

Opening Stolen Moments. Namibian Music History untold.**9. December 2022, Windhoek**

Dear representatives of Namibian and German Institutions, esteemed guests from all over Namibian societies.

Dear Team of the Stolen Moments Project, especially the curator Aino Moongo and the Stolen Moments Band, especially Thorsten Schütte. – all protocols observed!

My Name is Birgit Albrecht. I represent KASA, the Germany-based Ecumenical Service for Southern Africa. I am reading out the speech of our coordinator Simone Knapp, who unfortunately can't be present at the opening of this exhibition:

KASA is the Partner Organisation of the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts in Baden-Württemberg, Germany, which through their Namibia initiative, made it possible for the Stolen Moment Exhibition to be brought to Namibia and be installed permanently at the Independence Memorial Museum. Our thanks are due to Minister Petra Olschowsky and her Team, who constantly and positively supported us through this challenging process when inflation and skyrocketing prices made a mockery out of our budgets. We also thank the German Federal Office and Heinrich Böll Foundation. Who assisted us financially in a limited amount of time.

Last but not least, we would like to thank the staff of the Independence memorial museum, Mee Esther and Mr. Boyson, Olivia and Lydia. Who made it all possible, therefore worked late hours and over weekends, coordinated by Aino: mission accomplished!

The result is very different from what we have had in Stuttgart for the given condition of this room – but embedded in the context of Namibian history, as His Excellence, Ambassador Martin Andjaba put it in his remarks for the opening of the Stuttgart Exhibition last year, and I quote: "The history of Namibian music must be told in the context of a protracted struggle for the liberation and self-determination of the Namibian people. Under such conditions, musicians, artists, and the arts, in general, were seriously affected and negatively impacted in their freedoms." End of quote.

Germany was a colonial power at the end of the nineteenth century already. But at the beginning of the twentieth century our forefathers committed the Genocide of the Herero and Nama people, which still shapes the relationship between our governments and our societies. The discussions around reconciliation, reparations and redress are part and parcel of the lobby and advocacy work of KASA. It was a great honour to be part of the last journey of the Stolen Moments project. The journey which brings the music back home to where it belongs, back to the people who still remember the musicians and the bands from their childhood, back to the next generation to be inspired by the courage and talents of those musicians - back to the Namibian public sphere. Therefore, we would like to thank everyone who has been a part of this journey from the bottom of our hearts, and we wish you great success with the Stolen Moments exhibition in this remarkable museum.