

## Pro-Israeli Africans show their teeth at the African Union



Chairperson of the African Union Commission Moussa Faki Mahamat delivers a joint press conference with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy after their meeting at the EU headquarters in Brussels on May 15, 2017.

/AFP PHOTO / JOHN THYS

### BG reporter

The 22nd of July 2021 will go down in the history of the African Union as a day of shame.

On that day, the AU Commission Chairperson, Moussa Faki Mahamat, shamelessly received the credentials of the Ambassador of Israel in Ethiopia, to set yet another record of violation of the OAU-AU principles of anti-colonialism and anti-apartheid after the admission by the AU in 2017 of another expansionist regime, Morocco.

The current Chairperson unilaterally adopted this shameful step, accrediting a criminal state without consulting member states of the AU and despite the existence of a clear and sound legal opinion opposing such act.

Immediately after this shameful act of surrender to oppressors and occupiers, Israel and pro-Israel media around the world started an orchestrated campaign stating that Israel had been granted the status of "Observer" in the AU - a status that legally doesn't exist at all in the structures of the Continental organisation.

Israel, like any non-African country, can theoretically request Diplomatic Accreditation to the AU or to any other international or regional organisation.

Israel in this case has just succeeded, finally, to become an accredited country to the AU exactly like US, Russia, China, Norway, Cuba, Venezuela, Iran, and many other non-African states.

Yet, the case is serious, because Israel, unlike all countries on the planet, maybe along with Morocco, is a rogue state and has always shown an open disrespect of international law.

Both the State of Israel and Morocco are illegally occupying the territories of others, killing innocent Palestinians and Saharawis, violating international law, and violating human rights, in total impunity.

These two states had also been strong supporters of Apartheid and maintained tight relationships with the segregationist Government of South Africa when Africans in SADC region and elsewhere were struggling for freedom from colonialism.

The case is serious because, after accepting the membership of Morocco back in 2017 despite a clear-cut legal opinion issued by AU Legal Office against this membership, the AU is now accepting to accredit yet another rogue state and received its Ambassador's letter of credence in total violation of another legal opinion provided by the AU legal office in 2013 and 2015 to Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, then Chairperson of the AU Commission.

But the difference is that Dlamini Zuma respected her legal service's recommendations and the political will of some AU

member states, and rejected the request by Israel to present its Ambassador's credentials.

Of course, Dlamini Zuma made such decision not only because of the legal opinion but also out of respect for the organisation's principles and ideals, because the African Union cannot and should not show any sort of support to a country that violates the international law and perpetuates colonial and segregationist projects like Israel.

Now, that the extreme majority of the generations that struggled for African freedom and liberation have been lost, it seems that the current generation is living in an era of total degradation of principles, values, and norms that governed and drove the founding fathers.

Worse still, Moussa Faki even dares to fake support to Palestinians in the same press release in which his organisation reported the shameful meeting. However, how can the AU maintain the old principled position on Palestine if it is now allowing the oppressor and aggressor in Tel Aviv to profit from recognition and impunity? The African Union cannot continue dealing with issues such as the decolonisation of Western Sahara or the occupation in Palestine with ambiguity. The principles and values of the OAU/AU are clear and noble and must be honoured.

Africa and Africans cannot put their fate in the hands of oppressing colonialists and have a duty of total support and solidarity towards Saharawis and Palestinians alike.

Unfortunately, it seems that the current Chairperson (and maybe he is not the only one in the current African leadership of the organisation but also in many African countries) is ready to give up all the values and founding principles of the continental organisation for profit and superficial gains. Sometimes, even for a fake feeling of security and protection of their undeserved power and rule.

But Africans have got the right to know what their leaders are doing on their behalf. African intellectuals, journalists, and civil society have a duty to inform the people that other peoples are being killed and oppressed in their name.

The current AU leadership of Moussa Faki and his closest assistants, in particular, marked their names in the history of the organisation as the ones who allowed colonialists and expansionist regimes to impose their will on the AU, which is supposed to be the biggest enemy of colonialism in the world.

This is why journalists must stop reporting superficial news about the AU and go deeper to explore the real stories and facts about the corruption and betrayal of AU values because African peoples deserve to know.

# Insight into Thomas Motingwa's book that never was

\*Thomas Nkhoma

I never thought it would turn out this way, having to sit down to write this. Not so soon, at least. It was supposed to be a book, chronicling his life struggles. A biography, if I may say, not an obituary.

Not even an article in the pages of a newspaper or magazine, for I had written one before. I remember this quite vividly because not so long ago, he called me. It was late in the evening when he called.

As usual, we exchanged some pleasantries before quickly moving into our pet subject or should I say the project, a young girl christened Tamasane Montshopitsa. I call her Wendy, he preferred Tamasane. However, Tamasane was not the topic for that day.

My namesake, Thomas Motingwa, seemed to have fallen in love with my writing and followed everything I wrote somewhat religiously. He always told me I was such a good writer particularly mesmerized by the way I played with the Queen's language, English.

A compliment I humbly accepted and cherished even though I felt it was just flattery. But nay, he meant it from the bottom of his heart and would brag about it whenever he introduced me to other people. When he called that evening, he simply wanted me to help him write his biography.

Breaking the ice, he said I have a lot to share with humanity. He wanted to do this before passing on, a story about his life struggles. He told me that when this came to his mind, the first name that popped up immediately was mine.

The biography would have been a telltale, as he told me. He was to narrate while I took notes and with my journalistic prowess transform that into a book, so he told me.

However, I told him I was time constrained and had my hands full at work but he insisted that I advise him how to go about it instead. We spoke at length and our parting shot was that we would revisit the subject as soon as I found time. But the common refrain is that procrastination is the greatest thief of time.

It robbed us of that opportunity to unlock what was in Motingwa's mind that he so much wanted to share with Batswana or posterity. If I had my way, I would act God and venture into Motingwa's head and tap into his brain to write the book but I am just a mortal and only regrets remain for I have missed that opportunity.

I cannot recall how we first met but all I can say is that ours was a match made in heaven, so they say.

He believed in me and I too believed in him. Somehow he believed I was an advocate for People Living with Disabilities (PWDs).

For this, he would co-opt me into a ministerial committee for PWDs and made me a focal person for the Ministry of State President during



Thomas Motingwa

the time I served as a journalist for the Department of Information Services.

At one point he would recruit me to join him at the Coordinating Office for People with Disabilities but government bureaucracy scuppered his plan to have me as his sidekick. The telepathy between us was our quest to address the plight of the underprivileged.

To borrow from one of them, whom we worked hard together to address her plight, Motingwa was the right candidate for that office. Because of his disability, he understood the struggles PWDs endured almost all their lives. How it was tough to wake up and face a world ignorant of the plight of PDWs.

He knew how hard it was for PWDs to get employment, the loneliness with failing relationships because some people would not dare date a PWD. I got this from Tamasane, whom he loved like his own daughter.

Tamasane was born an orphan in a small but desolate settlement called Khudumelapye in Kweneng District.

She lost her mother at birth. As if that was not enough, she would lose her hearing too.

Tamasane would be left to the vicissitudes of a cruel world raised by her grannies. Another misfortune would strike when her grandmother lost her sight barely three years after starting her primary school.

Life would become tough when the grannies grew too old and weak to continue providing for her. Wandering around alone and faced with a grim future, she would land in my office where I worked as an editor for Kutlwano Magazine.

After failing to find any options I immediately contacted Motingwa. For five years we collaborated on addressing Tamasane's plight, organising temporary employ-

ment for her, keeping her under our wings as a father would for his daughter.

Guess what, the Tamasane you meet today is not the one you would have met some five years ago. She has been to Cape-town, South Africa where she did courses in agriculture, mixed farming.

In Setswana, the common refrain would be...*fa go gatang Motingwa teng*. He did not stop there. Tamasane is officially a civil servant under the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Food Security where she is on probation as a technical assistant...*fa go gatang Motingwa teng!*

When Tamasane's appointment letter was eventually signed, Motingwa excitedly phoned me to break the good news.

This is Motingwa's enduring legacy, a footprint that will remain indelible for many years to come.

This is but one of the short tales that defined Motingwa, a selfless giant who dedicated his life to the plight of PWDs. We were to celebrate Tamasane's feat together but unfortunately, he left before we could taste the fruits of our labour, Tamasane's first salary! A date was coming our way, a table for three had already been reserved.

Unfortunately, his chair remains empty. His date is now with his maker.

That is where his dinner table is set and I guess he is looking down at us content that he ran his race. We had hoped he would pull through but July 27 came with its own tale when Tamasane sent me a WhatsApp message that Motingwa was no more.

I did not expect this, at least so soon because the last message he had sent Tamasane sounded promising. I guess this would have been one of his memoirs in that book he so much wanted me to write. How I wish we had, but Adios my friend!