

SWAPO ELECTION MANIFESTO

Towards an independent and democratic Namibia: SWAPO's policy positions

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SWAPO'S POLICY POSITIONS

Introduction

Today Namibia is at the crossroads of its independence.

The agony of death and destruction that the Namibians have endured for the past 105 years of colonial oppression is about to come to an end and freedom is in sight.

The process of transition to independence has already started, On 1 November 1989, the Namibian people will exercise their long-denied right to self-determination by electing their own leaders who, by virtue of being elected by the masses will

have the sovereign right to draft the constitution of independent Namibia.

This will bring about a new political and socio-economic order.

The task before the Namibian people is to seize this historic opportunity and ensure that they join hands to safeguard the revolutionary gains we have made in bringing

our country to the threshold of independence.

Seizing this opportunity means, first, to register as a voter, and second, to vote and send to the Constituent Assembly men, and women with a revolutionary will,

honourable record, vision for a better future, integrity, experience and proven ability to fight for the interests of the broad masses of the Namibian people.

Such men and women are to be found in SWAPO. SWAPO has stood tall in the face of formidable odds over the last twenty-nine years of its struggle to free Namibia.

Because of this fact, SWAPO had participated in the formulation of Resolution and fought bravely for the last 11 years for its implementation.

The motivating force behind this struggle has always been to guarantee that

power is given to the Namibian people to decide the future of our country through free and fair elections.

Now that Resolution 435 is being implemented, the Central Committee of SWAPO has the honour to place before the people of Namibia its concrete programme of action in

the form of SWAPO's policy positions on a broad spectrum of political, economic, social and cultural issues.

Together, these policy positions form SWAPO's Election Manifesto.

1. SWAPO'S ELECTION MANIFESTO

Philosophy of Government

For SWAPO, the ideals of solidarity, freedom and justice constitute the political guide to action.

They are the basis of the brotherhood of mankind.

The perspective of life flowing from our commitment to these ideals is that individuals should subordinate their own personal interests to the greater good of all.

We in SWAPO have fought for decades, and been imprisoned for the noble cause of putting an end to the denial of our people's democratic rights.

Thousands of SWAPO members have laid down their lives so that the oppressed majority of our society can have freedom.

Such supreme sacrifice for the welfare of others is the highest expression of solidarity. SWAPO wants to see all sections of our people working in solidarity to attain

objectives that are common to the whole society.

Our struggle has not only been to liberate the black majority from colonial domination, but also to emancipate the whites from the narrow and dehumanizing confines of

class and race privileges.

A SWAPO-led government of independent Namibia will thus take concrete actions to promote fraternal and humane social relations in our country.

The ideal of solidarity obliges our movement to address the essential needs of all our people who find themselves in difficult social and economic plight.

SWAPO recognises the fact that it was international solidarity that enabled our people to endure the long years of war, imprisonment, detention, torture and exile, and

to arrive at the present stage of our liberation struggle.

In this connection, Namibia under SWAPO government will affirm the inadmissibility of any oppression of one nation or people by another and will extend solidarity to

all peoples fighting for freedom and social justice.

The ideal or principle of freedom embodies for us a wide range of democratic rights and freedoms, the most basic of which is the right of all nations to determine

their own destiny and to exercise sovereignty over their lands and resources.

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Freedom includes the rights to life and personal liberty; rights to freedom of movement, expression, conscience, worship, speech, press, assembly and association;

right to the due process and equality before the law: right to protection from arbitrary deprivation of personal and private property; and the right to freedom from

racial, ethnic, religious or gender discrimination.

Most of these democratic rights have been denied the majority of the Namibian people for over one century by both German and South African colonialists.

Therefore, the primary objective of a SWAPO government will be to restore and defend these rights.

Their restoration requires the final and definitive end to foreign rule.

In a liberated Namibia under a SWAPO-led government, freedom will also mean an opportunity for all the people to realise their potentials and to participate in

decision-making and in directing the development of our society in a way that creates the necessary material requirements and achieves higher forms of social consciousness.

The creation of a viable; participatory and genuinely representative political system in our country is central to the realisation of such freedom.

A SWAPO-led government will thus work to establish this form of political system.

Justice means fairness to all people.

In Namibia, gross injustices have been the hallmark of colonial rule.

Policies and social practices by the colonial ruling class have been grossly unjust to the dignity, rights, and socio-economic requirements of the majority of the

Namibians, These unjust policies and practices are responsible for the present division of our society into two distinct social groups: the landless and property less

black majority, on the one hand, and the propertied and privileged white minority, on the other.

The deprivation of the indigenous Namibian people of their liberty, land and other means of livelihood has inflicted deep wounds on our society.

The black majority has not only been robbed of its land, but also of its fair share of the wealth it produces.

A SWAPO-led government will ensure that in independent Namibia social justice and equality for all is the fundamental principle governing the decision-making

process.

In order to bring about social justice and to heal the wounds of colonial oppression, a SWAPO-led government will not only restore the Namibian people's lost political

and legal rights, but will also effect a fundamental social, industrial and economic change.

In short, the ideals of solidarity, freedom and justice are the beacon of light

which guides our Movement towards the future. They constitute SWAPO's philosophy of government.

They are principles that must underlie the actions and behaviour of people in control of state power.

2. The Namibian State

SWAPO will establish an independent, unitary, secular and democratic state whose territory includes the 1,124 square kilometre area of Walvis Bay and all the

islands (the Penguin Islands) between the Orange River and Walvis Bay.

The constitution to be written by the Constituent Assembly will be the fundamental law of the land.

It will be a product of the Namibian people's democratic choice in the sense that its basic principles will be discussed and approved by the vast majority of our

people during this election campaign.

SWAPO has fought for the implementation of Resolution 435 because it wants the Namibian people to have the freedom to discuss, throughout the country, such principles

on which the Namibian state will be founded.

Namibia's independence constitution must, among other things, provide for a genuine bill of fundamental rights, a bill that is radically different from all the bogus

ones previously produced by the appointees of the colonial power in our country.

The organisation, aims and functions of the Namibian state will express the interests and will of the people.

Its basic features will be: the participation of the people in determining the government's policy; social changes; and consistent struggle for economic independence

and against neo-colonialism.

Unlike in the colonial era, when the state power was used as an instrument of a small colonial ruling class to defend its accumulated privileges and to suppress the colonised majority, in a SWAPO-led independent Namibia the state will operate in

the interest of the people as a whole.

The key organs of the Namibian state will be the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary.

(a) The Executive

The executive will be made up of the Head of State, in whom the executive power of the state will be vested, and a Cabinet.

The power and authority of the Head of State will emanate from democratic elections.

The Head of State will appoint ministers who may or may not be members of the National Assembly or Parliament.

The Cabinet will have the collective responsibility regarding decision-making.

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Ministers, who are members of the Cabinet, will also have their own individual ministerial duties and will be accountable to the Head of State and, where appropriate,

to the Parliament.

The Cabinet will be assisted in the execution of its duties by a Public Service which will be responsible for the implementation of government policy-decisions and the

management of public enterprises.

Recruitment into the public service will be on the basis of proven skill, experience and accountability.

Racial, sex, and ethnic discrimination will be strictly prohibited as a basis for the recruitment of personnel into the public service.

(b) The Legislature

The legislature will be the law-making organ of the state.

Its members will be elected through universal adult suffrage to represent the various constituencies.

Thus, the Parliament will be the focal point of popular representation and articulation of the just interests of the constituent provinces or regions of the state.

The Parliament will consist of a single chamber.

Its immediate tasks will be the repeal of all discriminatory legislation.

(c) The Judiciary

Under colonialism, the judges and other judicial officials have upheld repressive laws and excused murders, atrocities and other forms of abuses which the colonial

state power committed against the Namibian people.

Their actions often negated the principles of due process of the law.

In a democratic Namibia, under the leadership of SWAPO, the primary function of the judiciary will be to establish a new legal system with an independent judiciary

that can provide speedy and efficient provision of justice.

The judiciary will be staffed with men and women of integrity whose legal philosophy and ideological disposition will ensure that our people's long cry for justice is

answered.

The new judicial structure will be unified and will consist of the supreme court, a high court, and various district and community courts,

3. Foreign Policy

The vast majority of Namibians, like the millions of other citizens of the developing world, live in abject poverty.

Their very survival is at the mercy of a group of small but powerful nations and the privileged few in the society.

Independent Namibia, under a SWAPO government will join the other developing

countries in their common struggle against this condemnable injustice.

The commitment of a SWAPO government to democracy and social justice at home would be equal only to its commitment to the imperative need for the democratization of

international political and economic relations.

Guided by the noble ideals of a just international order, a SWAPO government will seek to join SADCC, thereby strengthening this vital community of neighbouring states

for greater regional unity, integration and development.

SWAPO believes that liberated Namibia together with its neighbours can build a future that is prosperous, more just and more secure.

A SWAPO government will also seek to join the Organisation of African Unity and help make its mission for unity, liberation, peace and prosperity possible for all the

peoples of our continent.

In this connection, SWAPO upholds the special role the Frontline States have played in support of and in solidarity with the struggling peoples in the region.

Independent Namibia will join these states in their demand for the eradication of the evil system of apartheid.

The state of Namibia will render moral, political and material assistance through the OAU to the heroic people of South Africa and their national liberation movement

to enable them to win their victory and replace apartheid with justice and democracy.

The United Nations is an indispensable world forum.

In pledging to uphold the United Nations Charter, upon joining the organisation, Namibia will seek to make its contribution to the efforts that are already afoot for

the reform of its charter, institutions and procedures.

SWAPO considers itself a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The state of Namibia will, therefore, promptly formalise its membership in this movement.

The principles and objectives of the movement will be at the core of Namibia's foreign policy, which will seek to promote friendship, co-operation, solidarity, non-

interference in other countries' internal affairs, mutual respect, and the establishment of diplomatic and commercial relations with other states.

As a non-aligned and a developing country, Namibia will strive to promote South-South co-operation for the adoption of common strategies and policies' in trade,

commodity prices, science and technology.

The state of Namibia will seek to pursue policies that support all efforts aimed at striking a balance between the often conflicting priorities of liberation,

disarmament, peace, security, environmental protection and socio-economic development.

4. Citizenship

Upon accession to statehood, Namibia will have its own citizenship law, defining the relationship between each individual living in the country and the state.

This law will be enshrined in the constitution of the country.

Namibian citizenship will be acquired on the basis of the following criteria:

- birth in Namibia, descent from a Namibian parentage, marriage to a Namibian citizen, and naturalisation.

Citizenship by birth will mean that any person born in Namibia will, regardless of the origins of the parents, have the right to the country's citizenship.

A person who acquired citizenship by birth cannot be deprived of it.

Citizenship by birth will be automatic, except for the children of diplomatic representatives of other countries.

A person will have the right to become a citizen on the ground that either one of his or her parents or grandparents was born in Namibia.

Also, a person one of whose grandparents was a Namibian or belonged to a community indigenous to Namibia may qualify for Namibian citizenship.

A person may acquire Namibian citizenship through marriage to a Namibian citizen.

An alien or foreigner may become a Namibian citizen by naturalisation, that is, by adopting, as a matter of personal choice, Namibia as his or her homeland.

He or she must show sufficient evidence of commitment or attachment to Namibia and declare his or her intention to renounce any other previous citizenship.

A period of at least 10 years of permanent residence in Namibia and proof that the applicant is of good character and has no record of fascist crimes against humanity

will be required for a person to qualify for citizenship.

A Namibian citizen will be prohibited from keeping the citizenship of another country.

In this context, SWAPO demands that those charged with the implementation of the UN Plan for the Independence of Namibia must ensure that non-Namibian nationals are

not permitted to vote in the election for the Constituent Assembly.

Specifically, SWAPO demands that appropriate provisions be made to control effectively the determination of eligibility of voters in the forthcoming UN supervised and

controlled elections.

5. Language Policy

The Namibian nation is made up of cultural and linguistic heritage of its various groups.

Democratic Namibia will be enriched by all which is healthy in this heritage.

A SWAPO government will therefore pursue a language policy that accords equal status and respect to all locally spoken languages.

The new policy will redress the present injustice whereby the German and South

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African colonial states have placed emphasis on the teaching, development and use of

German and Afrikaans at the expense of all other local languages, such as, Darnara>Nama, Kuangari, Otjiherero, Oshiwambo, Silozi, etc., will be improved to a

satisfactory standard.

Mother language will be used as the medium of instruction at the lower primary school level.

The concern here is not with so-called group identity or ethnic consciousness and exclusivity, as has been the case with the apartheid colonial regime, but with the

fulfilment of cognitive and communicative functions.

Since it is through the mother languages that infants first acquire social habits, manners, feelings, tastes, skills and other cultural norms, it is important that

their formal schooling starts with those languages of everyday life at home.

At the higher primary school level, English, which SWAPO proposes to make the official language for independent Namibia, will be introduced as a compulsory subject.

English will then be used through the secondary level to higher education as the medium of instruction.

This policy objective is based on the realisation that none of the locally spoken languages, Afrikaans included, is a medium of international communication; and that

in this day and age of increased interdependence among nations, parochial outlook does not serve the interests of any nation.

Also, to improve Namibian people's quality of life requires that our country adopts, as a practical sovereign right, a language that will help our people to speedily

acquire the vital scientific knowledge and technological know-how.

English is one such language.

6. State and Religion

Freedom of conscience and religious worship will be enshrined in the constitution.

Every person will be entitled to propagate or preach his or her religious belief.

All denominations will be free to provide religious instruction to their members, pupils and students attending educational institutions which belong to church

communities.

Church schools will be fully recognised by the state as long as such institutions include in their syllabuses subjects stipulated in the curricula of the national

education system.

This is essential to achieve uniformity regarding standards of examination and certification.

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Other religious institutions, such as, hospitals, printing houses, etc., will also enjoy the protection of the state.

On the other hand, since the political objective of SWAPO is to create a democratic society and to defend the democratic rights of everybody, no person shall be

required to undergo religious 'instruction or to take part in or attend religious observance if such observance or instruction is in conflict with that person's own

beliefs.

7. Economic Policies

The Namibian economy under South African colonial rule has been characterized by total lack of coordination.

There are minimal linkages within the various sectors of the economy.

Each of the three groups that have dominated the Namibian economy, namely, foreign mining companies, white commercial farmers, and South African fishing companies,

have only sought to maximise profits by concentrating on the production of primary products for export at the expense of domestic consumption.

The benefits accruing from the production processes are distributed on unequal and unjust racial lines in favour of the ruling white group.

Exchange of what is produced brings profits only for the owners of the mines, the white farmers, and the fishing companies.

In spite of their vital labour input, the black workers get only meagre or starvation wages.

For example, in urban areas the whites' per capita income is on average 12 times more than that of the blacks.

In the rural areas, this gap is even wider there, on average a white person's income is 25 times more than that of a black person.

The goal of SWAPO's policy on economic reconstruction and development will, therefore, be to bring change in ownership relations, bring about equitable distribution of

national income, create rational linkages of sectors and diversify the economy.

The mining sector that accounts for a third of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 85 per cent or more of all the goods exported from the country, could have been the

pillar of a strong and self-sustaining economy in our country.

The tax receipts from this source make up about half of the estimated government revenue in spite of the fact that some of the mining companies have been allowed to

operate without paying taxes for years and others provide false information about their true incomes in order to avoid paying full taxes.

Of course, there is not a single mining company operating in Namibia that is wholly or partially owned by Namibians.

This has meant that Namibia's minerals are effectively monopolised by western and South African corporations; and with such a stranglehold on the country's key

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economic sector, these corporations have oriented our economy towards exports of unprocessed raw materials.

Thus, much of the wealth from the mining industry - up to 35 per cent of the country's Gross National Product (GNP) - flows to foreign bank accounts of the

transnational and South African corporations in the form of profits, dividends, remittances and capital transfers; this has been extreme poverty for the black workers

and peasants.

As a movement committed to the values of social justice, solidarity and public interest, SWAPO does not conceal its belief in the moral superiority of socialism over

capitalism. Egalitarianism forms the basis of its vision of a just social order.

Under a SWAPO government, Namibia will not allow the status quo to continue whereby the structure of the economy is tailored to the needs and demands of foreign and

local private capital.

Change will have to be brought about.

The present unjust state of affairs characterised by the supremacy of foreign capital, on one hand, and the total subordination of national capital formation, on the

other, will have to go.

SWAPO's economic policy on ownership relations is that there will be state, co-operative, joint venture and private participation in the economy.

The state will have ownership of a significant part of the country's economic resources.

No wholesale nationalization of the mines, land and other productive sectors is, however, envisaged in the foreseeable future.

The independent state of Namibia will stand ready to negotiate new and appropriate agreements with both the existing foreign companies and new investors interested in

participating in the development of Namibia's resources for mutual benefit.

The central plank of SWAPO's policy on economic restructuring and development is to achieve a measure of national control over the country's resources and to bring

about a balance between just economic returns for the Namibian people and reasonable profits for foreign and local private investors.

(a) The Mining Industry

The revenue and foreign exchange earnings from Namibia's mining industry will become the most important element in restructuring and developing the country's national

economy.

To this end, investors will be required to reinvest into the country's economy a significant part of their profits.

Areas of the economy where such financial plough back will be necessary include

agriculture, manufacturing and mineral exploration and development.

SWAPO's mineral development strategy will also aim at the integration of this key sector with the rest of the economy.

This will include the development of mineral-based processing industries such as the manufacture of fertilizers, production of agricultural implements, manufacture of

construction materials, metal refining, and fabricating, diamond sorting, valuation and cutting.

SWAPO government will also pursue a tight fiscal policy in respect of the country's mineral industry.

This will include the curbing of corrupt practice of transfer pricing and the introduction of state lease and other taxes by the mining companies operating in the

country.

At present, the transnational corporations are taxed considerably less than in other African countries.

For example, CDM pays higher taxes in Botswana than it does in colonial Namibia.

In the future, all the corporations will be required to pay tax rates that are commensurate with their actual earnings.

(b) Land Reform and Agricultural Policy

SWAPO is committed to land reform in order to redress the imbalance created by the colonial policies of land allocation on racial basis.

The objective of the new policy will be to transfer some of the land from the few with too much of it to the landless majority.

At present, some 65 per cent of the land is owned by the whites.

There are about 6000 cattle and karakul ranches owned by some 5000 white commercial farmers.

According to official figures, as many as 48 per cent of all these farms are owned by foreign absentee landlords.

There are also certain whites who own several large farms.

The land occupied by absentee landlords, and some of the land of the farmers with many farms will be redistributed to the landless.

But, as in the case of mining, there will be no full-scale nationalisation of the land.

Instead, state farms, cooperatives, peasant family farming units, and private commercial farms will be promoted.

This strategy of mixed ownership or use of land will seek to promote broad participation of the Namibian people in the country's agricultural production and in the

sharing of its surplus value.

The second objective of this policy is to increase agricultural production and achieve appropriate product mix.

SWAPO's agricultural policy aims to minimise dependence on imports of foodstuffs.

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To this end, areas, such as, the north-eastern, northern and north-central Namibia - covering what are presently known as the Ovambo, Ihvango and Caprivi regions as

well as the Tsumeb / Grootfontein / Otavi triangle -will be designated high priority zones for crop production and intensive irrigation projects.

A SWAPO government will strive 'to provide the necessary support services to the agricultural sector in these and other zones in the form of credit, marketing, extension services for peasant farmers, infrastructure, and adequate producer prices.

To realise these policy goals, it will be necessary to transfer a considerable part of the state revenues from the mining sector to the development of agriculture.

As part of its policy to achieve agricultural self-sufficiency and rural economic development, a SWAPO government will promote the establishment of agro-industries

such as grain mills, fertiliser plants, timber mills, edible oil refineries, bag making, food processing, packing and canning factories, as well as the production of

simple agricultural implements.

Also a SWAPO government will seek to put an end to the export of unprocessed karairul pelts that are now auctioned in London and processed for wholesalers in Europe

and North America. A SWAPO government will seek joint ventures with interested investors to establish a local processing and manufacturing industry in order to export

the pelts as finished products.

(c) Policy on Fisheries

Fishery is a massive resource whose benefits have long been denied to the Namibian people and has instead been over-exploited mainly by South African fishing

companies.

Allocation of high catching quotas to the South African fishing fleet and lax controls over fishing fleets have greatly contributed to the devastation of Namibia's

fish resource.

A SWAPO-led government of independent Namibia will take immediate corrective actions to rehabilitate the fishing industry.

A SWAPO government would declare a 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone off its coast and assume the responsibility for the management and control of fishing in

that zone.

The government will introduce appropriate levies for all fishing rights to foreign fleets fishing in its territorial waters. Licensing will be linked to adequate

policing procedures and reporting.

State allocation of quotas and, controls over all the catching operations will be aimed at allowing the fish stock to recover after a decade of ruthless over-

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exploitation and to ensure that the fishing industry will, once again, become an important revenue generating and export-earning sector that it used to be.

SWAPO's ownership policy on fishery envisages the creation of a state fishery sector, in the form of a national company; joint venture operations with experienced and

technologically better equipped foreign enterprises; local private ownership as well as workers' co-operatives.

(d) Wildlife and Tourism

Protection of Namibia's unique wildlife resource, historical sites, vegetation, wild landscape, etc, will be among the top priorities of a SWAPO government.
Wildlife

is a major resource base for Namibia's tourist industry. The present colonial misuse of the country's wildlife and the destructive over-use of its plant reserves will be stopped. Legislation will be passed by the Namibian

Parliament to prohibit all forms of encroachment on the country's national parks and nature reserves.

The legislation will also provide for both state patrol of game parks and education about the importance of environmental protection.

National recreation areas and other types of tourist attraction, such as, historical architecture, rock art, sceneries etc. will receive greater state attention than

has been the case in the past.

This will include better management and conservation strategy.

To this end, a SWAPO government will establish a wildlife and nature conservation authority whose main function will be to monitor the well-being and progress of

wildlife populations against all destructive and destabilizing forces, such as, drought, the movement and settlement of people, poaching, etc.

(e) Economic independence

There is a simplistic view that Namibia's economy is tied to that of South Africa and that whatever the political and ideological colour of the government that emerges

from the UN-supervised elections in Namibia, that government will have to toe the Pretoria line if Namibia is to survive economically.

This is a false argument.

Although presently more than two-thirds of all the investment in the Namibian mining industry is owned by South African-based transnational corporations, these

corporations are themselves haunted by the spectre of sanctions against South Africa and have, therefore, already embarked on their own investment risk-spreading

policies.

They are in fact busy establishing separate and locally incorporated companies outside South Africa in pursuit of their own corporate interests.

This means that unlike other countries which export capital, the South African

white minority state will not have the kind of economic leverage that it would wish to

have in Namibia.

Regarding the supply of mining equipment, Namibia can readily find suppliers in Europe, North America and the Pacific - it does not need to import such equipment from

South Africa.

Furthermore, unlike some of the south-central African countries, Namibia does not need access to South African rail routes or ports to transport its goods to the

international markets, the claim for sovereignty over Walvis Bay by South Africa notwithstanding.

The present use of South African routes and ports is contrived.

It is not dictated by any natural necessity. Rather, it came about as a result of colonial connection and is in fact unnecessarily expensive and counter-productive for

Namibia.

Since much of Namibia's output of fishmeal and oil, some tinned fish and just about all beef cattle are sent to South Africa to satisfy that country's own demand at

prices usually far lower than those obtainable at the world market, Namibian food producers are quite often denied higher earnings from their export.

Further, instead of benefiting from this imperial / client relationship with South Africa, Namibia has had to forego the development of its own slaughtering, cold

storage and processing industry and is denied direct access to the lucrative European, Middle Eastern, Asian and other world markets for its products.

Independence will end this unjust relationship.

As mentioned earlier, Namibia also has enough arable land to produce the crops but the colonial rule has deliberately discouraged Namibian farmers from going into

commercial production of cereals, fruits and vegetables in order to keep the country a captive market for South Africa's own food surplus.

Thus, contrary to the repeated claim that Namibia is heavily dependent of South Africa, the country is in a position to establish its own independent national economy,

with its own trade routes to the world markets.

A SWAPO government will thus ensure that Namibian producers will be freed from imperial control.

They will be able to diversify their trade and establish alternative markets where their products could obtain better trade terms.

They would, for example, be able to benefit from EEC preferential beef quotas under the International Convention.

Independent Namibia will also stand to benefit economically from other multilateral economic associations like the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference

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(SADCC), the Preferential Trade Area (PTA), the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), the General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT), the Generalised system

of Preferences, etc.

The country will also, for the first time, have the freedom to produce for domestic and regional markets, instead of remaining a perpetual dumping ground for South

African goods.

The current situation regarding Namibia's presence in the Southern African Custom Union (SACU) is not one of equality.

Allocation of customs revenues to Namibia are at the discretion of South Africa.

It permits free flow of South African agricultural and manufactured products to Namibia, thereby undermining the development and growth of local agricultural output

and manufacturing firms.

Under SACU, Namibia in fact pays indirect tax to South Africa.

This horse and rider economic relationship cannot continue.

Nevertheless, independent Namibia may consider the possibility of staying in the SACU if there are genuine prospects for a non-racial and democratic change in South

Africa: and if Pretoria is willing to accept the principle of equality of nations and non-interference in other countries' internal affairs.

It is common knowledge that since 1915 Namibia's Balance of Payments (BOP) has been significantly favourable. South Africa has all the statistics.

SWAPO would, therefore, insist on the repatriation to Namibia of the country's share of foreign exchange reserves accumulated and invested in South Africa and elsewhere in the world by the Reserve Bank of South Africa.

SWAPO does not underestimate the enormity of the task of economic restructuring and development ahead and the considerable magnitude of the financial, technological

and managerial requirements for which provisions must be made.

A SWAPO government will, therefore, make concerted efforts to obtain the necessary capital assistance, and technological, training and managerial support from friendly

countries and international organisations in order to implement its policy of restructuring and developing Namibia's national economy to achieve growth with equity and

economic independence.

8. Science and Technology

The acquisition, adaptation and development of science and technology are crucial for any society that wishes to meet the basic needs of its people.

Under colonialism, black Namibians have been excluded from the execution of technical tasks and duties.

This practice has inhibited the evolution and development of a technological

culture among' our people.

Under a SWAPO government, independent Namibia will emphasise a scientific-technological culture.

It will follow a policy of acquiring, adapting and using science and technology to meet the people's basic human needs and to improve the quality of life of all

Namibian citizens.

The acquisition and adaptation of science and technology will entail measures to train cadres at all levels in technical and professional fields.

Technical training institutions will be established to build up technical skills.

A SWAPO government will, furthermore, embark upon programmes for the popularisation of science and technology through the dissemination of technical information that

is relevant to the day to day activities of the masses.

Science and mathematics will be a strong element in our school curricula; and the school syllabuses will strive to ensure an organic link between scientific /

technological theory and application.

Independent Namibia will also seek to enter into multilateral and bilateral agreements in co-operation with other countries regarding science and technology exchanges.

9. Policy on Health

Health services is one of the areas where colonialism has found its most cruel expression in Namibia.

Disproportionately large sums of money are spent on luxurious hospitals and clinics for the white minority, while health facilities for the black majority are

underfinanced, poorly staffed and equipped.

Curative, preventive and promotion medical services for the black majority of the population are hopelessly inadequate.

As a consequence, infant mortality rate amongst the blacks is high and life expectancy, low.

The provision of public preventive and curative health care services for all Namibians will be a high priority for a SWAPO government.

The government will also strive to introduce primary health care services throughout the country.

To carry out this task of providing a comprehensive health service to all Namibians, SWAPO government will establish a nationwide network of public health centres, clinics and hospitals.

It will also improve the training of health personnel.

To this end, medical, and nursing schools will be established to train doctors, dentists, nurses, clinical officers, laboratory technicians, radiographers,

psychiatrists, public health inspectors to man the health institutions adequately.

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Traditional medical practice will be accommodated to enhance research and utilisation of an important local medical resource.

A Namibian National Red Cross will be established and the government will support and work towards the WHO goal of health for all by the year 2000.

Thus, a healthy nation will be the primary goal of a SWAPO-led government in independent Namibia.

10. Education and Culture

One of the most glaring inequalities perpetrated in Namibia by the colonialists has been the gross neglect of the education of the indigenous Namibian population as a

deliberate policy designed to subjugate the masses of our people through the perpetuation of ignorance and illiteracy.

The colonialists understood that knowledge is power, and they were not prepared to share power with the black majority.

The objective of the system of Bantu education imposed in Namibia was simply to provide an inferior education to produce barely literate Namibians who would then be

useful tools for the colonial administration in carrying out its dictates.

A sanitised curriculum which denied the scholars a broader and open education emphasised their contrived racial inferiority.

Scholars were imbued with the virtues of their colonial masters' history at the expense of their own.

They were also denied a proper foundation in the sciences, since they were expected to know only enough to service the colonial status quo.

Advancement of Namibians to higher learning was greatly circumscribed.

Only a handful of Namibians could matriculate.

For any further studies, the high school graduates had to compete for the few places available at South African Bantu colleges.

Namibia can hardly boast of any institutions of higher learning.

Adult education has largely been ignored.

The colonialists have ensured that Namibians remain a semi-educated people.

This has been an inexcusable denial of the basic human rights of our people. SWAPO views education and training as the right of every Namibian and not a privilege.

Against this background, a SWAPO government would work to correct this wrong.

SWAPO's basic policy is education for all.

Education will be at the centre of the transformation of the Namibian society.

There will be universal and compulsory education for all Namibians of school-going age.

A SWAPO government will encourage and subsidise nursery schools to better prepare Namibian children for their long and important educational journey to adulthood.

The government will provide seven years of basic education at the primary level, three years junior secondary level, Education will be compulsory up to the

important

part of the senior secondary school curriculum to prepare students for further technical, vocational, and professional training.

Priority will be given to the expansion of schools, teacher training, and production of appropriate educational materials.

Students unable to proceed beyond junior secondary school level would be encouraged to continue their schooling at junior polytechnics to develop skills in fields such

as metal-work, carpentry, bricklaying, motor mechanics, plumbing, catering, tailoring, etc.

Senior secondary school graduates will be given opportunity to advance to universities for degree studies or progress to specialised institutions, such as, institutes

of technology; agricultural schools; fishery institutions: commercial, secretarial and accountancy schools; journalism; teacher training colleges; and public

administration institutions, etc.

At present, these opportunities and institutions exist only for the education and training of the privileged white minority.

A SWAPO government will make it a priority to establish such facilities for all Namibians.

A mass literacy campaign will be carried out to eradicate the colonial humiliation of being denied the opportunity to learn, read, and write.

Provision will be made for adult education through on-the-job training, and extension, continuing education, non-formal education as well as other skills development

programmes.

Provision will also be made to cater for the special educational need of the disabled and handicapped members of our society, such as, war victims, the blind, the deaf

and dumb, the emotionally disturbed, and the physically disabled.

Education in rural and urban areas will be equalised.

All districts will have government secondary schools and all regions will have specialised state institutions of tertiary or higher education which will be affiliated

to the national university.

A SWAPO government will thus invest adequate resources in education in order to uplift and improve the quality of life of all the Namibian people.

Culture is a product of history.

In a situation where a nation is dominated by another, the culture of the dominated nation will always carry the mark of domination and oppression.

The Namibian people's cultural development was suppressed and retarded for over a century.

At the spiritual level of culture, our people's songs, dances, poetry, arts, languages, traditions, values and beliefs were ruthlessly denigrated by the dominant

ruling ideology of racism.

At the material level, our indigenous technology collapsed in the face of western manufactured goods. Our artisans and craftsmen were forced out of the productive

processes. As a result, the indigenous industry lost the opportunity of further innovation and production because the invading western traders would brook no local

competition.

Our architectural designs and building expertise gave way to the dominant alien skills and techniques.

National independence should bring with it the liberation of our people's culture from the fetters of colonial domination.

An independent Namibia under a SWAPO government will promote the revival and development of our people's cultural expression and creativity.

It will launch a comprehensive cultural programme entailing the establishment of national museums and monuments, theatres for arts and drama, literacy associations, a

foundation for arts and crafts, as well as institutes of music and dance, films and languages.

The rekindling of the cultural pride among Namibians is of vital importance because it will serve as a vehicle of their creative reflection upon their past and present

realities as well as an expression of their aspirations for a better future.

11. Policy on Rural Development

In the interest of equality and social justice, a SWAPO government will endeavour to eliminate the wide differences between the urban and rural standards of living by

initiating development programmes designed to bring about improvements in the income earning activities of the rural communities.

It will do this through equitable allocation of investment funds.

Investment funds will be allocated for the development of rural physical infrastructure, such as, I hospitals and clinics, schools, water wells, dams and irrigation

facilities, etc.

Since there will be limits to the availability of investment funds, independent Namibia will emphasise the use of labour-intensive methods.

The people's government will work to help improve the organisation of rural production and distribution of goods through the provision of extension services and

promotion of grassroots voluntary organisations, especially women associations, whose aim will be production co-operation among the peasants.

Such organisations include peasant co-operative movements, self-help housing committees, small-scale industrial development associations, etc.

Rural development will be an integral part of the national development plan: and the government, as the common agent of all the Namibian people, will have the

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responsibility to provide the necessary support for rural development in the form of funds, leadership, and technical expertise.

12. Local Government and Housing

(a) Local Government

In colonial Namibia, authority at local levels of government has been divided along racial and ethnic lines.

Much of the regional government responsibility has been delegated to the so-called second tier authorities.

In the rest of the country, local government responsibility has largely been delegated to a number of white magistrates.

White municipal authorities for cities and towns have powers to raise revenue from taxes and provide services: peri-urban boards are also run by whites.

In this same urban setting, there are separate councils for whites and blacks.

The councils for blacks are mere advisory boards with no power to raise taxes or to make decisions of any consequence.

The black majority have, therefore, been left out of the decision making process at the local government levels, as is the case at the central level.

Democratization of the Namibian society would require the eradication of all the apartheid local government structures.

Under a SWAPO government, independent Namibia will have democratically elected local authorities, both in rural and urban areas, in order to give power to the people at

the grassroots level to make decisions on matters affecting their lives.

For administrative convenience and development requirements, a SWAPO-led government will restructure and divide the country into regional, district, municipal and

village units of local government.

This division will not be based on tribal and racial lines, as has been the case.

The present tribal "homelands" will be done away with.

But local government will be organized in such a way as to protect local cultural traditions and institutions.

Local government structures will be organised in such a way that they can directly influence policy decisions at the central government level.

Chiefs and other traditional leaders of the Namibian communities of our society will have a significant role to play in the local government.

(b) Housing

Housing is one of the forms in which racial stratification of our society has found its most appalling expression. Discriminatory and racist practices remain firmly

entrenched.

Black workers in urban areas live in squalid conditions of labour compounds, single quarter housing, and in segregated ghettos.

The housing conditions of the overwhelming majority of rural blacks are equally

appalling. The often corrupt administrations of the so-called second tier authorities

did nothing to improve the housing conditions for the masses.

A SWAPO government will therefore make the provision of adequate housing as one of its top priorities.

It will set up a public housing sector to help provide appropriate and affordable shelters for all sections of the Namibian population.

Such a public housing sector will be charged with the responsibility for a rapid expansion of housing construction activities in the country.

Housing construction for the lower income groups will receive state subsidies. State support will also be given in the form of appropriate housing legislation, giving

access to various forms of credit to enable individuals of land groups to build and improve their own houses.

There will also be provision for building material loans and crash training programmes for construction workers and & sans in order to ensure the successful

implementation of the government's housing policy and programmes.

Local government at regional, district, municipality and village levels will be called upon to support self-help housing projects and technical services in the form of

land survey, water supply, electricity and sanitation.

The central government will make provision for the upgrading of the administrative, managerial and technical capacity of the local government authorities to enable

them carry out this task.

The government will also mobilise and encourage privately-owned construction companies to contribute to the housing programme through an incentive package.

13. Policy on Women

The socio-economic position of women in colonial Namibia has been characterised by brutal oppression, Black women have been oppressed on the basis of race, sex and

class.

A SWAPO-led government will bring about social justice by bringing women in the mainstream of national life.

Namibian women are actively involved in the creation of our society's material requirements.

In the rural, areas, they constitute well over 60 per cent of the subsistence agricultural work force.

But, the extent of their participation in the production process is by and large invisible.

Many of their economic and home activities often go unrecorded and under-compensated.

Namibian women face greater discrimination than men in achieving full recognition for their role in the economy.

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In the urban areas, where women participate in the wage paying sector of the economy, there is a clear division of labour.

Women are concentrated in the low-paying, unskilled, domestic and casual jobs.

Black women, are the most hard-hit by the present high rate of unemployment.

The few employers in this country, who provide some kind of training for their workers, tend to discriminate against their female workers, arguing that women stop

working when they give birth to children; and, as such, money spent on training them is a "waste."

SWAPO fully recognises the specific oppression which Namibian women have suffered under colonialism.

Its government will therefore, accord full and equal rights to women in all aspects of our future democratic society.

Their full and unfettered admission to all levels of government responsibility, and to the industrial, commercial, agricultural, scientific, academic and professional

life will be defended.

Women will have the right to paid maternity leave and job security.

Linked to this right will be state provision for free child care facilities to enable the women to return to their jobs after maternity leave.

The campaign to root out discrimination against women will involve not only provisions for equal education, better training and job security for women, but also

minimum quotas for their participation in decision-making bodies at all levels of the government, trade unions, political parties, etc.

There will be a national women organisation to promote the interests of the Namibian women.

Gender-neutral criteria, based on skills, training, responsibility and working conditions, will be used to ensure equal pay for equal work.

Sexual harassment in the workplace will be a legal offence.

14. Youth and Students

Youth account for 55 per cent of Namibia's total population. As a group, it has borne the brunt of the liberation war.

Many young Namibians have been in the firing line and have made enormous sacrifices.

They have demonstrated an impressive will to work in various fronts of our people's bitter and bloody anti-colonial resistance.

The majority of the black Namibian youth have also suffered from the inequality inherent in Bantu education which is restrictive both in terms of coverage and content.

A SWAPO government will, as pointed out in the education section of this manifesto, pursue a policy of comprehensive programmes of education and training to better

prepare the Namibian youth for a productive and fulfilling role in adulthood.

It will also guarantee the right and freedom to the Namibian youth and students

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to mobilize and organize themselves into independent organizations.

Such organizations will be free to establish fraternal relations with other youth and students' organizations regionally and internationally.

There will be a Ministry of Youth Affairs.

Youth representation in decision-making structures of government at all levels will be guaranteed to ensure their active participation in the national reconstruction,

development and defence.

The Ministry of Youth Affairs will have specific budget for the promotion of cultural activity among the youth through the establishment of multi-purpose art and craft

centres throughout the country.

Such centres will have training programmes in music, dance, drama, painting, drawing, etc for the youth.

The aim of such activities will be to project among the young people Namibia's cultural identity, values and aspirations, Youth sports' clubs also will be established

in urban and rural areas.

On the economic front, the government will pursue a policy of job creating projects for the young people through the provision of rural and urban youth co-operatives

and vocational training centres for school leavers.

Since the Namibian youth has been on the front ranks of the armed liberation struggle, quite a number of them are victims of war for whom a SWAPO government will

establish a comprehensive programme of rehabilitation, involving skills and training.

15. Labour in Independent Namibia

In line with our movement's policy of economic reconstruction, a SWAPO government will bring about fundamental changes in the country's labour system.

There will be a new labour legislation whose major purpose would be to protect the workers' economic interests and rights.

Racist practices whereby black workers are treated as an expendable commodity, that is useful only for its contribution to output, will be done away with.

The new labour legislation will include, among other things, provision for a minimum or living wage which each employer will be required to pay his workers.

All the remnants of the oppressive contract labour system will be abolished.

Restrictions on population movements will be ended.

Migrant workers or contract labourers from the so-called homelands will be fully integrated into the areas of the country in which they work, and will have freedom to

live with their families or dependents.

Quality of opportunity and treatment in workplace will be strictly demanded of all employers.

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To redress the effect of past racial and gender discrimination, the government will immediately take measures to eliminate all forms of injustice in recruitment,

promotion, wages and training.

The Namibian workers* will enjoy the full democratic right to organize themselves into trade unions, and to enable them to participate in economic unit management.

The right to trade union activities will be extended to all categories of workers, including farm and domestic workers.

A SWAPO government's labour policy will call for the introduction of workers' education programmes aimed at skill development and raising the workers' level of general

education.

These will include on-the-job training, adult literacy and continuing education so as to enable the workers to advance through ranks, to managerial, administrative,

professional and technical levels of employment.

Employers will be required to provide their employees with housing subsidies, life and health insurance, annual and maternity leave and other necessary fringe

benefits.

The observance of health and safety standards will be required of every enterprise in the country.

16. Armed Forces

Independent Namibia under a SWAPO government will pursue a policy of peaceful Co-existence with its neighbours.

However, for the purpose of national defence, the country will establish a national army.

The army will recruit all loyal and able-bodied Namibians of the age between 17 and 45 years.

All male youth of 17 years will undergo military training and perform at least two years of military duty or national service.

Soldiers of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), who have fought for the independence of the country, will form the core of national army; and those

soldiers of liberation who sacrificed their lives in the course of the struggle for independence will be recognised and honoured as national heroes and heroines.

Their families and dependents will be 'looked after by the state.

The Namibian national army will be constituted so as to be of a defensive character.

The army will take part in agricultural production, construction and other civil duties.

17. The Mass Media

In colonised Namibia, mass media, i.e., press, radio and television, has been part and parcel of the occupation regime's propaganda machinery.

In this, it has been reinforced by a host of publications owned or sponsored by

political groupings or business interests that have been in alliance with the occupation regime against the independence movement.

The South West African Broadcasting Corporation (SWBC), for example, has functioned as an integral section of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC),

controlled from Johannesburg with policy decided there and the key personnel appointed or seconded by the parent.

Similarly, progressive journalists and publications that emerged in recent years from independent and church sources, were ruthlessly suppressed.

A galaxy of draconian laws, such as, the Prohibition of Information Act, Riotous Assembly Act, the Terrorism Act and martial laws imposed in the war zones of northern

Namibia, restricted not only the freedom of movement, assembly, expression, association, etc.; they have also been utilised to gag the mass media.

SWAPO believes that freedom of expression is a basic human right.

As such, journalists will have an important role to play in promoting democracy and people's power in an independent Namibia.

Bona fide journalists, both local and foreign, will be accredited to perform their duties.

Newspapers, magazines, periodicals, newsletters and other news and information publications will be certified and registered by the appropriate government agency.

Under a SWAPO government, there will be state-owned media which will serve as a vehicle to promote national unity, reconciliation, reconstruction, development and

international solidarity.

Media functionaries will be encouraged to disseminate information and ideas.

The mass media in Namibia will subscribe to the United Nations' New International Information Order in providing an accurate and balanced account of information and

events on and about Namibia and the world at large.

In order to settle complaints and conflicts between the mass media and the general public, the government will set up a Mass Media Council or (Press Council) composed

of leading citizens and representatives of mass media workers (unions or associations) and mass media owners (proprietors/management), headed by a prominent judge to

arbitrate on such cases.

The normal courts of law will settle with libel, defamation and slander cases according to the law.

18. Corruption in Public Life

In colonial Namibia, as the South African appointed Thirion Commission revealed, widespread graft, malpractices, maladministration, abuse of power and public office

and squandering of public funds by holders of public office in some of the "ethnic" governments have been widespread.

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A SWAPO-led government will put a definitive stop to this cancerous rot in public life by introducing stringent measures to curb corrupt practices.

Corruption in all its manifestations will be regarded as a serious crime.

A SWAPO government will require persons entrusted with public positions to declare their business interests to avoid conflict of interest.

It will also set up adequate machinery to ensure that public funds are properly utilised and accounted for.

In addition, an Office of the Ombudsman will be created as a watchdog against the misuse of public office.

This office will operate independent of the government to ensure non-interference in its investigations, and fairness in handling complaints.

It will have investigative powers to look into cases and complaints brought before it by the general public about unfair practices, such as, bribery, fraud,

favouritism, tribalism, racism, victimisation, undue influences, etc.

Complainants and witnesses will be protected and the confidentiality of evidence will be guaranteed.

Public servants accused of wrong-doing will have the right to defend themselves against such charges and be cleared of any wrong-doing, if found innocent of the

allegations.

On the other hand, the government will take appropriate action against offending public officials upon the recommendation of the Office of the Ombudsman, should they

be found guilty of corrupt practices.

The government will, furthermore, establish an Anti-Corruption Commission to investigate all serious cases of corruption in national life.

The citizenry will be free to report genuine cases of corruption and corrupt practices to the Commission, which will have investigatory and prosecution powers.

19. Policy on Public Finance

A SWAPO-led government will adopt procedures of strict financial management and overall budget balancing. The specific objectives of such public finance policy will

be:

(a) to secure the necessary funds through appropriate and efficient mobilization of public revenue for implementing the government's various social service and developmental programmes;

(b) to maintain a proper balance between productive investment and consumption;

(c) to minimize budget deficit and avoid excessive external borrowing, through concerted efforts to mobilize internal financial resources;

d) to encourage and promote domestic investment, through state, private and joint ventures;

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(e) to effect substantial cuts in the public expenditure through a reduction in the present huge state bureaucracy resulting from the existence of eleven so-called

second-tier authorities; and

(f) to adopt more efficient methods of tax collection to increase tax revenue from corporate profits, individual income tax, non-resident shareholders tax, import and

excise duties, sales tax, transfer and stamp duties etc.

Independent Namibia under a SWAPO government will also strive to correct imbalances in supply and demand of certain commodities and reduce the inequalities of income

distribution.

20. Electoral Process

SWAPO played an important role in the formulation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 385 of January 1976 and 435 of September 1978.

Both resolutions called for free and fair elections in Namibia under the supervision and control of the UN, as a key step towards independence.

Therefore, while deeply deploring and condemning the event of April 1, SWAPO reaffirms its commitment to Resolution 435 and support for its implementation.

At the same time, it demands and expects UNTAG to exert the necessary pressure on the South African administration to withdraw all Koevoet paramilitary elements from

the police and to put an immediate stop to the on-going acts of intimidation and terrorism by these elements.

As to the future, independent Namibia under a SWAPO government will respect the democratic principle of periodic elections on the basis of universal adult suffrage.

All racial and ethnic obstacles to the exercise of such democratic right will be done away with.

The only restrictions on the exercise of this democratic right will be age, citizenship, mental deficiency and records of serious criminal offences.

The scheduled independence election will be a multi-party contest which will hopefully provide indication of the Namibian people's preference of political party

system.

In line establish an electoral commission to look into issues of national census, demarcation of constituencies, voters' qualifications etc. in preparation for future

elections.