

## **Press Release**

**06 December 2013**

### **MINISTER NKOANA-MASHABANE PAYS TRIBUTE TO FORMER PRESIDENT NELSON MANDELA**

South Africans and millions of people from around the world are today mourning the loss of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, our first democratically elected President of a free South Africa.

An international icon and a symbol of hope for the oppressed and marginalised people across the globe, former President Mandela dedicated his life in service of humanity and contributed immensely to the promotion of a culture of peace throughout the world.

Former President Mandela worked tirelessly in the struggle for democracy and for the promotion and protection of human rights internationally.

Today, we pay tribute to this formidable Statesman's long history and leading role in, and support for Africa's struggle for liberation and unity, and outstanding contribution to the creation of a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic South Africa.

Former President Mandela will always be remembered worldwide for his values and dedication to the service of humanity in the fields of conflict resolution, reconciliation, the promotion and protection of the rights of children, gender equality and the uplifting of the poor.

During his lifetime, former President Mandela was bestowed with numerous awards and honours, including the Nobel Peace Prize.

At the initiative of the South African Government and the Nelson Mandela Foundation, the United Nations General Assembly, in 2010, proclaimed 18 July, the birthday of Former President Mandela, as "Nelson Mandela International Day", to be observed each year.

Since 2010, millions of people from around the world have annually celebrated Madiba's birthday by dedicating their time in community service - their actions inspired by the life's work of this iconic South African leader. This is the only fitting way to pay tribute to this great man – by looking back at his public and political life and emulating his selflessness and kindness.

Former President Mandela once said that "to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others." These words remain true as we celebrate South Africa's 20th Anniversary of Freedom and Democracy next year.

Through his extraordinary actions and personality, Madiba remains a moral compass that all of us will forever look up to.