



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

PRESS STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY WILLIAM RUTO, C.G.H.; PhD; PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE KENYA DEFENCE FORCES, AFTER THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING AT STATE HOUSE NAIROBI FOLLOWING AN AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT AT CHESEGON

APRIL 18TH, 2024

STATE HOUSE, NAIROBI

Today at 2; 20 pm, our nation suffered a tragic air accident at Sindar area, Kaben location, Tot division, in Elgeyo Marakwet County. I am deeply saddened to announce the passing of General Francis Omondi Ogolla, the Chief of the Kenya Defence Forces.

Together with him in the crash were eleven other gallant military personnel, 9 who also passed on and two survivors.

The gallant military personnel who passed on are:

1. Brigadier Swale Saidi,
2. Colonel Duncan Keittany,
3. Lieutenant Colonel David Sawe,
4. Major George Benson Magondu,
5. Captain Sora Mohamed,
6. Captain Hillary Litali,
7. Senior Sergeant John Kinyua Mureithi,
8. Sergeant Cliphonce Omondi, and
9. Sergeant Rose Nyawira.

The CDF, onboard the Kenya Air Force Huey Helicopter, had left Nairobi this morning, to visit troops deployed in the North Rift under Operation Maliza Uhalifu, and to inspect the ongoing school renovations works in the following schools:

1. Chesitet Primary School,
2. Cheptulel Boys High School,
3. Chepoton Primary School,
4. Ksaa Primary School; and
5. Sablimoi Primary School.



As part of his working tour, the CDF had been briefed on the security situation by a multi-agency team stationed at Chesitet in Baringo County, after which he proceeded to the Kainuk Forward Operating Base in Turkana County, where he addressed troops, commending them for their resilience and operational successes.

The CDF and his entourage departed from Kainuk to Chesezon, West Pokot County, where he launched the rehabilitation of Cheptulel Boys High School. He then departed Chesezon for the Recruits Training School in Uasin Gishu County, where he was scheduled to inspect construction facilities at the institution. Unfortunately, the aircraft crashed shortly after take-off.

This is a moment of great sadness for myself, as the Commander in Chief of the Kenya Defence Forces, the Kenya Defence Forces fraternity and the nation at large. Our motherland has lost one of her most valiant generals, gallant officers, service men and woman. The demise of General Ogolla is a painful loss to me, and certainly, the sorrow we all feel about his passing is shared by all the people of Kenya, and especially the KDF fraternity. A distinguished four-star general has fallen in the course of duty, and service to country.

I convey my deepest condolences to all families who are grieving this untimely loss and our mourning nation. May the Almighty Lord rest their souls in peace and grant their families fortitude at this time of deep sorrow. I also wish a quick recovery to the two injured soldiers in this accident.

The Kenya Air Force has constituted and dispatched an air investigations team, to establish the cause of the air crash.



In honour of the life and the distinguished military career of the fallen general, who lost his life not just while in office, but in active military duty, the nation will observe a period of 3 days of mourning commencing tomorrow 19th April 2024.

During this time of national mourning, the Kenyan flag, the Kenya Defence Forces Flag, and the Eastern Africa community flag shall fly at half-mast in the Republic of Kenya and Kenya missions abroad.

Poleni sana.

