

31 May 2024

The Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Hosseini Khameneh,
The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran,

H.E. Dr. Mohammad Mokhber
Interim President & Appointee of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic
of Iran

It is with great sadness that I have learned about the unfortunate air tragedy that has claimed the lives of the revolutionary Late President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Ayatollah Ebrahim Raeisi along with the Late Foreign Minister, Honourable Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and other dignitaries of the friendly and brotherly country of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on Sunday, 19 May 2024.

The news of his passing struck a deep and solemn note when their helicopter crashed in East Azerbaijan while they were en route back to Iran. This is an unthinkable tragedy that has claimed a remarkable leader of a nation and a great loss to the Iranian people.

Against this background, I join the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran to mourn a good friend of Namibia and bid him farewell as we the Namibian people are familiar with the painful experience of mourning a President as we have recently lost a sitting President, the Late President H.E. Dr Hage G. Geingob.

With the untimely passing of the Late President Ayatollah Ebrahim Raeisi, the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran have lost an outstanding leader whose entire life was devoted to serving his people and enjoyed the well-deserved admiration of the Iranian people.

I have a long-standing friendship, before and after the independence of my country, with the Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Hosseini Khameneh, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, with whom our country has long standing good bilateral relations.

Our indissoluble bonds of friendship were forged in the crucible of the struggle when the Islamic Republic of Iran gave its support variously to SWAPO. It is thus with fond memories that we recollect when, with the help of the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran, we opened our first Embassy in Tehran after the inauguration of the first SWAPO Embassy in New Delhi, India, on 24 May 1986 before the independence of our country.

In this regard, we are immensely grateful for the political, material and moral support the Islamic Republic of Iran and its people have rendered to SWAPO until the attainment of our freedom and genuine independence on the 21st March 1990.

It is this shared past that makes us, as Namibians, feel the loss of the Late President Ayatollah Ebrahim Raeisi all the more deeply as he was a reliable friend of Namibia when he strengthened the mutually beneficial cooperation and made invaluable contribution to the long standing good bilateral relations between our two countries. I have traveled to Iran several times, and I intend to visit Tehran and meet the revolutionary leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran when the circumstances allow.

Our thoughts and hearts are with the families of the Late President and Foreign Minister as well as the relatives of the personnel and air crew and all those affected by this tragic incident as you go through the grief of a loss so overwhelming. As you walk through this difficult time, it is our wish that you are consoled by the knowledge that the formidable legacy of the Late President Ayatollah Ebrahim Raeisi will live on. May it be that others step forward to follow in his footsteps and take up his mantle.

In closing, allow me, on behalf of the Veterans of our National Liberation Struggle, the Nujoma family and indeed on my own behalf, to extend our heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathies to the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, The Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Hosseini Khameneh, H.E. Dr. Mohammad Mokhber, Interim President and appointee of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Government and the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran for this irreparable loss.

May we all be granted fortitude as I extend my wishes for strength to the Iranian people as they navigate through this dark cloud hovering around their nation. We in Namibia stand in solidarity with the Islamic Republic of Iran in this time of sorrow and sad hour.

May the soul of the Late President Seyyed Ebrahim Raeisi rest peacefully and may his revolutionary spirit live on!



Sam Nujoma
FOUNDING PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

FOUNDER
The Sam Nujoma Foundation