

12th December 2013

PROGRAM

**NELSON MANDELA REMEMBERED: TRIBUTE TO, AND CELEBRATION OF
MADIBA'S LIFE**

18 JULY 1918 – 5 DECEMBER 2013

KUALA LUMPUR CONVENTION CENTER (PLENARY THEATRE)

12 DECEMBER 2013

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| 13:30 – 13:50 | REGISTRATION & REFRESHMENTS |
| 13:50 – 14:00 | ARRIVAL OF VIP's |
| 14:00 – 14:10 | OPENING REMARKS: PROGRAM DIRECTOR |
| 14:20– 14:30 | OBITUARY |
| 14:30 –14:45 | SPEAKER 1: DR KRIBANANDAN G.N, CHAIRPERSON OF
THE MALAYSIA – SOUTH AFRICA BUSINESS COUNCIL
(MSABC) |
| 14:45 –15:00 | SPEAKER 2: HE GEBHARD KANDANGA, HIGH
COMMISSIONER OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA TO
MALAYSIA , DEAN OF THE AFRICA GROUP OF HEADS OF
MISSION, |
| 15:00 – 15:15 | SPEAKER 3: H.R.H PRINCESS SAMDECH REACH BOTREI
PREAH ANOCH NORODOM ARUNSAMY, AMBASSADOR OF
THE ROYAL EMBASSY OF CAMBODIA: DEAN OF THE
DIPLOMATIC CORPS |
| 15:15 – 15:30 | SPEAKER 4: H.E Ms Michelle Gyles-McDonnough, UNITED
NATIONS RESIDENT COORDINATOR |
| 15:30 – 15:45 | SPEAKER 5: REPRESENTATIVE FROM UMNO (TBC) |
| | SPEAKER 6: REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE GOVERNMENT
OF MALAYSIA (TBC) |
| 15:45 – 16:00 | CONCLUDING REMARKS: HIGH COMMISSIONER TD
MSELEKU |

SPEECH BY DR KRIBANANDAN GURUSAMY NAIDU

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

YOUR EXCELLANCY TAMI MSELEKU HIGH COMMISSIONER TO THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

YOUR EXCELLANCY GEBHARD KANDANGA, HIGH COMMISSIONER OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA TO MALAYSIA, DEAN OF THE AFRICA GROUP OF HEADS OF MISSION,

H.R.H PRINCESS SAMDECH REACH BOTREI PREAH ANOCH NORODOM ARUNSAMY, AMBASSADOR OF THE ROYAL EMBASSY OF CAMBODIA: DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS

H.E Ms Michelle Gyles-McDonnough, UNITED NATIONS RESIDENT COORDINATOR

REPRESENTATIVE FROM UMNO (TBC)

REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF MALAYSIA (TBC)

TAN SRI TAN SRI, DATUK DATUK AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

A great giant who strode the globe like a colossus has departed

A mind whose thoughts have opened the doors to a rainbow nation has ceased to function.

A heart whose dreams gave hope to South Africans and millions the world over has forever lost its beat.

The gentle voice whose measured words of reason shook not only his jailers but all of us in every nook and corner of this world, has been silenced.

Madiba lived because he had surrendered his very being to his people and to an ideal which which is timeless

He lived because his very being embodied love, an idea, a hope, an aspiration, a vision.

It is indeed a salutary Honour to be here to mourn and celebrate an incredible man and a unique life

Madiba visited Malaysia for the first time in 1997 and on the 8th March Launched the Malaysia South African Business Council with these words, and I quote

“In ancient times the peoples of South East Asia and Southern Africa were linked in trade. I will be able to say, that now that both our regions are free again, we have in this region peoples who are reaching out to work with us in making a reality of our ‘shared vision of a better life’”

I did not get to meet him and this was the second time that I missed Madiba in person. I was working at the time in KL for an international consultancy and as luck would have it I had to attend an important project meeting in the middle-east at the same time. It was something I regret to this day. There was another occasion when I missed him and I will come to that in a short while.

From first accounts of the people who met him in KL, everyone present was mesmerised by the man who was already a living legend.

Indeed the MSABC has been fortunate to have been able to share in Madiba’s vision by developing the business links between our 2 peoples and in a small way having contributed to this ‘shared Vision of a better life’.

Madiba and his team of able men and women laid the bedrock on which South Africa would emerge as a significant democracy, economy and business partner. The open economic modal adopted by the new Nation would see SA grow by unprecedented levels. Malaysian businesses were among the pioneers who took advantage of these developments. With the recent very high level links between the 2 countries we are confident that we will continue to engage and deepen the bonds between the 2 peoples and forge a lasting partnership which Madiba so wanted for our 2 societies.

But what a week it has been, the accolades and celebrations have been unprecedented. The amazing outpouring of condolences and messages from within South Africa and the world over that we have seen in the last week, everyone agrees is un-paralleled in our planet’s history. One thing is patently clear Madiba has touched not only the life’s of those immediately and physically close to him but so many of us at distant corners of the globe and I am certainly no exception.

My first connection with South Africa and Nelson Mandela was when I left these shores to the United Kingdom for my studies in the late 70s. I went to Cardiff in Wales to study engineering and there quickly became engulfed in the very active and dynamic Welsh Anti-Apartheid Movement. My awakening as an individual had begun. If my late Parents and immediate family had known that I was spending all my time learning about the struggles in a far of land and immersing myself in Mandela life story they would have been shocked. We heard about the atrocities of Apartheid and were reminded of the ruthlessness and bankruptcy of white minority rule. The Soweto Massacres of 1976 and the untimely death of Steve Biko were fresh in our minds. It was a time when we learnt about the 1964 Riviona Trials and the incarceration of the Mandela and his co- conspirators for freedom and the ideals which they stood for. There was turning back for me and I had become part of the Anti-Apartheid Dream for a free South Africa.

I left Cardiff 3 years later and went to Aberdeen in Scotland one of the Northern most cities in Scotland. There with a group of likeminded individuals we set up the Aberdeen Anti-Apartheid Movement. Within 2 years ie on 29th November 1984 after a vigorous campaign and against a formidable opposition from right wing conservatives, we were able to secure the 2/3 majority required at a crucial local council meeting to obtain the freedom of Aberdeen City for Nelson and Winnie Mandela, the highest honour which can be bestowed on any individual by a City in Scotland. It was the first time that a husband and wife team were to be bestowed this accolade since the first Free Burgess was announced in 1833.

Incidentally next year it will be 30 years since this award by Aberdeen City and the legacy of 1984 continues

The Aberdeen council's Town House flag is flying at half mast until after Mr Mandela's funeral on Sunday.

It has also been announced that a major celebration of Nelson Mandela's life could take place in Aberdeen next year.

The Lord Provost George Adam said he wanted Aberdeen's tribute to be fitting.

He told BBC Scotland: "*I am sure we will be doing something to remember the legacy of Nelson Mandela, it's reflecting our internationalism as a city, and what he did as a man.*"

The event is likely to be held on Nelson Mandela Day on 18 July 2014 in Aberdeen.

I left Aberdeen for London in 1986 for work and became intimately involved with the AAM in London. On 11 June 1988, the British Anti-Apartheid Movement (BAAM) held an 11-hour rock concert at Wembley Stadium in London to pay tribute to Nelson Mandela on his 70th birthday on 18 July. I was part of the organising committee and the event was an unprecedented show of support not only to Nelson Mandela but to the Struggling masses within South Africa.

Peter Gabriel delivered his anti-apartheid anthem called Biko.

Whitney Houston, Phil Collins, Miriam Makeba, Hugh Masekela, Simple Minds, Eurythmics and Dire Straits also performed. 72,000 people went to the concert and it was broadcast live on BBC to sixty different countries with an estimated audience of a billion people.

The performers and celebrities had called for the release of Mandela from prison. That event was widely praised for putting international pressure on the South African government like no other.

Mandela had become a household name and the isolation of Apartheid South Africa as a Pariah nation had been achieved with bang.

Little did we know that Mandela was already winning over his jailers in Robben Island and that he would walk out of the Apartheid Jail free within 2 years.

Buoyed by the release of Mandela in Feb 1990, the British Anti-Apartheid Movement aimed to put further pressure on the South African regime with a second concert.

On April 16, 1990— just two months after Nelson Mandela's release from prison, where he had spent the past 27 years — he made an appearance at the International Tribute for a Free South Africa charity concert at London's Wembley Stadium. Musical guests at the event included Lou Reed, Anita Baker, Chrissie Hynde, Tracy Chapman, Bonnie Raitt, Natalie Cole, Neil Young and Peter Gabriel, but the person who brought the house down was Madiba himself. The applause was so great and continuous that it took father Trevor Huddleston, the Master of Ceremonies, several minutes to silence the crowd so that Mandela could address them

Appearing onstage and speaking in front of a crowd of 72,000 — not including the millions around the world who watched the televised broadcast — Mandela addressed his supporters saying, "Thank you that you chose to care," and urging them to continue the fight against apartheid. He ended his speech by saying

"We admire you "

"We love you"

To a rapturous crowd which could not stop cheering.

During the five-and-a-half-hour concert, myriad acts took to the stage to honor and support Mandela, and to champion the end of apartheid. Just four years later, not only would apartheid be dismantled but Mandela would become the first black president of South Africa

The Tribute concert was in fact the first time I missed meeting with Mandela. My wife Rekha and I were part of the welcoming committee organising the International Tribute. Unfortunately for me I had accepted a job offer in Botswana some months earlier well before I knew about Mandela's visit and had to leave for Southern Africa just before the amazing concert. My wife stayed back and met with him and I know she will cherish that meeting, that fleeting moment in her life, forever.

My only solace was that being in Gaborone I was able to in the next 3 years become part of a movement for change in South Africa, at very close quarters.

Madiba his socialist instincts combined with liberal ones, his old-fashioned manners and family values the product of his Methodist missionary schooling and African chieftom roots and his absolute commitment to civil liberties are all an integral part of this all-encompassing man we salute today.

At Oliver Tambo's Obituary Mandela offered a deep and meaningful eulogy to his great friend and comrade. I would like to borrow from that moving speech as the very same values he movingly shared about Oliver so apply to Madiba

Let all who value peace say together - long live Madiba!
Let all who love freedom say together - long live Madiba!
Let all who uphold the dignity of all human beings say together - long live Madiba!
Let all who stand for friendship among the peoples say together - long live Madiba!
Let all of us who live, say that while we live, Madiba will not die!
May he, for his part, rest in peace.

I AM COMFORTED IN THE NOTION THAT MADIBA CAN NEVER DIE BECAUSE THE IDEALS WHICH HE SACRIFICED HIS LIFE FOR CAN NEVER DIE

In this eulogy to Walter Sisulu his long time friend and comrade he had this to say, and I quote

"I a sense I feel cheated by Walter. If there be another life beyond this physical world, I would have loved to be there first so that I would welcome him". Such were his bond with Walter. Well Madiba yes indeed if there is life beyond this world, you must be the most enriched person right now as you would have been received by your great friends Walter Sisulu and Oliver Tambo.

I would like in my last few minutes to reflect on Obama words when he attended Mandela's memorial in Soweto just 2 days ago.

Obama called out to those who claim to "embrace" Madiba's legacy of racial reconciliation, "but passionately resist even modest reforms". He said: "There are too many leaders who claim solidarity with Madiba's struggle for freedom, but do not tolerate dissent from their own people. And there are too many of us who stand on the side lines, comfortable in complacency or cynicism when our voices must be heard." We need to reflect on our own societies Non racialism is an ideal Madiba stood for and if we are to keep his memory alive we need to learn from his vision for a better society and look at practical ways to achieve this in our lifetimes. We in Malaysia have many lessons to learn from our great inspiration Madiba and his ideals.

Well what a fitting end to an amazing life.

Till we meet again, Hamba Kahle, Madiba. Qhawe la ma Qhawe! (Go well, Rest in Peace, Madiba. Hero among heroes.)

I thank you

Dr Kribanandan Gurusamy Naidu

Chair MSABC, Dec 2012