration also contributed to the institutional strengthening of the MLRR.

Since 1999 the Polytechnic has a Department of Land Management, which is part of the School of Natural Resources and Tourism, and offers a number of Certificate, Diploma and a Bachelor of Technology in Land Management programmes. It supports most levels of cadre needed in land management institutions, and has 17 staff members. Initially a large proportion of the students consisted of MLRR staff. While training for the Ministry still continues, gradually more Grade 12 students have opted for the programme. Because of

NiZA, the Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa

In 1997, three Dutch organisations, which had been actively supporting the anti-apartheid struggle since the 1960's, merged. These organisations, the Holland Committee on Southern Africa (KZA), the Dutch Anti-Apartheid Movement and the Kairos became NiZA. NiZA, remaining united with the people of southern Africa after the fall of the apartheid regimes, seeks to help people find structural solutions in their fight against poverty, injustice and inequality. It primarily collaborates with organisations in southern Africa which promote freedom of expression, free media, human rights, peace building and economic justice, in order to strengthen their capacity and influence the policy-making process in the south and the north.

its excellent reputation it attracts students from other southern African countries as well. The Department, which began with 20 enrolments in 1997, now has over 200 students, of which some 50 graduate each year. Annually two Polytechnic or MLRR students went to ITC Enschede to obtain their Masters Degree.

As the SAIL International Education Programme terminated in 2004, efforts have been made to attract European Commission funds, through its Rural Poverty Reduction Programme, to proceed capacity building and develop a Masters programme at the Polytechnic. Meanwhile ITC plans to assist the Polytechnic with a joint education programme, widening the scope of the curriculum in Land Management to urban, environmental and agricultural fields.

Polytechnic and NiZA

Since 2000, the Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa (NiZA) co-operates with the Department of Media Technology at the Polytechnic. In a three-year diploma programme students are trained in different aspects of the media profession. The Polytechnic is currently in-

vestigating the start of a degree programme following the diploma. NiZA provides funds so the Department can hire local and regional consultants to assist in the development of its curriculum and training manuals (with local content), and train teaching staff and students. Over the years approximately nine experts from Namibia and South Africa have worked in this project, on short or longer missions. Several media agencies have meanwhile formed partnerships with the Polytechnic, some of them providing experiential learning opportunities for students.

The Polytechnic finds it important to develop the community media sector to improve access to information also outside the capital. Highlight in 2004 was the establishment of the Echoes News Wire Service. This innovative student-run media outlet serves as a practical training ground and operates as a real press agency, offering information and contributing to the diversification of the media landscape. Its output is unique because it covers areas which media houses usually have not got the resources for. Established media houses use the Echoes articles against payments. To make Echoes a sustainable enterprise NiZA recently supported a feasibility study into possible income generating activities.

Chapter 10

Namibian-Dutch Municipal Partnerships

At present there are three active municipal twinning partnerships between Namibia and the Netherlands: Rundu and Nieuwegein; Gobabis and Smallerland; Otjiwarongo and Heusden. All concentrate on development co-operation. This chapter addresses these municipality twinings. They appear to be much more than an official relation between politicians and civil servants. In the Netherlands as well as in Namibia a large number of schools, NGOs and other institutions as well as individuals are involved and value these relationships highly.



Marianne Ros

Marianne Ros studied History at the Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen. In 1994 she came to Namibia. She lived in Nyangana and taught History at the newly established St. Boniface College in Sambyu until 1998. With her husband she then moved to Windhoek where she became part of the founding team of Catholic AIDS Action (CAA). Developing its Prevention Office, she co-ordinated the My Future is My Choice programme for CAA, in collaboration with UNICEF and various Ministries, until 2001. She now lives in the Netherlands and works for a Foundation that aims to stimulate integration processes within Dutch society.

Mutual respect and understanding



Being the former mayor of Gobabis, Ismael Pijoo Nganate has inside knowledge on the concept of city twinning. In 1995 his town entered into a meaningful relationship with the Dutch Municipality Smallerland. "The relationship is based on mutual respect and mutual understanding," says Nganate. "It was and is very valuable in changing of lot of people's lives in Gobabis."

Back then town twinning was a new thing in Namibia and Gobabis was the first to embark on a path of co-operation with a foreign town. The relationship was sparked after a Dutch visitor and a Namibian regional councillor exchanged addresses which eventually led to a letter from Nganate to the Dutch mayor of Smallerland about the possibility of city twinning. "In the same year I went to The Netherlands with a delegation of four people to discuss the arrangements. I decided that we should embark not with the idea of Smallerland giving a fish, but teaching us how to fish." Shortly after his visit, a Dutch delegation flew to Namibia. "The Dutch mayor had a political relationship in mind, but the women in his delegation were shocked by the poverty and suffering in Gobabis." Their actual tears inspired a more developmental sort of twinning resulting in a shipment of for instance wheelchairs and clothing late 1995. Soon other projects were started amongst which a housing project in Gobabis named Mapanga. "Every year 25 houses were built first for the council workers and later for the broader community earning between N\$ 0 and 2500. To me housing was very important. In order to improve life one first must have a place to live.

"Other projects involved the funding and use of Dutch volunteers to provide a normal life for street children and a center for disabled children. "Many Dutch volunteers still walk the streets of Gobabis," claims Nganate. But Gobabis is not the only Namibian town with ties to a Dutch municipality. After his post of mayor Nganate became the vice-president of the Alliance of Local Authorities in Namibia (ALAN) and struck up a partnership with its Dutch counterpart The Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG). "In a meeting of Dutch, Belgian and Namibian delegations we discussed the concept of twinning," remembers the former mayor. The result: ties between in total five Namibian and Dutch towns. The cornerstones of these relationships, says Nganate, are not the politicians, but the citizens. Politicians come and go and might instigate a twinning "for their own image", but the citizens who see to the person-to-person relationship stay. "Therefore I'm very thankful that these people have sacrificed much having their own problems and change the lives of other people."

Interview and photograph by Arjan de Boer

Dutch towns consider the ties with their Namibian counterparts as a powerful tool in improving citizen's knowledge of and involvement with international co-operation. Parallel to an official twinning relation through the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG), private initiatives among citizens are stimulated. They aim to inform and mobilise people and organisations within the municipalities. Awareness and fund raising activities by working groups, schools, churches, companies, service clubs include art auctions, sponsored athletics and dinners, Christmas and book markets, fairs, collections. Schools are prominent stakeholders, not only in raising money; they twin with Namibian counterparts and include Namibia in their curricula as well. Personal exchanges and visits in both directions are another feature of these partnerships.

Municipality Co-operation for Development through town twinning is also an official programme of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) that receives funding for projects and programmes from the Netherlands Government. Municipalities share expertise and experience and make funds available to facilitate and strengthen local governance as a key factor in the development process. The 458 Netherlands municipalities have over 800 international ties, 65 of these are with African towns.

In 2003 the Dutch government decided that the bilateral aid programme and also the support under the regular twinning programme of VNG for Namibia and a number of other countries would be ended in two years. An exception was made for a programme to support local government in dealing with HIV/AIDS issues, considering that the fight against HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa is a priority. Hence, the municipalities of Heusden, Nieuwegein and Smallerland will receive official government support to carry on with their town partnerships until 2008. The programme was launched in 2005. Co-ordinating committees representing the most important local HIV/AIDS activities and actors are being established, and expanding the town twin programmes by involving a third partner in South Africa, thereby becoming city triplets, is planned as well.

Gobabis and Smallerland

The oldest Namibian - Netherlands municipal partnership is between Gobabis and Smallerland. Gobabis, situated some 200 km's east of Windhoek, is the main service centre of the semi-desert Omaheke Region. It has some 16 000 formal residents and in addition an estimated number of 10 000 informal inhabitants. Smallerland, in the northern Dutch province of Friesland, with over 54 000 residents, consists of Drachten, its largest community, and several surrounding villages.

In the late 1980's Smallerland formulated a policy plan on foreign aid in conjunction with a counterpart town in a developing country. The aim was to develop a strong personal relation with a municipality in the South. Friendship, instead of only a formal programme, should contribute to raise the community's awareness on global issues. Smallerland had actively supported the anti-apartheid struggle and it made sense to keep up assistance in southern Africa in the post-apartheid era by inviting a town from this region for this partnership. Gobabis, which has several similarities with Smallerland, came in sight as a partner through a personal recommendation.

The first phase of the co-operation was characterised by getting acquainted, to become friends, to establish reciprocity. A process with ups and downs. On a municipal level Gobabis was assisted in exchange of information on democratic processes. Some of its officials visited the Netherlands. Gradually some project priorities were formulated. It was only after five years, in 1995, that the first official visit from Smallerland to Gobabis took place and a more official relation was established, with the signing of a Friendship Treaty. Gobabis mayor, Mr. Pijoo Nganate typified this treaty as "Do not give us fish, but teach us how to fish".

Since then initiatives to co-operate with Gobabis and its people accelerated. Projects focus on municipal organisation, and even more so on improving the situation of the most deprived and vulnerable groups, e.g. assisting the Epako Old Age Home and street kids. In the project named 'Sida Sores' ('Our House in the Sun') day care is provided to handicapped children. Smallerland is very proud of this project, in which parents are expect-



Smallingerland Village

Between the centre of Gobabis and Epako township, this sign leads to the housing improvement project that has been the core of the co-operation for many years. Many inhabitants of the poor settlement near the town are now housed in better accommodation. Photo by Harry Balgobind.



Sida Sores, Our House in the Sun

These are the rondavels of the Sida Sores centre, where handicapped children receive care and education. The project involves parents and other care givers to teach and assist them to raise these children. Photo by Harry Balgobind.



A full stomach for street kids

The potjies are boiling to prepare a proper meal for street kids. The co-operation between Gobabis and Smallerland aims to improve the situation of the poorest and most vulnerable inhabitants. People living with HIV/AIDS, street children, the aged and jobless residents of the poor townships are the direct beneficiaries of many activities. Photo by Harry Balgobind.



Celebration of ten-year partnership

On 29th October 2005 the 10-year twinning partnership of Gobabis and Smallerland was celebrated. A large delegation from the Netherlands, led by Mayor Van der Zaag, travelled to Namibia to participate. The celebrations started with a procession of vehicles and participants from the centre of Gobabis to the stadium in Epako township. The picture shows some of the fire- and refuse trucks that were donated by Smallerland to Gobabis. Photo by Huub Hendrix.

The visit of President Nujoma to Nieuwegein

The Utrechts Nieuwsblad newspaper reported on 28th March 1998 about President Sam Nujoma's visit to Nieuwegein, the sister town of Rundu. In the article Dr Nujoma is compared to Nelson Mandela. A member of the former Komitee Zuidelijk Afrika confirms that Dr Nujoma has not forgotten his friends who supported SWAPO, before the Netherlands government followed suit. Dr Nujoma is reported to say that he thinks Nieuwegein is a suitable partner for Rundu, because both are new towns. He also states that he admires the many planted trees and waterways in Nieuwegein. The photo shows president Nujoma planting a tree in the "Rundu woods". On the left is Mayor Laan of Nieuwegein. Reproduced from "Utrechts Nieuwsblad".



Burgemeester Laan van Nieuwegein en de president van Namibië Nujoma planten glorieus samen een boom in het 'Nieuwegeinse Rundu-bos'. Foto: Peter Arns (Brent) 144

Bomen planten met Namibische president

Door Rita van Grollenboom
Nieuwegein

Een stiel van op 's tien zwarte heren, begeleid door twee leden van de gemeenteraad, betraden zich glorieus een weg door Nieuwegein. En de stoet van heren met daarbij de Namibische president dr. S. Nujoma.

President Nujoma bezocht Nieuwegein in het kader van de wederzijdse tussen Nieuwegein en de qua inwonersmaatschap van Rundu in Namibië, zuidelijk Afrika. Na een bezoek aan het Milla Eduardus Centrum, waar een tentoonstelling over Rundu is ingericht, plantte president Nujoma glorieus samen met burgemeester Laan een boom in het 'Rundu-bos' in de Nieu-

weginse wijk Galweg. Na afloop schudde hij hartelijk de handen van de heren. Daarna ging de stoet naar het gemeentehuis van Nieuwegein. Achter de wijk kwam erop het wijkcentrum publiek zich al welke goet er nu wel en Nieuwegein gemeenteraad mocht zijn.

De Namibische president Nujoma doort een bezoek aan Nelson Mandela. Ook hij streeft naar de apartheid en voor de onafhankelijkheid. In 1990 werd Namibië een republiek, met aan het hoofd de voormalige Nujoma. Ontlangt heren bij een oververzekering op een manier van meerderheid behaalt.

Het bezoek van Nujoma aan Nieuwegein werd door het Nederlands Instituut voor Zuidelijk Afrika, waarheen het Koninkrijk van Zuidelijk Afrika, aangegrepen om de president de archieven van het Koninkrijk over de

Namibische onafhankelijkheidsstrijd te overhandigen. Een woordvoerder van het Koninkrijk herinnert eraan dat de huidige president van Namibië tijdens de strijd voor onafhankelijkheid vaak naar Nederland is gekomen voor steun. „En dat is hij niet vergeen.“ aldus de woordvoerder van het Koninkrijk. „Wij zijn al verschillende keren te gast geweest in zijn paleis in Windhoek.“

Investeren

De president benadrukt op zijn beurt de Nederlandse bereidheid voor haar steun aan de Namibische strijd voor onafhankelijkheid. Daarnaast deed hij een beroep op bereidwilligheid om, maar dan in economische zin. „We zijn nu hier om Nederland al in te zetten om te investeren in ons land.“ aldus president Nujoma. Hij noemde het gesprek dat hij een-

der drie week had met minister Prokx van ontwikkelingssamenwerking „vruchtbaar“. Maar ook de wederzijdse tussen Rundu en Nieuwegein is hem dierbaar, met alle die tussen vier andere Nederlandse gemeenten en plaatsen in Namibië. Nieuwegein is een stad naar zijn hart. Met alle Nieuwegein in Rundu een nieuwe stad, zo benadrukte hij. De president was vooral onder de indruk van de vele bomen in Nieuwegein, maar ook van de waterwegen. De aanleg van kanalen heeft zijn bijdrage aan de ontwikkeling. Dit bij de minister bij Nieuwegein burgemeester Laan moet zijn, of moet aankloppen bij minister Prokx in nog andere vraag. Zoals het voor dat met de uit Galweg de vraag was wie die belangrijke minister nu precies was. „Ik heb nu wel van handhaving, maar ik weet niet van wie.“

ed to be involved as well, not only in the daily tasks but also in workshops and courses to enhance their knowledge and skills in raising their children. The housing in traditional rondavels offers warmth in wintertime and coolness in summer.

Also the private initiative working groups in both Gobabis (Gobabis Working Group) and Smallerland (Werkgroep Ontwikkelingssamenwerking Smallerland) (WOS) initiate activities. The extensive and solid community basis, formed by the commitment of inhabitants, schools, students, housing associations, old people's homes and other sectors, is a source of pride to everyone involved. The WOS, which has 17 board members, uses the projects to inform the public.

Annually, at least 10 volunteers and students from Smallerland go to Gobabis for practical work and to assist in various projects. To celebrate the first decade of the signing of the agreement in October 2005 over 40 Smallerland residents travelled to Gobabis. Meanwhile a high number of Gobabis representatives have visited the Netherlands to participate in municipal training programmes on various topics such as waste management, civic participation, social housing. Exchange programmes between participating churches in Gobabis and Smallerland lead to visits in both directions by pastors and church leaders.

As for the planned focus on HIV/AIDS activities in town twinning programmes, the WOS will concentrate on awareness raising by small-scale projects. Furthermore, in order to assist vulnerable people obtaining a sense of perspective, support will be given to income generating projects.

The foundation for the co-operation remains the friendship between inhabitants and organisations of both municipalities.

Rundu and Nieuwegein

Rundu is the bustling centre of the Kavango Region in the north of Namibia, a region four times as big as the Netherlands with some 180.000 inhabitants. Nieuwegein is a young (1971) medium sized commuter town

in the centre of the Netherlands, in the province of Utrecht. Rundu and Nieuwegein are municipal partners since 1994. Common features are its number of inhabitants, some 60.000, and their location along a river, respectively the Kavango River and the Lek. In mutual consultation municipalities and citizens from Nieuwegein and Rundu have initiated and supported development co-operation activities, at municipal as well as community level.

When the twinning started it took some time to get to know each other and to understand the differences. One such striking difference was the size of the administration, which was very much smaller in Rundu, though the number of its operational staff was much higher. Another difference was that town council Nieuwegein has a more prominent role in policymaking than its counterpart in Rundu. Through the years the twinning's character evolved from donor-oriented to know-how exchange. It is currently more professionalized and institutionalised as well. In 1998, when H.E. President Nujoma paid a state visit to the Netherlands, the President of Namibia spent some time in Nieuwegein.

To assist Rundu in the process of decentralisation of governance the two municipalities have drawn up successive agreements to strengthen Rundu's municipal capacity for service delivery.

Although progress is slow at times and projects are small scale, Nieuwegein regards the long term character of the relation as benefiting Rundu's institutional and community absorption and its sustainability. In the Solid Waste Management Project for example, Rundu involved women of the Donkerhoek, Safari en Nkaramwe areas to address the growing waste problem. Nieuwegein's transfer of technical expertise, its donation of waste containers plus the active involvement of the women resulted in a much cleaner environment. Now, other parts of Rundu want to implement such a project as well.

The Working group Nieuwegein is mandated to stimulate and co-ordinate Nieuwegein's civil society initiatives and efforts for the town twinning. It regards its town link to Rundu as an important "window on the world" through which the citizens of Nieuwegein can discover other cultures and ideas. It receives subsidy of the municipality, works closely with it and complements its



Mayor de Vos in Rundu

Mayor Cor de Vos of Nieuwegein is pictured here between the women who participate in the sanitation project that is supported by Nieuwegein in some low-income areas in Rundu. The local community is involved in refuse collection and other activities to improve sanitation. Photo by Marijke Bosman.



A house in Sauyemwa

This is a house in one of the neighbourhoods where the sanitation project helps to improve conditions. In the background is the Kavango River. Photo by Marijke Bosman.

activities, e.g. through linking local schools, hospitals, Chambers of Commerce, libraries and employers, resulting in, among other, educational exchange projects and donations to Namibian counterparts.

In the 2000-2001 project Steun Scholen Rundu (Support Rundu Schools), a wide variety of sectors and individuals from the Nieuwegein community participated in fundraising activities and raised over one million Namibian dollars to build classrooms in a number of schools in Rundu. Its Namibian counterpart is called Working Group Nieuwegein.

Rundu has identified HIV/AIDS as one of the major threats to its development. Both municipalities and Working groups Nieuwegein and Rundu, having witnessed the growing impact of the pandemic, are very motivated to pull their weight for the future HIV/AIDS project. In Rundu an estimated 21% of the population between 13 and 45 years old is HIV positive.

Otjiwarongo and Heusden

Otjiwarongo and Heusden form the most recent town twinning that started functioning mid-2004. Otjiwarongo (Herero for 'the Pleasant Place') lies north of the central part of Namibia. Various national roads converge in this agricultural and ranching centre. The town has about 28 000 inhabitants. Heusden, a rural municipality with some 43 000 citizens in the southern province of Noord Brabant consists of the villages Heusden (originally a fortress town dating from the 8th century), Vlijmen and Drunen.

Responding to a request from Heusden's city council to become active in development co-operation, the municipality consulted with the VNG on options concerning international municipal aid. Learning that programme subsidies were available, and after an exploratory visit of Otjiwarongo municipal staff to the Netherlands, Heusden decided to support this Namibian town. The partnership concentrates mainly on two areas.

Otjiwarongo's municipal Multi Purpose Help Centre (OMPHC), built with support of a Dutch NGO called STOP AIDS NOW! and Rotary Amsterdam South, is as-

sisted in management and implementation of activities focused on HIV/AIDS. HIV prevalence among Otjiwarongo's adult population is estimated to be 17%. The Centre provides day care support for some 40 orphans and vulnerable children, ranging from very young to secondary school age. They receive food, while the Centre provides space for making homework, play or sport. The Centre also runs a home based care project, involving fifteen trained volunteers, providing simple medication and aid materials to home based HIV/AIDS infected. There are prevention activities as well, involving and focusing on young people. To sustain the activities of the OMPHC in future, the two co-operating partners put much effort in strengthening the (financial) management and administration capacity as well, including exploring opportunities for income generation. Former President Sam Nujoma is patron of the OMPHC.

A committed group of volunteers, civil servants from Heusden's municipality, undertakes to inform their community about Otjiwarongo stimulating to support the OMPHC in cash and kind. Substantial financial contributions have been received for the Centre already, amongst others from one of the Schools (D' Oultremont College), which has linkage with the Otjiwarongo Paresis Secondary School.

Apart from support to the Centre, many efforts are made to also strengthen Otjiwarongo local government's capacity, concentrating on HIV/AIDS related youth, care and construction activities, and addressing unemployment. While equipped with a generous number of staff for operational tasks, the town expressed a need for support to its organisation and management processes. By sharing know-how and experiences with its Namibian colleagues Heusden attempts to cater for this request. During mutual visits of professionals concrete administrative and practical issues involved in running a town are compared and reviewed. Professionals from Heusden are voluntarily stationed in Otjiwarongo to share hands on experience.

Heusden cherishes the positive and enthusiastic way in which the bond with its Otjiwarongo colleague has evolved. Together with the lessons learned, this forms a solid foundation for future co-operation.

In an article in Die Republiek about the co-operation between the towns of Heusden and Otjiwarongo the Chief Executive Officer of Otjiwarongo, Mr Manfred Uxamb praises the opportunity that he and some of his officers had to spend a few weeks with their counterparts in Heusden. He also mentions the Multi-purpose Help Centre that is supported by Heusden. In the picture we see Mayor Henk Willems of Heusden offering a pair of wooden shoes to Mr Uxamb. Reproduced from Die Republiek.

Otjiwarongo en Heusden: vinkel en koljander

SEDERT Otjiwarongo 'n tweeling-ooreenkoms met Heusden in Nederland gesluit het, het die kapasiteit van munisipale werkers van dié noordedorp aansienlik verbeter.

Drie munisipale amptenare van Otjiwarongo het onlangs 'n besoek aan die Gemeente Heusden gebring om 'n Internasie-opleidingsprogram van twee werke by te woon.

Dié program is deel van die ooreenkoms tussen die twee dorpe se munisipaliteite vir die uitbreiding van werkers se vermoëns.

Die opleidingsprogram is bygevoeg deur die waarnemende hoof uitvoerende beampte van die Otjiwarongo munisipaliteit, mnr. Manfred Uxamb, mnr. Dirk van Niekerk van die gemeenskapdiens- en dorpsbeplanningafdeling en me. Agatha Mwati, senior ekonomiese beplanner en skakelbeampte.

Die kostes van die program is deur die munisipaliteit van Heusden gedra en die kursus is rondom die spesifieke take van dié drie amptenare gestruktureer.

Volgens me. Mwati het hulle baie kennis opgedoen wat direk by die munisipaliteit op Otjiwarongo toegepas kan word.

"Die bestuur van die munisipaliteit sal egter die konsepte wat geleer is, in konteks moet plaas om die opleiding van waarde vir ons dorp en die land te maak."

Die ooreenkoms met die dorp in Holland het tot gevolg gehad dat ander beamptes van die Otjiwarongo munisipaliteit aan programme met betrekking op ander taakbeskrywings binne die munisipale konteks in Europa kon gaan deelneem.

Een van die beste voorbeelde van samewerking tussen die twee munisipaliteite is die ingebruikstelling van die veeldoelige gemeenskapsentrum wat in die Orwetoerni-woonbuurt van Otjiwarongo gebou is.

"Die sentrum word aktief deur die munisipaliteit van Heusden ondersteun en geborg. Hulle voorsien ook in die sosiale en maatskaplike behoeftes van Orwetoerni se inwo-

ners."

Die sentrum sien tans na die behoeftes van mense wat MIV/vigs onder lede het en weeskinders om.

"Berading en tuissorg vir die mense word by die sentrum gedoen en nagenoeg 40 weeskinders word op 'n daaglikse grondslag daar versorg."

Die Senior Sekondêre Skool Faresis het vanweë die tweeling-ooreenkoms met die D'Oultremont College, 'n hoërskool in Heusden, ook met programme begin om MIV/vigs-lyers by te staan.

"Die sekondêre skool het 'n vipklub gestig en D'Oultremont het rekenaars geskenk om die saak van die klub te bevorder. Fondse wat deur die kollege in Nederland ingesamel is, sal eersdaags aange-

wend word om die sportvelde van Faresis op te knap."

Die munisipaliteit van Heusden het, sedert die tweeling-ooreenkoms onderteken is, verskeie organisasies daarvan bewus gemaak en 'n groep wat as die Vriende van Otjiwarongo bekend staan, is uit die geledere van die instansies op die been gebring. Die organisasie ondersteun reeds verskeie projekte op Otjiwarongo.

Volgens m. Mwati is die tweeling-konsep 'n ideale wyse waarop globale netwerke geskep kan word waarmee behoeftige dorpe 'n dinamiese wêreld kan aanpak.

Dié gaan volgens m. Mwati nie net oor die finansiële ondersteuning nie, maar ook oor die magdom kennis wat mense ingevolge sulke ooreenkomste kan uitruil.



Die burgemeester van Heusden, mnr. Henk Willems, het tradisionele klompes aan die waarnemende hoof uitvoerende beampte van die Otjiwarongo munisipaliteit, mnr. Manfred Uxamb, tydens 'n onlangse besoek aan die dorp in Nederland oorhandig.



The Multi-Purpose Help Centre in Otjiwarongo

The centre in Orwetoveni in Otjiwarongo was built with funds from Heusden. It helps people living with HIV/AIDS and provides daycare for orphans in the area. Highly qualified volunteers from Heusden are currently in Otjiwarongo to help improve the services the centre offers. Photo by Ans van der Griendt.



Happy children playing

The children who receive daycare in the Multi-purpose Help Centre enjoying the break. Photo by Ans van der Griendt.

WHAT KIND OF BLACK MAN ARE YOU?

Eddy Schenkens, a Heusden official, visited Otjiwarongo in 2004. Dark-skinned and from Surinam origin, this visit was his first acquaintance with the continent of his remote ancestors.

This poem expresses the many profound and sometimes confusing impressions the visit made on him, in which the encounter with an old black man stuck out. The man tried to speak with Eddy in various Namibian languages, none of which Eddy comprehended. Finally the man gave up and said, indignantly, "What kind of a black man are you?" This question kept following Eddy and served as inspiration for this poem.

*What kind of black man are you
When you stand.....
In my Namibian sand..
Looking at the joyful children of this land
Staring at You with hunger
and sickness in their eyes...
staring at you....yes...!
What kind of black man are you ...
If you walk away..... blind....*

*What kind of black man are you..
If I speak to you....
With all the words I know....
Whith all the signs I show..
And you don't even understand...
One....?
Saying to you*
*Look....see.... feel....sense...
yes.....
What kind of man are you..
If you walk away in silence?....*

*What kind of black man are you
If you stand..
On my Namibian sand..
If I stare at you..
With my old and weary eyes....
Reaching for your help...
In Herero, Oshivambo, in San, in Himba, in
Afrikan and in Damara....
yes... what kind of black man are you
if you only see me..
through the eyes of your camera??...*

*What kind of black man are you ..
if you look at my Namibian sky
and see my far horizon,
hear my hungry children cry..
see their poor sick mother die
yes.. what kind of man are you..
When in the evening you sit
at your expensive diner
And do not even ask why?...
What kind of man am I?....*

*What kind of black man are you
When after just one week you fly
Over my Namibian hills
Into your peaceful sky..
Never to look back again....
Never to turn again.....
Maybe never to see me again....
Yes ... what kind of man are you
If you never tell the world of me.....again!....
What kind of man are you.....?*

Eddy Schenkens 18-11-2004

The partnership received national attention in the Netherlands when a Dutch celebrity hosted a television documentary of her visit to Otjiwarongo.

Partnerships between towns in Namibia and the Netherlands have grown from humble beginnings to interesting networks far beyond official relations between

politicians and administrators. Schools, churches, private business, NGO's and private citizens have become involved. Apart from products of this co-operation, such as new institutions and improved services, the many personal contacts between the participants are a contribution to mutual understanding and lasting co-operation between the two countries.

Namibia Contact

In 1996, a group of Dutch people, who have had close ties with Namibia during the late decades of the last century, decided to establish an independent committee to bring Namibia under attention in the Netherlands and to develop a network between these two countries. This group, *'Namibia Contact'*, currently consists of eight people who have been working as experts in Namibia for education and health organisations, in ethnology and in the Netherlands diplomatic service while one is Namibian by birth. *'Namibia Contact'* tries to strengthen the image of Namibia in the Netherlands by applying their knowledge and experience.

The contribution of the Dutch government to the development of Namibia is being closely followed and whenever appropriate *'Namibia Contact'* makes its voice heard. The committee therefore keeps close track of the developments and official relations between both countries.

'Namibia Contact' tries to focus on a broad range of aspects like art, economy, cultural and social aspects, health care, tourism, land reform, nature conservation and wildlife. They do this by organising lectures, expositions and seminars, exchanging experience and knowledge between Dutch and Namibian nationals. *'Namibia Contact'* co-operates with the Namibian - Dutch municipal partnerships and maintains also a close relationship with the Dutch Embassy in Namibia and the Namibian Embassy in Brussels, Belgium.



At a percussion workshop facilitated by *'Namibia Contact'*

Mrs Sophia Nangombe (left), at the time counsellor at the Namibian Embassy in Brussels proved to be a talented player. 'Namibia Contact' fosters development and relations between the Netherlands and Namibia by organising a range of activities including lectures, expositions and seminars, experience and knowledge exchanges on topics like art, economy, cultural and social aspects, health care, tourism, land reform, nature conservation and wildlife.

During the past years, *'Namibia Contact'* stimulated an educational program about Namibia in Dutch schools, it helped expatriates and students to find their way in Namibia, organised 'home lectures' (for example on HIV/AIDS) and held two important seminars which attracted publicity both in Namibia and the Netherlands. In 2002, a day about local government and tourism was organised in the *'Wêreld Museum'* in Rotterdam.

The Mayor of Rotterdam Mr Ivo Opstelten together with one of the former mayors of Windhoek, Mrs Vivienne Graig-McLaren discussed the issue of "diversity in local government". Furthermore, there were lectures about wildlife and tourism and the development thereof, art and photography expositions, Namibian crafts being sold, a children's program and a life-performance by Namibian singer Jackson Kaujeua. The Ambassador of Namibia in the Benelux, Dr Zedekia Ngavirue, was the guest of honour of the day. This day was an enormous success and was visited by around 800 people.

In 2004, a seminar on the land reform in Namibia was organised in the municipality of Boxtel with three lectures, one of which held by Dr Chris Brown, director of the Namibia Nature Foundation and Member of the Technical Team of Ministry of Lands. After the lectures participants split up into three groups to further discuss the issue of land reform in depth. Additionally an art exposition was organised and a percussion workshop, in which Mrs Sophia Nangombe, at the time Councillor at the Namibian Embassy in Brussels proved to be a talented player.

'Namibia Contact' will continue connecting the two countries through exchanging "contacts" between its people on subjects of interest to them. Both countries have a lot to share in their contrasting beauty and diversity.

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Additional Reading

There are few books that are directly related to the subject of this book. This section therefore contains a small selection of general books in various languages about Namibia and the Netherlands. Information about the current relations between the two countries and general information for visitors can be found on the Internet. A good start is the site www.nederlandnamibia.net, which will be available in June 2006.

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