



## About Nelson Mandela

Nelson Mandela was born at Qunu, near Umtata on 18 July 1918. His father, was chief councillor to Thembuland's acting chief David Dalindyebo. When his father died, Mandela and was groomed for becoming chief of his local tribe. However Mandela would never be able to make this commitment. Whilst at university Nelson Mandela became increasingly aware of the unjust nature of South African Society. The majority of Black South Africans had little opportunities either Economic or Political. Much to the disappointment of his family, Mandela became involved in politics, and along with his good friend and comrade Oliver Tambo was expelled from Fort Hare for organising a student strike. However Mandela was able to finish his degree and qualified as a Lawyer. In 1952 Mandela and Tambo opened the first Black Law firm in South Africa. The Transvaal Law Society tried to have it closed down, although this was blocked by the South African Supreme Court. In 1944 Mandela helped found the ANC Youth League, whose Programme of Action was adopted by the ANC in 1949. Mandela was instrumental in pushing the ANC into more direct action such as the 1952 Defiance Campaign and later acts of sabotage. By the late 50s the S.A.state had become increasingly repressive making it more difficult for the ANC to operate. Mandela had to resign from the ANC and work underground. In the late 50s (56 –61) there was an extremely lengthy "Treason Trial" in which Mandela and several others were charged with treason. Conducting their own defence they eventually proved to be victorious. Mandela noted in his autobiography the judiciary were one of the least repressive parts of the South African State and in theory sought to follow the rule of law. However in 1960 the Sharpeville massacre of 63 black South African's changed the whole political climate. South Africa was increasingly

isolated on the international scene and the government banned the ANC. This led Mandela to advocate armed struggle through the Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). However by 1962 Mandela had been arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment in the notorious Robben Island prison. Life at the prison was tough and uncompromising. However in his autobiography Mandela reveals how he sought to make the best use of his time there. He helped to keep other Men's spirits high and never compromised his political principles when offered earlt release. Towards the end of his prison spell his treatment improved as the South African establishment increasingly looked to negotiation, in the face of international isolation. Although negotiations were painfully slow and difficult, they eventually led to Mandela's release in 1990. It was an emotional moment watched by millions around the globe The next 4 years were also difficult as South African society suffered inter cultural violence between ANC and Inkarta supporters, in addition to slow progress on a new constitution. However on 10 May 1994 Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as the first democratically elected State President of South Africa on and was President until June 1999. As president, Mandela presided over the transition from minority rule and apartheid. His advocacy of reconciliation led to international acclaim and importantly the trust of the White African population. Despite the initial euphoria of winning the election the ANC faced a difficult challenge to improve the lives of the black population.



Nelson Mandela

## Achievement

In 1993 Nelson Mandela was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

## Quotes By: Nelson Mandela

1. "Let freedom reign. The sun never set on so glorious a human achievement."
2. "A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination."
3. "Only free men can negotiate. Prisoners cannot enter into contracts."
4. "Communists have always played an active role in the fight by colonial countries for their freedom, because the short-term objects of Communism would always correspond with the long-term objects of freedom movements."
5. "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."
6. "If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner."
7. "Let freedom reign. The sun never set on so glorious a human achievement."
8. "There is nothing like returning to a place that reminds unchanged to find the ways in which you yourself have altered."
9. "We owe it to all the peoples of the sub-continent to ensure that they see in us, not merely good leaders waxing lyrical about development, but as the front commanders in the blast furnaces of labour, productive investments and visible change."