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MANDELA'S LEGACY AT HOME AND ABROAD

Princeton N. Lyman

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The world rightly celebrated the life of South African president Nelson Mandela (1994–99) when he died in December 2013 at the age of 95. Mandela's dedication to the cause of freedom in South Africa; his commitment to a South Africa for all its people, regardless of race; his determination to forge a negotiated transition to democracy, sparing South Africa the bloody civil war that many had feared inevitable; and finally, his spirit of reconciliation, all merit such adulation. South Africa emerged under Mandela with one of the strongest democratic constitutions anywhere in the world. The new South Africa thus seemed poised to become a global beacon for democracy and human rights.

Yet while Mandela's greatness as a democratic leader in South Africa is unquestioned, his legacy in the realm of foreign policy is much more ambiguous. Critics point to Mandela's outspoken support for leaders of decidedly undemocratic states—Muammar Qadhafi in Libya, Fidel Castro in Cuba, Suharto in Indonesia—and the strong relations that the South African leader later forged with China and Saudi Arabia. Recalling Mandela's 1994 pledge that human rights would be "the light that guides our foreign affairs,"¹ analysts and diplomats were surprised and disappointed when the new South Africa failed to become a champion of democracy and human rights elsewhere in the world, and even sought to constrain the United Nations and other international bodies from pursuing these objectives. Having voted against UN Security Council resolutions on human rights in Belarus, Burma, Cuba, Darfur, North Korea, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere, South Africa

would be described in 2008 by *Washington Post* columnist Michael Gerson as a “rogue democracy.”²

Many observers chalk up these “inconsistencies” to Mandela’s legacy of loyalty to those who had supported the African National Congress (ANC) in its long struggle against apartheid, when the West was indifferent or hostile. That is surely part of the explanation. But the matter is more complex. Mandela’s thinking on the advancement of democracy elsewhere evolved as a result of early diplomatic setbacks as well as his deep understanding of the importance of indigenous democratic movements. His successors in office built upon Mandela’s ideas and experience to chart a new direction for South Africa’s foreign policy, one that adheres closely to an African consensus and shifts much of the focus on democracy away from governance within individual states and toward governance within international institutions.

As a result, we have much to learn not only from South Africa’s own democracy, but also from the country’s “shortcomings” as a global democratic leader, including some underlying truths that its experience has revealed about how democracy can actually be fostered. This too is part of Mandela’s legacy—complex but instructive.

It was clear to those who knew Mandela that he truly believed in nonracial democracy. This was not a slogan or simply a public stance to win over opponents. It was a belief rooted in the ANC’s Freedom Charter, which declared: “South Africa belongs to all who live in it.” That would prove a major difference between the ANC and South African movements such as the Pan-Africanist Congress and AZAPO that believed the liberation struggle had to be led predominantly, if not entirely, by the black majority. The ANC drew its leaders from among blacks, whites, Indians, and Coloureds. Mandela’s first cabinet and the ANC’s first parliamentary majority reflected that diversity. Archbishop Desmond Tutu exulted in the view of the new Parliament as the embodiment of the “Rainbow Nation.”

A Commitment Tested

Mandela’s views on democracy came clear in the hard-fought negotiation of an interim constitution to carry the country through the 1994 elections and guide the subsequent Government of National Unity (GNU), which the ANC had, with some reluctance, agreed would operate for up to five years. Mandela pushed back hard against proposals by outgoing President F.W. de Klerk (1989–94) that would have required a supermajority on decisions taken by the cabinet of the GNU, which would in effect have limited the power of the expected ANC majority. Mandela saw these proposals as an attempt by the forces of apartheid to put constraints on a majority long disenfranchised and oppressed—indeed, as an attempt to preserve some of the powers and privileges of an

apartheid society. In this dispute, he stood fast on the principle of majority rule. At the same time, he counseled his ANC negotiators that constitutions should put constraints on “temporary majorities.” Over time, Mandela said, all majorities prove temporary. More to the point, he told them that constitutions should put constraints on political movements when they were most “triumphant.”³ The 1993 Interim Constitution that emerged was thus a “classic, liberal” one:

It broadly incorporated the principle of separating power between the three branches of government (executive, legislative, and judiciary), spreading it from the center to provinces, and preventing the misuse of power. It included a bill of rights enforceable in the courts . . . ; a constitutional court to resolve disputes and ensure that the constitution reigned supreme in the new state; and it assigned some limited powers to provinces.⁴

The final constitution (signed by President Mandela in December 1996) retained these provisions and added protection for economic and social rights.

Mandela’s commitment to democracy was tested soon after he assumed the presidency. Both the interim and the permanent constitutions endowed the president with strong powers. Some worried that Mandela might become an autocratic leader. But as his biographer Anthony Sampson recounts, that did not prove to be the case: “His old friends from the fifties looked for signs of autocracy. Walter Sisulu watched him like a trainer watching his champ, but was soon reassured. ‘I have no fears that you’re going to have a dictator arising from him.’”⁵

Mandela did chafe at how limiting democracy sometimes could be. One of the compromises in the interim constitution was to allow the holdover bureaucracy of the apartheid regime to remain in place. Once Mandela assumed office, he came to believe that these civil servants were undermining the objectives of the elected ANC government, and he often rued the agreement to keep them on. He was frustrated by media criticism and sometimes lashed out, accusing white editors of being wedded to the old status quo and black journalists of being hostile to the ANC. Yet Mandela never moved to censor the press, reassuring editors in 1996, “I don’t want a mouthpiece of the ANC or government. The press would be totally useless then. I want a mirror through which we can see ourselves.”⁶

He resented rather strongly that USAID and other international donors continued (though at a lower level) to support South African NGOs after the 1994 election. With the democratic transformation, Mandela argued, there was no longer a role for NGOs; thereafter, they were only sources of divisiveness and unfair criticism of the government. But Mandela never suggested that South Africa enact the kind of legislation, seen in many countries today, that aims to suppress the sources of NGO funding and thereby the viability of civil society. Mandela set a critical precedent when

he adhered to a judgment of the Constitutional Court that went against the government, a practice that his successors have since honored.

Two other legacies of Mandela are of vital importance. The first was in his personal integrity. Mandela, as discussed more fully below, was an unabashed fundraiser for the ANC. In the run-up to the 1994 election, in particular, he had no compunction about seeking (some say demanding) contributions from the major corporations in South Africa, from other governments, and from wealthy individuals.⁷ But he did not do this for personal gain. Indeed, Mandela's will, made public in 2014, revealed an estate worth \$4 million—extraordinarily modest for someone who could have sought vast riches. Instead, he devoted his energies and talents to the ANC and the various charities that he founded and raised funds for after leaving office. Unfortunately, Mandela's successors have been less scrupulous about exploiting the ties he established between the ANC and the corporate world. Many ANC leaders have grown fabulously wealthy through these connections. Mandela himself was upset with the corruption that soon emerged within the ANC during his presidency and continued afterward.⁸ Nevertheless, Mandela's personal integrity and modest way of living throughout his life continue to serve as a lesson, if not a reproach, for other leaders.

The second and even more far-reaching legacy was in his decision to serve only one term as president, stepping down in 1999. This ran directly counter to the president-for-life syndrome that has bedeviled so many other developing countries. Mandela, of course, could have been elected for as long as he wished. By choosing not even to seek a second term, as the constitution allowed, and by pointedly turning the leadership over to the next generation, Mandela set a firm precedent not only for South Africa but for the whole continent. There is little doubt that his decision encouraged subsequent successful efforts against third-term bids in Zambia, Nigeria, and elsewhere on the continent. While some long-term presidents still cling to power in Africa—Uganda's Yoweri Museveni and Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe, for example—the trend is clearly moving in the opposite direction.

With regard to the many frustrations and limitations on his presidential powers that Mandela experienced, Anthony Sampson observed, "Mandela had great respect—perhaps too great—for African democracy."⁹ But that respect laid a solid democratic foundation. As Adebajo Adedeji wrote years after Mandela's presidency:

South Africa's first decade and a half of democratic transition succeeded in establishing and entrenching democratic institutions and practices which have ensured checks and balances within the state. The independence of the judiciary, the supremacy of law, ensuring the accountability of political institutions—the parliament and executive branch—and the promotion and protection for the media and civil society are some of the landmark achievements of thirteen years of freedom.¹⁰

If Mandela's commitment to democracy in South Africa is clear, and his legacy on that point secure, it is his commitment to promoting democracy abroad that has been seen as less than expected, and indeed almost a reversal of what he had promised. His early statements about the central place of democracy and human rights in South Africa's foreign policy created what turned out to be exaggerated expectations. How this happened tells us about the limits of moralistic power and the complexities of a new country's foreign policy.

Mandela's first major challenge on promoting human rights and democracy abroad came in November 1995, when Nigerian military ruler Sani Abacha executed the Ogoni human-rights advocate Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight of his fellow activists. Abacha had promised Mandela, who was off to a Commonwealth summit in New Zealand, that he would do no such thing. Enraged at the news of the Ogoni Nine hangings, Mandela stepped out of the meeting and called for international oil sanctions against Nigeria. Mandela declared that Abacha "is sitting on a volcano and I am going to explode it under him."¹¹ But when Mandela returned to South Africa, he found that no other African country would support the call for sanctions. South Africa was isolated. The Organization of African Unity (the precursor to the African Union) publicly castigated South Africa for having called for such action. No other African country even protested the executions. South Africa was accused of breaking African solidarity and of acting "pro-Western." Even UN secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali chided Mandela, reminding him of Nigeria's peacekeeping contributions. South Africa backed down, acceding to a decision of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to take no action against Nigeria.¹²

It was a painful and shocking lesson to a newly democratic South Africa, which had ambitions to use its status to act not only as a leader in Africa, but more broadly as a new source of influence on the world stage. The Nigeria incident caused South Africa to recalculate. It had to shore up its base of support within Africa first. As one South African official later recalled, the country's leaders vowed "never again" to allow South Africa to be positioned outside the African consensus.¹³

Other setbacks followed. Assuming the helm of SADC in 1995, Mandela sought to broaden its mandate beyond economic development to collective support for democracy and stability in the region. A new organ was created for this purpose at the 1996 SADC summit. Two years later, under a SADC mandate, troops from South Africa and Botswana entered the tiny kingdom of Lesotho to restore order and return the elected leadership to power. The original objective was achieved but at a significant cost: South Africa's intervention was accompanied by looting, the destruction of property, and several deaths, creating a strong anti-South African backlash. The Lesotho episode served as a reminder that South Africa's apartheid-era history of encroaching upon its neighbors contin-

ued to linger in the minds of African nations, despite its new democracy. Mandela also saw his SADC leadership challenged on other issues—notably, by Mugabe on SADC’s role in the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo.¹⁴ Subsequently, SADC’s support of democracy in southern Africa has been weak, notably in Zimbabwe and in Swaziland, one of the most repressive SADC regimes.

Finally, the demands of governing, internal political pressures, and practical economic concerns led Mandela to take actions that contradicted the principles not only of democracy promotion but also of conflict resolution. His government inherited the world’s tenth-largest arms industry, an important source of foreign exchange and employment. Under Mandela, in spite of some new oversight regulations, the industry continued to export arms into conflict situations—to Algeria, Angola, Chad, Indonesia, and both sides in Sudan’s civil war.¹⁵ Moreover, the Mandela government vigorously opposed U.S. judicial actions against executives of the South African arms industry accused of violating the arms embargo on Iraq—a position carved out earlier by the de Klerk government. Mandela did, however, firmly oppose South Africa’s becoming a nuclear power or possessing chemical and biological weapons. But he balked at the push by the United States and United Kingdom for South Africa to destroy the research on which the apartheid regime’s chemical- and biological-weapons programs had been based, accepting his military’s argument that it was a “national asset.”¹⁶

Mandela was an unabashed fundraiser for the ANC, not only during apartheid but even more flamboyantly during the 1994 election campaign and thereafter. The governments that had been loyal to the ANC during the long struggle against apartheid, whatever their democracy or human-rights records, proved good sources of follow-on support. In a meeting with U.S. president Bill Clinton in 1994, at which the author was present, Mandela urged the United States to contribute to the ANC’s campaign. When Clinton demurred, saying that the United States could not give support to one party in an election, Mandela replied, “You would be surprised what other governments do.”

Realpolitik

Thus free South Africa learned early on that in charting its foreign policy it could not take for granted South Africa’s leading role on the continent. Nor, for that matter, could it hope to pursue a foreign policy based largely on universal principles of democracy and human rights and assume that others would follow. Indeed, the country had other interests of equal, if not greater, importance that often conflicted with those principles.

From the beginning of the postapartheid regime, South Africa saw itself not just as a beacon of democracy but as an important bridge. It

had an advanced industrial economy but also a large, poor rural population that linked it closely with the poor countries of Africa. South Africa thus saw itself as a conduit through which developed and developing countries could forge new relationships and understandings, thereby producing more sustainable progress in overcoming poverty. Mandela saw himself personally as someone who could help to resolve other north-south confrontations—for example, the conflict over Libya's role in the 1988 downing of a U.S. commercial airliner over Scotland. South Africa also believed that, as an "emerging economy" (especially if allied with China, Brazil, India, and Russia), it could challenge Western dominance of international economic institutions on behalf of the developing world.

South Africa did not give up its commitment to democracy. Indeed, Mandela and his successor Thabo Mbeki (1999–2008) both felt strongly that democracy, good governance, and human rights had to be supported throughout Africa. But having learned the lessons of Nigeria and Lesotho, and keeping in mind other foreign-policy priorities, South Africa came to believe that democracy could not be forced upon other governments, especially by South Africa. It had to be pursued, particularly on the African continent, free from Western pressure or moralizing.

Under Thabo Mbeki, South Africa would bring these several strands of policy together through advocating the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). This is a partnership between Africa and its donors, with the former pledging to pursue economic reform and good governance, and the latter to provide adequate economic support through aid, debt relief, and trade. The African Union approved NEPAD in 2001. African leaders acknowledged that peace, democracy, and good governance were preconditions for reducing poverty, and they pledged to promote democracy, human rights, and accountability.¹⁷ Progress on these reforms is evaluated through the African Peer Review Mechanism, a process of African experts reviewing each country's performance toward meeting these objectives, with subsequent review and comments by the country's African leadership peers. The process has not been entirely open and has produced mixed results, but it has preserved the principles of South Africa's democratic legacy without alienating its African constituency.¹⁸

A second step, also articulated more clearly under Mbeki, involved refocusing the democracy issue away from individual countries and toward international governing regimes—the UN, World Bank, IMF, and WTO. Doing so allowed South Africa to sidestep issues of internal democratic governance (regarded by some nations as the province of sovereign governments) and instead to focus on the democracy deficit in the international arena. Jakkie Cilliers, founder of South Africa's Institute for Security Studies, suggests that this was a logical direction for South African foreign policy to take. Middle-power diplomacy looks

to a central role for multilateral institutions; in his view, therefore, it inclines toward an “anti-hegemonic” approach to international relations. South Africa later would explain its controversial votes on human-rights issues in the UN as sending a message that the United States and its Western allies could no longer selectively set the agenda, determining which countries should be criticized and which issues constituted threats to international peace and security. Of course, South Africa’s growing relationship with China was also a factor.¹⁹

On a 1997 trip to Southeast Asia that included visits to Indonesia and Burma, Mandela himself signaled this shift in attitudes toward democracy and human-rights promotion, as well as his impatience with Western hectoring on these issues:

South Africa would not be influenced by differences which exist between internal policies of a particular country and ourselves . . . There are countries where there are human rights violations but these countries have been accepted by the United Nations, by the Commonwealth of Nations, and the Non-Aligned Movement. Why should we let ourselves depart from what international organizations are doing?²⁰

On his visit to Burma, Mandela did not ask to see fellow Nobel Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi. The leader of Burma’s military regime would later attend Mbeki’s inauguration. In sum, as one analyst put it:

South Africa is neither a messiah nor a mercantilist power. It is simply an aspiring middle power seeking to punch above its weight in global politics. . . . It simply lacks the economic and military muscle and political legitimacy to impose its preferences on its own Southern African sub-region, let alone the continent.²¹

Mandela’s Most Important Lesson

Mandela provided one more lesson about the promotion of democracy, and perhaps it is the most important of all. Sometime after the Nigerian fiasco, Mandela had an opportunity to address once again Abacha’s Nigeria. A group of Nigerian activists came to him asking for him to renew his earlier advocacy of an oil embargo. They reminded him of the campaign for sanctions against apartheid South Africa and their importance to South Africa’s liberation. Mandela is said to have replied: “International sanctions can be helpful. They were helpful to us in South Africa. But they are of no value if there is not a strong indigenous democratic movement. You do not have one in Nigeria, so international sanctions would not be that much help.”²² This somewhat brutal dismissal conveyed an important lesson: Without the equivalent of an ANC—without a strong indigenous democratic political movement—neither international pressure nor domestic advocacy would assure a democratic outcome.

Mandela was a product of the ANC, and his fierce loyalty to it often superseded adherence to sound governance or personal friendships. This was not just an act of political solidarity with the ANC or simply a way of protecting the movement's hold on power. Mandela and his disciples would say that it was the ANC—with its decades of political debate, institutional development, dedication, and internal discipline—that had made possible not only liberation from apartheid but also the transformation to a democratic South Africa. Not all ANC members were democrats. Yet Mandela could appeal to the ANC's history of commitment to democratic principles and call upon those who were equally dedicated to those principles to lead the transition negotiations to a democratic outcome.

The ANC was not a civil society organization. It was a political movement dedicated to coming to power and to governing according to the principles by which it had lived. It was therefore different from the United Democratic Front, the nonracial antiapartheid coalition which spearheaded the "ungovernability campaign" that undermined the apartheid regime in its final days. The ANC was also different from the many civil associations that mobilized people at the grassroots level against apartheid. These movements played a major role in bringing down the apartheid regime, but they were not in a position to govern when apartheid fell. They were not structured for that, and they had not been deeply immersed in the principles of governing over a period of many years. They were not *political* movements in that sense.

What Mandela was saying to the Nigerian activists is that, in the absence of political movements dedicated not just to democracy but also to governing when the opportunity arises, social, civic, and economic pressures against tyranny will not suffice. International democracy-promotion efforts, if they do not address this political factor, ultimately will fail. Mandela never abandoned his commitment to democracy, nor have his successors in South Africa. But they learned from hard experiences that democracy cannot be imposed from outside, and that it cannot be brought to fruition without indigenous political leadership committed to it.

Mandela's lesson about the importance of political movements resonates as we watch the abortive outcomes of the Arab Spring, and the disintegration of South Sudan. Hundreds of thousands of deeply engaged people from civil society, many mobilized through social media, thronged Tahrir Square in Cairo in 2011 to bring down a dictatorship. But when elections came, there was no organized secular movement ready to take over and govern democratically. The same forces came together to bring down the Morsi regime, but again they lacked the organizational capacity to follow up, leaving the military in a position to determine the future, one that is likely to be far from democratic. Something similar happened in Libya, where grassroots forces brought

about a dictator's downfall that, in the absence of a democratic political movement, has been followed by near chaos and anarchy. In South Sudan, the Southern People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) brought its people independence, but it had no in-depth commitment to democracy, no experience with it, and no institutional structure capable of promoting and defending it. The ANC was a political movement with a military wing. The SPLM is a liberation army with a weak political wing. It makes all the difference.

International organizations and governments dedicated to the promotion of democracy are now examining what went wrong in these instances and what to do next. One answer comes from a former Canadian ambassador, Jeremy Kinsman. His formula: "The new job of diplomatic institutions, governmental or not, is to empower civil society."²³ But is that not what democracy-promotion organizations have been doing all along? They tend to shy away from helping overtly political movements or parties, lest they be seen as partisan. So they continue on, hoping that civil society's actions can somehow pave the way for democratically oriented political parties to emerge and govern. Even political-party foundations such as the National Democratic Institute and the International Republican Institute do not often provide direct assistance to opposition political movements in nonpermissive environments nor help to create such parties where they do not yet exist. Mandela's gentle admonition to President Clinton carries a message here. Are governments dedicated to democracy willing to go where those committed to other political goals are ready to go?

To be sure, there are risks in going down the path of support to political movements seeking power. The SPLM-North, a political party engaged in a military conflict with the Sudanese government for the past two and a half years, has repeatedly asked for such help from the U.S. government. With its allies in Darfur, the SPLM-North has formed a broader coalition, the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF). Its leaders have asked for assistance to develop the SRF's political platform to appeal to a broader spectrum of the Sudanese population, to improve its negotiating skills, and to develop its capacity ultimately to take part in governing the country. Up to now, despite encouraging the SRF in this direction, the U.S. government has declined to provide such help. For the SRF is publicly pledged to the military overthrow of the Khartoum regime, and U.S. officials fear that supplying direct assistance, even of the kind requested, would lead the Sudanese government to believe that the United States supports the SRF's military objective of regime change. This could endanger the diplomatic presence of the United States in Khartoum and the extensive U.S. humanitarian programs in Darfur. Similar risks would arise in helping other such movements.

It is safer to focus on civil society. But Nelson Mandela's legacy tells us something else. Not even a leader as extraordinary as Mandela,

at the helm of a new and almost miraculous democracy in South Africa, could bring democracy to a country where there was no indigenous democratic political movement. The Arab Spring too tells us that civil society is not enough. The question, then, is whether outsiders can contribute to the development of serious, dedicated, democratic *political* movements. Perhaps that is something that we can learn from South Africa and other countries with successful movements of this kind. That would indeed be a significant addition to the powerful legacy of Nelson Mandela.

NOTES

1. Nelson Mandela, "South Africa's Future Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 72 (November–December 1993): 88. See also Chris Alden and Garth le Pere, *South Africa's Post-Apartheid Policy—From Reconciliation to Revival?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 12.

2. Michael Gerson, "The Despots' Democracy," *Washington Post*, 28 May 2008.

3. Comments from Mohamed Bhaba, who participated in the constitutional negotiations, and Ibrahim Rasool, ANC activist and current South African ambassador to the United States, at the U.S. Institute of Peace seminar "Exemplar or One-Time Miracle: What are the Lessons of Mandela's Legacy and South Africa's Transition for Other Countries?," Washington, D.C., January 2014.

4. Patti Waldmeir, *Anatomy of a Miracle* (London: Penguin Books, 1997), 228.

5. Anthony Sampson, *Mandela: The Authorized Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), 498.

6. Sampson, *Mandela*, 518.

7. Sampson, *Mandela*, 472–73.

8. Sampson, *Mandela*, 563.

9. Sampson, *Mandela*, 498.

10. Adebayo Adedeji, "South Africa's and Africa's Political Economy: Looking Inside from the Outside," in Adekeye Adebajo, Adebayo Adedeji, and Chris Landsberg, eds., *South Africa in Africa: The Post-Apartheid Era* (Scottsville, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2007), 53.

11. Adekeye Adebajo, "South Africa and Nigeria: An Axis of Virtue?" in Adebajo, Adedeji, and Landsberg, *South Africa in Africa*, 220–21.

12. Adebajo, "South Africa and Nigeria: An Axis of Virtue?" 220–21.

13. Pauline H. Baker and Princeton N. Lyman, "South Africa: From Beacon of Hope to Rogue Democracy?" in Michael Schiffer and David Shorr, eds., *Powers and Principles: International Leadership in a Shrinking World* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington, 2009), 272.

14. Zimbabwe, joined by SADC members Namibia and Angola, sent troops into the war in support of the DRC government. Mugabe, who was chair of the SADC organ on politics, defense, and security (OPDS), claimed that he had the authority to make that deci-

sion. Mandela was opposed to SADC entering the war, wanting the organization instead to act as peacemaker. Mandela and Mugabe's differences roiled SADC from the very beginning of OPDS, and eventually OPDS was allowed to die. Khabele Matlosa, "South Africa and Regional Security," in Adebajo, Adedeji, and Landsberg, *South Africa in Africa*, 115–17.

15. The sale to Indonesia was particularly notable, given that the Indonesian government was fighting to put down the rebellion in Timor Leste, whose liberation movement the ANC had expressed sympathy for.

16. Princeton N. Lyman, *Partner to History: The U.S. Role in South Africa's Transition to Democracy* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2002), 243–47, and 249–54. Thabo Mbeki, then vice-president under Mandela, told U.S. vice-president Al Gore that the case against the arms executives threatened normalization of relations with the United States.

17. Larry Diamond, "Promoting Real Reform in Africa," in E. Gyimah-Boadi, ed., *Democratic Reform in Africa: The Quality of Progress* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2004), 276.

18. For an assessment of the first few years of the Peer Review Mechanism, see Ross Herbert and Steven Gruz, *The African Peer Review Mechanism: Lessons from the Pioneers* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of International Affairs, 2008).

19. Mbeki personally attributed U.S. pressure on South Africa to take greater action against Zimbabwe as having racist implications. In a letter to President George W. Bush, Mbeki cited such pressure as an insinuation that Africans cannot manage their own affairs. For a fuller discussion of Mbeki's approach to these issues, see Baker and Lyman, "South Africa: From Beacon of Hope to Rogue Democracy?" 274–76. Cillier's views can be found in Jakkie Cilliers, "An Emerging South Africa Foreign Policy Identity," Institute for Security Studies, Occasional Paper 39.

20. Baker and Lyman, "South Africa: From Beacon of Hope to Rogue Democracy?" 272.

21. Adebajo, Adedeji, and Landsberg, "Introduction," in *South Africa in Africa*, 24.

22. As told to the author by persons who were present at the meeting.

23. Jeremy Kinsman, "Is the World Now in a Democratic Recession? What's Gone Wrong? What's Our Job?" As summarized in the *DACOR Bulletin*, January 2014, 27.

NELSON MANDELA (1918–2013)

Nelson Mandela's death was followed by an outpouring of tributes in his honor. South Africa's Mail & Guardian published one entitled "We Thank God for Madiba" by Desmond Tutu, the former Anglican archbishop of Cape Town who earned a Nobel Peace Prize for his work to end apartheid. F.W. de Klerk, the president of South Africa (1989–94) who helped to negotiate apartheid's end and later became deputy president in the Mandela administration, issued a statement on the website of his foundation. U.S. president Barack Obama, who considers Mandela

a hero, delivered a speech at the memorial service for Mandela on December 10 in Johannesburg. Excerpts from their tributes appear below:

Desmond Tutu: Some have said Mandela's 27 years in jail were a waste, suggesting that if he had been released earlier he would have had more time to weave his charm of forgiveness and reconciliation. I beg to differ.

He went to jail an angry young man, incensed by the miscarriage of justice in the travesty of the Rivonia Trial. He was no peacemaker. After all, he had been MK [the armed wing of the African National Congress (ANC)] commander and intended to overthrow apartheid by force.

The 27 years were absolutely crucial in his spiritual development. The suffering was the crucible that removed his considerable dross, giving him empathy for his opponents. It helped to ennoble him, imbuing him with magnanimity difficult to gain in other ways. It gave him an authority and credibility that otherwise would have been difficult to attain. No one could challenge his credentials. He had proved his commitment and selflessness through what he had undergone. He had the authority and attractiveness that accompany vicarious suffering on behalf of others—as with Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa and the Dalai Lama.

We were spellbound on Sunday, February 11, 1990, when the world came to a standstill and waited for him to emerge from prison. When he came out with Winnie by his side we were united in our admiration. What bliss to be alive, to experience that moment! We felt proud to be human because of this amazing man. For a moment, we all believed that it is possible to be good.

F.W. de Klerk: South Africa has lost one of its founding fathers and one of its greatest sons. . . . In the years that followed [his release from prison], it was an honor for me to have been able to work with Mr. Mandela in the process that led to the adoption of the interim constitution and our first democratic elections in April 1994. Although we were political opponents—and although our relationship was often stormy—we were always able to come together at critical moments to resolve the many crises that arose during the negotiation process. . . .

In the concession speech that I made after the ANC's victory in our first non-racial election on 27 April 1994, I congratulated Mr. Mandela on the role that he had played during the negotiations:

“Mr. Mandela will soon assume the highest office in the land with all the awesome responsibility which it bears. He will have to exercise this great responsibility in a balanced manner which will assure South Africans from all our communities that he has all their interests at heart. I am confident that this will be his intention. Mr. Mandela has walked a long road, and now stands at the top of the hill. A traveler would sit and admire the view. But the man of destiny knows that beyond this hill lies

another and another. The journey is never complete. As he contemplates the next hill, I hold out my hand to Mr. Mandela—in friendship and in cooperation.”

During his presidency, Mr. Mandela did indeed use his great responsibility to assure South Africans from all our communities that he had all their interests at heart. He made a unique contribution not only to the establishment of our constitutional democracy but also to the cause of national reconciliation and nation-building. Even in his well-deserved retirement he continued to be a force for reconciliation and social justice—not only in South Africa, but throughout the world.

Barack Obama: He was not a bust made of marble; he was a man of flesh and blood—a son and a husband, a father and a friend. And that’s why we learned so much from him, and that’s why we can learn from him still. For nothing he achieved was inevitable. In the arc of his life, we see a man who earned his place in history through struggle and shrewdness, and persistence and faith. He tells us what is possible not just in the pages of history books, but in our own lives as well. . . .

Mandela demonstrated that action and ideas are not enough. No matter how right, they must be chiseled into law and institutions. He was practical, testing his beliefs against the hard surface of circumstance and history. On core principles he was unyielding, which is why he could rebuff offers of unconditional release, reminding the Apartheid regime that “prisoners cannot enter into contracts.”

But as he showed in painstaking negotiations to transfer power and draft new laws, he was not afraid to compromise for the sake of a larger goal. And because he was not only a leader of a movement but a skillful politician, the constitution that emerged was worthy of this multiracial democracy, true to his vision of laws that protect minority as well as majority rights, and the precious freedoms of every South African.

And finally, Mandela understood the ties that bind the human spirit. There is a word in South Africa—Ubuntu—a word that captures Mandela’s greatest gift: his recognition that we are all bound together in ways that are invisible to the eye; that there is a oneness to humanity; that we achieve ourselves by sharing ourselves with others, and caring for those around us. . . .

The questions we face today—how to promote equality and justice; how to uphold freedom and human rights; how to end conflict and sectarian war—these things do not have easy answers. But there were no easy answers in front of that child born in World War I. Nelson Mandela reminds us that it always seems impossible until it is done. South Africa shows that is true. South Africa shows we can change, that we can choose a world defined not by our differences, but by our common hopes. We can choose a world defined not by conflict, but by peace and justice and opportunity.