

MANDELA – LEADER, COMRADE, NEGOTIATOR,
PRISONER, STATESMAN

A groundbreaking exhibition celebrating the life and times of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela is currently on at the Apartheid Museum.

“The exhibition attempts to breathe fresh life into a story that has been well told in countless books, documentaries and other exhibitions around the world,” says Christopher Till, Director of the Apartheid Museum.

The strength of the exhibition is the way it attempts to provide a layered glimpse of Mandela in all his various guises and reincarnations. It examines his undoubted strengths and greatness, but does not shy away from his (self-acknowledged) weaknesses too.

Mandela’s extraordinary life is explored through seven themes – character, comrade, leader, prisoner, negotiator and statesman. In each theme, the narrative is presented through dramatically visual wall displays, supported by films, hundreds of photographs and displays of original artefacts.

Mandela was central to every stage of South Africa’s epic struggle against apartheid – from formulating a new radical approach in the 1940s to leading the mass struggle of the 1950s, from the formation of *Umkhonto we Sizwe* in the early 1960s to imprisonment for 27 years.

Beginning in the mid 1980s, Mandela initiated and led the negotiation process that culminated in South Africa’s first democratic elections on 27 April 1994. He served as the first president of a democratic South Africa, according him the iconic accolade of “Father of the Nation.”

The exhibition traces how Mandela built a new nation from the fragments of conflict, making full use of the “weapons” at his disposal: love, persuasion, forgiveness and acute political acumen – with a fair amount of self-deprecating humour sprinkled in for good measure.

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**LEADER
COMRADE
NEGOTIATOR
PRISONER
STATESMAN**

MANDELA



**AN EXHIBITION CELEBRATING THE LIFE
OF NELSON ROLIHLAHLA MANDELA**

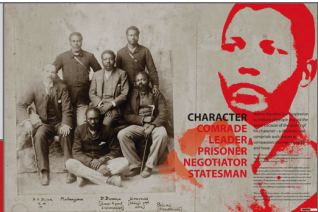
1-5 December 2015



CHARACTER

1

Nelson Mandela is an inspiration to millions of people around the world because of the quality of his character – a character that comprises such virtues as compassion, courage, integrity and hope.



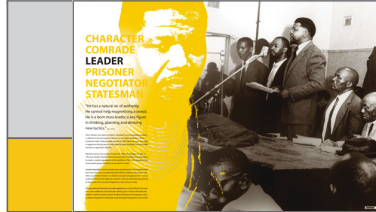
LEADER

3

“He has a natural air of authority. He cannot help magnetising a crowd. He is a born mass leader.” Oliver Tambo

“It was then that I realised that he was a natural leader. He was firm, courteous, his views always based on thought and reason.”

Sir Sydney Kentridge



NEGOTIATOR

5

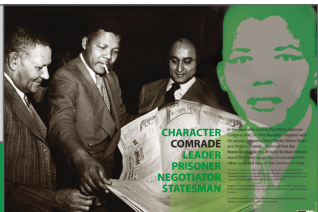
Bringing the apartheid regime to the negotiating table was Mandela's guiding objective. He always made it very clear that he regarded armed struggle as a tactic, and not a principle in itself. Almost 30 years after adopting the armed struggle, it was Mandela who had the vision and courage to push for negotiations.



COMRADE

2

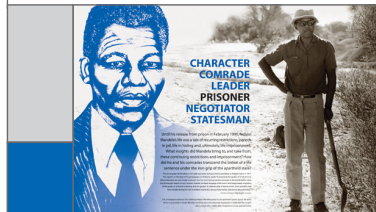
In the years after joining the ANC in 1943, Mandela believed that the liberation struggle should be led by black Africans alone. Over time, this narrow Africanist position was to change as Mandela embraced non-racialism.



PRISONER

4

Until his release from prison in February 1990, Nelson Mandela's life was a tale of recurring restrictions. What insights did Mandela take from these continuing restrictions and imprisonment? How did he and his comrades transcend the ordeal of a life sentence under the iron grip of the apartheid state?



STATESMAN

6

On 10 May 1994, after three and a half centuries of colonialism and apartheid, tens of thousands of people gathered at the Union Buildings in Pretoria to witness the inauguration of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela as South Africa's first democratically elected president.

