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## Hamba kahle, brother Ronnie

It is with great sadness that I say farewell to my friend and fellow government communicator.

When I first heard of Ronnie Mamoepa's death, I did not believe it and was relieved to hear it was fake news.

But three hours later, the news that my comrade had died was confirmed.

When he was at Foreign Affairs, I was a journalist at Gagasi 99.5 FM in Durban.

I found him a passionate communicator who responded to enquiries and gave clarity where needed. I used to receive statements and sound clips in my inbox sent at midnight.

The true communicator knew the journalists and the institutions they worked for.

When I asked for sound bites, he always signed off by saying "Ronnie Mamoepa, Gagasi 99.5 FM News, New York."

I worked closely with him at

Home Affairs and later, in the presidency.

Ronnie was always on the lookout for new blood to boost government communications.

He tried to poach me to assist with Home Affairs' radio.

And with him, "getting fresh air" meant talking about work.

I learnt a lot from him. He told me that no matter what you communicate to people, if there is no trust between them and government, it won't work.

We are poorer without you, son of the soil, the gentleman who was always ready to help. Death has robbed us of a motivator and dedicated civil servant.

Farewell my friend, we will continue where you have left off.

Your legacy will be passed on to the next generation.

May your soul rest in eternal peace. Hamba kahle, Ronnie Mamoepa!

Reggie Ngcobo