

13 May 2026.

Mma Barbara Nametso Mogae,
Gaborone.
Republic of Botswana.

Respected Mma Mogae,

Re: Condolences.

It was with great sadness that we received the news that your dear husband, our esteemed colleague and friend, President Festus Mogae, had passed away.

Of course, we had known for some time that the President's health was not of the best and had therefore everyday said a silent prayer for his full recovery.

We did this because we truly admired the immense contribution he had made to the all-round development of Botswana, first as a civil servant and later as President of the Republic.

We were very conscious of the wise, courageous and delicate role Botswana played during the challenging years of struggle against apartheid to help liberate our country.

Given our own close proximity to Botswana during those years, and therefore fully aware of the sacrifices the sister Batswana made, we were very hopeful that once apartheid South Africa was a thing of the past, Botswana would show the way in terms of the real meaning of Africa's independence.

For this reason, it was a great privilege to me that both President Mogae and I, Thabo Mbeki, were Presidents of our respective countries during much of the same period.

It was therefore a matter of great honour to us that you, Mma Barbara and President Mogae gave us the unforgettable opportunity to pay a State Visit

to the Republic of Botswana and literally to see, touch and feel the progress the country was making.

It was with warm hearts that we experienced the cooperation between our two countries and peoples as your dear husband, President Mogae, led Botswana, freely chosen by the sister people he led.

An all-weather friend and colleague, we were very pleased to continue working with him after both he and I, Thabo Mbeki, had left public office.

His departure has robbed the peoples of Botswana, South Africa and Africa as a whole of an unassuming but selfless, brave and principled leader who knew what it meant to serve the peoples of Africa.

We will forever miss him.

Dear Mma Mogae, please accept our heartfelt condolences at the departure of your dear husband and kindly convey the same to the children and the rest of the Mogae family.

May the esteemed statesman and dear friend, Rre Festus Gontebanye Mogae, rest in eternal peace.

With heartfelt sympathy and warm regards,

Zanele and Thabo Mbeki.

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