



HAGE GEINGOB

ADDRESSES WORLD LEADERS

By Ify Ezinwa

Although Dr. Hage Geingob was addressing the General Assembly for the first time in the capacity of the President of the Republic of Namibia, he is not new to the United Nations. During Namibia's liberation struggle, Geingob was at the UN in 1964 as a young petitioner for the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), against the Apartheid rule of South Africa. From 1975 to 1989, he was the head of the United Nations Institute for Namibia, established by the UN Council for Namibia under which he and his team were able to develop building blocks with which to construct Namibia's democracy. Dr. Geingob returned to the UN on April 23, 1990 to address the General Assembly as the first Prime Minister of newly liberated

Namibia when the country was admitted as a Member State. As one of those in the forefront of Namibia's fight for independence of which the UN played a key role, it is somewhat symbolic that Dr. Hage Geingob returned to the United Nations to address world leaders at the 70th session, in the capacity of the President and Commander in chief of the armed forces of the Republic of Namibia.

Born August 3, 1941, Hage G. Geingob was made Namibia's Prime Minister when the country got her independence from South Africa in 1990, a position he held till 2002. He was again made Prime Minister in 2012, after serving as the country's Minister of Trade and Industry. In 2007 Geingob became the Vice-President of SWAPO, which had

evolved from a liberation movement to the ruling political party. Dr. Hage Geingob won the November 2014 Presidential election in Namibia and was sworn in as President of Namibia on March 21, 2015.

Dr. Geingob was one of the few African Presidents who arrived New York City early for the General Assembly. The President and his team who admirably, are mostly made up of brilliant, enterprising, vibrant and hardworking young men and women, were extremely busy throughout their visit. They participated in all the events and programs they'd been scheduled for and even found time to honor some invitations outside the UN, including an award ceremony at Fordham University - his Alma Mata where he

was honored with a Doctorate degree. Then came the General Debate and not a few people were curious and eager to know what this freedom fighter had to say to the world. In his opening statements, President Geingob acknowledged the role of the UN in Namibia's fight for independence. "Namibia is a Child of International Solidarity, midwived by the United Nations. As Namibians, we are both grateful and proud of the support we received from the international community, through the United Nations system, during our struggle for Independence..."

Dr. Geingob informed the Assembly that Namibians were so grateful for the part played by the UN during their struggle for emancipation that at the handover ceremony, they insisted the symbol of power be handed over to their first President,