

Nelson Mandela

WORKSHEET A

On 10th May 1994 Nelson Mandela became the first black president of South Africa. Mandela's political party, the African National Congress (ANC), had just won the country's first ever democratic elections. The minority white population had held power for the previous 300 years, and from 1948 to the early 1990s the country had lived under a system of *apartheid* (meaning "separateness" in Afrikaans, one of the languages spoken in South Africa) which forced blacks and whites to live in separate areas, study in separate schools, and use separate public services (everything from hospitals to public transport).

Mandela, who called *apartheid* a "human disaster", wanted the different races to live together as equals in South Africa. After the 1994 elections he said: "Never, never again will this beautiful land experience the oppression of one by another".

Mandela knew a lot about oppression, because in 1964 the government had sentenced him to life in prison for his political work in the ANC, which at the time was an illegal organization.

During his trial in the city of Pretoria, Mandela told the court that he hoped South Africa would one day become "a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities".

The world did not forget about Mandela while he was in prison: many governments and other organizations put pressure on the South African government to set him free and end *apartheid*. Finally, in 1990, the government released Mandela from prison and began to talk to the ANC about creating a democracy for the country.

Mandela was president of South Africa until 1999, when he decided to retire from political life. He is still very busy, however: even at the age of 87 he travels around the world to meet important politicians and give speeches. He is one of the most admired public figures in the world, and people always want to hear what he has to say.

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WORKSHEET B

Many South Africans refer to Nelson Mandela as 'Mkhulu', a word from the Xhosa language. Fill the gaps below to complete the crossword and reveal the meaning of 'Mkhulu'.

1. Nelson Mandela still travels around the world to _____ speeches.
2. He went to _____ in 1964.
3. _____ is one of the South African languages.
4. Mandela wanted all South Africans to live together in _____.
5. He thought *apartheid* was a _____ for the people of South Africa.
6. He was South Africa's _____ black president.
7. Under *apartheid*, people of different races lived mostly _____ lives.
8. Mandela was put on trial in a _____ in Pretoria.
9. Under *apartheid*, people of different races could not go to the same _____.
10. The government _____ Mandela from prison in 1990.
11. South Africa is now a _____.

