

timeline

July 18, 1918 - Born in Eastern Cape, SA as Rolihlahla Mandela

1925 - Given the name "Nelson" in Primary school

1944 - Joins the ANC and creates the youth league

"I pay tribute to the endless heroism of youth, you the young lions."

1952 - Participates in the defiance campaign

"It was an effective way of getting the masses to function politically, a powerful method of voicing our indignation against the reactionary policies of the government."

1952 - Banned from political meetings

March 29, 1926 - Acquitted at treason trial

"Hardly anybody believed that we would be convicted."

March 21, 1960 - 60 blacks die at Sharpeville Massacre

"Out of the many Sharpevilles which haunt our history was born the unshakable determination that respect for human life, liberty and well-being must be enshrined as rights beyond the power of any force to diminish."

April 8, 1960 - ANC is banned

"The banning and confinement of leaders, banishment and deportations, imprisonment and even death, have never deterred South African compatriots."

December 16, 1961 - Mandela forms Umkhonto weSizwe

"It was only when all else had failed, when all channels of peaceful protest had been barred to us, that the decision was made to embark on violent forms of political struggle, and to form Umkhonto we Sizwe."

January 11, 1962 - Secretly leaves South Africa, received army training, and returns in 1962.

August 5, 1962 - Arrested for leaving the country illegally

"The policeman was doing his duty, he did it according to the law, he was courteous. He treated me with respect and I had no reason to be bitter at all about a policeman doing his duty."

November 1962 - Sentenced 5 years of imprisonment

"Prison is itself a tremendous education in the need for patience and perseverance."

April 20, 1964 - Delivers famous speech, "Prepare to Die."

"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."

June 12, 1964 - Sentenced to lifetime imprisonment

"In my thoughts I am as free as a falcon."

February 2, 1990 - ANC is banned

"Let us remember that despite oppression, despite hangings, banning, imprisonments and exile, our Liberation Movement united like no other in the world."

February 11, 1990 - Released from prison

"Friends, comrades and fellow South Africans, I greet you all in the name of peace, democracy and freedom for all!"

October 10, 1993 - Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize

"A man does not become a freedom fighter in the hope of winning awards, but when I was notified that I had won the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize jointly with Mr de Klerk, I was deeply moved."

April 27, 1994 - Votes for the first time

"I waited for over seventy years to cast my first vote. I chose to do it near the grave of John Dube, the first President of the ANC, the African patriot that had helped found the organisation in 1912. I voted not for myself alone but for many who took part in our struggle."

May 10, 1994 - Inaugurated as South Africa's first democratic president

"I, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, do hereby swear to devote myself to the well-being of the Republic of South Africa and all its people."

1999 - Steps down after one term as president

2004 - Announces he will be stepping down from political life

December 5, 2013 - Dies at his home in Johannesburg, South Africa

All quotes from Nelson Mandela