



**MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE
BY RACHEL ODEDE,
UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR A.I.
IN HONOR OF DR. THEO-BEN GURIRAB
WINDHOEK
20 July 2018**

The Widow, Madam Joan Guriras and children;

H.E. Dr Hage G. Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia and
Madame Geingos, the First Lady

H.E. Dr Nangolo Mbumba, Vice-President

H.E. Dr Sam Nujoma, Founding President and Father of the
Namibian Nation

H.E. Dr Hifikepunye Pohamba, Former President

Hon. Dr Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Prime Minister

Hon. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of
International Relations & Cooperation

Hon. Prof. Peter H. Katjavivi, Speaker of the National Assembly

Hon. Prof. Margaret Mensah-Williams, Chairperson of the National
Council

Hon. Peter Shivute, Chief Justice

Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament

Dr George Simataa, Secretary to Cabinet

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Senior Government Officials

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with great honour that I stand here, as the acting UN Resident Coordinator representing the UN System in Namibia, to deliver a Message of Condolence on behalf of Mr. António Guterres, the UN Secretary General, for the passing of Honourable Dr Theo-Ben Gurirab.

Hon. Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab's death is a great loss not only to his dear family, colleagues and friends, but also to the development and human rights community.

Within the UN, we remember Dr. Gurirab as a seasoned diplomat and negotiator. We remember him for his great work as the President of the 54th Session of the UN General Assembly from 1999 to 2000.

During his tenure, the UN General Assembly successfully held a 3-day Millennium Summit of World Leaders and at this event, the historic Millennium Declaration (Resolution 55/2) was adopted by 189 countries. During this Summit, nations committed to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and it set out a series of targets to be reached by 2015.

These have become known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It is this Summit that laid the foundation for the launch of the new bold and transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The United Nations will remain grateful for Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab unwavering support to the United Nations and its ideals and principles.

As the UN, we are cognizant of the fact that the peace and stability that Namibia enjoys today, which makes our development work possible, is fought for by liberation struggle icons such as Dr. Gurirab.

As we mourn this great Son of the Soil, may we be reminded about his selfless act for not only the Land of the Brave but the world at large!

May his soul rest in eternal peace and may the family of Dr. Gurirab find peace and strength in this difficult time!

End

Now, please allow me to read the Message of Condolence on behalf of António Guterres, the UN Secretary General.

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

--

MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE FOR THE PASSING OF
DR. THEO-BEN GURIRAB

Windhoek, 20 July 2018

Excellencies,

I extend my deepest condolences to the Government and people of Namibia on the passing of the Honourable Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab. At this time of sorrow, our foremost sentiments are with his family as they mourn this loss.

Dr. Gurirab dedicated his life to the cause of an independent Namibia and will be remembered by future generations as one of the nation's founding fathers.

His legacy is also testament to the unique bond between Namibia and the United Nations. Being able to stand side-by-side with Namibia as it struggled for justice and independence was among the proudest moments of the United Nations.

Dr. Gurirab's involvement with the United Nations dated back to the 1960s, when he received a UN fellowship to attend Temple

University in the United States. It continued during his years as SWAPO's representative at the United Nations, leading decades of efforts to see the independence of Namibia come to fruition.

After Namibia's independence, Dr. Gurirab honourably served his country as Minister of Foreign Affairs and then as Prime Minister.

He will be remembered for building Namibia's foreign policy tradition of solidarity, justice and multilateralism. His political and diplomatic acumen was crucial in the reintegration of Walvis Bay and the Off-shore Islands, a significant achievement.

When he returned to New York as President of the Fifty Fourth session of the General Assembly, he served as a forceful advocate of the Assembly's role and helped put noble and enduring causes – such as the Millennium Development Goals – on the global agenda.

He also played an invaluable role in the adoption of the landmark Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security.

On behalf of the entire United Nations, I wish to express our profound gratitude for these wide-ranging contributions.

We can honour him by advocating for the values that defined his life: self-determination, human rights, freedom, justice, solidarity, reconciliation and, above all, the belief in the potential of peaceful change through international diplomacy.