

# OR TAMBO. CENTENARY

## NEWSLETTER



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**H**undred years ago beyond the Engeli Mountains, a gentle colossus of our Struggle, Oliver Reginald Kaizana Tambo, was born. A cattle herder who became a teacher, lawyer and President of the African National Congress (ANC), OR Tambo espoused the values of human dignity, solidarity and freedom for the oppressed.

Tambo's involvement and commitment to the Struggle became clearer when he became Secretary-General in 1954 and Deputy President of the ANC in 1957. In 1960, following the Sharpeville Massacre, and an earlier ban by the apartheid government, he left the country on a primary mission to seek international support and solidarity for the South

African liberation movement. He was President of the ANC from 1967 to 1991.

In the three decades that followed, Tambo rallied the global community against the apartheid state and spearheaded international sanctions to bring about change. With other leaders incarcerated in Robben Island while others were scattered all over the world, he became the embodiment of values and ethos of our revolution. Tambo was the glue that held our movement together for over 30 years and effectively maintained cohesion within the movement at the most difficult of times.

He exuded immense dignity, discipline and compassion. For us as young girls and women fighters, he was a father figure and pillar

### A CENTENARY OF OLIVER REGINALD TAMBO MINISTER'S FOREWORD



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**OR TAMBO.  
100 YEARS**



of strength; we were his flowers of the revolution. Tambo was an exemplary and practical leader who was prepared to share the hardship with his soldiers.

As we continue the journey of building our democratic state, let us remember and appreciate how privileged we are to enjoy the fruits of freedom that OR Tambo and countless others laboured for, and did not have the opportunity to

experience and enjoy. We commemorate and celebrate his legacy with confidence that his overarching presence and spirit of a teacher, fighter, reconciler, diplomat and unifier continues to guide us from beyond.



This year, 2017, OR Tambo would have turned 100 years old and thus President Jacob Zuma declared 2017 as the Centenary of OR Tambo. To drive the celebrations, an Inter-Ministerial Committee on the OR Tambo Centenary was established and has been working with various national, provincial and local government departments in the Eastern Cape and Gauteng. These celebrations will include reflective events, public lectures, seminars and the completion of a wall of remembrance and reconciliation garden at Mbizana in the Eastern Cape.

We invite you to follow these stories in this monthly electronic newsletter. Through this platform we will share with you some of the exciting events which have taken place and stories about this unsung hero of our people. We hope that young South Africans will enjoy and draw inspiration from reading these stories as they incorporate his values, ethos, dignity and his fortitude.

Thank you

**Ms Ayanda Dlodlo, MP**  
Minister of Communications





# TAMBO AND MANDELA IN CONVERSATION – KEY LESSONS FOR THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES OF OUR TIMES

By Phumla Williams

A common quality of both Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo was the ability to bring together all generations to identify with each other and work in unity towards a common goal.

These were the words of African National Congress (ANC) and Struggle veteran Mac Maharaj, as he reflected on the leadership legacy of Tambo, the longest-serving ANC President. Maharaj, alongside diplomat and politician Lindiwe Mabuza as well as historian and author Luli Callinicos, engaged in a dialogue titled: Tambo and Mandela In Conversation. Despite the unrelenting winter's night, people came in their numbers to tap once more into the fountains of wisdom as embodied by Tambo and Mandela.

On the night, Maharaj offered a profound recollection of these leaders while also warning the audience against what he called the “syndrome of the great leader.” He emphasised that successful leadership not only depends on the individual leader, but also on the ‘collective’ followers that also take responsibility, both in its errors and successes. At a time when society is grappling with fundamental leadership challenges, Maharaj reminded us that a key solution was to “stop consulting in the middle of doing things.”

His call to action or what Maharaj described as “action vested with vision,” echoed the style of leadership of both Tambo and Madiba, who believed not only in action, but crucially, also in diversity in action. Maharaj stated that when

looking at the tradition of leadership, it is impossible to not look at Tambo, who was resilient, Mandela, who was resourceful and Walter Sisulu, the strategist amongst the three leaders, because in leadership, they were inseparable.

I was privileged to spend time with Tambo while I was in exile. As a result I was able to experience first-hand, his convincing and credible leadership style, which was underpinned by an unflinching commitment to humanity and high ethical standards. The panellists fondly and nostalgically remembered Tambo undoubtedly as one of our country's greatest leaders; a visionary, a patriot, an internationalist and a great freedom fighter who led his people to freedom.

This dialogue is part of a year-long programme to celebrate the centenary of the birth of Tambo and it also marked the start of a range of activities planned for Mandela Month, which we celebrate in July – the birth month of Madiba. It is fitting that this year, when Tambo would have turned 100, that the South African Government together, with the Tambo family, the OR and Adelaide Tambo Foundation, and other



key stakeholders, will be honouring this great leader.

Government has planned an exciting year-long series of awareness creation and educational campaigns to celebrate and honour the life of Tambo. These initiatives are planned to take place across the length and breadth of the country in a build-up to the centenary celebration event that will take place on 27 October 2017. We expect visitors from far and near to descend upon South Africa to join us as we honour this giant of a leader.

In a fitting reminder, Maharaj pointed out that Tambo's time was up

and that ours “was coming.” This sense of continuation was an important hallmark of Tambo's leadership. The Struggle indeed continues. We dare never rest, until we have been able to attain freedom for all, regardless of race, class and gender.

Tambo's leadership style is one that transcended generations and races. If we allow ourselves to be guided by his principles and his vision for South Africa, we will be that much closer to fulfilling our task of knitting together a flourishing and cohesive, yet diverse, society.



# COMMUNITIES OF OR TAMBO DISTRICT RECEIVE FREE INTERNET

**D**eputy President Cyril Ramaphosa led a government delegation that provided the communities of King Sabata Dalindyebo (KSD) and Mhlontlo local municipalities in the OR Tambo District free Internet at an event held at Tyeni village on 7 July 2017.

The Deputy President was accompanied by the Premier of the Eastern Cape, Mr Phumulo Masualle, the Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services, Dr Siyabonga Cwele, Deputy Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services, Ms Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams, Executive Mayor of the OR Tambo District, Cllr Nomakhosazana Meth, Mayor of KSD Cllr Dumani Zozo and the Mayor of Mhlontlo Cllr Nompumelelo Dywili.

More than 300 schools and health facilities have been connected to the Internet in the two local municipalities through WiFi. Another 300 government facilities were expected to be connected by the end of July 2017. There are plans to connect the municipal offices and the Royal Traditional Council office.

“Access to the Internet is going to change the lives of these learners. This project is a development of great significance not only for the people of the Mhlontlo and KSD



local municipalities, but for the country as a whole. It marks a milestone in our effort to ensure access by all communities – both urban and rural – to broadband Internet and information technology. This is a priority for government because technology holds the key to economic freedom,” said Mr Ramaphosa.

He added that broadband provided opportunities to improve the provision of services to communities.

People in close proximity to the connected facilities get 300 megabytes of data per day on their devices.

“We don’t just want people to have access to the Internet. We want them

to use it for their development. We have facilitated the training of 15 companies and 60 young people to instal and maintain this network,” said Dr Cwele.

He added that Internet access would enable the connected government offices to deliver services to citizens faster and this would lead to a reduction of queues.

The government Internet service in Tsolo is delivered through a WiFi network that has average download speeds of 15 Megabits per second (Mbps). These speeds compare favourably to the government broadband policy called South

Africa Connect that targets minimum speeds of 10 Mbps. The speeds ensure the reliability of the Internet access and enhance the user experience through the instantaneous delivery of content on webpages, including video content.

This government Internet service is funded by the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa, which is an agency of the Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services.

Government has prioritised the roll-out of broadband or modern communications infrastructure and services as one of the levers that can be used to reignite the economy and facilitate shared and inclusive growth. The Internet gives people in rural areas similar access to digital information as those who live in urban areas and can be used to solve local challenges.

Mr Masualle said the Eastern Cape government had developed a strategy for the roll-out of broadband across the province.

“As we expand the reach of high-speed Internet to more and more everyday activities across the province in the months ahead, we are laying the groundwork for all-new ways for people to connect,” he said.

The Eastern Cape Department of Education has partnered with the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa to train teachers in basic Information and Communications Technology skills. The trained teachers will then train their peers who will then train learners.



## MINISTER RADEBE DELIVERS INAUGURAL OR TAMBO CENTENARY TALK

South Africa will this year celebrate the centenary of the birth of Oliver Reginald Tambo, who was born in the Nkantolo Village outside Mbizana in the Eastern Cape on 27 October 1917. Tambo is one of the key founding fathers of South Africa's liberation and constitutional democracy.

Minister in The Presidency responsible for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Mr Jeff Radebe, delivered a keynote address at the inaugural OR Tambo Centenary Talk hosted by the National Heritage Council at Freedom Park in Pretoria on 30 May 2017. He declared in his introduction that from the outset he accepted the invitation to speak at this august occasion with a bit of trepidation.

He outlined what it meant for him to reflect on the life and legacy of Tambo by stating that, "For me to speak of the late Oliver Tambo is to speak of a towering intellectual with unparalleled leadership virtues. He remains the crucible from which we seek inspiration and a figure that we must strive to emulate".

The Minister further emphasised that celebrating Tambo's memory was important because he remained one of the most outstanding leaders that this country had ever produced. He also mentioned that the purpose of celebrating exceptional leaders

like Tambo was not to wallow in the glory of our past, but to use the past as a means to inspire our future growth as a nation.

He also encouraged the celebration of excellence in leadership as a means of recognising the positive contribution that outstanding leaders made in our society and then called on the preservation of stories of leaders like Tambo for posterity. He asserted, "We have the duty to preserve our heritage so that future generations would understand the significance of the sacrifices that were made for us to be where we are today".

The Minister said there was no doubt that one of Tambo's most outstanding traits was that of a unifier. "The most fitting tribute that we can pay to him is to reinforce unity, social cohesion and nationhood amongst all South Africans. Let us uphold the values and the vision that Tambo stood for and cherished during his lifetime".

The centenary celebrations of the birth of Tambo are taking place under the theme "Life and Legacy of OR Tambo" and are expected to run until December 2017. The celebrations will be used to draw lessons from his life and understand the qualities that made him succeed as a leader.





## NHC HOSTS OR TAMBO CENTENARY TALK



The National Heritage Council of South Africa, an agency of the Department of Arts and Culture, partnered with the Freedom Park, South African Maritime Safety Authority and Oliver and Adelaide Tambo Foundation to host the OR Tambo Centenary Talk, themed “Celebrating the Life and Legacy of OR” at Freedom Park in Pretoria on 30 May 2017.

The talk comprised panellists whom Tambo led and pondered about the great leadership qualities that he embodied during the apartheid regime. Retired Judge Albie Sachs; Aventura Liberation Vessel veteran Commissar Tlou Cholo; Retired South African High Commissioner to Mozambique, Ms Thandi Lujabe-Rankoe and former

Minister in The Presidency, Dr Essop Pahad. The panel described OR Tambo as one of the greatest leaders ever produced from the South African soil.

Minister in The Presidency responsible for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Mr Jeff Radebe, delivered a keynote address and said that with this year declared the Year of OR Tambo, the best way to preserve his legacy would be to realise the freedom fighter’s dream to liberate South Africans economically; freed from poverty and inequality. He concluded by calling South Africans to work together to build a better South Africa.

The talk was attended by more than 200 people including the broader public, school learners and South Africa’s liberation movements.

The panellists and the esteemed audience highlighted the country’s key socio-economic issues. Retired Judge Sachs called upon the youth to take part in politics and understand the clauses in the Constitution, and be brave in order to be able to carry on the legacy that stalwarts have left. Commissar Cholo recalled OR Tambo as a brave political and military strategist when they were trying to smuggle Umkhonto we Sizwe operatives into South Africa, in an effort to liberate the people of this country.

Ms Lujabe-Rankoe reiterated that Tambo believed in women leadership during the Struggle, and justified the reason why there was tremendous development in socio-economic issues during the 1950s and 1960s. Dr Pahad said the ruling party founded by stalwarts like OR and Nelson Mandela, needed to be regenerated so that it could go back to its founding values.

More of the Oliver Tambo Centenary Talks will be announced in future. A full video can be viewed on [www.nhc.org.za](http://www.nhc.org.za)





# A CONCEPT PAPER ON THE CREATION OF A HERITAGE SITE NAMED AFTER OLIVER REGINALD TAMBO IN LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

By Ms Sikose N. Mji, South African High Commissioner, Lusaka, Zambia – 18 January 2016



## WHY OLIVER TAMBO

1. The South African “Moses” who showed his people and guided them to the promised land which he was able to only glimpse at from a distance resulting in OR Tambo receiving less media attention than his peers who later held government positions in the new democratic South Africa.
2. His strategy carefully crafted to extol the name of Nelson Mandela as a link of the African National Congress’s (ANC) exile struggle with the ANC’s internal struggle for over 27 years as a symbol of the fight against apartheid

paid gradual but enormous dividends, as did his ability to gracefully re-acknowledge Mandela as the people’s leader when the latter was released from prison. The result was that no power struggle for leadership ensued within the ANC during the transition to democracy.

3. OR had a team of leaders with whom he worked in the 40 years he spent in exile, some of whom died and were buried on foreign lands, including Zambia.
4. His international diplomacy for the liberation of South Africa traversed the entire world stage at a time when many African countries were still colonised. Through his leadership, the ANC managed to forge the status of a government-in-waiting and therefore Observer Status at the United Nations (UN), including the creation of the UN Committee Against Apartheid.
5. As a devout Christian, Tambo managed to convince both the Communist and the Western World of the moral high ground on which the struggle against apartheid stood.
6. His dedication to education resulted in the education of many South African freedom fighters through scholarships offered as a result of his efforts in the East and the West.
7. He managed to steer the ANC’s liberation ideology squarely and firstly against apartheid while soliciting help for the anti-apartheid struggle from sworn enemies.
8. The ANC was the only liberation movement that created a Cultural Ensemble group named “Amandla” that became a catalyst for African governments in particular, to support the ANC as the authentic leader of the people of South Africa.
9. OR laid the foundations for the current South African diplomacy, particularly in the multilateral arena.
10. Had OR been alive he would be celebrating his 100th

birthday in October 2017; an opportune time to mark his remembrance through this proposed project.

## WHY LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

A house that was formally assigned to OR by the Zambian Government exists that can be declared a memorial site at Chelston, code-named at the time “Phiri”. The house of the first Zambian President, Dr KK Kaunda, at Chilenje, Lusaka where Dr Kaunda [popularly called KK] lived while he was involved in the fight for Zambia’s independence, has already been declared a memorial site. South Africans who were in exile and others, today visit Lusaka and want to visit this house because of their desire to understand Zambian history as it has and continues to impact on South African history and bilateral relations. Once OR’s house has been declared a heritage site and prepared as such, it will add to KK’s as well as to others in the pipeline such as that of Robert Mugabe, Joshua Nkomo and others, thus making Zambian tourism an attraction for liberation tourism. This should impact positively on the people-to-people relations as well as the bilateral relations between the two countries.

- a. The house can be used as a resource centre depicting the history of the ANC and that of apartheid during the time when the ANC was headquartered in Lusaka.
- b. It can serve as a starting point for those also wishing to visit the graveyards where more than 400 South Africans who died in Lusaka during their exile are buried and thus help them to find closure.
- c. Many South Africans were born in Zambia at the University Teaching Hospital during that time and are now looking for their origins in Lusaka in particular. Many other South Africans studied at the University of Zambia during the exile days and are therefore products of this



first Zambian university, which this year celebrates its 50 years of existence.

- d. Zambia and Lusaka in particular, was the home of at least five Southern African liberation movements whose history is intertwined with the Zambian people's history, which has not yet been told fully and is likely to be lost if not documented while many of the role players are still alive.
- e. Both communist and capitalist countries were involved in the support or rejection of the struggle against apartheid for reasons that should be explained in order for the current generation to learn from history.
- f. Tambo carved a new terrain as a diplomat that was stateless and in the process influenced the diplomacy of many liberation movements and set the foundation for a new democratic South African diplomacy.

Tambo became the ANC president by default rather than by design. When the ANC was banned together with other political parties following the brutal Sharpeville massacre of 67 peaceful demonstrators, he was instructed to leave South Africa in order to defeat the intention of the apartheid regime to obliterate the name of the ANC. It is thanks to the committed, dedicated and focused leadership of the ANC's activities on foreign soil and foreign lands by OR and his team that the ANC survived the death sentence that the apartheid regime had imposed on it.

He opened ANC offices in many countries while simultaneously creating anti-apartheid movements and chose to always direct that leadership from as close to South Africa as possible from 1960 to 1993, when he succumbed to his death after suffering a stroke. Out of the nearly 40 years that Tambo spent in exile, 20 were spent in Zambia where the ANC leadership created the headquarters of the liberation movement of the people of South Africa. Zambia and Lusaka in particular, deserves a permanent place in the commemoration and celebration of South Africa's liberation as well as that of the liberation of Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola. The headquarters of the Organisation

of African Unity Liberation Committee was also based in Lusaka for a while.

The High Commission is fortunate to be embarking on this heritage project with the help and keen interest of the Zambian Government through its Heritage Council and President Edgar Lungu's vision that was expressed in his first National Assembly Speech on Friday, 18 September 2015, when he said, "The decision for this government to use tourism, the arts, culture and heritage as one of the vehicles for local economic development and job creation, is a bold and progressive one. This decision is in addition to building on our arts, culture and heritage foundation for a solid national brand and image that also underscores and embraces our heritage and culture of peace and unity."

The South African Government, through the Department of Home Affairs, has in January 2016 hailed the contribution of tourism to the national coffers despite the slowdown in the South African economy and maybe, because of it. This is an example of how Zambia can also cushion itself against the falling global prices of copper, through Heritage Tourism, thus diversifying its economy.

In the same vein that Oliver Tambo in agreement with his team of leaders chose Nelson Mandela to symbolise the South African liberation struggle, his name should be kept alive as a lasting memory to the long Struggle against the vicious apartheid system through the Zambian Government assigned house during the Struggle, symbolising the indomitable fighting spirit of the South African people and the true African hospitality of the Zambian people that endures to this day.

As Tambo would never extol himself as the sole leader, his South African colleagues who lived and died in Zambia, should also be included in the heritage memorial site, in one way or the other. Mr Johny Mfanafuthi Makhathini and Mr Duma Nokwe together with Mme Florence Maphosho and Masiperepere are some of those leaders. While therefore the focus of the heritage site will be the former residence of Tambo and his successful liberation struggle diplomacy,

the ANC leaders who worked with him in those years will be remembered in the narrative that will be looking into OR's influence and leadership.

#### MOTIVATION FOR A DOCUMENTARY

- Some books have been written about Tambo and a few snippets of him in action at international events such as the UN and anti-apartheid protests and so forth. There is at least in Zambia wherein he lived for at least 20 years no record of his work and time spent for the obvious reason that OR and his colleagues were living in perpetual fear of the South African Defence Force (SADF) raids that became frequent in the 1980s, aimed especially at the assassination of ANC leaders. Tambo and Chris Hani were known to be the most wanted.
- Once the house that was assigned to OR has been declared by the Heritage Council of Zambia as a heritage site and the High Commission has prepared it as such, it will house documentaries of the anti-apartheid struggle that visitors will view and listen to.
- In view of the South African Government's gratitude to all those countries that hosted and assisted the anti-apartheid struggle in one way or the other, interviews that will target Zambians who knew OR and other ANC leaders and members who lived in Zambia will help bring about better and enhanced understanding of the era as well as the nature of the Struggle.
- From the documentary which will depict primary sources, a lot of other interesting information will be generated for both South African and Zambian history.
- Zambia, having hosted almost all Southern African liberation movements and suffered because of the SADF raids as well as the destruction of its economic infrastructure, will be able to enhance its tourism status as that of the home of SADC liberation movements and therefore benefit from its past in rebuilding itself.







OR Tambo's residence while in exile in Lusaka. The house was nicknamed "Phiri".



International Relations and Cooperation Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane and Mr Vincent Mwale, Minister of Local Government of the Republic of Zambia visit the OR Tambo house as part the Africa Regional Heads of Mission Conference held in Lusaka, Zambia on 15-17 May 2017.





# UPCOMING EVENTS

## 1 – 30 August: Women’s Month

On 9 August 2017, South Africa will be celebrating Women’s Day under the theme “The Year of OR Tambo: Women United In Moving South Africa Forward”. The theme was inspired by the President Jacob Zuma’s declaration of 2017 as the ‘Year of OR Tambo’ as the country will be celebrating his centenary year in October this year. During Women’s Month, government would acknowledge Tambo’s contribution towards women empowerment and gender equality. The OR Tambo pre-centenary celebrations in August will be carried out under the sub-theme “OR Tambo and the Emancipation of Women”. Be part of the conversation on different social media platforms using the #Womensday and #Womensmonth hashtags.



## 9 – 20 August:

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation will be hosting the 37th SADC Ordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government in Pretoria.

## 10 August:

The Tambo Foundation together with the Thabo Mbeki Foundation will be having a lecture on “Celebrating Women and OR Tambo championing women’s rights - Young & Older women in conversation” at Webber Wentzel in Johannesburg.

## 24 August:

OR Tambo Centenary Lecture – Albie Sachs, University of Stellenbosch.

## CONTACT US

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## Did you know?



## July OR Tambo Quotes

