

Yale-United Nations Oral History

Moses Katjuongua

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Windhoek, Namibia

Jean Krasno, Interviewer

Jean Krasno (JK): For the record, Mr. Katjuongua, could you please describe where you were born and educated and then how you became involved in the movement for Namibia's independence?

Moses K. Katjuongua (MKK): I was born on April 24, 1942, at a small rural place called Okomumbonde in the Epukiro Native Reserve. That is about 400 kilometers from Windhoek. But I grew up in Windhoek during my initial years. I started my primary education here in Windhoek – at the Herero School in what was known as the ‘old location’ which was located in what now is known as Hochland Park, not far away from here in Pionierspark – the area where the old graveyard for Blacks is situated.

The old location was to be demolished by the White Colonial authorities to give way to the expanding white city in terms of the apartheid policies of the day. That was back in 1959 – a move which resulted in a bloody confrontation between the South Africa colonial authorities and our people. As a result, 10 blacks were massacred while over 50 others were wounded, including relatives of mine.

Eventually in 1968, the blacks were forcibly removed to what is now known as Katutura – meaning in Otjiherhero, “we have no permanent abode,” or permanent place of residence.

When their houses and other forms of property were bulldozed to the ground and destroyed and brute force was used, many were forced to move to Katutura, while many others opted to go to the Native Reserves.

In post-historic days – after the German War against our people and the occupation of our country by South Africa, our family went to settle in the Aminius Native Reserve, east of Gobabis and about 450 kilometers from here.

However, before the German occupation of South West Africa and their dirty war against our people, my family – the Rukoro family, or clan, lived in at Okakango, about 5 kilometers from Okahandja, north of Windhoek. That is our traditional land. It is now a farm of a German family. My great-grandfather and my own father are buried there.

The eviction of the Herero people from their traditional lands was the final outcome of the extermination order by the German Colonial Military Commander in the South West Africa (or “German South West Africa”), General Lothar von Trotha, to wipe out the Herero Community – men, women and children – to seize their property – stealing their land and cattle.

The extermination order was the first ever such action by a colonial power against colonial peoples in African history.

By the end of the Genocidal War of 1904-1907, three-fourths of the Hereros perished and many, many Namas, Damaras, San and other in the Central and Southern areas of Namibia.

Many Hereros had to flee to Bechuanaland (now Botswana) and that explains why you have many of them there, who originally escaped there as war refugees. Those days the Resistance Movement was neither fought from foreign bases nor with external help.

When my father realized that I was spending more time away from school watching American Cowboy films together with my cousin Tisby Hengari (Katupakere) who now works for the British High Commission (Embassy) here in Windhoek, he “deported” me to our home in the Aminius Reserve.

I finished my primary education there at the Rietquelle Primary School in 1958. Because South Africa was planning to introduce Bantu education (a form of inferior education system for blacks compared to the one given to whites), he decided to send me to Botswana to attend high school there.

He happened to be a friend of the late Chief Tshekedi Khama, uncle to Botswana’s first president, Seretse Khama, and made arrangements that I go to Moeng College under his auspices. My father was one of the Senior Councilors to the Great Herero Paramount Chief, Chief Hosea Kutako, and it was through missions to Botswana to deliver messages from Chief Hosea to Chief Tshekedi Khama to be forwarded to the UN asking the world body to stop the South African White minority regime from incorporating South West Africa into the Union of South Africa as a 5th Province.

What is often forgotten is that the struggle for freedom and national independence was first started and prosecuted by our traditional leaders. Chief Hosea was the most prominent as an old fighter in the war against the German imperialists and an opponent of South African occupation. What was later done by political parties was a mere continuation of the struggle by other means.

Political parties, such as SWANU and SWAPO, were formed in the late 1950’s.

Since Chief Hosea and our family lived in the same area in the Aminuis Reserve, I saw him very often and I could listen to his conversations with his Councilors and I could see what they were doing. That is how my first political schooling started.

I left for Botswana in May 1959. But, unfortunately, when I arrived Chief Tshekedi Khama was very ill – first he went to hospital in Salisbury (now Harare) and later died in London and I attended his funeral at Serowe where I first met Sereste Khama.

Things became difficult and complicated – our plans were definitely turned on their heads. Nevertheless I continued to stay on in Botswana with relatives, doing all sorts of odd jobs and attending evening classes under Professor K. Motsete – a Mostwana intellectual from the University of London.

Odd jobs included working as a shoe-maker for a cousin of my father in Mahalapye, working as a garden boy and house-cleaner for an Afrikaner family, the Henninas, and later promoted to a foreman in their butchery and bakery business when they realized that the “small kaffir” from South West Africa had a bit of schooling – his Afrikaans was rather good, handwriting perfect and his knowledge of arithmetic was better than that of the “Mrs. – the wife of the boss.

That gave me the skills in cutting meat and selling cakes.

I left Botswana late 1960 with some refugees from SWA and SA. Emille Appolus and Paul Shipanga were the ones from home. I paid for all of them until we reached Tanganyika, now Tanzania.

JK: Then in Terms of Namibian Independence?

MKK: As I said earlier, I joined the modern independence struggle through SWANU abroad. So, most of the time I was in exile, I was going from place to place – from East Germany to Moscow, to Beijing to Havana, name it, looking for support for our struggle through SWANU.

Since I spent almost 23 years of my life in exile – having left here in 1959 at the age of 17 years and returning back home in 1981, the most contributions on my part to the independence struggle were made while in exile.

The main reason for coming back home was very simple: since the UN – at the request of the OAU – decide to recognize SWAPO as the “sole authentic representative of the people of Namibia,” the non-SWAPO parties had no longer access to either the OAU or the UN and therefore they had no business to campaign abroad.

Coming back home the job was to organize and hold protest meetings. Since South Africa was under increasing pressure from sanctions and international isolation and at times showed signs to negotiate solutions, some of us felt there was no harm to talk to the devil himself – since SWAPO and the UN were after all seeking talks with South Africa.

Since the non-SWAPO parties could not rely on external support, this was often a frustrating process. But one could not go home and call it a day. The struggle had to go on by other means under out special circumstances.

JK: So, you were not a member of the SWAPO Party?

MKK: No, I have never been a member of SWAPO. I have only been a member of SWANU under different forms – as SWANU was making fronts with other organizations.

JK: You said you came back to Namibia in 1981. Between 1981 and 1989, there was still a lot of struggle and negotiation going on to try to gain independence. What kinds of things were going on there Namibia?

MKK: Protest meetings and demonstrations against the SA presence here. Also appeals and petitions to SA to relent and to allow self-determination and independence and to scrap apartheid structures.

The non-SWAPO political parties started talks to form a broad-United Front to create their own political power base. Not an easy task.

Eventually these parties formed a Multi-Party Conference (MPC) in 1983. Practically all the groups that had some political relevance, including the “whites-only” National Party, joined.

This was mainly the initiative of SWANU under my leadership, having been elected president in January 1982. Andreas Shipanga and his SWAPO-D helped as a close ally.

SWAPO was clearly upset by this development and did all sorts of things to disrupt it. When SWANU and some other parties rejected the proposal of a “State Council” by Administrator-General Willie van Niekerk, SA, surprised by the progress

MPC was making, approached the MPC as to whether we did not want to have an Autonomous Administration while waiting for the implementation of Resolution 435.

This is how the MPC became the Transitional Government of National Unity in 1985. We were to have all powers except Defense and Foreign Affairs. But this proved to be a tricky game as SA and P.W. Botha proved to be difficult and often unreliable partners.

As you know, there was the UN Independence Plan for Namibia in the form of Security Council Resolution 435. However, its implementation was delayed by a number of factors for a long time.

The Republican Administrations of both Ronald Reagan and George Bush and South Africa (SA) insisted and demanded the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola as a condition before 435 could be activated. Similarly, Cuba, the Angolan Government of MPLA, the Soviets and others maintained that the presence of Cuban troops in Angola was not linked to Resolution 435, and therefore, was an extraneous issue.

So, the plan was delayed and the way continued. So, the delay and the uncertainty it created and the position of the UN and the OAU and non-SWAPO parties, the so-called internal parties had to think about new tactics to help break the deadlock and give life to their own existence.

In any case the Final Compromise between SA and the USA, Angola and Cuba and their friends was a mutual withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola and the Departure of the SA army from Namibia and the cessation of hostilities to pave the way for the implementation of Resolution 435 at the end of March 1989.

The Transitional Government was disbanded on February 29, 1989, to make way for Resolution 435.

JK: Then at that time was the Administrator General Louis Pienaar put in position?

MKK: Yes, he replaced Dr. Willie van Niekerk with whom we negotiated the Transitional Government.

Although Dr. Van Niekerk was not always an easy customer – as he had to take into account the often-moody feelings of P.W. Botha – he was by far a flexible and reasonable man. Of course, he had the brilliant and tactful advice of Mr. Sean M. Clearly – his Chief Administrator.

Adm. Louis Pienaar, by comparison was often arrogant, opinionated if not dictatorial. As a former Ambassador to France, he has French mannerisms, believing that he was a refined and more civilized diplomat and an intellectual.

He replaced Dr. Van Niekerk in 1985 with the inauguration of the Transitional Government.

Apparently P.W. Botha appointed him thinking that Van Niekerk was a bit to “soft” with us and that Louis Pienaar was the man who would carry out his wishes.

If Van Niekerk was the man who negotiated the TG, why not allow him time to see how things will work out. He knew us much better and understood the process we went through.

However, unlike most of my colleagues in the Transitional Government, especially Andreas Shipanga, I could cope with him after long and hard arguments we could end up smiling.

I suspect he knew that I did not believe that he was more of an intellectual than myself or more experienced than I.

Anyway, Louis Pienaar left Independent Namibia with tears in his eye, hoping to come back one day.

JK: Were you able to change the Budgetary Process and the policies?

MKK: That's a complicated story. I will come to that a little later. Certainly, we could not change things here that would – as we were to learn later – embarrass the SA Government at home.

The budget. We assumed that Proclamation R101 that was the basic document of understanding between ourselves and the SA Government was to be respected at all times. It contained a rather unique Bill of Rights, under a colonial situation, and defined the division of powers between ourselves at the SA Government in South West Africa/Namibia.

Since the budget was not part of Foreign Affairs and Defense, we believed it to be our prerogative to decide it.

When we were negotiating the Transitional Government, P.W. Botha used to say to us, “We are friends;” “You are South West Africans and I am South African;” “Govern yourselves in to Self-Government,” etc.

But this was not going to be the case when the fundamentals were at stake.

When some of us were talking about abolishing the Ethnic Authorities established under Proclamation AG8 of 1980, he got cold feet because that did not fit his agenda in SA. He started threatening.

When SWANU and SWAPO-D got tired and frustrated by the delaying tactics of our colleagues in the Transitional Government (TG) who had Ethnic Authorities under AG8 – always saying that “We should not throw away the baby with dirty water” – and approached the High Court to establish whether the continued existence of second tiers or Ethnic Authorities, and the continued allocation of monies to them was not in the violation of the Bill of Rights, our colleagues became so depressed and P.W. Botha so furious.

In an Advisory Opinion, the Court ruled in our favor. (We paid a lot of money to our lawyers).

And although we decided to settle the matter out of court, P.W. Botha decided to change provisions in Proclamation R101 to limit our powers.

SA and P.W. Botha also used their subsidies to our budget to blackmail us.

So, you see the difficulties and contradictions with the Budgetary Process and the change of domestic policies.

The same problems were experienced when the majority of the Cabinet refused to accept the inclusion of “minority rights” in our so-called Hiemstra Constitution – which in fact, also influenced our Independence Constitution.

The fact of the matter is that the Ethnic Authorities – one for all whites – Afrikaner, German, Portuguese, English, etc. – and one for each Black tribe, were

modeled on the SA Homelands and the whole system of Apartheid in SA. So, how can you destroy them here while keeping them in SA?

When we agreed to the formation of the Transitional Government we believed that this was a constitutional process to disband Apartheid and its structures pending the implementation of Resolution 435 and, since Namibia was not part of SA, this would give SA an opportunity to learn to give up Apartheid and its Bantustans. “You can bring a horse to water, but if can’t drink there is not much you can do!”

NO! NO! This was too much for P.W. Botha.

So P.W. Botha did not only learn but he also robbed the so-called internal parties necessary tactical benefits for the coming UN elections.

In practice things became more difficult and complicated – SA with its racial problems at home and our colleagues in the TG having a split loyalty between their membership in the TG and their vested interests in the ethnic authorities as a base of political support.

SWANU and SWAPO-D had no ethnic authorities and that is why we had pushed hard for the adherence to Proclamation R101. A lot of political headache!

However, it must be pointed out that the Transitional Government did not only suffer from problems but it also did a number of good things, despite its constraints, contradictions and problems. A few examples:

1. We were the first to introduce the concept of National Reconciliation (1987), which at the time helped ease race relations and relax human relationships in Namibia, to make us have a better racial climate than South Africa.

2. A small but effective, able and capable Cabinet impressed many. No nepotism and tribalism and corruption was minimal. Salaries modest and waste not so widespread.
3. A Bill of Rights, which was rather unprecedented in a colonial situation. Even SWAPO used it to protect itself when it was in trouble with the police. Also, the Namibian newspaper used it to get a better deal to register as a newspaper.
4. The release of Andimba Herman Toivo Ya Toivo and others from Robben Island.
5. The implosion of the dirty and unhealthy compound in Katutura and the creation of Hakahana settlement as a basic alternative accommodation.
6. Improvement in health and social services – Primary Health Care, medically stocked hospitals and clinics and cleaner medical facilities. Happier nurses and doctors. Food supplies to schoolchildren. Better attention to pensioners, though their income was low it was paid on time.

All this despite limitations imposed by AG8. There were, of course, improvements in other areas. All this despite sanctions against SA and no foreign aid. All this only in a period of less than 5 years.

7. A Bill of Rights and a Draft Constitution which definitely influenced the process of writing the Independence Constitution.
8. We never put fellow citizens or our own party members in dungeons because of political disagreements or suspicions.

SWAPO obviously saw the MPC and the TG as spoiling their chances of winning a 2/3 majority in UN-supervised elections to be able to write the Independence Constitution alone or to dictate. They feared we would change things to allow little for them to claim to change.

So, they called us all sorts of names. However, we never saw ourselves as “puppets” or “unpatriotic elements” but as a daring facilitating political force trying to open up alternative strategies in a deadlocked situation and, of course, as people looking for a political base like all politicians do.

We never saw the Transitional Government as a permanent arrangement or consider SWAPO as having a monopoly over the definition, content and form of patriotism.

JK: I wanted to ask you about that. When did that separation of different Namibian groups start? Did it start under the Germans, as well?

MKK: Actually, yes. Racial discrimination and the separation of blacks started with the Germans. That was the tactic of divide-and-rule. It was the Germans who started with the policy of creating the “Native Reserves”.

The victory of the National Party in the whites-only elections in 1948 in SA only intensified and solidified racial discrimination by giving it a legal framework and a special name of Apartheid.

After over 350 years of white domination, racial discrimination and Apartheid proved to be a horrific waste of time and money – a monumental bluff.

But the whole thing – the entire doctrine of black domination of whites – became a very terrible project after 1948 carried out with fanatical zeal, Nazi-style tactics and brute force.

But Africa and Mandela proved that Colonialism and white domination couldn't last forever in Africa. Their final defeat is inevitable.

JK: However, one thing that I have not completely understood about SWAPO is that SWAPO operated primarily in exile during this period.

MKK: Their military activities were carried from abroad. They had a local political organization.

Yes, they carried out their military operations from Angola into this country on occasions, but they did not have Base Areas or "No Go Areas" inside Namibia.

SWAPO would often like to claim that the actual struggle for liberation only started on August 26, 1966 at Ongulumbashe and only the Ovambos liberated this country.

Not true!

Of course, to say that only the Ovambos liberated Namibia should be a serious embarrassment to the non-Oshivambo members of SWAPO.

The liberation of this country is, in reality, a product of a process of struggles over a long period of time by the various nationalities of our country – in different forms – and the support of the international community.

For its part, SWAPO contributed by way of protests and demonstrations locally and the exercise of military pressure from outside with the support of Angola and Cuba.

However, there was no outright military victory to defeat colonial SA. While one admires the sacrifices of PLAN fighters, the fact that most SWAPO leaders came back

home intact and well looking, perhaps tells us that they were involved in diplomatic activities rather than in military operations.

By-and-large the whole struggle for independence did not start either on August 26, 1966, at Ongulumbashe with the beginning of the SWAPO armed struggle; the petitions to the UN by Chief Hosea and others, or the tragic events of December 1959, or even the Great Patriotic War against German imperialism of 1904 – 1907. The struggle started much earlier around 1896, with the brutal murder of Kahimemua Nguvauva and others and basically, after the whole process of the Berlin Conferene of 1884 was set into motion to divide Africa among the European Powers.

It is in that context that I would like to see the Independence Struggle as the product of a series of struggles over a long time in which so many of our people suffered, sacrificed and were even exterminated in an extra-ordinary manner, and not a sudden outcome of the action at Ongulumbashe.

The Hereros, for example, would like to believe that they would not have become an ethnic or political minority today if it were not for the ruthless War of Extermination in the defense of this country.

This issue is also related to the problems surrounding the Land Question in this country. Who lost the land? For example, if you take away the land from the whites, who are going to be a priority recipients of the land re-distribution.

History speaks for itself. Most of the farms owned by whites in this country, especially in the Central Namibia, have Otjiherero names.

The fact of the matter is that the oppressed people of this country became companions in the Liberation Struggle from different angles and perspectives. Some

wanted freedom and independence from colonial oppression while others also wanted freedom and independence but also to regain their lost and conquered lands and other forms of property.

While Namibia belongs to all of us, some lost more than others in the common for independence.

When some people from the ruling party say that the Hereros “ran” to Botswana because of “cowardice” they show that they know nothing about history and have no feeling for people who do not belong to their ethnic group.

When the Mayor of Oshakati says that priority in job distribution should first go to the people in the North, it shows the need for prioritizing in terms of local realities and ethnic sympathies,

I believe in straight talk and fair play.

I will talk about these things in the Parliament this afternoon.

(Moses was giving a speech in the National Assembly in the afternoon).

MKK: Jean, what I am trying to put on record is that Namibian Independence was the fruit of local struggles and international solidarity and compromises with the oppressor and the enemy, and not simply a SWAPO story –

JK: There are a lot of pieces to the puzzle and you have to have all the pieces to have the full pictures.

MKK: Precisely.

JK: While we are still talking about SWAPO and its bases in Angola, what I have not understood is that was the relationship between SWAPO and the Angolan Government and the Cuban troops.

MKK: You see, what happened was a very strange story. Initially – during Portuguese colonialism – Mr. Nujoma was a friend of Dr. Savimbi and SWAPO an ally of UNITA. They were fighting together during those early days of both struggles. That is before MPLA took over in 1975.

However, with the collapse of the Portuguese in Angola in the middle 1970's and the independence of Angola and the take over of power by MPLA with the help of the departing Portuguese, the Soviets and the Cubans, SWAPO suddenly switched sides thinking that its bread was better buttered with MPLA than with UNITA which was now involved in a power struggle with MPLA.

They say, "There are no permanent friends but only permanent interests."

JK: The Portuguese government had become socialist and they initiated the decolonization of Angola. And the Angolan government was also socialist.

MMK: Because the MPLA was Pro-Soviet. The people who took power in Lisbon through the Coup were mainly Pro-Moscow Communists. This is how the relationship actually developed.

The last governor of Angola at the time the “Red” Colonel Rosa, handed over what remained of the government, the administration of Angola, to the MPLA. That is how the Civil War was started. There was an agreement before that there must be an Electoral Process in Angola to produce at least a government of National Unity. But it was obvious at that time that Savimbi and other groups were going to win. Some people feared this and at that time Soviet power was a world factor. And, they took the side of the MPLA.

SWAPO, because of the power change in Angola and the independence given to the MPLA, had to change sides, from UNITA to MPLA. Now they had to use MPLA as an ally for whatever they wanted to do hoping that the MPLA was agreeable.

JK: Because the government was stronger. And the Cubans with a socialist base as well aligned with the government.

MKK: For them it was a forward base for Soviet influence, and whatever it implied.

JK: This comes to my question: the West considered Nujoma and SWAPO communist.

Is that accurate?

MKK: Well, if you were to say that they were considered as an extension of Soviet influence in this part of the world, which was considered as a Western sphere of influence, yes, yes.

They were communist by association, not by ideology, not because SWAPO or even Mr. Nujoma accepted the Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx, for matter. It was “communism” by association.

You remember, that at an earlier stage when the Sino-Soviet conflict was very much alive, SWANU and SWAPO were divided along those ideological lines. SWANU, to which I belonged, was more allied with China and SWAPO with the Soviet Union.

JK: Earlier you said you visited Beijing.

MKK: Yes, we met Chairman Mao Tse-tung on March 18, 1963. I went several times to China. I was there when the Cultural Revolution started in 1966. Our contacts with China were first initiated by SWANU’s first president, Jaririetundu Fanuel Kozonguizi, Namibian’s First Ombudsman, who first went to China in 1960, a move that angered the U.S. and made him confined to Manhattan whenever he went to New York to appear before the UN.

JK: Oh, I remember when you were in New York you said he had died.

MKK: Yes.

JK: So, were you in East Berlin?

MKK: East Berlin, yes, arrived there in July 1961, when they were putting up the Berlin Wall. I had a scholarship to study at some of their newspapers, in this case the “Volkstimme”, Organ of the District Leadership of the SED – Socialistischen Einheits Deutschlands (the Communist Party).

Then I spend another time at the Youth High School – Jugend Hochschule and William Pieck – of the Communist Party, near Berlin.

All in all, I spent about 2 years in East Germany.

JK: What finally caused Angola and Cuba to agree to the withdrawal of the Cuban troops? You said that the whole Independence process became linked to that issue. It dragged on and on, so what finally led to that decision?

MKK: I think they all finally got tired of the war. They fought each other to a virtual standstill.

Since the conflict was finally resolved through negotiations and the hard-line positions of yesterday were given up through political compromises, no one can credibly claim a military victory, despite claims to the contrary when the war was over.

I think the South Africans and the U.S. were involved in Angola for different strategic reasons. The U.S. was to revenge on an old enemy back home and to tell the Soviets that they cannot use the Cubans at all times and everywhere to expand their influence.

I do not think the U.S. was engaged to support Apartheid. SA was fighting to stop the “Communist Onslaught” far away from its own borders. For the Soviets and

Cuba, Angola and SWAPO were handy friends to extend and expand their strategic influence.

Another One-Party, Totalitarian State, South of Angola, next-door to SA, was certainly a welcome prospect.

Remember that these developments were taking place then the process of Soviet disintegration was in the offing and the prospects for the end to the Cold War were around the corner.

JK: Was SWAPO only fighting from bases in Angola or did they have representative in Namibia? How did they operate?

MKK: Yes, they had a local political organization as opposed to local military bases.

Their activists were very active. They protested, went on strikes and demonstrated. However, they were often harassed by the police, arrested and even locked up.

JK: And you had the Transitional Government and you had been working for unity.

MKK: Yes, we tried our best to look for an all-inclusive National Consensus. But SWAPO was greedy and recalcitrant.

JK: That makes sense and explains things a lot more clearly to me. We talked previously about the SWAPO forces that came over the border on March 31 and April 1 of 1989. If

the UN troops had been there, as they were supposed to have been, but if they had not arrived, would that have happened? Would SWAPO have come across if the UN troops had already been in place?

MKK: What is not understandable is that if SWAPO had agreed to the end of hostilities and they knew that UN troops were coming, why try to cross the border and establish military bases here, which they did not have? They were simply tactless, over-ambitious beyond their resources and capabilities and local realities.

JK: There is a debate within the UN concerning what would have happened if the UN troops had been there. There was a six-week delay in the deployment of the troops. Would it have made a difference if the UN troops had actually been stationed there along the border?

MKK: Well, it is difficult to say. Definitely, SWAPO was exploiting the situation by trying to establish a de facto military presence of the delay of the arrival of the UN troops. I don't think that they would have wanted to be seen fighting against the UN. So, I think they were trying to take a last moment chance, but it didn't work.

One would suppose that because the UN had been supporting them and had come here to mediate independence, that it would not have done anything. This is where the problem arose.

When you are talking about a cease-fire arrangement like in the Congo, you are talking about the rebels controlling about one third of the country, which is a huge portion of the country.

You are not talking about people fighting from abroad or fighting from another country. In this case, SWAPO wanted to establish a reality they thought the South Africans would tolerate or not notice. But that did not work. Only many lives were lost.

People were unnecessarily massacred because of leaders who were unrealistic and did not know the situation on the ground.

JK: At the time of the beginning of the UN mission here, and at the time that the troops had come across and the South African army had been released to go and contain that movement, what was the reaction of people here in Windhoek to the UN at that point? How did they feel the UN was working? Did they feel the UN was doing a good job, or not such a good job?

MKK: Everyone was tired of the long, drawn-out conflict, so the attitude of the people when the UN arrived at the end of March, beginning of April, was a welcome thing, even by people who hated the UN.

They felt that this conflict should come to an end and that the UN was instrumental in doing so. I think the attitude of everybody here, including the die-hards, was: "Let's get over it and get it done once and for all and start a new life." The attitude of people here was very positive.

Everybody wanted independence. Most people in this country wanted a change, and the end to the conflict.

JK: When Martti Ahtisaari, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, arrived on April first simply to find out that SWAPO had come across the border, he gave the approval to release the South African troops. How did people here react to that?

MKK: Two things happened. A number of people were always under the impression, and sometimes justifiably so, that Ahtisaari and the UN were pro-SWAPO, so they would do nothing. But the UN was angered by the SWAPO action that was undermining their mission here. Therefore, between South Africa and the UN, there was an agreement that this new SWAPO “element” would only spoil the prospects for independence. So, it must be stopped, at all costs.

I understand from soldiers I have met, SWAPO and Koevoet, that, actually, they suspected that something was on the move. What they did is that they allowed these people to come in quite deep into the country and then take action. Their rifles were put somewhere but ready for action on a massive scale.

JK: Oh, because the Koevoet had supposedly been demobilized, but in fact, it wasn't.

MKK: It was formally demobilized but not operationally “sleeping”. The feeling of the South African military, as I understand from these sources, was that this was definitely a

violation of an understanding. They were disarmed and confined to base and but that these other people were coming in just like that.

Many people knew exactly what happened but never understood the need for it. The UN was arriving. Why then try to start another way? The UN was definitely angered and embarrassed because this was reversing the process.

The South Africans had the capacity to do all sorts of things. They got a unique, unexpected opportunity to settle some final scores with SWAPO.

JK: You were in Windhoek at the time of this transition in 1989. Did you have any direct contact with the UN or UN officials?

MKK: Oh yes, there were regular political meetings with the UN team here and the political parties.

JK: And Joseph Legwaila?

MKK: Joe, yes he was the Deputy Representative of the Secretary-General. By all means, one must say that people like Joe were fair and even-handed in dealing with the different political organizations. On the whole, I think, their behavior here was impartial and helpful.

Let's say that by and large the election was free and fair. That is what we all said. That was basically the result of the election. The SWAPO military option and the possible continuation of the war were a consideration for those who were involved. If

you turn it the other way around: if the other major contender for the election, the DTA, could have won – could SWAPO have accepted the election results as free and fair and not go back to the bush. That was the fear. That is why people accepted some irregularities in the electoral process, to avoid more fighting and chaos.

JK: Explain a little, for the record, about the DTA. It was a coalition?

MKK: It was a coalition of ethnic and political groupings. The majority of the members are black but historically led by whites. It was backed significantly by South Africa. In that sense, DTA was perceived by many people as a creation of South Africa to weaken the hard-line breakaway elements of the National Party in SA and had to be seen to support moderate groupings here to bring about change.

JK: Was it a moderating influence?

MKK: Not really, not with it's a Pro-South African image. But we could do so because our historical roots and background are not very different from SWAPO. We may be talking about the same thing while meaning different things.

The DTA, through their whole existence. Was based on fear of SWAPO as a surrogate for communism. That was their card they tried to play very strongly all the time. But now what happened after independence, it turned out that SWAPO, because of the changed world situation and the collapse of the Soviet Union and its empire, they did not become “communist” or get a two-thirds majority. Because of that they couldn't

control the writing of the constitution, to begin with. Like all of us, they made compromises.

After Independence the DTA said that SWAPO, did not become 'Communist' and 'stole' their platform. And how can you defeat somebody who is running on your 'platform'?

JK: So, there is no ideological difference anymore?

MKK: As far as I am concerned, there are no significant ideological differences. I think the differences now are more issue-oriented. You talk about defense, foreign policy, the crime rate. Unemployment, pensions, etc.

You must look for issues to be able to discredit SWAPO. You cannot simply say that ideologically we are different. The whole world, after the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the disappearance of the Soviet Empire, is talking about free markets and attracting outside investments. The competition with the Soviet Bloc is no longer there, which was a factor before in 1989. So, actually the ideological battle distinctions have disappeared or become diluted or blurred.

JK: I wanted to get back to a couple of things that you had brought up earlier. We had talked briefly about the Koevoet. That is a phenomenon and a term that most Westerners are unfamiliar with.

Could you explain who they were or who they still are? How were they recruited and what was there purpose?

MKK: Well, the word “Koevoet” means “crowbar”, they were Special Unit of the Police – a Counter-insurgency Force. That was their function. Their duty was very simple: to shoot to kill and save nothing of the enemy, unless for interrogation purposes. It was a Paramilitary Organization whose sole purpose was to fight their enemy ruthlessly. For the most part, they took no prisoners. They were Special Unit of the Army and the Police. Their Guerilla Army?

JK: How were they recruited and who were they?

MKK: They were a mixed bag of people, a lot of Namibians from across the country, especially from Ovamboland a number of Angolans from Southern Angola, and a number of South Africans. Hans Dryer was a Brigadier and then a General – he was their creator and Commander. He was a very tough man – no two words about his enemies. He was a sort of Moshe Dayan – only seeing Cairo with that one eye. They called him ‘Sterke Hans’ (Strong Hans).

JK: They joined the Namibian army?

MKK: Some of them were taken up; either from the Koevoet or SWATF, the South West African Territorial Force. But many of them are jobless and are very bitter. When South Africa withdrew from here, they gave certain benefits to Koevoet and SWATF, about R30 million. That was to be divided between them and PLAN (SWAPO’s People’s

Liberation Army of Namibia) fighters. So, they are saying why should the benefits be divided if PLAN people are protected by the Government. They are very bitter. One only hoped that they wouldn't create an element of instability out of their bitterness. They feel left out. There are many of them around here.

JK: Have people like that who were basically trained to kill become a problem in terms of crime after independence?

MKK: Well, I think not to the extent as in South Africa. I have not heard of former soldiers involved in crime, perhaps except in isolated cases. The criminals are basically other social cases who are trying to avoid unemployment or simply hardcore criminals.

JK: Was there any kind of plan to find employment for former soldiers?

MKK: They were under the impression that they would be integrated into the new National Army. Not really, schemes for pensions and employment are mainly worked out for former PLAN Fighters. Most in the new army are SWAPO members and Oshiwambo-speaking people.

JK: And then that became established as the military?

MKK: Yes, PLAN fighters became the backbone of the new Security Forces – Defense Force, Police and the Special Field Force. Yes, there are some former Koevoet and SWATF elements.

JK: During the transition when the UN was here the UN had a certain number of police monitors. Were you ever aware of the work that CivPol was doing?

MKK: Basically, what they were doing was monitoring SWAPOL (South West African Police) and the military that had not yet withdrawn to South Africa. They were just observers, watching the behavior of these other people. I think that everyone was aware of them; the UN was all over the country. Everyone was aware that they were looking after any possible incidents.

JK: They were also there to see that SWAPOL was itself not involved in human rights violations.

MKK: That's correct.

JK: Did that seem to work?

MKK: Yes, to a very large extent. I know that SWAPOL and others were very irritated because they lost their former power of doing whatever they wanted to do. They were

under constant surveillance. There was not much they could do to alter the changing situation.

JK: Did the UN do much while it was here to facilitate the development of political parties?

MKK: No, I think that they found that the political market was almost already saturated. At the first election, there were about ten political parties that registered for the elections. Seven got into Parliament or the National Assembly, or the Constituent Assembly at that time. The rest disappeared. After the second election, there are five parties in Parliament; two disappeared from Parliament. So, actually the UN was not involved in the training or encouragement of political parties. They were there to observe that the rules that were agreed upon were followed and to allow the process to take place. The contact that they parties had with the UN was in terms of the rules of the election and in terms of the Code of Conduct. The UN, as far as I know, did not visit the offices of political parties, apart from individual officials.

JK: It seems as though the party structure in Namibia was already developed.

MKK: It was already developed. That's quite right.

JK: Even though SWAPO had developed outside the country, it made the transition to a political party inside Namibia.

MKK: It was already developed. That's quite right.

JK: Even though SWAPO had developed outside the country, it made the transition to a political party inside Namibia?

MKK: SWAPO had SWAPO inside and SWAPO outside. And SWAPO inside was also very strong simply because SWAPO was seen as a fighting force supported by the international community.

If you were frustrated by the local situation, especially by the whites, the best option was to join SWAPO, even simply to irritate them.

JK: When you know you are not going to win, there is not a big incentive to put up all the money and effort into putting a campaign together.

MKK: Precisely. And very often some of us make that mistake.

JK: During the time that the UN was here, there was a "Code of Conduct" that was developed for the political parties. How did that come about?

MKK: This was a product of consultations and negotiations between the political parties and the UN people here, Ahtisaari and his colleagues. The idea was basically to have an orderly election and that violence would be avoided at all cost and all kinds of irregular

activities that would affect the electoral process should be avoided and parties should behave responsibly. All agreed to the Code of Conduct. It helped. It was a very handy instrument that we could use these days.

JK: During July of 1989, Secretary General Pérez de Cuéllar came to Windhoek and spoke about the Code of Conduct. Did that help in any way?

MKK: That helped and we met him at the Trosky Building where the UN was staying. For me, I had a very good rapport with him. He appeared to be honest and evenhanded and encouraged his officials to do the same. I must stick to the rules and be impartial with all political parties and should not appear to be double-faced. He gave a boost to all of us that we had a responsibility to make sure that the election was free and fair and peaceful.

JK: What was the issue of Walvis Bay and why it was not included in the transition of Namibian independence?

MKK: South Africa insisted, through the whole process of negotiation with the UN, that Walvis Bay had a different status. That there were treaties that it was part of South Africa and, therefore, Walvis Bay should not be included in the UN Plan for Namibia. However, the people there voted in Swakopmund for Namibia's Independence.

JK: Was it much of an issue during the elections in 1989? Were people aggravated by that issue?

MKK: It was an issue. The majority of the people of Walvis Bay are Namibian. It is not an island, it is linked to Swakopmund territorially. People felt frustrated that somehow South African citizens there, who were white or colored, were treated differently – much better than our own people.

Then came the Kempton Park talks. F.A. de Klerk and his party got a major surprise when the black majority decided that Walvis Bay belonged to Namibia and we also got a big surprise to get Walvis Bay just like that.

JK: In 1989, it was felt that it was a contentious issue that was just going to be put aside.

MKK: Until further notice, yes.

JK: So that independence could go forward. And in this case, it worked.

MKK: It worked! It worked out by surprise.

JK: Describe the Katutura Township in Windhoek.

MKK: Katutura is a Herero word, which means we have no Permanent Place of Residence. We are moved all the time – move here, move there, more here – by the

South African government and others. I explained this earlier in connection with the events of December 10, 1959. Historically, blacks were put in different Townships though recently, before Independence, there were attempts to allow integration by creating names such as “Wanaheda” – Wambom, Nama, Herero, Damara.

JK: To try and overcome the segregation into different tribes?

MKK: Yes, but this is a recent phenomenon. The integration process is almost complete, but you still find pockets of the remnants of the old system.

JK: During 1989, when the registering of voters and the elections took place, how did all of that affect Katutura? What was going on there?

MKK: They had polling stations all over the whole country. So, Latutura it was up into different voting constituencies. In some areas there was predominantly one ethnic group, but generally speaking, people voted according to the polling stations by the UN. The people voted very peacefully. That was really a surprise for all of us. You could hear a needle drop. There were long queues but no fighting, no stones, nothing. The whole process went very peacefully.

JK: How do you explain that? Why did it go so peacefully?

MKK: People wanted independence and the end to conflict and Apartheid. They were looking for change, that's all. Nobody wanted to disturb the process of change. So, everybody accepted that now the day of reckoning has come. We must all make the process work.

JK: You have mentioned Apartheid a few times and how it affected Namibia. What were some of the specific ways in which Apartheid was felt here?

MKK: Because of the relative isolation of Namibia from the outside world – the International Press, Diplomatic Missions and the limited number of visitors to the country, most of the SA laws applied to us as well, were perhaps more harshly applied here than in SA itself. There was no Reuter to go to. Practically all the repressive laws in South Africa, for example the Group Areas Act –defining where black should reside and where the whites can live, Job Reservation Act that reserved certain jobs for whites to keep them away from being unemployed at the expense of blacks, the Terrorism Act which referred to all Freedom activities of blacks as Acts of Terrorism against the white state, the Anti-Communism Act, whatever it meant all applied with equal force to Namibia and had the same effect as in SA: To suppress the blacks with all tricks and tactics.

JK: During 1989 when UNTAG was here, the registration of voters was to follow a certain kind of policy that would not discriminate against anyone.

MKK: Yes, and all blacks and whites were in the same queue. You would find in predominantly white areas that there would be more white voters at the polling stations than elsewhere. There was nothing stopping anyone from voting anywhere, in any case. The voting was on a party list, so the whole country was one constituency. There were also tendered votes (absentee ballots) because if you didn't live in a certain place you could send your vote to another place and then it was sent to a central location. Discrimination was not a factor in registering or voting, not at all.

JK: When UNTAG was here was there any attempt to eliminate discrimination in other aspects of Namibian life?

MKK: Not really, but things kind of collapsed by themselves with the arrival of UNTAG and the prospect of independence. Basically, the UN was just seeing the independence process through.

The role of the UN was to ensure that the transition was peaceful, the electoral process was free and fair. That was the job of the UN. I think they did it very successfully.

In my statement at the Opening of Constituent Assembly – day one – as the political parties were allowed to make opening statements – my statement is on tape – I congratulated Marti Ahtisaari and his team for a job well done. I thanked Ahtisaari many times and I said, after all, he was my friend. Even though we had a lot of arguments, we were good friends. I was a difficult job.

One must say that it was the most successful operation in UN history. There were something between 7000-8000 UN people here. That in itself was not only an element of reassurance of a peaceful transition, but it was also a “show” of so many missed people that we had never seen before in our lives.

Before independence, you would be happy to see one or two Italians in this country. Now you had so many of them around here. We had all these blacks from different countries, even from Fiji. It was a cocktail of people that they brought from different countries. It was a learning experience.

It was a big surprise to our white people here. They said, “Oh dear, but let’s see how it works.” And it worked; it stabilized the minds of many people. They said, “After all, if people of mixed backgrounds and colors can cooperate it is so good. It is not a crime; it is not a problem.” That helped and many white stayed here after Independence. There were those who were initially skeptical. But in the end, they were quite happy. By force example UNTAG helped Apartheid to become so shaky

JK: People who thought they might have to leave Namibia because they might not be treated well after Independence got a certain confidence because of the UN presence.

MKK: Yes. Yes. You distinguish, some people, especially among the white farmers in the rural areas, got scared. They sold their properties for almost nothing and went to South Africa. Some white people who were cleverer than the others and who had connections with those people, bought their properties. I have some friends who bought

property for almost nothing and later it was valued in millions. The people who ran away wanted to come back, but it was too late because the property value was going up.

Definitely, the UN process was successful.

JK: What were some of your arguments with Ahtisaari?

MKK: Sometimes the perception of bias worried a lot of people. Over time, things went very well. When we went to the UN meetings, I saw that some of my SWAPO colleagues going there were carrying pistols into the buildings of peace. And nothing happened.

I went there driving myself. We had good meetings. In my records, I could find some of the arguments I had with Ahtisaari. But it was mainly over perceptions of partiality of some sort. In the end we overcame them.

JK: Was the UN too bureaucratic? Were there frustrations about the fact that things were not getting done because of bureaucratic issues?

MKK: The UN, by its nature, is a bureaucratic organization. Sometimes you don't know who decides things, whether they were waiting for instructions from New York or whether they themselves were delaying things. They would often meet with you, but would not always give you the answers. But on the whole, I don't think anyone would complain about accessibility.

JK: When they were here in Namibia and when they were spread out around the country, they were open and accessible?

MKK: Yes, that's right. I went to many places where they were stationed and I heard very few complaints.

JK: The transition to de Klerk, how did that affect Namibia?

MKK: Well, the major decision 'to let Namibia go' had already been taken and so it meant little whether it was P.W. Botha and F.W. de Klerk who was in charge. After all de Klerk took over when there was not much time left before Resolution 435 implemented.

However, the personal styles of P.W. Botha and F.W. de Klerk were very different. F.W. de Klerk was very suave, pragmatic and reasonable and very personable to deal with. He could listen with a friendly smile.

He treated us from Namibia as adults and negotiating partners. He seemed to have accepted that the Independence of Namibia was "inevitable" and there was no point to waste time arguing about trivia. He seemed more concerned with the process about how things will happen. On the contrary, P.W. Botha was the bully and the 'tough one' who felt he was being pushed into solutions he did not like. Most of the time he looked sour and ready to wag that notorious finger at anyone, even at a passing, innocent fly.

He often treated us as the 'Kerels van Suidwes', boys from South West. Those of us, who dealt with him, know when the volcanoes can erupt.

Let him take his rest at his home in the wilderness.

Pik Botha was a 'show boy', if one can put it that way. One moment he would like to bully you like P.W. Botha – threatening. But the next moment he would smile and say 'my friend don't be surprised if Resolution 435 comes tomorrow – and we must be ready for it! When Pik said that, he was actually telling you that 435 is around the corner without directly offending P.W. Botha.

Do not forget that Pik once angered P.W. so much when he said SA will one day have a black president. P.W. almost fired him.

JK: Now, Pik Botha was the Foreign Minister at the time of the Transition. Did he play much of a role here in Namibia?

MKK: He did because he was the main spokesman of the South African government. Very often when P.W. Botha did not come, Pik Botha came, an experienced diplomat and somebody with whom you can argue. He was a debater.

JK: When there was the transition to de Klerk, did that have an effect on Pik Botha and the way he dealt with Namibia?

MKK: Yes, Pik Botha can change anytime. He became somebody else. Pik Botha had been the Ambassador to Washington and the UN and that sort of thing. He knew the atmosphere and the mood of the international community very well. He wanted to save

the face of South Africa and be accommodating to the world community. He was another Pik Botha, not putting so much pressure on us like he did under P.W. Botha.

JK: You know Sam Nujoma. In what ways did the personal qualities of Sam Nujoma contribute or not contribute to the success of the transition UNTAG?

MKK: Well, Mr. Nujoma came here around September, just about three months before the elections. So, by that time the process was really on going. So, by that time the process was really on going. Geingob and others came much earlier, but Nujoma came almost at the end.

However I have known President Nujoma for years. I met him the first time in 1961 in Dar es Salaam.

Sam Nujoma is a very interesting personality. One would say that he is a political operator and survivor: Most of his contemporaries either vanished or came to him for survival or reconciliation.

He has a very humble background, especially in terms of formal education. But he has survived all kinds of battles inside SWAPO and finally he emerged as the First Founding President of Namibia.

I think he has the ability to ward off his opponents or enemies in the organization and to get the rest together to work for the organization and for him.

Because he has been the sole strong personality in SWAPO – SWAPO has not known any other President – the world basically only knew SWAPO through Nujoma.

Access to funding and assistance could not be done without his hand. Actually, he established a condition of dependency of his colleagues on him.

For the survival of the organization, Nujoma had to survive. For the others to survive, Nujoma had to survive.

He has that capability. Unless you know him very well, you will never know exactly his moods.

He is often smiling, but he can become very explosive at times. He has that fatherly image. I think at the end of the day, that is this major factor in his favor.

The longevity of his control within SWAPO and the fatherly figure for the organization, and for the country for that that matter, make some people say that if Nujoma is gone, who can be next from SWAPO, even if you do not like a Third Term for him. Some people, very seriously, say why don't you give him another five years until things are properly stabilized. Although he might not be an intellectual personality, or the best speaker, he has political stamina, a sense of timing political determination and a strong personality, which might not be obvious at first sight but which is observable in the long run.

JK: Was he able to develop a trust amongst the white community in Namibia?

MKK: That is the debatable point. Initially, I think, yes. But, of late, he has been making remarks about whites, Germans, foreigners, the Boers, and others. The European Union and other criticized him.

A lot of whites today are quite scared; are they immigrants here or are they full citizens. One day they are citizens and another day they are not. It depends on the mood that the President is in. That is a bit problematic. When he wants to appeal to the black constituency, he gets to riding on the whites and calling them all kinds of names. The next day he says we are all citizens, so the whites are quite edgy. They don't know precisely where they stand with him.

JK: Do you think he will do something like Mandela has done by actually hand selecting a successor like Mbeki?

MKK: This is the problem that in all these years he has not established a successor, perhaps to avoid contenders or political infighting. That is why they want to extend his term by five years.

Nobody wanted to get up and say, "I want to succeed you" at the moment. That could be a lot of trouble.

You see how things work here; Nujoma is the President of SWAPO and President of the Republic. Then they have a Vice President who is totally not a threat at all to any successor. I think he has no intention of becoming President. Therefore, those who want to become President but are afraid to come out in the open, they use the SWAPO Vice President as a scapegoat to keep the door ajar – just in case. When Nujoma is not here, Geingob, the Prime Minister, is the Acting President. So Hage is good enough to be Acting-President but not good enough to be Vice-President of SWAPO. What a contradiction.

Geingob tried about two times to become Vice President of SWAPO but he failed because those who want to become President are keeping Geingob from becoming SWAPO Vice President, so as not to slip into the top by “default.” Of course, Geingob is a very hardworking man and ambitious.

He wants to become Vice President and possibly President of the country, if “opportunity knocks.”

So far, there is no obvious successor and that is the dilemma of SWAPO. How can five more years make that possible?

That is one part of the problems. Another part of the problem is that no one can tell Nujoma that he should stick to the two terms in the Constitution and get out.

He was a friend of my late father and hopefully me too. As you can see (Moses has a picture of him with Sam when they were very young: 24 years old and Moses, 19) I am on the best of terms with him. But I do not hesitate to say to him what I think.

My arguments against the Third Term are about the desirability of constantly changing the Constitution to accommodate the internal problems of a political party. To do that is not to create stability but to perpetuate uncertainty. If there is no President Nujoma, there is a DRC in Namibia!

JK: So, the current Prime Minister came earlier.

MKK: He was heading the SWAPO Elections Teams that were sent here to prepare for the UN Supervised Elections early 1989.

He did a good job, though SWAPO did not get a 2/3 majority or as much as the ANC got in SA.

The 1989 election disproved the proposition that SWAPO was the 'sole and authentic representatives of the people of Namibia'. Perhaps the main but not the sole. 'Authentic' is another issue.

JK: I haven't asked you about the UN troops that were here. How important was it that there was a military presence of the UN here? Was Force Commander Prem Chand a very prominent figure?

MKK: Oh yes, he was a very respectable figure. I think many people liked him, even those in the white military and others. He had a low profile. He did not appear like a dictator and most of the time he did not appear in uniform. There were times when he was just in a suit. He was always smiling with his mustache. He looked like an experienced old soldier and statesman.

Whenever you met him, you had a nice conversation with him. He avoided anything controversial. Martti was that type of figure who would bulldoze things and would provoke controversy, but often in a nice way. He often wanted to test your nerves.

But Prem Chand, as a force commander, was quite an amicable fellow. He avoided controversy and publicity. He was a father figure and an experienced old soldier who had a mission here to accomplish. The military component was absolutely necessary because the situation that we had that time, men in military uniform were a deterrent for possible trouble makers. So, that was important.

Yes, Martti was a nice fellow and a brother, with blue eyes from Finland.

JK: So, they really acted as a deterrent?

MKK: Yes, they did.

JK: Did they ever use force?

MKK: Not that I know of. No, they didn't have to.

JK: So, there were enough of them and there was a strong enough presence. And Prem Chand established a certain kind of respect.

MKK: He did, yes, especially among his fellow soldiers, the military here, the South African ones. I understand from the ones that I knew that they had a good rapport.

JK: There is one last question. I have been asking the questions and directing the interview, but do you have any special memories of UNTAG or the UN's role here that we haven't really covered?

MKK: I can only repeat what I said to Martti Ahtisaari when the show was over and the election was completed and the Constituent Assembly was established.

The first session was very ceremonial. When the leaders of the political parties elected to the Assembly was each given a chance to say something, I said: I do not regret anything. I thought I was expressing a real feeling and Martti came to me later on during a Coffee Break to thank me for the remarks that I made on the role of the UN and UNTAG, of his staff, his office, his colleagues, who after all made the process, with its ups and downs, a huge success for Namibia and its people and for the international community.

That its success and, no doubt, all came out of that process, in fact, stunned and even surprised so many of the permanent skeptics.

Why was it a success? Our people have a lot to thank the UN for because at the end of the day, it was evident that although our people fought for our independence for so long, they could not have been so successful without the solidarity and support of the International Community represented by the UN and finally, that the last leg of that support was the presence of UNTAG in Namibia.

Many of the UNTAG people I met, many were reluctant to go back home; they liked this place. They established friends and I think some of them got married around here. All kinds of things happened. Many of them where here I met later at UN headquarters in New York or in Luanda in 1992 or some other spots. Many remain nostalgic to come back here because they made obvious historic progress.

When I met some of them in Angola, they were facing a process that had no end in sight. Trouble starts all over again and again. In Angola, they were basically confined to an area in a UN camp outside Luanda. But here, they were living among the people. Martti Ahtisaari was living somewhere West of Windhoek, next to some of my friends.

Many lived around here in this area. Here they lived as citizens; they were free here. They were not confined to a camp. They had their freedom to go out and dance and so on. I remember when the Ghanaian Contingent was returning back home; I was, perhaps, the only politician there, or who went to that party and we had a grand time. People were crying because it was time to say goodbye.

After midnight, the Ghanaian Chief of Mission invited me to say something. I think it must have been around 1:00 or 2:00 in the night. So, I don't know exactly what I said, but something like, "The Independence of Namibia was meaningless until it was linked to the total liberation of the rest of Africa."

I was also sad and many of us were sad that they were going. Not only their presence to supervise the process, but also their presence as human beings, being here changed the perceptions of our people, the human relations climate of his country and made things develop much easier for the future. Their staying here for one year actually promoted the process of National Reconciliation.

JK: That is a whole interesting view that I have never heard before, the fact that the international community demonstrated that they could cooperate here in Namibia and that was a model for the Namibians.

MKK: It cooled off fears, and new friendships were created. We started talking about UNTAG. "We were at an UNTAG party last night and I was with a contingent from Finland, Ghana, etc. This is how things developed.

The fact that these people were not put in a camp, that they were free to move around and they were stationed in the middle of the city and their Headquarters, was so open and their visibility was quite strong and made a strong impact.

Everywhere you went, you saw UNTAG. UNTAG, UNTAG, UNTAG. That was good news – a refreshing, new situation.

JK: That is all, so, I want to thank you so very much.