



MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCES BY THE SADC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY DR. STERGOMENA LAWRENCE TAX TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA AND TO THE MANDELA FAMILY ON THE PASSING AWAY OF NELSON MANDELA

"During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. 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." These words and many other statements of wisdom by President Nelson Mandela served as inspiration for the people of South Africa, the SADC region, and the international community to strive for freedom, peace, equality and human dignity.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has received with profound sadness and deep grief the sad news of the passing away of H.E. Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, former President of the Republic of South Africa on December 5, 2013. On behalf of SADC, and on my behalf, I wish to convey our heartfelt and deepest condolences to you, and through you, to the Government and people of South Africa and to the Mandela family.

Indeed the Government and people of South Africa, the SADC Region, the African continent, and the international community at large have lost an iconic true servant of the peoples.

For decades, President Mandela provided South Africa and the SADC Region with hope, inspiration and impeccable leadership in the struggle against apartheid, colonialism, exploitation; and his achievement of reconciliation. To millions of people, he was more than just a man. He was a symbol of the struggle for freedom, justice, equality, and dignity not only in South Africa but throughout the world. His selfless sacrifice inspired freedom loving people in all corners of the world to relentlessly fight for justice, freedom and human progress. He leaves us with a legacy and great vision to attain greater wellbeing for the people of our region.

At this time of bereavement, we in SADC wish Your Excellency, the Government, and people of South Africa and the Mandela family strength and good health.

May his legacy live on, and may his soul rest in eternal peace. Amen.

December 6, 2013