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World leaders react to Robert Mugabe's death

06/09/2019



[Robert Mugabe](#), the rebel leader who led [Zimbabwe](#) to independence in 1980 and ruled with an iron fist until his own army ended his almost 40-year tenure in 2017, has died. He was 95.

In announcing Mugabe's death on Friday, Zimbabwe President [Emmerson Mnangagwa](#) praised Mugabe as an "icon of liberation".

"His contribution to the history of our nation and continent will never be forgotten. May his soul rest in eternal peace," he said.

Mugabe has received a glowing tribute, particularly, from African leaders.

### **Following are the reactions from world leaders to his death:**

#### **South African President Cyril Ramaphosa**

South Africans join the people and government of Zimbabwe in mourning the passing of a liberation fighter and champion of Africa's cause against colonialism.

Under President Mugabe's leadership, Zimbabwe's sustained and valiant struggle against colonialism inspired our own struggle against apartheid and built in us the hope that one day South Africa too would be free.

Many Zimbabweans paid with their lives so that we could be free. We will never forget or dishonour this sacrifice and solidarity.

### **Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta**

In this moment of sorrow, my thoughts and prayers go out to his family, his relatives and the people of Zimbabwe who, for many years, he served with commitment and dedication.

Words cannot convey the magnitude of the loss as former President Mugabe was an elder statesman, a freedom fighter and a Pan-Africanist who played a major role in shaping the interests of the African continent.

Indeed, we will remember former President Mugabe as a man of courage who was never afraid to fight for what he believed in even when it was not popular.

### **Tanzanian President John Magufuli**

Africa has lost one of its bravest and Pan-Africanist leaders, who led by example in opposing colonialism.

### **Zimbabwean Opposition Senator And Rights Lawyer David Coltart, On Twitter**

He was a colossus on the Zimbabwean stage & his enduring positive legacy will be his role in ending white minority rule & expanding a quality education to all Zimbabweans.

### **Mpho Balopi, secretary-general, Botswana Democratic Party**

Comrade Mugabe was one of Africa's most renowned freedom fighters and also one of the founding fathers of what is today known as SADC (the intergovernmental Southern African Development Community, whose headquarters are in Botswana).

The history of our respective parties' fraternal relations would be incomplete without mention of Uncle Bob, as he was affectionately known. It is beyond any doubt that he leaves an indelible mark on the politics of the region.

### **China's foreign ministry**

Mugabe was an outstanding national liberation movement leader and politician of Zimbabwe.

Throughout his life, he has firmly defended the sovereignty of his country, opposed foreign interference, and actively promoted China-Zimbabwe and China-Africa friendship and cooperation.

### **UK prime minister's spokeswoman**

"There will be mixed emotions in Zimbabwe at today's news. We of course express our condolences to those who mourn but know that for many he was a barrier to a better future. Under his rule the people of Zimbabwe suffered greatly as he impoverished their country and sanctioned the use of violence against them," she said.

"His resignation in 2017 marked a turning point and we hope that today marks another which allows Zimbabwe to move on from the legacy of its past and become a democratic, prosperous nation that respects the human rights of its citizens," she added.

### **Namibian President Hage Geingob**

As Namibians, we owe President Mugabe a deep sense of gratitude for his immense and selfless contributions to the liberation of our country ... The loss of the people of Zimbabwe is Africa's loss.

### **Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari**

The President commiserates with family members, friends and political associates of the political activist who fought for the independence of the country from colonial rule, and lived most of his life in public service.

President Buhari believes Mugabe's sacrifices, especially in struggling for the political and economic emancipation of his people, will always be remembered by posterity.

### **Russian President Vladimir Putin**

Many important events in contemporary history of Zimbabwe are linked with the name of Robert Mugabe. He made a major personal contribution to the struggle for your country's independence and to building institutions of Zimbabwean statehood.

The people of Russia will remember him as a consistent advocate of developing friendly relations between our countries and a person who had accomplished a great deal to strengthen mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation.

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