



**Republic of Namibia**

**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**HON. ERATUS UUTONI**

**MINISTER OF URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

**AT THE**

**MEMORIAL SERVICE IN HONOUR**

**OF THE**

**LATE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**DR. HAGE G. GEINGOB**

**AT**

**CONCORDIA COLLEGE, WINDHOEK**

**16 FEBRUARY 2024**

**Thank you Director of Ceremonies;**

- **Mr Wonder !Omeb, Chairperson of the School Board;**
- **Esteemed Members of the School Board;**
- **Ms. Mary Uanguta, the Principal of Concordia College;**
- **Members of Management;**
- **Teachers and staff members;**
- **Pastor Maureen Dausas;**
- **Distinguished Invited Guests;**
- **Members of the Learners' representative Council (LRC);**
- **Dear Learners;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen.**

**A very good morning to you all**

I am very delight to join you to pay tribute to a fallen hero, the third President of our beloved motherland, Namibia, who passed on Sunday, 04 February 2023.

The passing of our President, His Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob, came as a shock to all of us, young and old. Collectively as a nation we are deeply saddened and mourning his sudden departure into eternity. I am here to join you to remember the impactful life of our departed President, the many countless good and memorable deeds that he has done and contributed to make Namibia what it is today.

May you all join me by standing up for a moment of silence in his honour  
**“Attention”**

As we remember our beloved departed President, we remember and extend our deepest condolences to his beloved wife, Madam Monica Geingos, the children and the bereaved family for their loss. Their loss is our loss. Let us continue to keep them in our prayers.

**Director of Ceremonies**

Our late President was not only an asset and a great leader to us as the people whom he led but he is hailed by many others in Africa and beyond as an exemplary leader who dedicated and lived his life serving the people of Namibia and the world.

Indeed our President believed and worked tirelessly to uphold and defend the principles of good governance, peace, inclusivity and prosperity for all in Namibia and the world. To him, every Namibian counts and belong to one family and the one Namibian House irrespective of their race, gender, color, ethnicity and creed. Among others, he had a special place for the elder, the vulnerable and the youth, the leaders of tomorrow, and strongly believed in education as an important catalyst for nation-building and development. I wish to call on you, teachers and learners, to immortalize and keep the good deeds and memories of our departed President alive by you continuing to uphold the ideals of pulling together, inclusivity and to re-dedicate yourselves to contribute to the development and betterment of our motherland.

On the other hand, I will also describe him as a man who knows how to deal and handle difficult situations. I am sure that all of you will agree with me if I say that when President Geingob took over the Presidency, he was really prepared to implement his vision of prosperity speedily from the word go, but the effects of the economic down turn as well as the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and many other challenges

such as drought. Despite those challenging situations, he stood firm to unite the nation in order to forge ahead with our developmental agenda.

Director of proceedings

Esteemed Management and Learners

Allow me for the sake of our school going youth to briefly narrate some of the highlights of the life of our late President and important roles that he has played before and after our independence.

- Dr Geingob was born on 3 August 1941 to a strictly Christian family on a farm owned by Germans in the Grootfontein district. Academically he was a hardworking and intelligent learner. Outside the classroom, he had a passion for soccer and was a good footballer, and was nickname ‘Danger Point’ as a right fullback.
- In 1964, he left the country to join the liberation struggle under SWAPO and got an opportunity to go and pursue his education in the United States of America (USA), where he earned his Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees.
- Owing to his political activism, maturity and leadership skills, he was named the SWAPO Representative to the United Nations and to the

Americas, shortly after arriving in the USA. His role grew as the then SWAPO leader, our Founding President Dr. Sam Nujoma entrusted him to lead the campaign and mobilisation of support for Namibia's independence at the United Nations (UN).

- In 1975, Dr. Geingob was appointed as the Director of the United Nations Institute for Namibia (UNIN) based in Lusaka, Zambia. The Institute's primary function was to train and prepare Namibians to take over the civil service in an independent Namibia.
- While serving as the Director of the Institute which role he performed until 1989, Dr Geingob also served as a member of both the Central Committee and the Politburo of SWAPO
- In 1989, he spearheaded SWAPO's election campaign in Namibia and returned to Namibia with many of his colleagues on 18 June 1989, after 27 years of being in exile

On 21 November 1989 and subsequent to the elections, he was elected Chairman of the Constituent Assembly, a body which was tasked with the drafting of the Namibian Constitution.

- In 1990 after the attainment of our Independence, Dr. Geingob was appointed as our First Prime Minister, a position he held for 12 years until the year 2002.
- In February 2003, Dr. Geingob took up the position of Executive Secretary of the Global Coalition for Africa, and was based in Washington, D.C in the USA.
- After this assignment in USA, Dr Geingob return back home and was appointed as Minister of Trade and Industry, a position he held from 8 April 2008 until the year 2012 when he was appointed as Prime Minister by the former President Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba. He served as Prime Minister from 2012 up to 2015.
- On 28 November 2014, Dr. Geingob was elected as the President of Namibia from 21 March 2015 to 2020.
- In November 2019, Dr. Geingob was re-elected as the President of our Republic, a position he held until his untimely passing on 04 February 2024.

Director of proceedings

Esteemed ladies and gentlemen

I have the privilege of serving with and under Dr. Geingob from 2015 when he appointed me as Deputy Minister of Home Affairs and Immigration. He again redeployed to the Ministry of Sports, Youth and National Service from 2018 up to 2020, and to head the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development as Minister from 2020 to date.

On 14 December last year, 2023, I invite and hosted the late President at the handing over of houses in Swakopmund built under the Mass Housing Development Programme. My staff and I were over-joyed that despite his ill-health and busy schedule he made time to grace the occasion. And a joyous occasion it was. On that occasion, said and I quote: *“Only through the holding of hands, enhanced collaborative action and unity of purpose involving all stakeholders, will we climb the summit of national housing deliver”* unquote. Indeed, let us continue to hold hands and build the Namibian House for the benefit and prosperity of all.

The departed President was a source of inspiration for me and I had and will continue to have the greatest admiration for him and his caring nature. His presence always lights of the room. I recall in the year, 2019 when I was at the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service, we attended a soccer match between the Brave Warriors and Guinea at the Sam Nujoma Stadium. The atmosphere at the stadium was of full joy and celebration



among others because of the presence of the President. Being a lover of entertainment and dancing, he invited me to join him in dancing. I tried but could not keep up with his dance moves. I am sure some of you have seen the video clip of us dancing circulating on social media platforms.

Our departed President Geingob was a straight talker. He will without hesitation point out to you what you have not done correctly there and there. On the other hand, he will complement and give credit where it is due. I remember one time when members of the communities came to my office to hand over a petition against their local authority which was not addressing their needs for housing and municipal services. My staff and I intervened to calm the situation and facilitate an amicable solution. The media is there to cover the event. I came to know that the President followed the media coverage of the event, and later that day in the evening, the President sent a text message saying, **“Job well done Minister, you handle the situation well”**. I was inspired and very much appreciated those words of encouragement and positive feedback.

Director of proceedings

Esteemed Principal, teachers and learners

Ladies and Gentlemen

In conclusion, as we mourn the passing of our great leader and hero, let us continue to honour his life by continuing to build the Namibian House by holding hands and holding high the banner of unity, democracy, peace and prosperity for all.

Once again may soul of departed President find a peaceful resting place in eternity. And may the Lord continue to console Madam Monica Geingos and the entire bereaved family and us all during this period of national mourning.

I thank you for your kind attention.