

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



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WINDHOEK

All Media

President Hage Geingob's tribute to Namibian Sports Mascot Robson "Robbie" Savage

I would like to join all members of the Namibian sports fraternity and Namibians from all walks of life, in paying tribute to a national icon, an evergreen and jovial personality, the one and only Robson "Robbie" Savage, who sadly passed away in the early hours of July 20, 2017.

I believe, it is always best to do something for people while they are alive since it enables them to experience the joy of being valued and appreciated. I am glad that I have done much for Robbie while he was alive, picking him up and taking him under my wings.

My fondest memories of Robbie were during the African Cup of Nations of 1998, hosted in Burkina Faso. I took Robbie along to the tournament in the Government plane and after I had informed him that he would be everywhere I went, he took on the role of my ‘Special Assistant’. Robbie took my words so seriously that in one lighthearted incident, he walked in and sat next to me during a Tete-a-tete I was holding with the Prime Minister of Burkina Faso. I simply told my Burkinabe counterpart not to mind him. Later on after Robbie had settled in his hotel room, he asked the other group members in Afrikaans, “Wanneer gaan ons dorp toe?” He had not realized the hotel was right in the center of town. You see, Windhoek is a Cosmopolitan City.

In 2000, I was once again with Robbie at the African Cup of Nations, this time co-hosted by Ghana. Once again, in true mascot fashion, Robbie’s evergreen spirit

and colourful personality added a fun and entertaining element to our delegation.

Namibian Football has lost a mascot – an ardent, loyal and patriotic supporter, not only of the beautiful game, but of all Namibian sports codes. Robbie represented any Namibian sports team donning the national colours. His sports family are left with a void that cannot be filled.

It is surprising to hear that many compatriots are suggesting he gets a State Funeral. I think that the best send-off Robbie can receive will be a football match in his honour, where all Namibians can fill the Stadium to capacity, to give this son of the soil and number one sports mascot a fitting farewell.

To his true family, they have lost a son, brother and an uncle. Human words fail to truly express the pain of mourning. Therefore, in times such as these, we turn to the words of our Creator. Isaiah 57:1-2 reads as follows, *“The righteous perish, and no one takes it to heart; the devout are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil. Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death.”*

Robson “Robbie” Savage, walked uprightly for Namibian sport and the Namibian nation as a whole. May he find rest as he lies in death, and may his soul rest in eternal peace.