

MONDAY MONTHLY
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Monday



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Hamba kahle, Madiba

Nelson
Rohlahla
Mandela

(18 July 1918 – 05 December 2013)

Photo by Louise Gubb

Filling the shoes of the fisherman...

A tribute to Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

BY CHAIR OF COUNCIL ARCHBISHOP EMERITUS
NJONGONKULU NDUNGANE

often say that Robben Island Maximum Security Prison was the university of the world in which I majored in humanities. There I learnt about the indomitable human spirit, empowered by the Spirit of the Living God. It was also there that I felt the hand of God upon me and the call to be his priest. For Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela it was the place where he displayed the mark of leadership that, nearly three decades later, would have him presiding over an established constitutional democracy that also allowed for academic freedom and freedom of speech. We shared a solidarity through our shared vision of a better life for all South Africans. We had an unshakeable faith in the God of Freedom, the God of Justice, the God of Hope, who touched our world of sad oppression with his healing breath.

Einstein said that coincidences are God's way of remaining anonymous. I would like to share with you a montage of coincidences, with the year 1963 as the common denominator.

In 1963, a time when the world was experiencing the consequences of the Cold War and the fear of a nuclear holocaust, Australian novelist and playwright Morris West wrote the prophetic book *The Shoes of the Fisherman*, about a protagonist unexpectedly set free after 20 years in a Siberian labour camp who goes on to be elected Pope. Literary critics said that the story lacked a major plotline, yet even at its darkest, the book maintained faith in humanity.

In the same year, a time when South Africa was experiencing intensified forms of militant struggle and urban uprisings based on an uncompromising demand for universal franchise, Nelson Mandela was arrested and tried for 221 acts of sabotage in what became known as the Rivonia Trial, a trial that would last for two years and seal his fate as a political prisoner for 27 years. Yet even at the trial's darkest hour, Mandela maintained his faith in justice: "I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities."

West's story centres around the Catholic Church, and in particular, the Papacy. He sees the pontiff as an earnest human being constrained by the inflexible traditions and bureaucracy of the Vatican, and the reader admires him for his willingness to carry the burden.



Benny Gool

Leadership trio: UCT's Chair of Council Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane (left) with Nobel Laureates Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (right) and Nelson Mandela, who received an honorary doctorate from UCT in 1990.

Mandela's story centres around inequality in South Africa where the majority of its 'citizens' were constrained by the inflexible laws of the apartheid government, and the world admired him for his willingness to carry our burden.

The 1968 award-winning film *The Shoes of the Fisherman* was based on Morris West's epic novel. The main character in the film bears remarkably strong similarities to the real character of Mandela. The finale portrays the pontiff (Anthony Quinn) standing on the balcony of the Vatican in front of a crowd of thousands on St Peter's Square. He removes his mitre and says: "I stand before you bare-headed because I am your servant. We are in a time of crisis. I cannot change the world. I cannot change what history has already written. I can only change myself, and begin with unsure hands to write a new chapter... I am the custodian of the wealth of the Church. I pledge now all our money, all our holdings in land, buildings, and great works of art for the relief of our hungry brothers... I beg the great of the world and the small of the world to share out their abundance with those who have nothing." The scene ends with resounding applause from the crowds amid loud chanting and waving of flags.

In February 1990, more than 50,000 people gathered on the Grand Parade in Cape Town to witness the newly-released Mkhulu as he stepped onto the balcony of the City Hall and addressed the crowds: "I stand before you not as a prophet but as a humble servant of you, the people. Your tireless and heroic sacrifices have made it possible for me to be here today. I therefore place the remaining years of my life in your hands... I am convinced that your pain and suffering was far greater than my own... The fabric of family life of millions of my people has been shattered. Millions are homeless and unemployed. We call on our white compatriots to join us in the shaping of a new South Africa... We call on the international community to continue the campaign to isolate the apartheid regime..." The crowds cheered and chanted "Amandla!" and there was great jubilation.

Pope John XXIII died on the same day that Morris West's book was published. *The Shoes of the Fisherman* became the best-selling novel in the US in 1963. Ten years after the release of the film in 1968, a cardinal from a Marxist-dominated country was elected as Pope. It was also the year that Martin Luther King

1918
18 July: Born at Mveze in the Transkei

1925
Attends primary school near Qunu (receives the name 'Nelson' from a teacher)

1927
Become the ward of Paramount Chief Jongintaba Dalindyebo

1934
Undergoes initiation; attends Clarkebury Boarding Institute in Engcobo

1939
Enrols at the University College of Fort Hare, in Alice

1941
Escapes an arranged marriage; becomes a mine night watchman; starts articles at the law firm Witkin, Sidelsky & Eidelman

1942
Starts to informally attend African National Congress (ANC) meetings informally

1942
Completes BA through the University of South Africa (UNISA)

1943
Graduates with BA from Fort Hare; enrolls for an LLB at Wits University

1944
Co-founds the ANC Youth League (ANCYL); marries Evelyn Ntoko Mase. They have four children: Thembekile (1945); Makaziwe (1947 – who dies at nine months old); Makgatho (1950); Makaziwe (1954)

1948
Elected national secretary of the ANCYL

1951
Elected President of the ANCYL

1952
Defiance Campaign begins; arrested and charged for violating the Suppression of Communism Act; elected Transvaal ANC President; convicted with JS Moroka, Walter Sisulu and 17 others under the Suppression of Communism Act; sentenced to nine months imprisonment with hard labour; suspended for two years; elected first of ANC deputy presidents; opens South Africa's first black law firm with Oliver Tambo

1953
Devises the M-Plan for the ANC's future underground operations

1955
Observes as the Congress of the People at Kliptown launches the Freedom Charter

1956
Arrested and joins 155 others on trial for treason. All are acquitted by 29 March 1961

1958
Divorces Evelyn Mase; marries Nomzamo Winnie Madikizela. They have two daughters: Zenani (1959) and Zindzi (1960)

(Timeline and biography courtesy of the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory.)

was assassinated. Coincidence, or fate? Chance, or destiny?

On 21 August 1963, I spent my first night as a convicted inmate reflecting on the words that Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe had underlined as the basis for the greatest cause on earth, the liberation of humanity: SERVICE. SACRIFICE. SUFFERING.

The next day I was transported to the country's maximum security prison, Robben Island, and thus began my education for life, in leg irons, handcuffed. My claim to fame is that, on Robben Island, I built the cell in which Mandela would later be incarcerated. He was a father figure, a leader, to many, many of the prisoners on Robben Island; a towering presence, a rock against whom the others leaned. His own service, sacrifice and suffering in his unflinching commitment to justice inspired younger generations in terms of nobility, fighting for basic human rights; and in terms of tenacity, not succumbing to the dehumanising efforts of the prison warders.

Born in Mvezo alongside the meandering Mbashe River, Mandela grew up in a royal Xhosa household and attended the elite Methodist school Healdtown, which was modelled on the English education system. He was part of that long line of intellectuals and distinguished leaders who attended the mission schools and influenced history and political life profoundly. As Professor André Odendaal articulated in his seminal book *The Founders*, "These examples are proof of the depth and resilience of the political and intellectual traditions attached to the earliest activists, who laid the foundations for the freedom struggle in South Africa. These traditions, together with the accompanying intellectual capital, survived for generations in durable and deep-rooted networks, through multiple transitions and adaptations, to impact on the present."

Mandela is one of my most revered heroes. We shared a commitment to the role of civil society in holding governments accountable to fulfil commitments on democratic governance and to deliver on pledges on aid, trade and development. We were both deeply committed to public service, to which we dedicated our lives. We have both spoken out on issues, of HIV and AIDS, gender discrimination, and reconciliation and forgiveness. As coincidence would have it, Mandela was the first elected President and I was the first elected Archbishop in the new dispensation, and so we would collaborate in addressing the challenges and deepening our new democracy. On occasion he would phone me and ask: "Njongonkulu, my leader, what are you doing for breakfast tomorrow?" and then we would talk about issues. There was always an openness to engage and work together.

At one of our breakfast meetings I shared a story of

my travels abroad during the time of the Free Mandela campaign. I was addressing young 11- and 12-year-olds at a primary school in Switzerland, and I asked them: "Who can tell me the first name of Mandela?" To which they all responded proudly in unison: "Release!". Such was the fervour of the campaign internationally!

I recall a time during his presidency when I was invited to Germany to meet with representatives of the church, industry and politics. I was staying at a convent just outside Bonn, and though the sisters were hospitable, I was not spared from sharing in their very frugal domestic lifestyle. At the end of the busy days I longed to relax with a glass of the nectar of the vine, but none was forthcoming in the cold convent. Until one day I was called to the telephone, and I revealed to my hosts that the caller was from South Africa, and was none other than Madiba himself. "If this man is receiving calls from Nelson Mandela, then he must be very important!" – and immediately the sisters' hospitality turned into kindness. How quickly the warmth raced through the corridors of the convent!

Mandela embodied a quasi-religious 'prophetic' leadership that in 1994 eventually freed his people from the bondage of apartheid. The Prophet, political or religious, is a revolutionary – that is, one who prophesies a better future, the attainment of which requires the radical transformation of the present. The Prophet is a political agent, but is also a moral agent – a political-religious man. Mandela's struggle for South Africa's liberation embraced this definition of prophetic rule, as the charismatic icon of the ANC liberation movement was able to build up and maintain a devoted following even through he was almost three decades in jail.

Mandela's presidency between 1994 and 1999 could also be seen in prophetic terms, as he sought to reconcile a deeply divided society and to point his 48 million disciples to a better future. His rule represented prophetic nation-building. An example of his insightfulness was when he stepped onto the field at Ellis Park in 1995 wearing the No. 6 Springbok jersey, and said: "The Boks belong to all of us now." He used sport as a catalyst to unite blacks and whites, and in return he was rewarded with the Rugby World Cup that year.

Nelson Mandela is the most well-known historical figure in African history. He has countless books, documentaries and monuments devoted to him, and universities and streets named after him. He sought peaceful means for conflict resolution and regional co-operation and integration.

Nelson Mandela is an icon and globally recognised symbol of his country's freedom. It is critical that his prophetic legacy is preserved.

Lala ngoxolo noloyiso Tata. AH Dalibhunga!!!

A message from the Vice-Chancellor

UCT mourns Madiba's passing

Together with everyone in the country – and across the world – the University of Cape Town is deeply saddened by the loss of Nelson Mandela.

Madiba taught us all about what it means to be humane in an often inhumane world. His courage and tenacity in fighting for democracy during his earlier years, the triumph of his spirit during his long incarceration, his astute and dignified leadership, and his wise counsel have all exemplified a way of being in the world that we should revere and emulate.

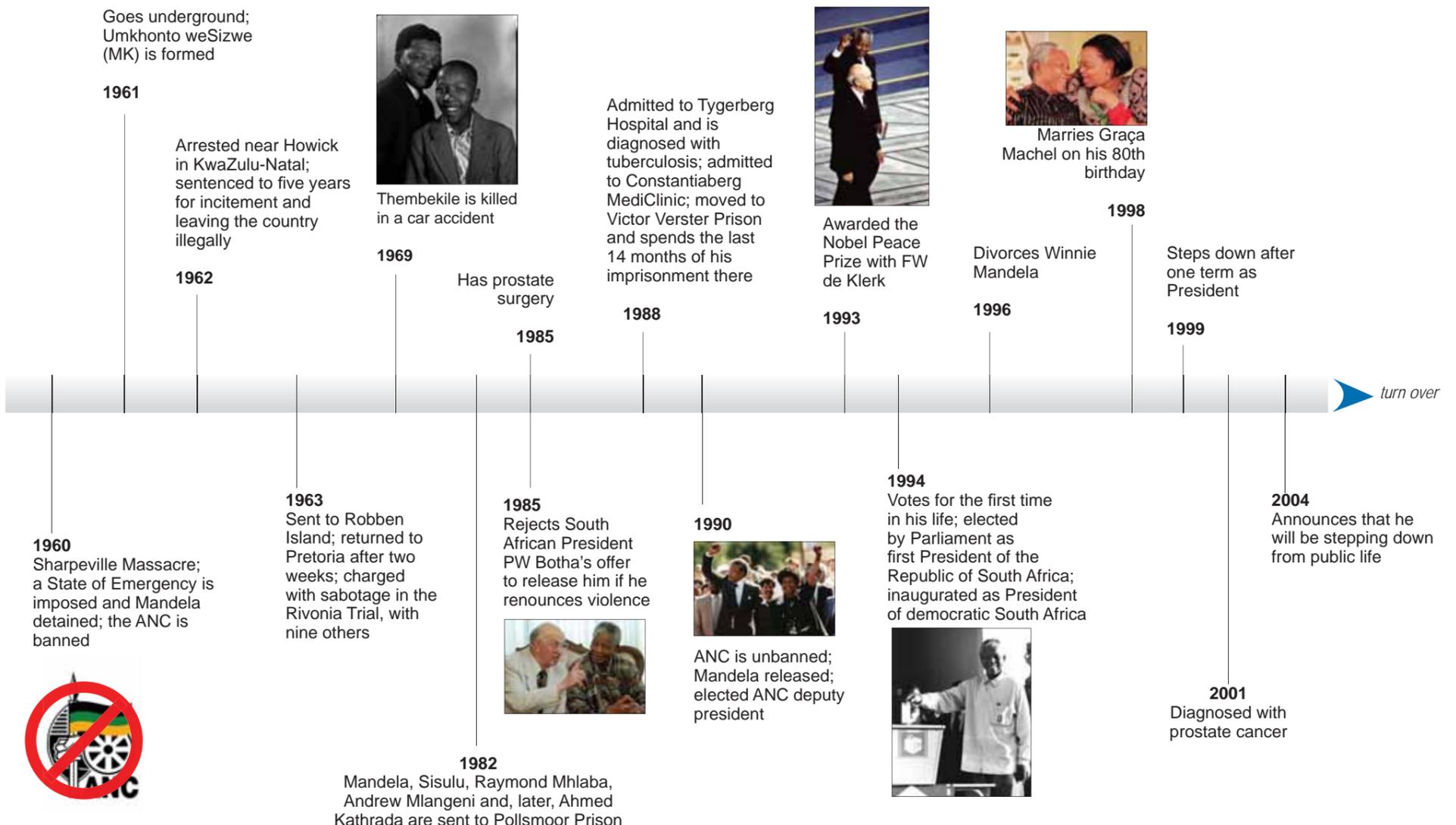
Our thoughts are with the UCT Chancellor, Mrs Graça Machel, and the Mandela family.

Dr Max Price, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town

Sincerely,



Dr Max Price
Vice-Chancellor



Mandela's visits always a special occasion

Nelson Mandela visited the University of Cape Town at pivotal times – both in the country's history and in the life of the university – bringing with him messages of peace, reconciliation and the need for transformation.

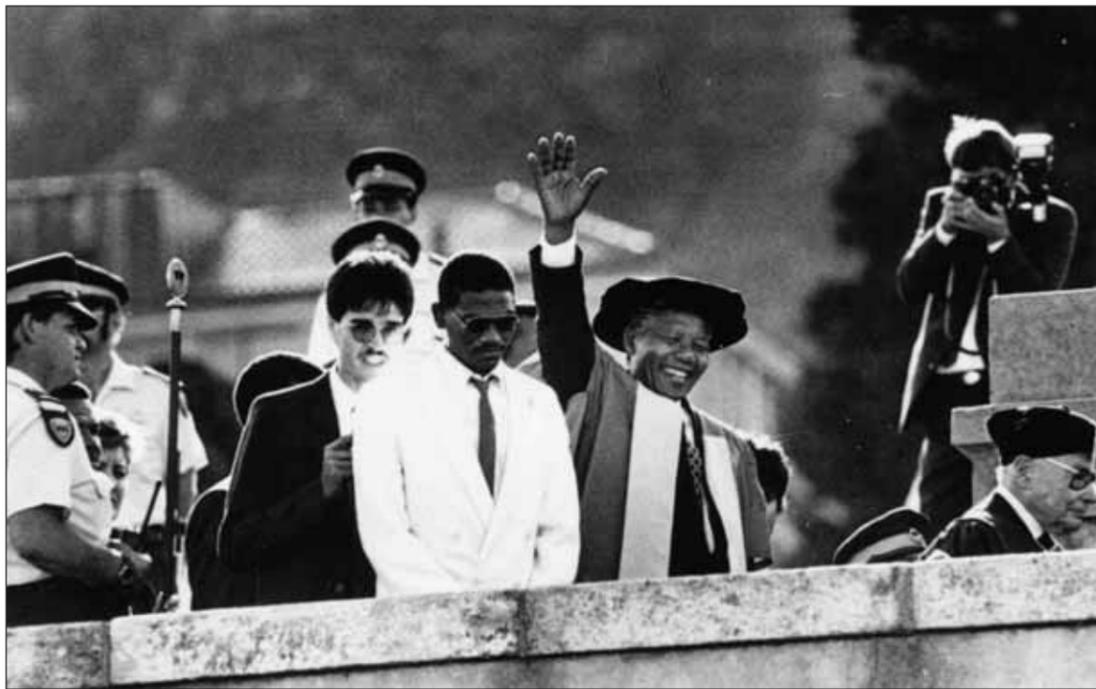
In November 1990, shortly after he was released from prison, South Africa's iconic leader stepped onto the UCT rugby field to the roar of the crowd, to receive an honorary doctorate in law. The university's Jameson Hall, where the ceremonies are normally held, simply could not contain the number of people who wanted to be part of the historic event.

Madiba, who had stood for justice his whole life, said he was deeply honoured to receive the degree of Doctor of Laws.

"Through this action you have chosen to identify with those committed to the cause of peace and justice in this country," he told students, faculty, staff and members of the public on 30 November, 1990.

Mandela also commended the university and its students for their activism and said the ties between the student body and those who had stood in the vanguard of the struggle for freedom stretched back over a number of decades.

"During the 1950s when the ruling Nationalist Party embarked on one of the most sinister aspects of apartheid policy, the destruction of academic freedom and the imposition of university apartheid, it was your student body that led the entire university community in mounting consistent and determined resistance. In the following decade, it was once again the students of UCT



Mirroring his famous wave from the Cape Town City Hall balcony following his release from prison ten months earlier, Nelson Mandela acknowledges the hundreds of guests attending his honorary graduation on November 30, 1990 on the UCT rugby fields.

who galvanised their institution into opposing the first State of Emergency and the passage of the 90-day detention laws."

He also spoke of how UCT students had supported him and his fellow prisoners during many dark days on Robben Island.

"Those of us who spent the latter part of that decade in the gloomy cells of Robben Island will forever hold dear the memory of the young men and women of the University of Cape Town who raised funds to provide us with books for study, collected their own textbooks and donated these for our use. In various other ways they kept our hope alive by clear demonstrations that the prison walls had not deleted our names from the collective memory."

Madiba's visit to UCT in 1990 came at a momentous and difficult time for the country. While many people were celebrating the unbanning of the ANC, Pan Africanist Congress and the South African Communist Party, the spate of political killings in Kwazulu-Natal and other parts of the country was extremely worrying.

Mandela used the opportunity in his address to call for an end to violence.

"We want to appeal to all South Africans to join us in calling for an end to violence. We invite all our compatriots – of whatever political persuasion and irrespective of race – to join us in building a national consensus around the need for peace."

He also focused on transformation at UCT.

"The university's admission and exclusive policies also require recasting to increase access to this institution for those who are deprived. We should arrive at a point where both the faculty and student body are reflective of the demographic make-up of our country."

By the time he visited the university again in 1996, Nelson Mandela was President of the country and UCT was about to install its first ever black woman Vice-Chancellor, Dr Mamphela Ramphele.

Staff and students welcomed him with open arms when he arrived at UCT to speak at Ramphele's installation as Vice-Chancellor on 11 October 1996.

Referring to the incoming VC as 'a daughter and friend to me' he said she was a 'powerful role model' and that he

was proud to be speaking at such an important ceremony.

"The installation of a university vice-chancellor is always an occasion of great moment. At an institution like the University of Cape Town – our oldest university and a world-renowned centre of learning and science – it evokes both the enduring character of the university and the constant renewal of scholarship and scientific inquiry."

Madiba also used the public platform to speak out about the transformation of universities. He challenged UCT to look at its research tasks, given the different needs and priorities in a new democratic South Africa.

Showing a keen interest in all aspects of the life of the university, Mandela also visited Fuller Hall, where Graça Machel's daughter, Josina, would later reside during her UCT studies. Josina went on to graduate with a Bachelor of Social Science in 1998, a year before her mother was installed as the Chancellor of UCT.

In the summer of 1999, South Africa's treasured icon returned to UCT, this time to witness the installation of his wife, Graça Machel, as UCT's fifth Chancellor. It was a proud moment for the former statesman, who celebrated the day with Graça, and Ramphele, who was still Vice-Chancellor at the time.

Keeping ever close to his ideals for equality and transformation, Madiba returned to the university in September 2004 to deliver the 5th Steve Biko Lecture. The lectures were introduced by the Steve Biko Foundation to honour the values that the struggle hero lived and died for.

To view footage of Nelson Mandela receiving his honorary degree and to see an excerpt from his Steve Biko lecture, visit the UCT homepage at www.uct.ac.za.

2005 Mandela announces that his second son, Makgatho has died of complications from AIDS

2007 Witnesses the installation of his grandson Mandla as chief of the Mvezo Traditional Council

2008 Turns 90 years old, asks the emerging generation to continue the fight for social justice

2009 Votes for the fourth time in his life; attends the inauguration of President Jacob Zuma on 9 May and witnesses Zuma's first State of the Nation address; turns 91

2010 Is formally presented with the Fifa World Cup trophy before it embarks on a tour of South Africa; turns 92

2010 His second book *Nelson Mandela: Conversations with Myself*, is released

2010 Attends the funeral of his great-granddaughter, Zenani

2010 Makes a surprise appearance at the Final of the Fifa World Cup in Soweto

2010 Meets the South African and American football teams that participated in the Mandela Challenge match

2011 His book, *Nelson Mandela By Himself: The Authorised Book of Quotations*, is released

2011 Is visited at home by American First Lady Michelle Obama and her daughters, Sasha and Malia

2011 Votes in the local government elections

2011 Is officially counted in South Africa's Census 2011

2012 Celebrates his 94th birthday with his family in Qunu

2013 Madiba passes away at his home in Houghton, Johannesburg. The world begins mourning this great loss

Memories of Madiba

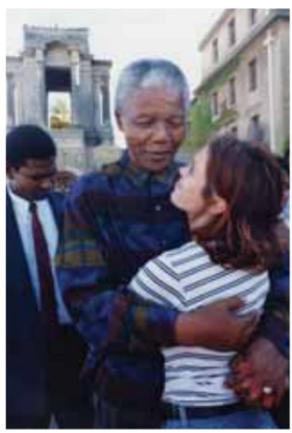
Honorary Doctorate

On 30 November 1990, a few months after being released from prison, Nelson Mandela stepped onto the UCT Rugby Field to receive an honorary doctorate in Law. The university's Jameson Hall, where these ceremonies are usually held, could not contain the masses who wanted to be part of the historic event.



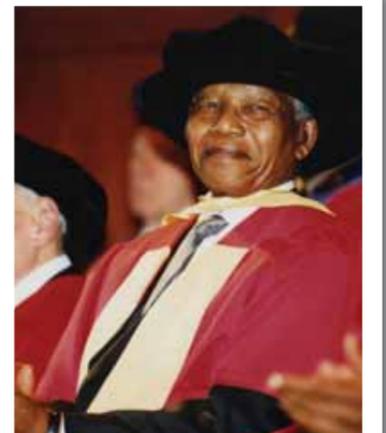
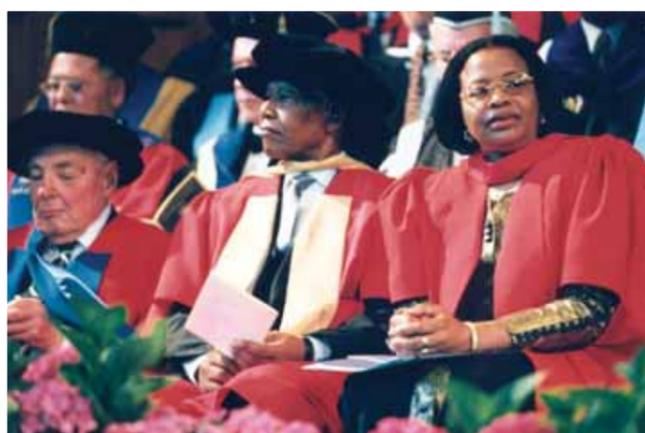
A visit to Fuller Hall

Accompanied by the then Vice-Chancellor, Dr Mamphela Ramphela, Nelson Mandela toured campus in 1996. Students and staff welcomed him with open arms. The visit included a stop at Fuller Hall, where Graça Machel's daughter, Josina, would later reside during her UCT studies. Josina went on to graduate with a Bachelor of Social Science in 1998, a year before her mother was installed as UCT Chancellor.



Graça Machel's installation as Chancellor

In 1999, Graça Machel was elected as UCT's fifth chancellor. She celebrated her installation with her husband and Dr Mamphela Ramphela, then serving as UCT vice-chancellor. This marked the first time in UCT's history that its two most senior executive positions were held by black women.



Steve Biko Memorial Lecture



UCT has been hosting the annual Steve Biko Memorial Lecture since the establishment of the series in 2000. In 2002, Mandela attended the third Steve Biko Memorial Lecture, delivered by the late Nigerian writer and scholar Professor Chinua Achebe. Achebe's lecture was titled *Fighting Apartheid with Words*. Two years later, marking ten years of democracy in South Africa, Madiba would deliver the 5th memorial lecture.

Mandela Rhodes Scholarship



In February 2005, Madiba and Graça Machel were on hand to congratulate the recipients of the inaugural Mandela Rhodes Scholarships. They included three UCT students – Sirika Pillay (back, far left), Julia Cloete (second from left) and Alex Salo (far right).

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

Early years

Rolihlahla Mandela was born in Mvezo, a village near Mthatha in the Transkei, on 18 July 1918, to Nonqaphi Nosekeni and Henry Mgadla Mandela. His father was the principal councillor to the Acting Paramount Chief of the Thembu. Rolihlahla literally means "pulling the branch of a tree". After his father's death in 1927, the young Rolihlahla became the ward of Jongintaba Dalindyebo, the Paramount Chief, to be groomed to assume high office. Hearing the elders' stories of his ancestors' valour during the wars of resistance, he dreamed also of making his own contribution to the freedom struggle of his people.

After receiving a primary education at a local mission school, where he was given the name Nelson, he was sent to the Clarkebury Boarding Institute for his Junior Certificate and then to Healdtown, a Wesleyan secondary school of some repute,

where he matriculated. He then enrolled at the University College of Fort Hare for the Bachelor of Arts degree, where he was elected onto the Students Representative Council. He was suspended from college for joining in a protest boycott, along with Oliver Tambo.

He and his cousin Justice ran away to Johannesburg to avoid arranged marriages, and for a short period he worked as a mine policeman. Mandela was introduced to Walter Sisulu in 1941 and it was Sisulu who arranged for him to do his articles at Lazar Sidelsky's law firm. Completing his BA through the University of South Africa (UNISA) in 1942, he commenced study for his LLB shortly afterwards (though he left the University of the Witwatersrand without graduating, in 1948). He entered politics in earnest while studying and joined the African National Congress in 1943.



Despite his increasing political awareness and activities, Mandela also had time for other things. "It was in the lounge of the Sisulu's home that I met Evelyn Mase ... She was a quiet, pretty girl from the countryside who did not seem overawed by the comings and goings ... Within a few

months I had asked her to marry me, and she accepted." They married in a civil ceremony at the Native Commissioner's Court in Johannesburg, "for we could not afford a traditional wedding or feast". Mase and Mandela went on to have four children: Thembikile (1946), Makaziwe (1947), who died at nine months, Makgatho (1951) and Makaziwe (1954). The couple divorced in 1958.

At the height of the Second World War, in 1944, a small group of young Africans who were members of the African National Congress, banded together under the leadership of Anton Lembede. Among them were William Nkomo, Sisulu, Oliver R Tambo, Ashby P Mda and Mandela. Starting out with 60 members, all of whom were residing around the Witwatersrand, these young people set themselves the formidable task of transforming the ANC into a more radical mass movement.

Their chief contention was that the political tactics of the 'old guard' leadership of the ANC, reared in the tradition of constitutionalism and polite petitioning of the government of the day, were proving inadequate to the tasks of national emancipation. In opposition to the old guard, Lembede and his colleagues espoused a radical African nationalism grounded in the principle of national self-determination. In September 1944 they came together to found the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL).

Mandela soon impressed his peers by his disciplined work and consistent effort and was elected as the league's National Secretary in 1948. By painstaking work, campaigning at the grassroots and through its mouthpiece *Inyaniso* (Truth) the ANCYL was able to canvass support for its policies among the ANC membership.

Emerging as a leader

At the 1949 Annual Conference the Programme of Action – inspired by the Youth League, which advocated the weapons of boycott, strike, civil disobedience and non-cooperation – was accepted as official ANC policy. Spurred on by National Party winning the 1948 all-white elections on the platform of apartheid,

The Programme of Action had been drawn up by a sub-committee of the ANCYL composed of David Bopape, Mda, Mr Mandela, James Njongwe, Sisulu and Tambo. To ensure its implementation, the membership replaced older leaders with a number of younger men. Sisulu, a founding member of the Youth League, was elected secretary-general. The conservative Dr AB Xuma lost the presidency to Dr JS Moroka, a man with a reputation for greater militancy. In December, Mandela himself was elected to the NEC at the National Conference.

When the ANC launched its Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws in 1952, Mandela, by then President of the Youth League, was elected National Volunteer-in-Chief. The Defiance Campaign was conceived as a mass civil disobedience campaign that would snowball from a core of selected volunteers to involve more and more ordinary people, culminating in mass defiance. Fulfilling his responsibility as Volunteer-in-Chief, Mandela travelled the country organising resistance to discriminatory legislation. Charged, with Moroka, Sisulu and 17 others, and brought to trial for his role in the campaign, the court found that Mandela and his co-accused had consistently advised their followers to adopt a peaceful course of action and to avoid all violence.

For his part in the Defiance Campaign, Mandela was convicted



of contravening the Suppression of Communism Act and given a suspended prison sentence. Shortly after the campaign ended, he was also prohibited from attending gatherings and confined to Johannesburg for six months.

During this period of restrictions, Mandela wrote the attorney admissions examination and was admitted to the profession. He opened a practice in Johannesburg in August 1952, and in December, in partnership with Tambo, opened South Africa's first black law firm in central Johannesburg. He says of himself during that time: "As an attorney, I could be rather flamboyant in court. I did not act as though I were a black man in a white man's court, but as if everyone else – white and black – was a guest in my court. When presenting a case,

I often made sweeping gestures and used high-flown language... (and) used unorthodox tactics with witnesses."

Their professional status didn't earn Mandela and Tambo any personal immunity from the brutal apartheid laws. They fell foul of the land segregation legislation, and the authorities demanded that they move their practice from the city to the back of beyond, as Mandela later put it, "miles away from where clients could reach us during working hours. This was tantamount to asking us to abandon our legal practice, to give up the legal service of our people ... No attorney worth his salt would easily agree to do that". The partnership resolved to defy the law.

In 1953 Mandela was given the responsibility to prepare a plan

that would enable the leadership of the movement to maintain dynamic contact with its membership without recourse to public meetings. The objective was to prepare for the possibility that the ANC, like the Communist Party, would be declared illegal, and to ensure that the organisation would be able to operate from underground. This was the M-Plan, named after him. "The plan was conceived with the best of intentions but it was instituted with only modest success, and its adoption was never widespread."

During the early fifties Mandela played an important part in leading the resistance to the Western Areas removals, and to the introduction of Bantu Education. He also played a significant role in popularising the Freedom Charter, adopted by the Congress of the People in 1955. Hav-

ing been banned again for two years in 1953, neither Mandela nor Sisulu were able to attend but "we found a place at the edge of the crowd where we could observe without mixing in or being seen".

During the whole of the '50s, Mandela was the victim of various forms of repression. He was banned, arrested and imprisoned. A five-year banning order was enforced against him in March 1956. "[But] this time my attitude towards my bans had changed radically. When I was first banned, I abided by the rules and regulations of my persecutors. I had now developed contempt for these restrictions ... To allow my activities to be circumscribed by my opponent was a form of defeat, and I resolved not to become my own jailer."

Although Mandela and Mase had effectively separated in 1955, it wasn't until 1958 that they formally divorced – and shortly afterwards, in June, he was married to Nomzamo Winnie Mandela. Their first date was at an Indian restaurant near Mandela's office and he recalls that she was "dazzling, and even the fact that she had never before tasted curry and drank glass after glass of water to cool her palate only added to her charm ... Winnie has laughingly told people that I never proposed to her, but I always told her that I asked her on our very first date and that I simply took it for granted from that day forward".

Unlike in his first marriage, the couple observed most of the traditional requirements, including payment of lobola, and were married in a local church in Bizana on 14 June. There was no time (or money) for a honeymoon – Mandela had to appear in court for the continuing Treason Trial, and anyway his banning order had only been relaxed for six days.

A legend in his own time

The trial



In fact for much of the latter half of the decade, he was one of the 156 accused in the mammoth Treason Trial, at great cost to his legal practice and his political work, though he recalls that, during his incarceration in the Fort, the communal cell “became a kind of convention for far-flung freedom fighters”. After the Sharpeville Massacre on 21 March 1960, the ANC was outlawed, and Mandela, still on trial, was detained, along with hundreds of others.

The Treason Trial collapsed in 1961 as South Africa was being steered towards the adoption of a republic’s constitution. With the ANC now illegal, the leadership picked up the threads from its underground headquarters, and Mandela emerged at this time as the leading figure in this new phase of struggle. Under the ANC’s inspiration, 1,400 delegates came together at an All-in African Conference in Pietermaritzburg during March 1961.

Mandela was the keynote speaker. In an electrifying address he challenged the apartheid regime to convene a national convention, representative of all South Africans, to thrash out a new constitution based on democratic principles.

Failure to comply, he warned, would compel the majority (blacks) to observe the forthcoming inauguration of the Republic with a mass general strike. He immediately went underground to lead the campaign. Although fewer answered the call than Mandela had hoped, it attracted

ers and police spies, Mandela had to adopt a number of disguises. Sometimes dressed as a labourer, at other times as a chauffeur, his successful evasion of the police earned him the title of the Black Pimpernel.

He managed to travel around the country and stayed with numerous

we Sizwe (MK), as an armed nucleus with a view to preparing for armed struggle, with Mandela as its commander in chief.

At the Rivonia Trial, Mandela explained: “At the beginning of June 1961, after long and anxious assessment of the South African situation,

struggle, and to form Umkhonto we Sizwe ... the government had left us no other choice.”

In 1962 Mandela left the country, as ‘David Motsamayi’, and travelled abroad for several months. In Ethiopia he addressed the Conference of the Pan African Freedom Movement

“...it would be wrong and unrealistic for African leaders to continue preaching peace and non-violence at a time when the government met our peaceful demands with force...”

considerable support throughout the country. The government responded with the largest military mobilisation since the Second World War, and the Republic was born in an atmosphere of fear and apprehension.

Forced to live apart from his family (and he and Winnie by now had two daughters; Zenani, born in 1959, and Zindzi, born 1960), moving from place to place to evade detection by the government’s ubiquitous inform-

sympathisers – a family in Market Street, central Johannesburg, in his comrade Wolfie Kodesh’s flat (where he insisted on running on the spot every day), in the servant’s quarters of a doctor’s house where he pretended to be a gardener, and on a sugar plantation in KwaZulu-Natal. It was during this time that he, together with other leaders of the ANC, constituted a new section of the liberation movement, Umkhonto

I and some colleagues came to the conclusion that as violence in this country was inevitable, it would be wrong and unrealistic for African leaders to continue preaching peace and non-violence at a time when the government met our peaceful demands with force. It was only when all else had failed, when all channels of peaceful protest had been barred to us, that the decision was made to embark on violent forms of political

of East and Central Africa, and was warmly received by senior political leaders in several countries, including Tanganyika, Senegal, Ghana and Sierra Leone. He also spent time in London, where he managed to find time, with Tambo, to see the sights, as well as to spend time with many exiled comrades. During this trip Mandela met up with the first group of 21 MK recruits on their way to Addis Ababa for guerrilla training.

Prisoner 466/64

Not long after his return to South Africa, Mandela was arrested on 5 August 1962 and charged with illegal exit from the country and incitement to strike. He was in KwaZulu-Natal at the time, passing through Howick on his way back to Johannesburg, posing again as David Motsamayi, now the driver of a white theatre director and MK member, Cecil Williams.

Since he considered the prosecution a trial of the aspirations of the African people, Mandela decided to conduct his own defence. He applied for the recusal of the magistrate, on the ground that in such a prosecution a judiciary controlled entirely by whites was an interested party and therefore could not be impartial, and on the ground that he owed no duty to obey the laws of a white parliament, in which he was not represented. Mandela prefaced this challenge with the affirmation: "I detest racialism, because I regard it as a barbaric thing, whether it comes from a black man or a white man."

Mandela was convicted and sentenced to five years imprisonment. He was transferred to Robben Island in May 1963, only to be brought back to Pretoria again in July. The authorities issued a statement to the press that this had been done to protect Mandela from assault by PAC prisoners. "This was patently false; they had brought me back to Pretoria for their own motives, which soon became clear." Not long afterwards

he encountered Thomas Mashifane, the foreman from Liliesleaf Farm in Rivonia where MK had set up their HQ. He knew then that their hide-out had been discovered. A few days later he and 10 others were charged with sabotage.

The Rivonia Trial, as it came to be known, lasted eight months. Most of the accused stood up well to the prosecution, having made a collective decision that this was a political trial and that they would take the opportunity to make public their political beliefs. Three of the accused – Mandela, Sisulu and Govan Mbeki – also decided that, if they were given the death sentence, they would not appeal.

Mandela's statement in court during the trial is a classic in the history of the resistance to apartheid, and has been an inspiration to all who have opposed it. He ended with these words: "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."

All but two of the accused were found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment, on 12 June 1964. The black prisoners were flown secretly to Robben Island immediately after the trial was over to begin serving their sentences.

Mandela's time in prison, which amounted to just over 27-and-a-half years, was marked by many small and large events which played a crucial part in shaping the personality and attitudes of the man who was to become the first President of a democratic South Africa. Many fellow prisoners and warders influenced him, and he, in turn, influenced them. While he was in jail his mother and son died, his wife was banned and subjected to continual arrest and harassment, and the liberation movement was reduced to isolated groups of activists.

In March 1982, after 18 years, he was suddenly transferred to Pollsmoor Prison in Cape Town (with Sisulu, Raymond Mhlaba and Andrew Mlangeni), and in December 1988 he was moved to the Victor Verster Prison near Paarl, from where he was eventually released. While in prison, Mandela flatly rejected offers made by his jailers for remission of sentence in exchange for accepting the bantustan policy by recognising the independence of the Transkei and agreeing to settle there. In the 80s, Mandela and others again rejected an offer of release, on condition that he renounce violence. Prisoners cannot enter into contracts – only free men can negotiate, he said.

Nevertheless, Mandela did initiate talks with the apartheid regime in 1985, when he wrote to Minister of Justice Kobie Coetsee. They first met later that year when Man-



delo was hospitalised for prostate surgery. Shortly after this he was moved to a single cell at Pollsmoor, and this gave Mandela the chance to start a dialogue with the government – which took the form of 'talks about talks'. Throughout this process, he was adamant that negotiations could only be carried out by the full ANC leadership. In time, a secret channel of communication would be set up whereby he could get messages to the ANC in Lusaka, but at the beginning he said: "I chose to tell no-one what I was about to do. There are times when a leader must move out

ahead of the flock, go off in a new direction, confident that he is leading his people in the right direction."

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.

Negotiating peace



For 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 27 April 1994, when Nelson Mandela voted for the first time in his life – along with the rest of the nation. 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.

Rolihlahla Nelson Dalibunga Mandela was inaugurated as President of a democratic South Africa on 10 May 1994. In his inauguration speech he said: "We dedicate this day to all the heroes and heroines in this country and the rest of the world who sacrificed in many ways, and surrendered their lives so that

we could be free. Their dreams have become reality. Freedom is their reward. We are both humbled and elevated by the honour and privilege that you, the people of South Africa, have bestowed on us, as the first President of a united, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist government.

"We understand it still that there is no easy road to freedom. We know it well that none of us acting alone can achieve success. We must therefore act together as a united people, for national reconciliation, for nation building, for the birth of a new world. Let there be justice for all. Let there be peace for all. Let there be work, bread, water and salt for all. Let each know that for each, the body, the mind and the soul have been freed to fulfil themselves. Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another and suffer the indignity of being the skunk of the world. Let freedom reign."

Timeless legacy



Mandela stepped down in 1999 after one term as President. He set up three foundations bearing his name: The Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory, The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund and The Mandela-Rhodes Foundation. Until the early 2000s his schedule has been relentless. But during this period he has had the love and support of his large family – including his wife, Graça Machel, whom he married on his 80th birthday in 1998.

Mandela never wavered in his devotion to democracy, equality and learning. Despite terrible provocation, he has never answered racism with racism.

His life has been an inspiration, in South Africa and throughout the world, to all who are oppressed and deprived, and to all who are opposed to oppression and deprivation.

Hamba kahle, Madiba