

MINISTER KASRILS ADDRESS AT THE ARBOR WEEK LAUNCH
TREE PLANTING CEREMONY,
AT THE WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM, RACIAL
DISCRIMINATION, XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED INTOLERANCE
DURBAN

29 AUGUST 2001

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr NC Dlamini Zuma, SG WCAR, Mary Robinson, distinguished guests and friends.

Spring in South Africa is in the air, a time of re-birth, awakening, and regeneration. The opening of this World Conference against Racism coincides with the annual launch of South Africa's National Arbor week. The planting of trees and the greening of the environment is reflective of the similar noble process of this great international conference to eradicate racism and prejudice from human behaviour.

The plaque before us records the yearly planting of trees at this conference venue and reads:

“Community Forestry: Remembrance Campaign

Plant a tree to heal a Nation to coincide with South Africa's hosting of the UN's third World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance to remember all the victims of racism world-wide and to honour the memory of all those heroes and heroines who laid down their lives in the struggle against racism and apartheid.”

The tree will be planted by Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, President of the World Conference against Racism, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Mary Robinson, Secretary General of the World Conference against Racism.

Just a few words about the tree that they will be planting. The Yellow Wood is South Africa's National Tree. It is the biggest and tallest of our indigenous trees. In Knysna Forests, it grows to the height of 40 metres with a girth of 8 metres and can live up to 800 years. It is a highly valued wood and a protected tree. A tree most suitable to honour this third World Conference against Racism's commemorable opening of South Africa's National Arbor week.

I am sure the caring touch of Dr Zuma and High Commissioner will ensure this beautiful trees' strength, beauty and longevity

Malibongwe igama lamaKhosikazi!

Viva the Third World Conference Against Racism!

Viva amahlathi! Viva the trees!