



**Statement of H.E. John W. Ashe
President of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,
on the passing of Nelson Mandela**

It is with great sadness that I learn of the passing today of an international peace icon and perhaps the greatest moral leader of our time, Mr. Nelson Mandela, the former President of South Africa. As the President of the General Assembly, I would like to pay tribute to President Mandela and to convey my sincere condolences to his family and to the Government and people of South Africa on the occasion of the loss of a great architect of the new South Africa and indeed the new Africa.

In 1994, Mr. Mandela became the first democratically elected President of South Africa, embracing his former oppressors and leading the country on a new path of healing. By so doing, President Mandela chose

and never again shall it be that this beaut

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