

Building a Nation of Good Governance & Stewardship Through Mandela's Values.

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Presentation at the Mandela Day Social Dialogue, Nelson Mandela Museum, 18 July 2022.

Introduction.

- As we converge here today to remember our global icon, Nelson Mandela, we need to pause for a moment and reflect on his legacy.
- As our country wrestles with challenges of intermittent electricity cuts, crime, poverty, weak economy, and constantly increasing petrol prices, the question becomes: **What has gone wrong in our nation?**
- Importantly, what can we draw from Mandela's values to get ourselves out of this situation?
- In the same breathe, we gather here to reflect on the life and times of ANC DSG, Jessie Duarte who passed on yesterday and I had the privilege to honour her on SABC 404 and again earlier today on Ligwalagwala FM.
- The common denominator between the two leaders (Mandela and Duarte) is that they both understood **good governance** and **stewardship**, which are the pillars for nation building.

Conceptual Definitions.

- **Governance:**

- In simple terms, governance means the practice of governing / ruling / administering.
- It encompasses “the system by which an organisation is controlled and operates, and the mechanisms by which it, and its people, are held to **account**.”
- Therefore, anyone involved in governance should subject himself/herself to accountability in order to govern well.

- **Stewardship:**

- Cockburn et al. (2019) argue that stewardship as a concept has had various meanings attached to it over time.
 - For Attfield (2015:2), stewardship “involves the responsible **care** or management of some good, together with some kind of **answerability**.”
 - Some see stewardship as being concerned with the management of human behaviour as it relates to the natural world (Welshman, 2012).
- Therefore, **good governance** and **stewardship** are some of the building blocks for nation-building. Leaders need both.

Conceptual Definitions.....

❖ Leadership:

- The concept “leadership” can best be summarised as follows:

L – Listen.

E – Enthusiasm.

A – Aspiring.

D – Decisive.

E – Empower and Encourage.

R – Responsible.

S – Supportive,.

H – Humble.

I – Inspire.

P – Plan (Surji, 2015: 155).

Drawing From Mandela's Values to Ensure **Good Governance** and **Stewardship**.

- Good governance and stewardship constitute a culmination of various **attributes** and **activities** discernible from a leader.
- Not all leaders possess these skills and not all of them have the ability to build nations through these skills.
- Mandela was an epitome of a number of values critical for good governance and stewardship.
- I will enumerate five of such values for the purposes of today's presentation in the interest of time.
- **These are:** honesty, honour, humility, selflessness, and vision.

Drawing From Mandela's Values Continued...

A. Honesty:

- Honest leaders are not shy to admit when they have **failed** or have done **wrong**.
- Mandela once said: "I am not a saint, unless you think of a saint as a sinner who keeps on trying."

B. Honour:

- Honour is **earned** through one's actions.
- Mandela stated that: "Honour belongs to those who never forsake the truth even when things seem dark and grim...(Mandela, 1969).
- This ties up with Oliver Tambo's view that: "Let's tell the truth to ourselves. Even if the truth coincides with what the enemy is saying. Let us tell the truth."

Drawing From Mandela's Values Continued...

C. Humility:

- A leader who fails to humble himself before those he leads, digs his own grave; he does not deserve to be a leader and cannot steer the nation in the right direction.
- In the Bible, the Book of James 4:10 reads as follows: “Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.”
- Mandela once argued that: “It is not at all correct to elevate any human being to the position of a god” (Mandela, 1990).
- Only a humble leader could say this, other leaders want to be worshipped – even if they have nothing to offer, except intimidation, bribery and political rhetoric!

Drawing From Mandela's Values Continued...

E. Selflessness:

- A leader who is obsessed with **self-elevation** and **egotism** is a **liability** to the nation.
- During his lecture on 12 July 2008, Mandela said the following: “A fundamental concern for others in our individual and community lives would go a long way in making the world the better place we so passionately dream of” (Mandela, 2008).

E. Vision:

- A leader with no vision cannot achieve good governance or stewardship.
 - Mandela once said: “The leader’s first task is to create a vision. His second is to create a following to help him implement the vision...” (Mandela, 1993).
- Before building a nation, a leader has to envision how that nation is to be built.

Conclusion

- As I conclude, it is important to state that nation building is not a child's play.
- I call for **erudite** leaders who are **compassionate** and who put people first.
- Mandela proved beyond doubt that he was such a leader; he facilitated the building of schools, clinics, hospitals and cared for the needy.
- The late Jessie Duarte **emulated** Mandela in many ways.
- As the ANC prepares for its policy & elective conferences, it would be advisable for leaders and delegates to put the nation first, not to worry about leadership positions.
- Unless they do that, nation building will remain a **dream** at best & a **mirage** at worst!

ENKOSI! NGIYABONGA!
THANK YOU! ASANTE SANA!

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