

Nelson Mandela: Beyond Prisoner, Beyond President

By [Global Research News](#)

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July 18th, 1918: Rolihlahla Dalibhunga Mandela is born into the Madiba clan, a cadet branch of the Thembu royal family, in the small village of Mvezo, in the Transkei, South Africa.

The name Rolihlahla means “pulling the branch of the tree”, or more colloquially “troublemaker.”

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People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.” (Nelson Mandela)

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NELSON MANDELA

BEFORE PRISONER - BEYOND PRESIDENT

1918 Nelson Mandela is born in Mvezo, a small village in the Transkei region of South Africa. He is the son of a Xhosa chief.

1944 Mandela joins the African National Congress (ANC) and becomes a member of its executive committee. He is arrested for his role in the 1946-48 Defiance Campaign.

1948 The National Party (NP) comes to power in South Africa and introduces the system of apartheid, which separates the races and grants the white population full citizenship rights.

1952 Mandela is arrested for his role in the 1952 Defiance Campaign. He is sentenced to two years in prison.

1953 Mandela is arrested for his role in the 1953-54 Biko Campaign. He is sentenced to two years in prison.

1955 Mandela is arrested for his role in the 1955-56 Treason Trial. He is sentenced to five years in prison.

1961 Mandela is arrested for his role in the 1961-62 Rivonia Trial. He is sentenced to life imprisonment.

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1989 Mandela is arrested for his role in the 1989-90 Treason Trial. He is sentenced to life imprisonment.

1990 Mandela is released from prison after 27 years. He is elected president of South Africa in 1994.

1991 Mandela is elected president of South Africa. He is the first black president of the country.

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- Nelson Mandela

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On December 5, 2013, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela passed away at his home in Johannesburg. He was 95.

"It is now ending. It is a time of grace. Our nation has had its greatest son. Our people have their greatest leader. Freedom Foughters. Nelson Mandela." - Nelson Mandela

Rest in peace, Madiba. You are missed.

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Nelson Mandela: Before Prisoner, Beyond President

Date of Birth: July 18, 1918

Place of Birth: Eastern Cape of South Africa

Father — Gadla Henry Mphakanyiswa

Mother — Nosekeni Fanny

Marriages/children:

- Evylyn Ntoko Mase (1944 – 19 March 1958, divorce) (b.1922 – died 2004)
 - son: Madiba “Thembi” Thembekile (1946–July 13, 1969) (Car Accident)
 - daughter: Makaziwe, 1947 – 1948;
 - son: Makgatho Mandela (26 June 1950–January 6, 2005) (AIDS)
 - daughter: Makaziwe Mandela (known as Maki; born 1953)
- Nomzamo Winnie Madikizela. (14 June 1958 – 19 March 1996, divorce)
 - daughter: Zenani (Zeni), born 4 February 1959
 - daughter: Zindziswa (Zindzi) Mandela-Hlongwane, born Dec 1960
- Graca Machel (July 18, 1998 – present)

July 18th, 1918: Rolihlahla Dalibhunga Mandela is born into the Madiba clan, a cadet branch of the Thembu royal family, in the small village of Mvezo, in the Transkei, South Africa. The name Rolihlahla means “pulling the branch of the tree”, or more colloquially “troublemaker.”

1927: When his father Gadla Henry Mphakanyiswa dies, he is placed under the guardianship of the Thembu Regent, Jongintaba Dalindyebo.

EARLY EDUCATION

- 1925: Attends a primary school near Qunu, where he is given the name Nelson by a teacher.
- 1934: Attends Clarkebury Boarding Institute in Engcobo, in the Eastern Cape Province.
- 1937: Enrolls in Healdtown Wesleyan College at Fort Beaufort.

1939 — 1942:

- 1939-Attends the University College of Fort Hare, studying for a B.A. and meeting his lifelong friend Oliver Tambo.
- 1940- Mandela and Tambo are expelled from university for political activism.
- 1941-Upon returning to the Transkei, Mandela learned of a marriage arranged for him by his guardian. He flees to Johannesburg and begins work as a night-watchman at a gold mine. Meets Walter Sisulu who helps him get a job at the law firm of Witkin, Sidelsky, and Eidelman
- 1942- Completed his B.A. Via correspondence at the University of South Africa (now UNISA). Began informally attending meetings of the African National

Congress (ANC)

- 1943- Graduates with BA from Fort Hare. Started studying law at the University of Witwatersrand. Campaigns against bus price increases. This is Mandela's first exposure to mass action.

1944:

- Mandela marries Evelyln Ntoko Mase, cousin to Walter Sisulu.
- Begins his political career by formally joining the ANC.
- Disillusioned with the "dying order of pseudo-liberalism and conservatism, of appeasement and compromise." that was the leadership of the ANC, Mandela, and along with Sisulu, Tambo, and a few others found the ANC Youth League (ANCYL)

1947:

- Elected as national secretary of the ANCYL, and becomes a member of the leadership of the Transvaal branch of the ANC.
- Spurred on by the Herenigde Nasionale Party's (HNP) platform of complete racial segregation, "To All Africans and Friends of Justice" a flyer calling for the abolition of the Pass Laws and the removal of Land Restrictions against Africans in urban and rural areas, is released by ANC president Dr. A.B Xuma.

1948:

- Mandela settled for practicing as an attorney after failing to pass the exams required for his LLB degree.
- 26 May, The HNP won 1948 general election with the most seats but a large minority of the popular vote, and instituted its policy of racial segregation that would later become known globally as Apartheid. The HNP later merged with the Afrikaner Party, and reverted to the short name, the Nasionale Party (National Party).

1951:Mandela is elected President of the ANCYL.

1952:

- The ANC implemented a national campaign of non-cooperation with certain laws considered unjust and discriminatory, which would come to be known as the Defiance Campaign.
- July 30: Mandela and 19 others are arrested and charged with violating the Suppression of Communism Act. All 20 are found guilty of "Statutory Communism" and sentenced to nine months hard labor, though the sentence is suspended for two years.
- August: Mandela and Tambo set up South Africa's first Black law firm in Chancellor House across from the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court.

1953:

- Mandela and Tambo draft the M-Plan (Mandela Plan), in which the ANC would be broken down into cells so that it could continue to operate underground if

necessary.

- March, Criminal Law Amendment Act No. 8 is passed. This Act makes civil disobedience punishable by a three year prison sentence

1955 - 1961:

- 26 June 1955: the Congress of the People in adopt the Freedom Charter. On 5 December 1956, The government arrested a total of 156 people, including Nelson Mandela, on charges of “high treason and a countrywide conspiracy to use violence to overthrow the present government and replace it with a communist state.” The punishment for high treason was death. The trial dragged on until the accused were finally acquitted in March 1961. “We, the people of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know: That South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people.”
- Divorce: His marriage to Evylyn Ntoko Mase ended in January, 1958.
- 21 March,1960- In a peaceful anti-pass march led by the Pan African Congress (PAC) at a police station in Sharpeville, the police opened fire on the protestors, killing 69 and wounding 186 in what becomes known as the Sharpeville Massacre, signaling the start of armed resistance in South Africa.
- In a show of solidarity, Mandela publicly burned his pass as rioting broke out across South Africa, leading the government to declare a state of emergency, and on March 30, 1960, Mandela and other activists were arrested and imprisoned without charge, but were freed from prison when the state of emergency was lifted in late August.
- Both the ANC and PAC were banned by the South African government under the Unlawful Organizations Act in 1960
- 1961:
 - On 29 March 1961, after six years the Judges in the Treason Trial hand down a not guilty verdict. Factoid: During the Treason Trial Mandela met and married his second wife, Nomzamo Winnie Madikizela.
 - 31 May, Amidst nationwide strikes, South Africa becomes a republic and the country’s membership of the Commonwealth simultaneously expires.
 - Straying from the ANC’s philosophy of passive resistance, Mandela is instrumental in forming and becomes the first commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation, MK), a military wing of the ANC. On December 16, MK announces its existence by bombing government structures and installations in Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Durban.
- 1962:
 - Mandela is smuggled out of South Africa to attend the February 1962 Pan-African Freedom Movement for East, Central and Southern Africa (PAFMECSA) meeting in Ethiopia.
 - He journeyed to London where he met with activists, reporters and politicians, garnering support for his cause.
 - He returned to Ethiopia for guerrilla training, completing only two months of training before returning to South Africa.
 - 5 August, Mandela is arrested just outside Howick, Natal after the

- police receive a tip-off from a CIA agent based in Durban.
 - 7 November, Nelson Mandela is sentenced to five years in prison for incitement and leaving the country without a passport.
 - 1963:
 - On 11 July 1963, police raided Lilliesleaf Farm in Rivonia, Johannesburg, arresting those they found there and uncovering paperwork documenting MK's activities, some of which mentioned Mandela, who is already serving a sentence of five years.
 - As a result almost the entire leadership of the MK was arrested. They were charged with sabotage and conspiracy to violently overthrow the government, and tried in what will become known as the Rivonia Trial.
 - 1964:
 - The Rivonia Trial begins with a second indictment, to which the defendants unanimously plead 'not guilty'.
 - At trial Mandela chose not to testify. Instead, he delivered a spellbinding four hour speech, which ended with the following: "During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die." Below the final paragraph of his typewritten speech Mr Mandela wrote: "The invincibility of our cause and the certainty of our final victory are the impenetrable armour of those who consistently uphold their faith in freedom and justice in spite of political persecution".
 - June 12, Despite calls for clemency from the international community, including the United Nations and the World Peace Council, all but two of the defendants are convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

1964 — 1982: Robben Island

- After sentencing, Mandela and his co-accused were sent to Robben Island, where he would spend the next 18 years of his life. Factoid: The prison was built specifically to house political prisoners, and was known for its harsh conditions. These included cramped, sparse cells, backbreaking hard labor, and minimum communication with the outside world. As a Class D prisoner (the lowest level), Mandela was entitled to one personal visit and one letter every six months.
- Mandela resumed studying towards a law degree from the University of London. He also helped form what became known as the "University of Robben Island", the 'lecturers' being prisoners who spoke on their own areas of expertise.
- During this time, he formed a working relationship with the warden, who was keen to improve prison conditions.
- By 1975, having achieved Class A prisoner status, and allowed 52 letters a year, Mandela continued to draw attention to the plight of Africans suffering under the Apartheid movement.
- In 1976, He was offered release conditional on his disassociation with the struggle and settlement in the Transkei. He declined.

- In 1978, Mandela's 60th birthday brought renewed interest in his situation and calls from the international community for his release, which the South African steadfastly ignored despite mounting political pressure.

1982 — 1988: Pollsmoor Prison

- In April 1982, Mandela, along with senior ANC leaders Walter Sisulu, Andrew Mlangeni, Ahmed Kathrada and Raymond Mhlaba; was transferred to Pollsmoor Prison in Tokai, Cape Town.
- February 1985, then President of South Africa, P.W. Botha, offered Mandela release from prison with the proviso that he "unconditionally rejected violence as a political weapon". Mandela rejected the offer, putting out a statement via his daughter saying, "What freedom am I being offered while the organization of the people (ANC) remains banned? Only free men can negotiate. A prisoner cannot enter into contracts."
- With increased civil unrest and mounting international pressure, both political and financial, South Africa enters a state of ungovernability.
- August 1985, Mandela was taken to hospital and underwent surgery for an enlarged prostate gland.
- 16 May 1986, Mandela assured negotiators that he could control the violence in the townships should the government withdraw their troops and allow him to travel unhindered. His proposal was met with a counter-offer that insisted that Mandela should first renounce violence.
- 12 June 1986, The South African government declared a nationwide state of emergency, granting the police increased power, resulting in the arrest of over 4000 people.
- August 1986, Comprehensive sanctions against South Africa on new investment, loans, airport landing rights and exports of oil, are imposed by the United States.
- August 1987, Mandela was diagnosed with tuberculosis, and admitted to the Tygerberg Hospital in Cape Town.
- 1988, Mandela's 70th birthday attracts international attention, with the BBC organizing a tribute concert at Wembley Stadium.

1988 — 1990: The Long Walk To Freedom

- December 1988: Mandela was moved from the Constantiaberg clinic to the comfort of a house at the Victor Verster prison, with a swimming pool and a big garden, as well as a personal cook. Here he is allowed many visitors, and finally completes his LLB degree.
- By 1989 things were looking bleak for the Apartheid regime: PW Botha had a stroke, and resigned. FW de Klerk succeeds him as President. De Klerk believed the Apartheid regime was no longer sustainable and, following a meeting with Mandela in December 1989, unbanned all political parties and released all political prisoners, with the exception of Mandela.
- On 11 February 1990 Nelson Mandela was finally, unconditionally released, and in front of large crowd walks out of the Victor Verster prison a free man.
- He gives his first speech at the Cape Town City Hall, declaring his desire for peace and reconciliation, but warning that the ANC's struggle is not over. He goes on to spend time at the home of Desmond Tutu, meeting with friends, activists, and the press, and on February 13th delivered a speech to 100,000

people at Soccer City in Johannesburg.

1990 — 1994: The Path to the Presidency

- Mandela spent the next four years traveling the globe, meeting with world leaders, garnering political support, and drawing attention to his cause. During this time he received numerous awards, most prominently the Nobel Peace Prize in December 1993.
- Announces separation from his wife Winnie in April 1992. Their divorce is finalized in 1996.
- Mandela visited the 1992 Olympic Games held in Barcelona, where a South African team, after 30 years of being banned from international competition, is finally allowed to participate.
- December 1993, Mandela is jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize together with former president F W de Klerk in Norway
- 7 April 1994, Millions of formally disenfranchised black South Africans participate in the first free and democratic elections ever held in South Africa. Factoid: At Inanda, Durban, Mandela votes in a general election for the first time in his life. For himself. For President.
- 9 May 1994, Mandela is elected unopposed as President of South Africa
- 10 May, Nelson Mandela's Presidential inauguration takes place at the historic Union Buildings in Pretoria. This is witnessed by over 100,000 people on site, and millions of people around the world. "We have at last, achieved our political emancipation. we pledge ourselves to liberate all our people from the continuing bondage of poverty, deprivation, suffering, gender, and other discrimination. Never, never, and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another... Let freedom reign. God Bless Africa!"

1994 — 1999: The Presidency

- Coming into office Mandela faced daunting challenges with regard to the disparity in wealth and services between the white and black communities. Of a population of 40 million...
 - 23 million lacked electricity or adequate sanitation
 - 12 million lacked clean water supplies
 - 2 million children were not in school
 - 13 million people were illiterate.
 - 33% were unemployed
 - 20 million lived below the poverty line.
- Needing to fulfill campaign promises to provide homes, jobs, healthcare, education, and access to utilities including clean water and electricity, Mandela instituted a plan of national reconstruction, known as the Reconstruction and Development Programme.
- As South Africa hosted the 1995 Rugby World Cup, Mandela rallied the nation around the hated national rugby team, the Springboks. Who would go on to defeat New Zealand in the finals, where Mandela presented the trophy to Springbok captain Francois Pienaar. F.W. de Klerk said, "Mandela won the hearts of millions of white rugby fans."
- Mandela oversaw the formation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to

investigate crimes committed under apartheid by both the government and the ANC. Started in February 1996, two years of hearings detailing rapes, torture, bombings, and assassinations, followed before the Commission issued its final report. Mandela lauded the work of the Commission, stating that it “had helped us move away from the past to concentrate on the present and the future”.

- Mandela stepped down as ANC President in December 1997
- In 1998, on his 80th birthday, Mandela marries Graça Machel, widow of former president of Mozambique, Samora Machel.
- By the 1999 election, the ANC could boast that due to their policies, 3 million people were connected to telephone lines, 1.5 million children were brought into the education system, 500 clinics were upgraded or constructed, 2 million people were connected to the electricity grid, water access was extended to 3 million people, and 750,000 houses were constructed, housing nearly 3 million people
- March 23, 1999, Mandela, having never planned on standing for a second term, gave his farewell speech and retired.

2000 — 2013: Post Presidency

- 2001: Mandela was diagnosed with prostate cancer.
- 2005: Time Magazine puts Mandela on its list of 100 Most Influential People.
- 2008: 89 year-old Nelson Mandela met with Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace. “You look younger every time I see you,” he told the British sovereign, who was 82 at the time.
- 18 July, Mandela and the world celebrate his 90th birthday. Time magazine honors him by placing him on its front cover and carrying an article on him. The South African Mint issues a commemorative R5 circulation coin in his honor.
- 2009: 20 January, In a letter to the newly elected US President Barack Obama, Mandela describes Obama’s election as “something truly historic not only in the political annals of your great nation, the United States of America, but of the world”.
- 18 July, The first Mandela Day was celebrated both in South Africa and in the United States. In November the United Nations general assembly announced that July 18 would be celebrated as Mandela Day.
- 2011: January, was admitted to hospital in Johannesburg where he was diagnosed with a chest infection.
- June 21, Mandela is visited at home by First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama.
- 2012: July 18, Mandela celebrated his 94th birthday surrounded by family and friends at his home in the Eastern Cape. He was also visited by former US President Bill Clinton.
- Between February 2011 and June 2013 Mandela was repeatedly hospitalized for various medical conditions including, gallstone removal, and respiratory infections.
- June 8, 2013 his condition worsened, and he was hospitalized once again.
- June 22, South African President, Jacob Zuma announces that Mandela is in critical condition, and calls for prayer for the father of the nation.

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