



Office of the Leader of the Official Opposition

25 FEBRUARY 2024

TRIBUTE AND EULOGY ON THE PASSING OF THE LATE

PRESIDENT H.E. DR. HAGE GEINGOB

His Excellency, President of the Republic of Namibia, Nangolo Mbumba, and First Lady of the Republic of Namibia, Sustjie Mbumba,

Madame Monica Geingos, Widow, Children, Grandchildren and Representatives of the Family

Your Excellencies Heads of States and Governments present,

**Your Excellency, The Founding President of The Republic of Namibia,
Dr. Sam Shafishuna Nujoma,**

**Your Excellency the second President of The Republic of Namibia, and
dear friend Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba,**

**Your Excellency The Vice President of The Republic of Namibia,
Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah,**

Right Honourable Prime Minister, Sara Kukongelwa-Amadila,

Speaker of the National Assembly, Peter Katjavivi,

Chairperson of the National Council, Madame Muha,

Members of Parliament

Chief Justice, Peter Shivute,

Judge Petrus Damaseb

Members of The Judiciary,

**The Secretary General of The Ruling party, SWAPO, Sophia
Shaningwa,**

Your Excellencies Ambassadors,

Plenipotentiaries of States,

Members of the Fourth Estate

Chief of the Namibian Defence Force Air Marshall Martin Pinehas

Service Chiefs

Luminaries of our great society,

**Bishop Emeritus Dr. Zephania Kameeta, Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of
Namibia**

**Rev. Dr. Ngeno Nakamhela (Rtd), Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia
Clergymen,**

Chief Immanuel /Gaseb, Chairperson of the Council of Traditional Leaders,

Dr. George Simataa, Secretary to the Cabinet,

Hon. Laura McLeod-Katjirua, Governor of the Khomas Region,

**Director of Ceremonies, Hon. Frans Kapofi, Minister of Defence and
Veterans Affairs,**

Fellow Mourners

Today, we gather to bid farewell to a statesman, a leader, and a unifying force in the history of our beloved nation – the late President Hage Geingob. In this moment of grief, let us reflect on the profound impact he had on our nation and the monumental legacy he leaves behind. Eulogizing any person is a formidable task, particularly when it pertains to an individual of President Geingob's stature, whose influence inspired a nation with hope.

In the medley of our nation, as we commemorate the life and legacy of President Hage Geingob, the profound words of Odysseus from Greek mythology echo through the corridors of time. We ponder the question that Odysseus asked: Will strangers hear our names long after we are gone, and wonder who we were, how bravely we fought, how fiercely we loved?

President Geingob's legacy not only as a Head of State, but also as a deft negotiator on the international stage is a testament to his enduring impact on our nation. His skillful diplomacy and adept negotiation strategies were instrumental in navigating some of the complexities of our nation's history. Just as Odysseus contemplated the echoes of his actions, we too must consider the indelible mark President Geingob leaves on the pages of Namibian history. Generations yet unborn shall inquire about the man who was a fierce debator and master negotiator and more so loved his country with a great fervor.

In honoring President Geingob's memory, let us recognize that his actions, like those of Odysseus, transcend the immediate present. His name shall endure, and strangers in the future will hear of his deeds, pondering the character of the leader who was present for many historical events in our nation's young history.

Fellow Mourners,

In these solemn moments, as we bid farewell to the late President Hage Geingob, I wish to extend my deepest condolences to Madame Geingos. The burden you carry during this period of profound loss is undoubtedly immense, and it is with sincere sympathy that I acknowledge the strength and resilience you have exhibited as the pillar of your family.

Navigating the intricate responsibilities of being the matriarch of the Namibian house is

no easy feat, and your steadfastness during this challenging time has not gone unnoticed. The sacrifices you made and the strength you displayed for the sake of your family, especially the children, exemplify the depth of your character and the love that binds your household. As my wife and I reflect on your poise and resilience, we stand in awe of your grace under such trying circumstances.

Madame Geingos, your role as a partner to the late President Hage Geingob did not go unnoticed, and I extend my utmost respect for the love, care, and support you provided throughout your marriage. Your unwavering commitment to him, both in public and private spheres, has left an indelible mark on the legacy he leaves behind. Your role in keeping him in check, offering counsel, and being a steadfast companion is a testament to the strength of your partnership.

As we collectively mourn this loss, I want you to know that my wife and I are profoundly proud of you. Your resilience, dignity, and unwavering support have been a source of inspiration to many during this challenging period. May you find solace in the memories of the love and partnership you shared with the late President Geingob, and may the legacy of his remarkable life be a source of comfort in the days to come.

As we navigate the tempest of loss, we turn to the words of William Shakespeare, who encapsulated the essence of our shared sorrow:

**"When he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine,
That all the world will be in love with night,
And pay no worship to the garish sun."**

In the tapestry of our nation, President Geingob's legacy shines as a constellation, a guiding light that has shaped the fabric of our identity. His dedication, to the nation-building project will forever remain etched in our collective memory. President Geingob often spoke of the test of our nation being in its unity, particularly during unprecedented periods in our history. Today, we find ourselves at such a juncture, facing daunting challenges that define our era. It is during these trying times that the unity he championed becomes not just a test but a beacon guiding us through the storm.

President Geingob could certainly be difficult at times yet, in our political rivalry, we found common ground when the greater good of the Namibian people required collaboration. This camaraderie extended beyond political boundaries, exemplifying the spirit of unity despite ideological differences. Our friendship, born from mutual respect and a shared commitment to the nation's welfare, transcended political variances.

Above all, President Geingob was a man with a code – a set of public virtues that brought strength and purpose to his life and to our country. His honesty, even when it offended, marked his honorable character. His critique of Germany's support for Israel's attacks in Gaza earlier this year exemplified his unyielding commitment to moral principles. He was a political force, engaging even his fiercest rivals with a recognition of their patriotism and humanity.

Namibia is better for his presence among us. The world is smaller for his departure, and we will remember him as he was – unwavering and towering. We will remember his husky voice, his jovial smile and laugh. We will remember his composure. We will remember that he brought a sense of calm to an office ever so serious. I recall during the Covid-19 pandemic when he would provide the nation with updates on the rates of infections and public health measures put in place to curb the virus; President Geingob's public addresses would jokingly be referred to as "*family meetings*." This is a testament to the fact that the Namibian people saw him as a father figure. That was what he represented. That is the legacy he leaves behind. We can see this by the outpouring of love, support, and grief. Our nation has been gripped by an extreme loss that has left us shouting [albeit internally] "Death; have thee no shame?" We have been robbed of one of the brightest minds, not just of our generation but also in our history. We have been gripped by a loss that affects every household in this great Republic. This is not just the death of a public figure; this feels personal because it is. The loss of President Geingob strikes a deep chord in our hearts, for he was not just a leader, but a visionary who had a profound impact on shaping the course of our nation. Despite any political differences we may have had, I have always held the view that we shared a common vision for a better Namibia, even though we may have had divergent views and opinions on how to get there. I have always respected President Geingob's advocacy for press freedom in Namibia, a fundamental pillar of democracy. Among his many achievements, his gender-aware policy stands out as a shining example of progress, elevating Namibia to a position of prominence. The loss of President Geingob strikes a deep chord in our hearts, for he was not just a leader but a visionary who profoundly shaped our nation's history.

We intimately feel the vacuum President Geingob's departure has left. We fondly remember his incisiveness, experience, and verve. As we bid the President farewell, we simultaneously celebrate a life lived to the full – one that touched the hearts of many and left an indelible mark on our country's history. Reflecting on the late President's legacy is to delve into the annals of Namibian history, tracing the evolution of our politics over the past 33 years, as President Geingob has been ever present in the Namibian political landscape.

During this unprecedented period in our country's history, marked by grief, let us reflect on the values President Geingob dedicated his career to promoting. His commitment to public service and dedication to the well-being of the Namibian nation serve as beacons

guiding us through adversity. President Geingob's legacy calls us to carry forward the virtues he championed. Unity, compassion, and commitment to the greater good must guide our actions as we navigate the future of our beloved country. In times of tribulation, a nation's strength is tested, and we can honor President Geingob's memory by fostering unity and solidarity.

As we mourn the loss of a statesman and son of the soil,, let us also look to the future with a collective resolve to continue the work he started. In the spirit of service to our nation, I am reminded of the duty we bear to uphold the principles that President Geingob held dear. At this juncture, we must envision a future guided by the principles of unity, service, and unwavering commitment to our nation. The challenges we face demand decisive leadership and steadfast dedication to our defining values. Inspired by President Geingob's legacy, I am committed to continuing the journey of public service.

In commemorating the memory of the late President Hage Geingob, let us assert that the paramount concern for the Namibian nation should be embedded in the fabric of all our endeavors. Despite our diverse backgrounds and perspectives, we must recognize that, above all else, we are unified by our shared Namibian identity. The recent period of mourning has underscored our capacity to stand together, demonstrating that collective strength can transcend individual differences. This unity displayed over the past two weeks must be the catalyst that propels us into a better, harmonious Namibia. One that we can all be proud of and one in which President Geingob would have said: “No one feels left out.”

Fellow Mourners,

As we navigate the path forward, the Namibian House we continue to construct must remain steadfastly committed to the eradication of divisive elements. Tribalism, racism, regionalism, and any other forms of discrimination and isms must find no place within our national narrative. This calls upon us to dispel the shadows of discord and forge ahead with a sense of shared purpose. In honoring his memory, we must pledge to uphold the principles of unity and togetherness that defined the period of mourning. The task at hand is to nurture an inclusive environment where every Namibian is regarded as an integral part of the nation's mosaic. In doing so, we secure a future where the bonds of our unity endure, transcending the challenges that may attempt to fragment our collective spirit.

President Geingob's legacy is an enduring testament to his dedication to the principles of justice and inclusivity. In alignment with similar principles that I champion, I am resolute in my determination to advance policies that promote social cohesion and eliminate the blight of division. Our political landscape must echo the harmonious chords of inclusiveness and unity, resonating with the dreams and aspirations of every Namibian citizen. Together, as a united country, we must seek to mitigate the challenges that lie ahead, fortified by the values that defined President Geingob's leadership. In the hallowed

memory of a visionary statesman, we march onward, unwavering in our dedication to building a Namibia that stands tall as a beacon of unity, justice, and prosperity.

Furthermore, our commitment to a high transactional currency in political discourse is paramount. Engaging in mature and constructive dialogue fortifies the foundations of our democratic institutions. As custodians of the Namibian future, we must navigate the complex terrain of governance with wisdom and sagacity, ensuring that our interactions reflect the political maturity befitting a nation striving for excellence. In upholding this commitment, we honor not only the memory of President Geingob but also the ideals that unite us as custodians of a harmonious Namibia.

Just as Namibia witnessed a peaceful and swift transition of power following his passing, so too must we come together, setting aside differences for the greater good of our country. Unity must reign supreme, as we strive to uphold the virtues of a good society – one that values collaboration, empathy, and the common good over individual interests. We must seize this moment to reaffirm our collective commitment to combating the persistent challenges of underdevelopment, unemployment, and inequality and other scores that continue to plague our society. and we must use this opportunity to intensify our efforts in laying the foundations for a Namibia that epitomizes goodness and justice. This pivotal moment calls for a renewed pledge to work tirelessly towards creating an environment where every Namibian has access to opportunities, and where the scourge of unemployment is replaced by inclusive economic growth. As we mourn, let us also reflect on how we can contribute to alleviating the disparities that hinder our progress toward a good society. By rededicating ourselves to these fundamental challenges, we not only honor the late President Geingob's memory, but also pave the way for a future where the principles of goodness and fairness guide our nation's path.

In bidding farewell to President Hage Geingob, let us draw solace from the comforting words of Psalm 34:18, "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. May these verses offer solace and assurance as we navigate the path ahead, united in honouring President Hage Geingob's legacy.

Amidst the somber occasion of bidding farewell to President Hage Geingob, I extend profound respect, admiration, and heartfelt appreciation to the Namibian Defence Forces for their exemplary conduct during the recent transition of power. The seamless and disciplined manner in which they facilitated the peaceful transfer of leadership has been a source of reassurance for our nation. Their commitment to upholding the principles of democracy and maintaining order during this period of transition is a testament to their dedication to the service of our beloved country.

In recognizing the Defence Forces' role in preserving peace, it is essential to appreciate their unwavering commitment to the security and stability of Namibia. The overall peace experienced in the country during this crucial period is a result of their vigilance,

professionalism, and allegiance to their duty. As we navigate this moment of transition and mourning, we acknowledge the Defence Forces' role not only in safeguarding the nation but also in contributing to the tranquil atmosphere that allows us to honor President Geingob's memory with dignity and unity. Their conduct exemplifies the strength and resilience of our armed forces, and we express gratitude for their steadfast service to the Namibian people.

Finally, as we lament a life well-lived, the sentiments penned by Horatius, a distinguished officer of the Roman Empire who famously defended the Pons Sublicius from the invading army of King Lars Porsena of Clusium in the late 6th century. His words resonate with our current historical experience. In contemplating President Hage Geingob's legacy, we find solace and inspiration in Horatius's ode:

‘Happy is the person, and happy they alone, who can claim today as their own. The one who, secure within, can boldly declare, "Tomorrow, face your worst, for I have truly lived today!"'

In the context of bidding farewell to President Geingob, these words encapsulate the essence of a life lived with purpose and conviction. President Geingob's dedication to building the Namibian house that he envisioned and confronting the challenges he faced along the way. As we pay tribute to his memory, let us draw inspiration from this ode, embracing the notion that a life devoted to noble causes leaves an indelible mark on the pages of history.

May President Geingob’s spirit rest in eternal peace.