



Indian Diaspora Council International

Shared heritage, aspirations and interests

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Press Statement

IDC Mourns the Passing of Winnie –Madikizela-Mandela, South African Anti-Apartheid Crusader

The **Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC)** joins in solidarity with organizations, institutions, agencies, advocacy groups and individuals in South Africa and other countries in mourning the passing of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela who passed away on 2nd April 2018 at the age of 81 years. Mrs. Madikizela-Mandela, born on 26 September 1936, was a renowned South African anti-apartheid crusader and politician, the former wife of South Africa's late president Nelson Mandela, who passed away at the age of 81 on 2nd April 2018. She was born on 26 September 1936.

She served as a Member of Parliament from 1994 until her death, and was a deputy minister from 1994 to 1996. A member of the African National Congress (ANC) political party, she served on the ANC's National Executive Committee and headed its Women's League. Mrs. Madikizela-Mandela was known to her supporters as the "**Mother of the Nation**".

She was married to Nelson Mandela for 38 years, including the 27 years he was imprisoned (18 of those years on Robben Island near Cape Town, South Africa). "She kept the memory of her imprisoned husband Nelson Mandela alive during his years on Robben Island and helped give the struggle for justice in South Africa one of its most recognizable faces," the statement said. The couple were divorced in 1996, two years after Nelson Mandela became South Africa's first black President. They had two daughters together. Nelson Mandela died in 2013.

The family said in a statement that she passed away at the Netcare Milpark Hospital in Johannesburg, South Africa after a long illness, for which she had been in and out of hospital since the start of the year. "Mrs. Madikizela-Mandela was one of the greatest icons of the struggle against apartheid," the statement said. "She fought valiantly against the apartheid state and sacrificed her life for the freedom of the country."

"During the crucial time while Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for 27 years, the people of South Africa desperately needed a strong, iconic and unwavering voice to keep the anti-apartheid struggle going forward, and Mrs. Madikizela-Mandela met that challenge with skill and perseverance which vastly contributed to end of apartheid in South Africa" - *Farook Khan (IDC Coordinator, South Africa)*.

"She inspired women everywhere with her undaunted determination and courage to stand up and fight for what is right despite seemingly insurmountable obstacles, to right the wrongs of society, to achieve fundamental human rights and equitable treatment. We owe Mrs. Madikizela-Mandela a lifelong debt of gratitude" - *Rita Abraham (South Africa), Chair of IDC's Women's Forum*.

"Very few have achieved what Mrs. Madikizela-Mandela has for the betterment of South Africa, contributing enormously to ending an unjust system which was forcibly inflicted upon the majority" - *Ashook Ramsaran, President, IDC International*

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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.