

## **New Year's Eve Radio and Television Address**

December 31, 1999

Fellow South Africans:

We are a few hours away from the beginning of the Year 2000. Together with the rest of the world, we will mark this coming year as the beginning of a new century and millennium.

Our season's greetings which we extend to you all and our best wishes for a successful New Year therefore assume a special significance.

For us as a country and for all the peoples of our Continent, the approaching century is and must be a century of hope. It is and must be a century of the sustained progress of all our people and the sister peoples of the whole of Africa. It is and must be a century during which we make real advances with regard to the achievement of the centrally important goal of a better life for all.

As the century and millennium close, we can be proud that during this century, the peoples of our Continent, including ourselves, brought the system of colonialism and white minority rule to an end.

Except for the still unresolved matter of Western Sahara, all our peoples, throughout Africa, have the possibility to determine their destiny.

At the same time, we must also make the point that in many instances we have not taken advantage of the fact of our liberation to address the fundamental interests of our peoples. As Africans we have seen too many military coups, too many wars within and between countries, too many people massacred, killed, maimed, displaced and turned into refugees.

We have watched as millions of our people have sunk deeper and deeper into poverty and fall victim to many diseases, including the AIDS epidemic.

We have had to live with corruption, as a result of which the few have misappropriated public resources and thus further impoverished the masses of our people who were already suffering. We have seen our Continent getting marginalised, as though it were destined to be by-passed by the rest of the world in all areas, including the economy, the development and the application of science and technology, education, training and knowledge, culture and the arts.

As we enter the new century and millennium, we must, as Africans, say enough is enough! We ourselves must do everything we can to strengthen democracy and entrench a culture of human rights in our own country.

We must continue further to encourage reconciliation among all our people, giving due respect to all our cultures, languages and religions and inculcating in all of us the new patriotism of which we have spoken in the past.

We have to make every effort to wipe out the legacy of the past of racism, sexism and discrimination against people with disabilities.

We must continue to sue for the safety and security of all our people, acting firmly against the criminals, the drug dealers, those who rape and abuse women and children and those who terrorise the people with guns and bombs.

We have to wage an unrelenting struggle against the poverty that continues to afflict millions of our people. This means we must ensure that our economy grows, that we modernise it, that we raise the skills of our working people. We must continue to work for an equitable distribution of wealth as well as ensure that we are an integral part of the modern global economy.

We must strive for shared social progress with all our neighbours and the rest of the peoples of our Continent, in pursuit of the noble goal of an African Renaissance. Accordingly, we must use the Year 2000 further to strengthen the impetus within our own country for the achievement of these goals.

We must also use it to build an All-African Partnership for Democracy, Peace and Development so that, through our own efforts, we transform the 21st Century into an African Century.

Whatever may have been the tragedies we experienced in the passing century and millennium, now we must aim for the stars! On behalf of our Government and in my own name, I wish you all a Happy and Successful New Year and extend our best wishes to all the peoples of Africa and the rest of the world.

Once more, I appeal to all our road users to take maximum care to ensure that we radically reduce the accidents and deaths that occur on our roads through reckless behaviour. Let us all respond seriously to the call -arrive alive!

Thank you very much for your attention.

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