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SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE A.N.C. (SA) WOMEN'S SECTION TO THE FIRST CONGRESS OF THE SWAPO WOMEN HELD IN LUANDA, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA. JANUARY 20th to 26th, 1980

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Dear Comrades,

Allow me on behalf of the oppressed but struggling women of South Africa, on behalf of the African National Congress and our entire membership, to extend our congratulations to our fellow combatants, the fighting women of Swapo, on this historic day - the inauguration of the First Congress of the Swapo Women.

Distinguished delegates,

Dear Comrades,

Before I deliver our salutations to this historic congress, allow me to extend our warm greetings to our OMA Comrades and fellow combatants. As the dark cloud that came with the passing away of our beloved Comrade President, Dr. Agostinho Neto, fades into the horizon, we cannot fail to once more emphasise our deep appreciation for the great deeds done by the Angolan people under the tried and tested leadership of Comrade Neto. Our very presence here and the warm hospitality accorded to us by our OMA Comrades is evidence of this fact.

VIVA POVO ANGOLANO!

Dear Swapo Comrades,

Your Congress takes place at a very crucial phase in the history of the struggles of the peoples of Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Forced by the ever-escalating offensive launched by the forces of the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe, the murderous Muzorewa-Smith clique has finally been forced to agree to the long standing demand made by all progressive forces - that there should be free and fair elections in Zimbabwe - elections that will reflect truly the aspirations of the peoples of Zimbabwe. We the progressive forces of the world welcome the settlement reached at Lancaster. We the women of Namibia and South Africa join hands in rejoicing with our sisters and comrades from Zimbabwe: for we as mothers know only too well that the just wars of liberation going on in our countries are claiming thousands of our people's lives. We however emphasise that we shall only accept the settlement reached at Lancaster if all parties concerned adhere to the agreements made at that conference. We shall never tolerate a situation whereby any authority imposes itself upon the peoples of Zimbabwe in a vain effort to divert the course that history has to take. The peoples of Zimbabwe must be free!

The First Congress of the Swapo Women also takes place at a time when the forces of imperialism and reaction, manifesting themselves in the so-called 'gang of five' western countries, are trying to manipulate the course of events in Namibia, with an aim of imposing a neo-colonial solution to the question of returning the land to its rightful people. The manoeuvres of the Western Five are obviously aimed at preserving and consolidating the position of South Africa and the west in your country. That is why we join your President, Comrade Sam Nojuma, in saying that the question of Namibia can no longer be solved across the conference table, but on the battlefield.



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We are not war-mongers, we did not choose the battlefield! Nobody is to blame for the situation in Southern Africa, but the minority racist colonial regimes and their Western imperialist allies.

We from South Africa know only too well that the victory you are inevitably going to achieve will be a victory for us too. That is why we are moved to see so many of you, gallant fighters for freedom and human justice, fighters for a democratic society wherein men and women alike shall strive to work hard for the attainment of peace and equality. We are inspired to note that you have gathered here to work out strategies to consolidate your ranks, to find ways of how best you as women can confront the viscious agents of reaction in your country in the form of the sellout Turnhalle Democratic Alliance, and all other puppets. At the same time you have gathered here to seek ways and means of effectively combining that task with the task of building up the women of a future Namibia, a woman who will take her rightful place as a woman, a wife and mother, and as an equal participant in the socio-political and economic life of your country.

That is why I stand here and wish you, on behalf of all the women of my country South Africa, success in your deliberations. Let us all emerge from this Congress better equipped for the onslaught on the enemies of our peoples.

VIVA THE FIRST CONGRESS OF THE SWAPO WOMEN!  
VIVA ANGOLAN WOMEN!  
PELO EMANCIPACAO DA MULHER!  
A LUTA CONTINUA!  
A VICTORIA E CERTA!



## REPORT ON THE FIRST SWAPO WOMEN'S CONGRESS

Dear Comrades,

I attended the first Congress of the Swapo Women's Council. The Congress was opened by the President of Swapo, Comrade Sam Nojuma on the 21st of January. The postponement of the opening was due to the late arrival of the representatives of the Angolan Women's Organisation (OMA), who were the main guests.

I also arrived late at the Congress. I or rather the group I was travelling with reached the meeting place late in the evening of the 21st of January. For this reason I could only deliver our message of congratulations in the morning of the 22nd of January.

Present at the Congress also were delegates from the Soviet Women's Committee, the G.D.R., Congo, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia and from the United Nations Council for Namibia.

All delegates read messages of congratulations and full support and solidarity with the struggling women of Namibia and all women of Southern Africa still under the yoke of racist domination. They pledged their unequivocal and continued support and all round assistance to our fighting sisters of SWAPO and also us the fighting women of South Africa and Zimbabwe.

In the declaration passed by the Congress the women of Namibia pledged to (among other things):

1. Mobilize and organise all Namibian women inside and outside the country, to raise the level of their political consciousness and to involve them fully into the struggle for Namibia's independence.
2. To work hard to improve the standard of education and to completely liquidate one of the evils of colonialism, illiteracy among Namibian women.
3. To encourage women to join and become active combatants of the People's Liberation Army (PLAN).
4. To support and carry out all decisions of the Central and Executive Committees of SWAPO and to work unsparingly to bring nearer the day of victory.

The First Congress of Swapo Women also sharply condemned the naked acts of aggression perpetrated by the Pretoria Boer regime against peaceful Angola. In conclusion the Congress extended solidarity and support to the struggling women of South Africa, Zimbabwe, Western Sahara, East Timor and all other women fighting oppression and exploitation for peace, freedom and social progress.

At the Congress I met Comrade Appolus Putuse, Swapo's representative in the Pan African Women's Organisation (PAWO), who told me that PAWO has been given an office in Luanda to be used by Liberation Movements. That is the A.N.C., SWAPO, and the Patriotic Front.

At the end of the Congress the Comrades only read the declaration. It was not given to us in document form. So what I have stated is only what I thought most significant and what I managed to write down. I told them to pass the declaration and resolutions on to the office.

Amandla - Matla!  
Jessica Monare.