

# TRIBUTE

To

## Comrade Dr. Nomava Shangase

BY COMRADE MOSES MABHIDA, MEMBER OF THE  
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS' NATIONAL EXECU-  
TIVE COMMITTEE AND GENERAL-SECRETARY OF  
THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY.

Death has once more robbed us of one of the finest daughters of our soil in Comrade Dr. Nomava Shangase. She passed away on the 23rd October, 1981, in a car accident that took place in the north of the People's Republic of Angola near a small town of Piri.

Born in Pondoland on the 9th May, 1931, Nomava Ndamase studied and qualified as a nurse at King Edward hospital in Durban. In 1962 the African National Congress answered an emergency call for aid from the government and people of Tanzania. This country had just obtained her independence and had inherited inadequate health and hospital services. In answering the call from a brotherly people, the ANC decided to approach African nurses in South Africa to go and assist the young African state. Nomava Eslinah Ndamase was amongst those nurses who volunteered to go and serve Tanzania in her hour of need.

When she answered the call to assist the people of Tanzania, Comrade Nomava had already served her people in South Africa. As a nurse at home she was not just a mere wage-earning personality. She participated actively in the struggle for the rights of African nurses. Like all African people she had suffered the indignities of racial discrimination. Comrade Nomava came to understand what it is like to ask for bread and be given a stone. She had to know what it is like to see African children withering away in thousands as a result of kwashiokor. She had come to know what it is like to qualify as a nurse and be treated like a nursing maid.

In 1963 Comrade Nomava got married to Comrade Vusi Shangase and when the latter was transferred to go and work for Radio Moscow in the Soviet Union, Comrade Nomava was also instructed to join him. In 1965 further instructions were given to her to go and study medicine as a doctor. She specialised in obstetrics and gynaecology. During her stay in the Soviet

Union, Nomava Shangase looked after the interests of the African National Congress Women's Section and represented them most effectively at various forums.

On completion of her studies in Moscow, she returned to Dar-Es-Salaam and then proceeded to Lusaka where she was attached to the University Training hospital. After a period of one year, Dr. Nomava Shangase was posted to Luanda where she served in the ranks of our people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, until June 1979 when she obtained a fellowship to do a course at Muhimbili Medical Centre with Community Health as her major field of study. Comrade Nomava successfully completed but she did not want to wait for the graduation ceremony on the 29th August, 1981, because of other tasks that she had to fulfil in the People's Republic of Angola.

During the duration of her studies, Comrade Nomava found time to participate in the work of the health team in East Africa. She regularly travelled to Morogoro and the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College (SOMAFCC) on professional visits to our people. Comrade Nomava also took an active part in the activities of the African National Congress Women's Section. Also of great political significance and importance, is the demanding programme of the Political Committee in East Africa in which she served two terms of office until her departure from Dar-Es-Salaam to Angola where she finally met her death.

This mother, a soldier of our People's Army, grew up under hazardous conditions in Racist South Africa. She was hated as a black child. In terms of her span of life Comrade Nomava was never expected to live beyond the age of five. As she grew up she got accustomed to hearing her people being discouraged and denounced, their mental and moral qualities held in contempt. They were treated as an inferior people. As she grew up she had to conquer this and fortunately for her, she defied and conquered these prejudices. That is why she died as a revolutionary doctor.

In the period of fighting for freedom and human dignity she found herself fitting in those forces that fight for the destruction of backwardness. As she lies buried in the People's Republic of Angola, the Firm Trench of Revolution in Africa, some of her comrades-in-arms are fighting and shaking the enemy inside our country, South Africa.

This mother - this doctor, has been with us for all this time. She never thought of making money for herself. She has never earned money as a doctor because she was a servant of our people. Comrade Dr. Nomava Shangase died as she lived; she died in her MK uniform. She leaves a 17 year-old son and a

husband, Vusi Shangase, who is presently furthering his studies in radio journalism.

We of the ANC and our revolutionary army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, pledge to pick up the fallen weapon of Comrade Nomava Shangase and continue from where she left off until we achieve what she sacrificed her life for, the liberation of our Motherland.

**HAMBA KAHLE MKHONTO!**

**LALA FAKU!**

**KHOTHAMA NGQONGQOSHE!**



## **JOURNEYING TO MK**

I have kissed the earth of ancestral Africa.  
Its humid aroma I inhaled  
Arms sideways stretched  
I borrowed the wings of the sparrow  
And exciting flights I performed  
Over elegant grasslands  
And the slopy landscape  
of conquered motherland.  
Over hungry villages  
and starving townships  
Beneath me they swept like movie tricks.

I crow-flied from city to city  
Circled low about ghettos  
The cities bright and dazzling  
Like Persian carpets,  
The ghettos gloomy and putrid