



## Republic of Namibia

### The President

#### *Message of solidarity on the occasion of the "International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People"*

This year marks a century since British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour wrote his letter to Baron Lionel Rothschild, expressing the British Government's support for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine by stating the following:

*His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.*

Unfortunately, since the Balfour Declaration, the world powers have failed to reach an understanding regarding the protection of existing so-called non-Jewish communities in Palestine from prejudice, thereby resulting in a milieu of violence, conflict and oppression, aimed towards the Palestinian people. Ironically, the so-called non-Jewish are the rightful owners of Palestine and the dispossession of their homeland was proclaimed in a typical colonial fashion.

The Palestinian people have been the victims of extreme prejudice for several decades and this day, **The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People**, is a day on which the international community recognizes the inalienable rights of the Palestinian People to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty. On behalf of the people and government of the Republic of Namibia, I take this opportunity to express our full solidarity with the Palestinian people as they continue their rightful struggle for self-determination.

The year 2017 marks a poignant anniversary: 50 years of oppression of the Palestinian People since Israel's illegal occupation in 1967 and 100 years since the Balfour Declaration, which led to the displacement of Palestinian people from their

Homeland. Despite repeated calls from the United Nations, we have continued to witness the unlawful construction and expansion of settlements, coupled with the destruction of Palestinian property, the displacement of communities and other flagrant violations of basic human rights. It is time the International Community move beyond the predictable rhetoric of condemnation, and work tirelessly to exhaust all diplomatic efforts, with the aim of granting the Palestinian People the freedom, for which they have fought and suffered for so long.

We take note of and appreciate the reconciliation agreement signed in October 2017 between Fatah and Hamas and commend the leaders of the respective organisations for presenting a united Palestinian front. We hope that this positive step will spur on the resumption of direct negotiations between Palestine and Israel, with the hope of bringing to a peaceful conclusion 100 years of continued resistance against occupation and 50 years of illegal annexation of the Palestinian homeland.

Namibia is committed to the peaceful resolution of the Palestinian cause. We have always made the greatest efforts to keep both diplomatic and political attention on the Palestinian People. We will continue to support them, as they fight for their independent, viable and contiguous State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Aluta Continua.