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THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE LAND REFORM AND THE LAND QUESTION  
IN NAMIBIA. WINDHOEK, JUNE 25 - JULY 1st, 1991.

THE NCCN's VIEW: Pastor Hiskia Ndjoze-UANIVI, General Secretary.

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Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Members of the National Assembly,  
Esteemed Members of the Diplomatic Missions,  
Dear Traditional Kings and Lords of our Land,  
Brothers and Sisters,

At last, the National Conference on the land reform and the land question is convened here in Windhoek, a beautiful place, but with its own ineffaceable and peculiar long dispute between the Great Kamaharero of the Hereros and the German Captain Curt von Francois. It is of a very cardinal importance, Mr. Chairman, to know - Why a National Conference on the land reform and the land question at this time?  
After so many people have lost their lives, their land and their property.  
Actually, who lost land in Namibia?  
And, when?  
Who should be heard or listened to, during the cause of our desirable deliberations on the land reform and the land question?

Mr. Chairman,  
Members of the Conference,  
Brothers and Sisters,

For those who never lost their original habitats, what will be their role in this Conference?  
Are they prepared to listen or are they going to impose their views on those who lost their precious land and property?  
These are only simple questions directed to the minds and souls of my countrymen and friends in the Conference.

The NCCN is not here to indulge herself into the long definitions of the terms: Land reform of Land question; but to touch on the realities and the inexplicable sorrow and wounds of my people which affected with great infinitude the land of hunters, herdsman and first swift riders of this country.  
The past history of my people wounds me. And, I think that we came here, to open and cure wounds at the same time.

Mr. Chairman,  
Members of the Conference,  
Brothers and Sisters,

The European expeditions to Namibia before and with the arrival of Dr. Hugo Hahn in 1840/2 were aimed at the land theft and consequently, the destruction of local cultic traditions, that is the Code of Holiness of our people.

In fact, land theft took greater proportions and remained the basis of inequity and unproductive use of land. And so came to our land, the disruption and bereaving of rights to land resources.

The Christian Missions and Churches in Namibia played an unholy and sinister role, by encouraging the colonisers to take away our land, contrary to the Code of Holiness of my people and country.

Nevertheless, the Rheinisch Missionary Society was given plots for the purpose of service to the people of Hereroland, but they defied those rights to serve the Hereros. The English did the same with Walvis Bay.

Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished members of the Conference,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Hour will come, when the Herero christians will, it appropriate to deal with the fallibilities of the Rheinisch Mission Society and shall demand the return of those portions of land, back to themselves or shall also request a fair christian compensation for the undone services

Mr. Chairman,  
Members of the Conference,  
Brothers and Sisters,

It is difficult, if not impossible; to discuss the question of the use of land for/by harvesters and producers, without addressing first the right to communal landownership by their various harvesters and producers.

We can only make success by using the land for crop-production and farming, only if the communal farmers have the security of land ownership and of land inheritance.

Thus, the Namibian Government of the day, the Cabinet of the Republic of Namibia and the Namibian National Assembly should not hesitate to accept the demanding reality of Namibia today which is the immediate recognition of the communal areas as the rightful and inalienable communal property of the homologous farmers/populations of the homogenous areas before March 21st, 1990.

Such simple and genuine recognition of communal landownership, should include the right to land - privately and cooperatively - as may be necessary in accordance with the norms and habits of social organisation of the particular farmers or populations.

Mr. Chairman,  
Members of the Conference,  
Brothers and Sisters,

Once, the vested rights to land are established in the name of that community, the communal farmers of all communal areas will no more be slaves of the State, like in the past and there will be no vacuum for landownership in Namibia.

Therefore, the NCCN would like to counsel our Government through this Conference not to start playing the tactics of the South Africa of the past, whereby an ungovernable situation in Namibia will be provoked.

Certainly, the NCCN is convinced that if the Namibian people, with the blessings of all Namibian churches and councils succeed to avoid the confrontations of interests and the Government of Namibia quit its reluctance in recognising the traditional authorities, the communal areas will surely take their proper place as the second base for industrial development in Namibia.

The commercialization, privatization and cooperativization of the communal areas will also broaden new chances of evangelization for the Churches in Namibia.

Mr. Chairman,  
Members of the Conference,  
Lords of our Land and friends,

The NCCN recommends the following:

1. Recognition of the right to communal landownership,
2. Effective protection of the interests of present and future commercial farmers,
3. Municipal autonomy from the central and regional Governments of free Namibia,
4. The identification of appropriate fields of production for each area according to its rainfall, soiltypes and other physical factors and the rendering of extension services,
5. The creation of acceptable conditions for financing and the means of production and of transportation.

Mr. Chairman, the NCCN hopes the best for this National Conference.

Thank you.

===== Pastor H.Ndj.-UANIVI

NCCN General Secretary

