

**United Nations General Assembly Informal Plenary Meeting on the Occasion of
the Nelson Mandela International Day and the Award Ceremony for the
Inaugural Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize
Trusteeship Council, United Nations Headquarters, New York**

24 July 2015

Context

On 10 November 2009, the General Assembly (GA) adopted by consensus the inaugural resolution A/RES/64/13 and thereby proclaiming 18 July as the Nelson Mandela International Day to be observed annually, starting in 2010. The resolution was co-sponsored by over 165 member states from all regions of the world and represents the overwhelming support of the international community.

This annual observance provides a befitting occasion to pay tribute to this global icon and acknowledge his values to the service of humanity particularly in the areas of conflict resolution, peace and dialogue, promotion of human rights, reconciliation and gender equality.

On 31 January 2014, the President of the General Assembly appointed the Permanent Representative of South Africa to facilitate consultations with member states on his behalf on the draft resolution to establish the Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize to further honour and pay homage to the extraordinary life and legacy of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

Following this facilitation, the General Assembly on 6 June 2014 adopted resolution 68/275 on the United Nations Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize, as a tribute to the outstanding achievements and contributions of individuals to the purposes and principles of the United Nations (UN). This resolution mandated the Secretary-General in consultation with the President of the General Assembly (PGA), to establish the criteria and procedures for bestowing the Prize.

Subsequently, the Secretary-General presented the proposed criteria and procedures for bestowing the Prize (statute) for consideration by the General Assembly. In this context, the PGA appointed the Permanent Representative of Algeria to conduct on his behalf, consultations with member states on the proposed statute. On 2 April 2015, the General Assembly adopted 69/269 entitled "Statute of the United Nations Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize" following conclusion of successful consultations with member states.

In accordance with the afore-mentioned resolution, the General Assembly decided that the selection committee to determine individuals to receive the Prize will be composed of "five representatives of member States of the United

Nations, one to be selected by each of the five regional groups, namely, African States, Asia-Pacific States, Eastern European States, Latin American and Caribbean States, and Western European and other States, for a period of five years and a Representative of the Permanent Mission of South Africa to the United Nations, to serve as ex officio member of the Committee". Subsequently, the respective Permanent Representatives of Algeria (African States); Saudi Arabia (Asia-Pacific); Mexico (Latin American and Caribbean States); Latvia (Eastern European States); Sweden (Western European and others States) and South Africa (ex-officio member).

The 24 July 2015 event will also be unique opportunity to bestow the inaugural Prize to the two winners.

Objective

Mandela Day is a global call to action for citizens of the world to take up the challenge and follow in the formidable footsteps of Madiba, a man who transformed his life, served his country and freed his people. Its objective is to inspire individuals to take action to help change the world for the better and in so doing, to build a global movement for good.

The annual informal meeting forms part of the global events in observance of the Nelson Mandela International Day. The GA event provides an excellent opportunity for the UN membership, agencies and other stakeholders to celebrate and recognize the long-standing dedication of President Mandela.

Target audience

The informal plenary meeting will include participation of UN member states and observers, relevant NGOs, private sector representatives, civil society and ordinary people. The session will be live-streamed over the Internet by UN Television.

Format

The event will take place from 10:00 an until 12:00 noon at the UN Headquarters, New York (Corner E42 street and 1 Avenue). The President of the GA will preside over both the annual observance and the award ceremony. It is proposed that the PGA open the meeting with few remarks and followed by the Secretary-General's remarks.

Following that, a formal ceremony will be held to bestow the Prizes to the two recipients. The Prizes will be presented by the Secretary-General in accordance with resolution A/RES/69/269. The Chairs of the five regional groups will deliver messages on behalf of their respective regional groups of the UN General Assembly.

About 4 eminent personalities should be invited to share their messages for this day focusing on how Mr. Nelson Mandela inspired them in their own lives as how they view the observance of this day. Others will be invited to attend but not necessarily speak at the meeting. Possible names may include the following:

- H.E. Mr. Ruhukana Rugunda: Prime Minister of Uganda
- High-level representative of the Government of South Africa
- Rev. Jessie Jackson: Anti-apartheid activist and civil rights activists
- Ms. Oprah Winfrey: Talk show host and Philanthropist

It is suggested that each speaker prepare their remarks of 10 minutes. Preferably, panelists should not use digital presentations for their respective interventions. Musical items could be rendered from a choir or group in the NYC vicinity.

With regard to the social responsibility work, it would be recalled that in line with the A/RES/64/13, individuals around the world are encouraged to devote 67 minutes to helping others, by volunteering in a hospital, tutoring a child, providing food for the homeless, or any other community service.

In this context, the Department of Information is organizing a community service project known as the UN-Green Thumb. This event will include participation of UN staff and volunteers in the UN-Green Thumb between 12:30 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. The event will be held behind the UN Secretariat building, near the telecommunications satellite dish, in the newly established United Nations Food Garden. The President of the General Assembly, visiting high-level representatives from the Government of South Africa and the Permanent Mission, 2015 laureates of the Nelson Mandela Prize, as well as representatives from the Mayor's Office of NYC will also be invited to attend.