



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

The significance of Mandela Day – 18 July

15 July 2015

Mandela Day has great significance as on this day annually people worldwide honour the first democratically elected President of South Africa.

This day reminds us to continue working towards a vision for a better life for all. It begins with each one of us making any type of contribution from our various environments. Inspired by this day, everyone is encouraged to find, promote and grow ordinary heroes and heroines, be they individuals or organizations, as they step up to the responsibility of making our world a better place for all humanity.

This day also calls for many acts of kindness, selflessness and activism. Mandela Day is not only about doing good - it is about service and it is an opportunity to build upon his lifelong belief that we must live to serve every day, in whatever we do.

We celebrate his life as we endeavour to make peace a way of life around the world.

The time has come to arise from our trenches and fulfill our destiny by raising awareness about the significance of this day, educating communities, mobilising all sectors of society across the globe to get involved in restoring the dignity of many underprivileged and vulnerable groups.

This annual international day of humanitarian action in celebration of Nelson Mandela's life and legacy serves the purpose of being a catalyst for each and every person to change the world through voluntary community work.

Through this day people across the globe are encouraged to do good for others. This year, December 2015, marks the 2nd year since the passing of this great international statesman.

People are urged to give their time to the service of humanity – by volunteering at Non-profit organizations and other sectors.

Mandela once said – “If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language - that goes to his heart.”



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It is through comments and utterances such as these that former President Mandela inspired people to “Take Action - Inspire Change - Make Every Day a Mandela Day.”

Even the United Nations (UN) General Assembly resolution A/RES/64/13 recognizes Nelson Mandela’s values and his dedication to the service of humanity, in the fields of conflict resolution, race relations, the promotion and protection of human rights, reconciliation, gender equality and the rights of children and other vulnerable groups, as well as the upliftment of poor and underdeveloped communities.

The resolution also acknowledges his contribution to the struggle for democracy internationally, the promotion of a culture of peace throughout the world and his determined quest to change the world for the better.

The event is in recognition of his values, legacy of humanitarian acts, voluntary initiatives, culture of peace and freedom, the UN General Assembly declared 18 July as “Nelson Mandela International Day” (also known as Mandela Day) in November 2009.

Former President Nelson Mandela spent 67 year of his life advancing the struggle for the liberation of all South Africans, black and white, from political, social and economic division.

A favourite quotation from him in the dock during the Rivonia Trial goes: “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.”

Fundamentally, Mandela Day creates an opportunity for all people, irrespective of their economic, social or political to work together to confront social ills within their communities and to build a better world.

To DWS personnel, the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) calls on you to start by devoting 67 minutes to community service on Mandela Day, on July 18 each year, and continue to do so on each day of the year, wherever you may be placed within the department. Ours is a service delivery department, delivering the most basic services that speak to the well-being of the South African society, at all levels.



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Communities both at home and abroad must continue to be inspired by the vision of the former President - Take Action! Inspire Change because "Together we move South Africa forward".

Ike Motsapi