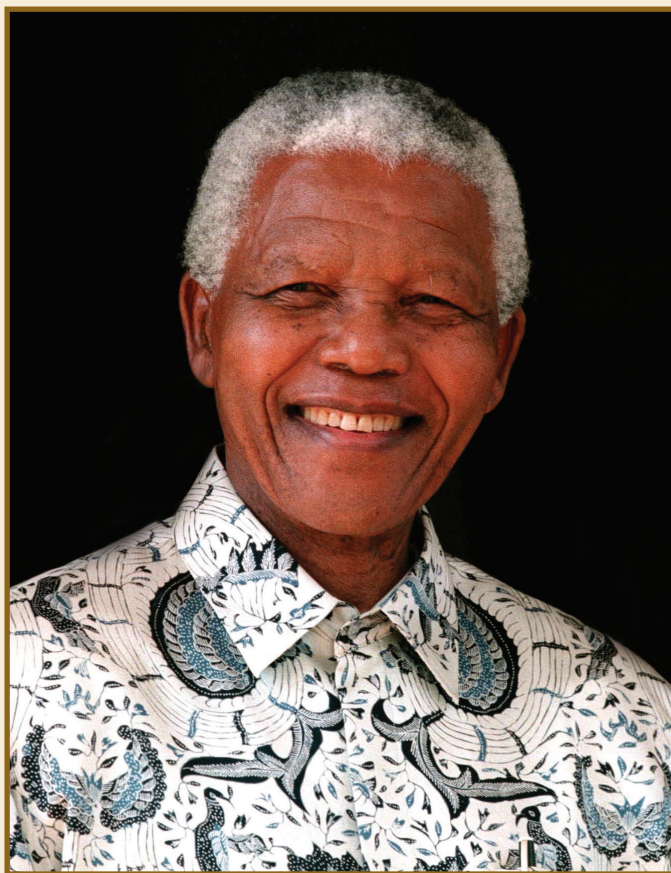


STATE MEMORIAL SERVICE
FOR THE LATE FORMER PRESIDENT

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

Date: 10 December 2013



18 July 1918 – 5 December 2013

Obituary of

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

It is with deep sadness that the Government has learnt of the passing of the father of South Africa's democracy – Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

He passed on peacefully in the company of his family around 20h50 on the 5th of December 2013.

The man who was to become one of the world's greatest icons was born in Mvezo, Transkei on 18 July 1918, to Nongaphi Nosekeni and Henry Gadla Mandela. His father was the key counsellor/advisor to the Thembu royal house. After his father's death in 1927, the young Rolihlahla became the ward of Chief Jongintaba Dalindyebo, the acting regent of the Thembu nation. It was at the Thembu royal homestead that his personality, values and political views were shaped. There can be no doubt that the young man went on to bring about some of the most significant and remarkable changes in South African history and politics.

It is through Mandela that the world cast its eyes on South Africa and took notice of the severe and organized repression of black South Africans. Yet it was also through Mandela that the world would learn the spirit of endurance, the triumph of forgiveness and the beauty of reconciliation. Indeed, the story of Nelson Mandela is so much the story of South Africa.

When he was only 25 years old, Nelson Mandela joined the African National Congress. His political career would span decades more – as he himself said: "The struggle is my life." The young Mandela also qualified and practiced as a lawyer. Together with Oliver Tambo he opened the first black legal practice in Johannesburg.

Mandela married Evelyn Nomathamsanqa Mase in 1945. They were married for fourteen years and had four children: Thembekile (1946), Makaziwe (1947), who died at nine months, Makgatho (1951) and Makaziwe (1954). The couple divorced in 1958.

He was instrumental in the formation of the radical African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) in the 1940s which was determined to change the face of politics. Mandela was elected the league's National Secretary in 1948 and President in 1952.

Much of the years that followed saw Mandela deeply involved in activism, rallying for political change against the increasingly aggressive apartheid government. He was a key player in the ANC's Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws in 1952 and the Treason Trial in 1961. During this time he was incarcerated several times under the apartheid laws and banned from political activity. Realising that the ANC needed to prepare for more intensive struggle, he became an instrumental force behind the formation of a new section of the liberation movement, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), as an armed nucleus with a view to preparing for armed struggle. Mandela was commander in chief of MK.

On 14 June 1958 Nelson and Winnie Madikizela were married at a local Bizana church. They had two children, Zenani (1958) Zindziswa (1960). In April 1992 they were separated and finally divorced in 1996.

He left the country in 1962 and traveled abroad to arrange guerilla training for members of Umkhonto weSizwe. On his return to South Africa he was arrested for illegal exiting the country and incitement to strike. Mandela decided to represent himself in court. While on trial, Mandela was charged with sabotage in the Rivonia Trial. This is his famous statement from the dock made in 1964: "I have fought against White domination, and I have fought against Black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

In the same year Mandela and the other accused were sentenced to life imprisonment in the Rivonia Trial and sent to Robben Island, near Cape Town. While in prison, Mandela rejected offers made by his jailers to be released on condition that he renounced violence. "Prisoners cannot enter into contracts. Only free men can negotiate," he said. He served a total of 27 years in prison for his conviction to fight apartheid and its injustices. Released on 11 February 1990, Mandela plunged wholeheartedly into his life's work, striving to attain the goals he and others had set out almost four decades earlier. In 1991, at the first national conference of the ANC held inside South Africa after being banned for decades, Nelson Mandela was elected President of the ANC while his lifelong friend and colleague, Oliver Tambo, became the organisation's National Chairperson.

In a life that symbolises the triumph of the human spirit, Nelson Mandela accepted the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize (along with FW de Klerk) on behalf of all South Africans who suffered and sacrificed so much to bring peace to our land.

The era of apartheid formally came to an end on the April 27, 1994, when Nelson Mandela voted for the first time in his life – along with his people. However, long before that date it had become clear, even before the start of negotiations at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park, that the ANC was increasingly charting the future of South Africa.

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was inaugurated as President of a democratic South Africa on 10 May 1994.

This world icon worked tirelessly even after the achievement of democracy in South Africa to continue improving lives. Even as he retired from politics, his attention shifted to social issues such as HIV and AIDS and the wellbeing of the nation's children. As a testimony to his sharp political intellect, wisdom and unrelenting commitment to make the world a better place, Mandela formed the prestigious group of called The Elders – an independent group of eminent global leaders, who offer their collective influence and experience to support peace building, help address major causes of human suffering and promote the shared interests of humanity.

Mr Mandela is survived by his wife Graça, three daughters, 18 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

Official Programme

Mr Cyril Ramaphosa and Ms Baleka Mbete

11:00 – 15:00

National Anthem:	Mass Choir
Welcome and Opening Remarks:	Programme Directors
Interfaith Prayers	
Tribute by Family Friend:	Andrew Mlangeni
Tribute by Family:	General Thanduxolo Mandela
Tribute by the Grandchildren:	Mbuso Mandela Andile Mandela Zozuko Dlamini Phumla Mandela
Tribute by UN Representative:	Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon
Tribute by AU Commission Chair:	Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma
Tribute by Foreign Dignitaries:	President Barack Obama (USA) President Dilma Rousseff (Brazil) Vice-President Li Yuanchao (China) President Hifikepunye Pohamba (Namibia) President Pranab Mukherjee (India) President Raúl Castro Ruz (Cuba)
Keynote Address by the President of the Republic of South Africa:	His Excellency Jacob Zuma
Sermon:	Bishop Ivan Abrahams
Vote of Thanks:	Premier of Gauteng, Nomvula Mokonyane