



Indian Diaspora Council International

Shared heritage, aspirations and interests

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PRESS STATEMENT

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IDC Observes 100th Birth Anniversary of Nelson Mandela

The Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC) and its global affiliates join with other organizations, agencies, officials, groups, individuals and institutions worldwide in commemorating the 100th birthday anniversary of **Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela** (July 18, 1918 -- December 5, 2013). We pay special homage and recognition of Mandela who was a nonviolence anti-apartheid activist, politician and philanthropist who became South Africa's first black president from 1994 to 1999.

Mandela joined the African National Congress in 1942, becoming actively involved in the anti-apartheid movement in his 20s. For 20 years, he directed a campaign of peaceful, nonviolent defiance against the South African government and its racist policies. Beginning in 1962, Mandela spent 27 years in prison for political offenses. In 1993, Mandela and South African President F.W. de Klerk were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to dismantle the country's apartheid system. For generations to come, Nelson Mandela will continue to be a source of inspiration for civil rights activists worldwide.

Nelson Mandela achieved a smooth transition to majority rule in South Africa following the teachings of peace and reconciliation of Mahatma Gandhi. "The legacy of Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela is that they were exemplars of the fundamental belief that the drivers of conflict are all amenable to non-violent solutions. The achievements of Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela demonstrate that the outcome of non-violent change, achieved through persuasion rather than coercion, are durable."

Nelson Mandela was a towering icon of peace, patience, tolerance and forgiveness that paved the way for his immeasurable contributions to freedom and betterment for people in South Africa. He has inspired the world with his persistence, example and selfless service to his people despite overwhelming opposition and insurmountable odds. Mandela was a gift to the world, a remarkable man, a leader with unmatched courage, stamina, grace and dignity who will always be revered among the most admired and respected of people.

"To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity" - Nelson Mandela

"We pledge ourselves to liberate all our people from the continuing bondage of poverty, deprivation, suffering, gender and other discrimination" - Nelson Mandela

"As our world is relying more and more on violence as a means of dealing with conflict and anger is growing rapidly as a destructive force in the world, the messages of nonviolence become more and more relevant and important to the future of this fragile planet" - Ela Gandhi.

"Through his lifelong struggles for freedom, Mandela is a revered teacher to the world in his "quest for peace, justice and equality" that resonates so deeply in the hearts and minds of people worldwide, transcending time and place" - Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC)

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Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC), established in 1997, is an international non-profit organization with global affiliates and membership in 21 countries with the objective to embrace, engage, and enhance the shared heritage, aspirations, and interests of persons of Indian origin with optimum inclusivity.