SPEECH BY HONOURABLE SENZENI ZOKWANA, MP, MINISTER OF
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES AT THE COMMEMORATION OF
NELSON MANDELA DAY, AT WITTEWATER, WESTERN CAPE

20 JULY 2015

TAKE ACTION, INSPIRE CHANGE, MAKE EVERY DAY A MANDELA DAY
Programme Director, the leadership of Carl Schreve Moravian Primary School our hosts, our councillors, our leaders of tomorrow—learners, ladies and gentlemen. Nelson Mandela International Day was launched in recognition of Nelson Mandela’s birthday on 18 July 2009 via unanimous decision of the United Nations General Assembly. It was inspired by a call made by former President Nelson Mandela in 2008 for the next generation to take on the burden of leadership in addressing the world’s social injustices. The idea of Mandela Day was inspired by Nelson Mandela at his 90th birthday celebrations in London’s Hyde Park in 2008 when he said: "It is time for new hands to lift the burdens. It is in your hands now."

Mandela Day is celebrated globally every year on 18 July as a day to commemorate and celebrate the life of Nelson Mandela. Nelson Mandela was a former struggle hero and was the first President of a democratic South Africa. This humble giant was born on the 18 July in Mvezo in the Eastern Cape. The aim of Mandela Day is to inculcate a collective culture of selflessness for all citizens of the world. Most importantly, it serves to steer citizens towards acts of volunteerism for the less privileged.

The day further recognises Mandela’s "values and his dedication to the service of humanity". It acknowledges his contribution to the struggle for democracy internationally and the promotion of a culture of peace throughout the world. It is more than a celebration of Madiba’s life and legacy; it is a global movement and honour to his life’s work and an act to change the world for better. 67 Minutes—"Nelson Mandela has been making an imprint on the world for 67 years, beginning in 1942 when he first
started to campaign for the human rights of every South African. His life has been an inspiration to the world," the Nelson Mandela Foundation said.

“By devoting 67 minutes of their time, one minute for every year of Madiba’s public service, people can make a small gesture of solidarity with humanity and a step towards a global movement for good.”

The Nelson Mandela Day message is centred on the central themes of:

- Food security
- Education and literacy
- Shelter and infrastructure
- Service and volunteerism.

It is against the above-mentioned background and message that the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries intends to celebrate former President Nelson Mandela’s aspirations and mark his contribution to reconstruction and development of the poor and the working class. Key is the rallying for business to invest in community development through Public-Private Partnership to support the most vulnerable communities and individuals.

The right to have access to sufficient food by all citizens is enshrined in the *South African Constitution*. However, according to the Statistics South Africa’s *General Household Survey (GHS) 2015*, the number of individuals with inadequate or severely
inadequate access to food increased from 13,8 million people in 2013 to 14,1 million people in 2014. Food security in South Africa has to be addressed within the context of issues such as the changing population growth patterns and macroeconomic issues. The South African population increased by (+3,4%) from an estimated 50,59 million people in 2010 to 54 million people in 2014 (Stats SA—Mid Year Population Estimates, 2014).

The unadjusted real gross domestic product (GDP) at market price for the first quarter of 2015 increased by 2,1% year-on-year. During the same period, unemployment increased by 1,2% to 26,4% from 25,2% in the first quarter of 2014, which is the highest rate since 2003 (Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2015). When comparing October 2013 to October 2014, the cost of the basic food basket increased by about R40 (+8,8%) in nominal terms from R462 to R502 (NAMC Food Price Monitor, 2014).

Moreover, urbanisation and declining agrarian activities in significant parts of the country, which were exacerbated by the drought situation experienced in the 2014/15 production season, have transformed the South African households into net consumers of purchased food. Less than a fifth of households (18,9%) in South Africa were involved in agriculture in 2014 (GHS, 2014). These changes have an impact on poor consumers’ livelihood systems. Programme Director, it is in our best interest to work together and move South Africa forward.

Thank you.