

UBUNTU

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UBUNTU AWARDS 2017: “CELEBRATING OR TAMBO ... IN HIS FOOTSTEPS”

The annual awards, hosted by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), are held to celebrate South African citizens who play an active role in projecting a positive image of South Africa internationally through their good work.

The third annual Ubuntu Awards were on Saturday, 11 February, at the Cape Town International Convention Centre, under the theme: “Celebrating OR Tambo ... In his Footsteps”. This year’s awards marked the centenary of struggle icon, Oliver Reginald Tambo, who was the longest-serving President of the African National Congress. Born in 1917, the late struggle stalwart, who passed away in 1993, would have turned 100 years old this year.

Addressing guests at the glittering event, the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, said the ceremony had over the past three years proved to be an important and popular programmatic activity that followed the State of Nation Address.

“It resonates well with our people and our collective desire to celebrate our very own leaders, and citizens who go beyond the call of duty in their respective industries to contribute to the betterment of this country as well as its general populace.”

Reflecting on the theme of the event, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane said: “We are proud to celebrate the life and times of this national icon, a revered statesman and a gallant fighter of our liberation struggle. He worked with his generation to shape our country’s vision and constitutional value system as well as the foundations and principles of our domestic and foreign policy outlook. OR was an individual epitome of the spirit and vision of the very occasion we are celebrating today”.



The Minister said the nominees had gone beyond the call of duty and were exemplary of active and responsible citizenry. Their passion and dedication, she said, should serve as an inspiration to all South Africans.

“This aptitude should indeed be a culture that permeates throughout communities and society in general.”

In the spirit of celebrating extraordinary South African, the Minister also expressed warm congratulations to Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma for the sterling work she did during her tenure as the African Union Commission Chairperson.

“She has made all of us as South Africans, particularly women, very proud. She not only pioneered her own path but also followed through the footsteps to our great giant OR. She worked hard in unifying the organisation towards a common goal of collective prosperity.”

The Minister also paid tribute to national sports icon, former Springbok captain Joost van der Westhuizen, who sadly passed away earlier in the week.

“Let the footprints of OR Tambo serve as an inspiration to all and let us work together in fulfilling’s the vision and ideals. Our individual and collective efforts can indeed make the world a different place to live in,” the Minister concluded.



UBUNTU AWARDS 2017 WINNERS

SASOL: Winner of the Ubuntu Economic Diplomacy Award (Africa) and Ubuntu Economic Diplomacy Award (Global)

Sasol now holds the record as the first organisation in the history of the Ubuntu Awards to win in two categories. The Economic Diplomacy Awards are given to South African businesses operating in at least two countries on the continent (Africa) and operating on several continents (Global) in a way that displays good business practice and governance, creates jobs and invests in corporate social responsibility programmes in the countries in which they operate.

Sasol has gone from being just a South African fuels company to become an international integrated energy and chemicals company with over 200 chemical products being sold worldwide. These products are used in the production process of numerous everyday products made worldwide and benefit the lives of millions of people around the world. This organisation operates in 33 countries and employs over 30 000 people across the globe. Listed on the JSE as well as the New York Stock Exchange, this organisation is recognised globally for its outstanding innovation in the energy space.



Marcel Mitchelson, Vice President, Stakeholder Affairs, Sasol is congratulated by a sponsor representative.

Siyabulela Xusa: Winner of the Ubuntu Youth Diplomacy Award

The Youth Award is given to an individual, between the ages of 15 and 35, who through his or her actions, activities and achievements, has promoted South Africa as a dynamic country with an enabling environment for youth to thrive in and contribute to making South Africa and the world a better place.

Siya Xusa has accomplished more by the age of 28 than many have in a lifetime – including having a planet named after him, in honour of his work in developing a record-breaking rocket and creating safer, more energy-efficient rocket fuel.

He is an energy-engineering Harvard University graduate with a passion for harnessing the power of the sun for clean affordable energy. One of his earlier projects won gold at the National Science Expo and the Dr Derek Gray Memorial Award for the most prestigious project in South Africa, which led to an invitation to the International Youth Science Fair in Sweden in 2006, where he presented his project to the King and Queen of Sweden and attended the Nobel Prize ceremony in Stockholm.

In 2010, he was elected as a fellow of the African Leadership Network, a premier network of those individuals poised to shape Africa's future over the next 10 to 20 years, consisting of the most dynamic, influential and successful leaders and entrepreneurs in Africa and its Diaspora. In 2011, he was invited to the United Nations (UN) and the New York Stock Exchange in recognition for being one of the world's emerging business leaders and to offer strategies for solving the world's energy crisis.

His credibility was further endorsed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration-affiliated Lincoln Laboratory, which was so impressed by the young engineer's achievement that it named a minor planet after him. Planet 23182, discovered in 2000, is now known as Siyaxuza and is found in the main asteroid belt near Jupiter.



Pretty Yende: Winner of the Ubuntu Arts and Culture Diplomacy Award (Youth) – Public Vote



The award was accepted on her behalf by her mother and father (picture left and centre) with a sponsor representative

This award was established last year to honour young people in the arts and culture space who have shone on the international stage and as a result made South Africa shine.

Pretty Yende is a world-renowned opera singer from Piet Retief who has worked in London, Milan, New York and Vienna. Representing South Africa on a global stage, she has risen to the top of the opera world with unparalleled speed having performed starring roles in the world's grandest opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera in New York City and the Royal Opera in London.

Among her many achievements, she is the only singer to have ever won all the main prizes at the renowned Belvedere Singing Competition in Vienna. She is currently performing in New York. Pretty is a global inspiration, groundbreaker and has truly displayed excellence in her chosen field.

Esther Mahlangu: Winner of the Ubuntu Arts and Culture Diplomacy Award (Veteran) – Public Vote

The award is given to an individual or organisation that has promoted a positive image of South Africa through arts and culture and/or facilitated cultural exchanges between South Africa and no fewer than two other countries for a minimum of 20 years.

Esther Mahlangu is most well known for her bold large-scale Ndebele inspired artworks, MKHARIBO!!! She recently collaborated with John Legend to design the limited-edition Belvedere Vodka bottle for the #MakeADifference campaign using her Ndebele tribal art style to raise money for HIV prevention.

In October 2016, Ms Mahlangu signed a BMW luxury automobile and made it into a work of art that the public could bid on. The vehicle was on display at the renowned Freize Art Fair in London. This iconic collaboration comes 25 years after she created a BMW Art Car, which was the first to be signed by a woman.



Babies Behind Bars: Winner of the Ubuntu Social Responsibility Award



Romy Titus (left), founder of Babies Behind Bars, accepted the award

The Social Responsibility Award celebrates the acts of kindness that have been done unto others by South African non-governmental organisations.

Babies Behind Bars, founded by Romy Titus, a South African radio and television personality, is a not-for-profit organisation based in Johannesburg, South Africa. They look after babies from birth to two years old while they are living with their mothers in prisons across the country.

The organisation has also expanded into correctional facilities beyond South Africa's borders, having managed to assist 14 prisons in South Africa, four in Namibia and one in Swaziland as well as prisons in Mozambique and Kenya. Babies Behind Bars also conducts weekly visits to correctional services with the aim of providing some relief and encouraging health and safety for the children.

Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation: Winner of the Ubuntu Social Responsibility Award



DESMOND TUTU
HIV FOUNDATION

The Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation, housed within the Desmond Tutu HIV Centre (DTHC) at the University of Cape Town, is committed to the pursuit of excellence in research, treatment, training and prevention of HIV and related infections in southern Africa.

The foundation, supported by the Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and his wife, Leah has, been in existence as a not-for-profit organisation since 2004.

The DTHC is an accredited research grouping within the University of Cape Town and is supported in its work by the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation.

The research, clinical and community outreach staff of the foundation share a common-agreed purpose to lessen the impact of the HIV epidemic on individuals, families and communities, through innovation and their passion for humanity.

Fully self-funded by grants and other raised funds, its shared vision for the future includes the continuation of current TB/HIV-related work of treatment, care, prevention and education, particularly in the most vulnerable populations, while staying abreast of new developments and continuing to contribute to cutting-edge information in HIV and TB public health, social and clinical research.

Riaan Beukes, pictured on the left, accepted the award on behalf of the foundation.



Caster Semenya: Winner of the Ubuntu Sports Diplomacy Award



Since winning a gold in the women's 800-m final at the 2009 World Championships with a time of 1:55.45, Caster Semenya has not looked back. She earned a silver medal in the 800 m at the 2012 Olympic Games in London – becoming the first black South African woman to win an Olympic medal in the field.

There are few who can dispute that 2016 was Caster's year, seeing her snatch the Gold medal in Rio de Janeiro in the 800 m.

Caster has captured the mind, heart and spirits of people across the entire world. Her determination to triumph against all odds, her sheer willpower and the grace in the face of tribulation have made her one of South Africa's all-time favourite sportspeople.

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of South Africa, TIAN Xuejun: Winner of the OR Tambo Excellence in Diplomacy Award



The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, awarded the OR Tambo Excellence in Diplomacy Award to a diplomat residing in South Africa that has contributed immensely to the upliftment of the South African people over and above the traditional channels of diplomacy.

Winnie Madikizela Mandela: Winner of the OR Tambo Lifetime Achievement Award



Winnie Madikizela Mandela is known for her constant fight for justice and triumph over tribulation. Her name is synonymous with the struggle for liberation in South Africa and she is lovingly referred to as the Mother of the Nation.

She attended primary school in Bizana and matriculated at Shawbury High School, where she distinguished herself as a person with exceptional leadership qualities. In 1953, she was admitted to the Jan Hofmeyr School of Social Work in Johannesburg. She completed her degree in social work in 1955, and was offered a scholarship for further study in the United States of America. However, she turned it down and opted for a challenging position as the first qualified black medical social worker at the Baragwanath Hospital in Johannesburg instead.

She became interested in politics while working at the hospital. In the mid-1950s, she became involved in the African National Congress (ANC). In 1957, she met Nelson Mandela. At the time he was on trial, along with 155 other people, in the now infamous Treason Trial following the civil disobedience campaigns of the early 1950s. They were married on 19 June 1958 in a Methodist service in the Transkei, after which Winnie settled in Mandela's home in Soweto.

From 1962, Winnie was subjected to a virtually uninterrupted series of legal orders, which prevented her from living, working and socialising. She was banned under the Suppression of Communism Act, 1950 for her part in the struggle and was restricted to the Orlando Township in Soweto. She started to work clandestinely for the ANC, which included participating in underground meetings and the printing and circulation of pamphlets.

In 1969, she was detained under the Terrorism Act, 1967 and was placed in solitary confinement for 17 months. In 1970, she was placed under house arrest. She repeatedly flouted this order and was charged on a number of occasions. During the 1976 youth uprisings, she established the Black Women's Federation and the Black Parents' Association. She fought gallantly throughout the 1970s and 1980s undergoing constant harassment, arrest and banishment from the apartheid regime.

Just before the advent of freedom in 1993, she was elected president of the ANC Women's League, a position that she held until 2003. She was voted onto the ANC National Executive Committee (NEC) in Polokwane.

The award was accepted on her behalf by her granddaughter, Lindo Zici Mandela.

Gertrude Shope: Winner of the OR Tambo Lifetime Achievement Award



The second Lifetime Achievement Award was awarded to the freedom fighter, stalwart and fierce feminist, Ms Gertrude Shope. Ms Shope was born in Johannesburg, and grew up in Zimbabwe. She was trained as a teacher and when she was 29 years she decided to join the ANC. Soon afterwards, she left teaching as part of the campaign to boycott Bantu Education. She was the chairperson of the Central Western Jabavu Branch of the Federation of South African Women.

In 1966, the ANC convinced her to leave South Africa and join her husband, Mark Shope, in exile. While in exile, Gertrude and her husband lived in Prague, Botswana, Tanzania, Czechoslovakia, Zambia and Nigeria. From 1970 to 1971, she was secretary to the head of the ANC's Woman's Section, Florence Mophosho.

Together these two women started the publication, *Voice of the Women*. Ms Shope then became the ANC's chief representative in Lusaka and in 1981, was promoted to head of the Women's Section. She became a member of the NEC of the ANC in 1985. In 1991, Shope was elected president of the ANC's Women's League, a position she held until 1993. She worked together with Albertina Sisulu in convening the ANC's Internal Leadership Corps Task Force from 1990 to 1991. In 1994, Ms Shope became a Member of Parliament in the Government of National Unity.



The OR Tambo Lifetime Achievement Award is named after DIRCO's patron saint, as he is fondly known.

His efforts in mobilising world support against the apartheid regime, were influential in the United Nations (UN) Resolution to declare apartheid a crime against humanity in the late 1970s, thus leading to the expulsion of apartheid South Africa from the UN.

And consistent with the progressive internationalism of OR Tambo, South Africa continues to advocate for the establishment of a rules-based multilateral order that reflects the current global reality and that does not advance the interests of powerful countries at the expense of poorer countries.

South Africa has also taken a firm stance against militarism and imperialist aggression as tools of foreign policy. South Africa's approach to global conflict resolution espouses the principles pioneered by OR Tambo, which stress the primacy of dialogue in settling disputes.

The Oliver and Adelaide Tambo Foundation was established in 2011, with the aim to promote and popularise the legacies of both Oliver Reginald Tambo and Adelaide Tshukudu Tambo. The foundation's mandate is to promote the legacies of these two patriots by supporting and addressing issues of socio-economic upliftment and advancement, education, women and youth empowerment, and the promotion of arts, culture and heritage.

The year 2017 marks an important era as the foundation celebrates Oliver Tambo's centenary. To celebrate his life, the foundation aims to embark on a campaign to promote his legacy, and highlight his values in addressing challenges and aspirations held by both South Africans and citizens across the world.

Minister Nkoana-Mashabane commissioned the development of a work of art by the young artist Setlamorago Mashilo and this was handed over to Linda Vilakazi from the Oliver and Adelaide Tambo Foundation during the Ubuntu Awards.



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Editor: Delien Burger

Picture Editor: Jacoline Schoonees

Design and layout: Michelle Greeff