

**INVITATION TO THE CENTENARY
CELEBRATION**

O.R. TAMBO
1917-2017



IN HIS FOOTSTEPS ...
PASSION. PATRIOTISM. INTEGRITY. HUMILITY

OLIVER TAMBO
100
years
1917-2017
FOR THE BETTER SOUTH OF A RAINBOW
 **O.R. TAMBO**
FOUNDATION

The Life of OR Tambo

President Oliver Reginald Kaizana Tambo (O.R.) was born in the village of Kantolo, Bizana, on 27 October 1917. President Tambo graduated with a B.Sc. degree in Mathematics and Physics in Fort Hare and he further enrolled for a Diploma in Higher Education. On 24 July 1951, President Tambo qualified as an Attorney. In the early 1940s, President Tambo joined the African National Congress (ANC), founded in 1912. In 1957 President Tambo was elected Deputy President of the ANC.

Subsequent to the Sharpeville Massacre, on 21 March 1960, (a day which is today commemorated as a national human rights day in South Africa) President Tambo embarked on a Mission in Exile in order to gain international support for the South African liberation movement. During 1963 and 1964, President Tambo made a number of high profile speeches to present the ANC to the world, the most prominent being one made to the UN in October 1963. This speech inspired the UN Resolution 18 of 11 October 1963 which called on the oppressive South African government to release all political prisoners.

As a President of the ANC, he mobilized the international community to support South Africa to fight against apartheid and he was at the forefront in establishing ANC offices in different countries. He engineered one of the most sophisticated liberation struggles that saw a co-ordinated expression of the mass movement, underground units, armed struggle and international solidarity. For many decades, he was in the forefront in providing leadership for both the external and internal structures of the liberation movement against apartheid oppression and repression. President OR Tambo is respected throughout the world as an embodiment of the highest values of selfless dedication to humanity and struggle for self-determination of oppressed peoples the world over, of patriotism, integrity, passion and humility.

He is recognized as an eminent leader who succeeded in mobilizing his people and the international community against the heinous system of Apartheid in South Africa, declared as "a crime against humanity" by the United Nations. O.R. Tambo was an outstanding internationalist, an outstanding premier diplomat, recognizing that the struggle for freedom in South Africa was inextricably bound to the struggles for freedom, peace and prosperity right across the world, thus his unwavering commitment to the struggle for the eradication of dehumanizing poverty, underdevelopment, and towards equality, justice, freedom, prosperity and human rights for all. It is therefore against this backdrop that the South African Embassy in Brussels is organizing the O.R. Tambo Centenary Public Discussion under the Theme: "Commemoration of a life of a great and selfless leader, a visionary, a patriot, a great freedom fighter and a premier diplomat", to be held on 27 April 2017, at the ACP house from 10am to 12am.



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The South African Embassy to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Mission to the European Union wishes to invite you to

The O.R Tambo Centenary Public Discussion

Theme: Commemoration of a life of a great and selfless leader, a visionary, a patriot and a great freedom fighter

Date

Thursday, 27 April 2017

Time

10:00 – 12:00

Venue

ACP House: Georges Henri 451, 1200 Bruxelles, Belgium

SPEAKERS

- **Ms. Hélène Passtoors** – Recipient of the South African National Order of the Companions of OR Tambo
- **Ambassador Welile Nhlapho** – Senior Advisor to ACCORD

RSVP BY MONDAY, 24 APRIL 2017

Please rsvp on: VanhendenL@dirco.gov.za

About the Speakers

- **Ms. Hélène Passtoors**

Ms. Hélène Passtoors, a Belgian national was born in the Netherlands (from a Belgian-Dutch family) on 9 August 1942. She immersed herself in the struggles of people other than her own for the cause of peace, freedom equality and justice. Ms. Passtoors lived in Mozambique and taught at the Eduardo Mondlane University when she was recruited into Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), special operations, by the late Joe Slovo in 1981. Between 1981 and 1985, she participated in highly secretive special operations under the immediate command of Joe Slovo, with Oliver Tambo as the Commander of Special Operations. In June 1985, she was arrested and kept for eight months in solitary confinement in John Vorster Square, where she was severely tortured and poisoned during the interrogations, to the point where she became epileptic. In May 1986, she was convicted of treason and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. In 1989, she was released, following negotiations between the Belgian and South African Governments. The Belgian Government stood by her during her imprisonment and even assisted her to communicate with her children during her incarceration. On 27 April 2011, the State President, Jacob G Zuma honoured Ms. Hélène Passtoors with the Order of the Companions of OR Tambo for her contribution to the underground work of MK and her spirit of internationalism and friendship she showed for the people of South Africa.

- **Ambassador Welile Nhlapo**

Ambassador Welile Nhlapo began his activities as a student in the Black Consciousness Movement, but by 1973, a banning order was issued against him. He went into exile in Botswana in 1974, and became Deputy Editor of the ANC publication *Sechaba*, and Head of the ANC Youth Section. Ambassador Nhlapo later became the ANC Chief Representative in Botswana, and Head of the Political Section in the ANC Secretary-General's office. He joined the Department of Foreign Affairs in 1994, and was part of the South African Government delegation to the United Nations General Assembly later that year.

In 1995, he was appointed South African Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. In 1997, he was appointed Special Envoy to Burundi. He also served as non-resident Ambassador to Djibouti, Eritrea and Sudan. In 1998, he was appointed Deputy Director-General responsible for Africa in the Department of Foreign Affairs, and in 2001, was appointed Head of the Presidential Support Unit. Ambassador Nhlapo was appointed deputy Head of Mission responsible for political affairs in the African Union Mission in Burundi. He later became the Head of the Political Section of the United Nations Mission there. Ambassador Nhlapo was a Director in the Department of Political Affairs (Africa Division 1) at the United Nation's Headquarters in New York. Welile Nhlapo has served as South Africa's Ambassador to the United States since August 14, 2007.

PROGRAMME

THE O.R.TAMBO CENTENARY PUBLIC DISCUSSION

ACP HOUSE, 27 APRIL 2017, 10H00-12H00

Moderator: *H.E. Ambassador Baso Sangqu, Ambassador of the Republic of South Africa to the Kingdom of Belgium, The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Mission to the European Union*

10h00-10h05: Welcome by a Representative of the Secretary General of the ACP

10h05-10h10: Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Teshome T. Chanaka, Chairperson of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors

10h10-10h40: Recollection of the life of Mr O.R. Tambo by Ms. Hélène Passtoors, Recipient of the South African National Order of the Companions of OR Tambo

10h40-11h10: Recollection of the life of Mr O.R. Tambo by Mr. Welile Nhlapo, Former South African Ambassador to the USA and Ethiopia, and now Senior Advisor to ACCORD

11h10-11h50: Discussion and Contributions from Participants

11h50-12h00: Closing Remarks by Ambassador B Sangqu