

**TRIBUTE BY HER WORSHIP CLLR TLOTLANANG
MOGOTLANE THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF WATERBERG
DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY DURING THE NELSON
MANDELA MEMORIAL SERVICE HELD ON THE 13TH
DECEMBER 2013 AT O.R. TAMBO HALL AT 10:00 IN
MODIMOLLE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY.**

Programme Director,

Mayor of Modimolle Local Municipality Cllr Kgaretja Lekalakala,

Mayors from our locals present,

The leadership of the ANC in the Region

Political Parties present,

Baruti ba rena,

Members of the Media,

Comrade and Friends,

Ladies and gentlemen.

Thobela.

We are gathered here today to mourn and pay homage to the doyen, icon and father of our nation. Tata Nelson Mandela has passed on but his revolutionary spirit and soul will be with us forever.

Comrades and Compatriots, there is an adage that says: Leaders are not born, but produced by experience of the material conditions in which they find themselves.

But Madiba was a born leader who sharpened his skills through the experience of material conditions in which the majority of our people found themselves. As a true leader of the people, he could not stand by when the scourge of apartheid and colonialism was eating away the social fabric of our society.

Waterberg District has joined the rest of the world in celebrating his extra-ordinary life. Madiba was a gallant leader who dedicated his life to the struggle for liberation. He led from the front as Commander-in-Chief of Umkoto We Sizwe, the President of the ANC and the country in creating a better life for all our people.

He dedicated 67 years of his life to the liberation of this country. If the Apartheid regime of that time did not remove him from us and jailed him for 27 years, South Africa could have long been a real model of peace and democracy to the rest of the world. But within a limited time he managed to transform this country into what it is today.

Let me also indicate that the collective leadership of his generation clearly and diligently directed our National Democratic Revolution. They possessed tools of analysis to mobilise our people towards a common course aimed at liberating the African people and blacks in particular. Madiba was an embodiment of peace and hope, humility and equality.

Comrades and Compatriots, Madiba loved the ANC and at one stage stated that when he reaches Heaven, he would join the branch of the ANC together with other leaders who have passed on. His honesty, humility, modesty and forgiveness describe the type of a leader he was. He was a principled cadre who believed in the collective leadership of the ANC in advancing our struggle for liberation.

We have a challenge in advancing the legacy of Madiba. Are we ready to advance his legacy? Are we ready to fight the triple challenges of unemployment, inequality and poverty? Are we ready to create a better life for the majority of our people? These are some of the questions that we should reflect on if we really want to emulate the legacy of this son of the soil.

Today we reflect on the loss of a great patriot and international icon who was the essence of Ubuntu and a key player in the struggle against apartheid. Madiba was a great, fearless and compassionate leader whose resilience and charisma made an impact on millions throughout his life.

He cannot be replaced in person, but his legacy of selfless and principled dedication to equality and justice lives on in South Africa. The gains of 19 years of freedom are a monument to Madiba and those who fought alongside him for non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous South Africa.

Comrades and Compatriots, we appreciate the condolences and tributes expressed around Africa and the world on the passing of Nelson Mandela. Government and South Africa is humbled by the tributes that have streamed in from governments, global institutions, civil society and millions of individuals around the world.

Tata Mandela was a patriot we shared with the world, and we continue to appreciate the extensive support he enjoyed around the globe during his decades of imprisonment.

We hope that as we revisit his lifelong contribution to humanity, we will also use this reflection to recommit ourselves to the values and practices he stood for.

Over and above his widely celebrated commitment to democracy and freedom, Madiba was a brave man, risking his life to champion a struggle against apartheid which the international community declared a crime against humanity. He was an internationalist, a symbol of worldwide struggle to eradicate injustice and resolve disputes through peaceful means.

Comrades and Compatriots, to celebrate Mandela's life, we need to stay true to his ideals, including his unwavering commitment to justice, equality and a non-racial South Africa. His support during the 1995 Rugby World Cup can attest to this.

We all have a responsibility to promote freedom and defend our democracy in honour of Madiba`s lifelong commitment to these ideals.

Madiba was a courageous leader, comrade and friend who often took the road less travelled to pursue what he deemed to be right and just.

Mandela was also the resident of Waterberg. He owned a game farm in Mabatlane/ Vaalwater. We are justified as the people of Waterberg to honour, celebrate, and pay homage to this icon and father of the nation.

Let me take this opportunity to convey our heartfelt condolences to his wife and family for the loss of this great son of the soil. Working together we can do more to emulate his legacy and to create a better life for all our people.

I THANK YOU.