in the footprints
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an agency of the
Department of Sport, Arts and Culture

Media Statement: African Liberation Heritage Indaba

Date: 21st October 2026

THE NELSON MANDELA MUSEUM TO HOST THE FIFTH EDITION OF THE AFRICAN LIBERATION HERITAGE INDABA

The Nelson Mandela Museum, in partnership with the University of the Free State (UFS), through its Department of History and the Centre for Gender and Africa Studies, as well as the Free State Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation, will host the fifth annual African Liberation Heritage Indaba at the UFS South Campus in Bloemfontein.

The 05th edition of the African Liberation Heritage Indaba will be officially opened by the MEC of the Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation in the Free State, MEC: Ms Ntombizanele Beauty Sifuba

The African Liberation Heritage Indaba is scheduled for 28 and 29 October 2026 and brings together key stakeholders to reflect on Africa's liberation heritage and its relevance to contemporary society. The indaba takes place at a time when we celebrate the life of Oliver Reginald Tambo.

This year's indaba is held under the theme *Re-imagining our heritage institutions for a new era*, with the aim of exploring how museums and archives can be transformed into innovative, inclusive, and accessible spaces that engage new audiences. The two-day programme will bring together academics, heritage practitioners, and diverse leaders to share knowledge and develop ideas to strengthen transformative and emancipatory roles within heritage institutions.

Dr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela once emphasised that "cultural heritage and higher education must serve nation-building, social justice, and the transformation of society away from past inequalities". The Nelson Mandela Museum and the UFS will use this African Liberation Heritage Indaba as a platform to reposition heritage and cultural institutions and institutions of higher learning as hubs of social justice, social cohesion, nation-building, and youth empowerment by enabling heritage and cultural knowledge transfer and development, as well as using heritage resources as stimulants for socio-economic development to advance fundamental human rights.

Drawing from this year's theme of *Re-Imagining our heritage institutions for a new era*, panellists and attendees will engage on these sub themes:

- The role and relevance of heritage institutions in preserving their family legacy and ways in which they can be reimagined for a new era
- Modernisation – Positioning museums and heritage institutions as relevant and innovative centres of knowledge in South Africa.

- Economic inclusion – Ensuring heritage contributes to social and economic development.
- Community engagement – Actively involving the public in interpreting and sharing heritage.
- Social responsibility – Using heritage to foster social cohesion and address contemporary societal challenges.

The media is invited as follow:

Date: 28-29 October 2026

Time: 08-15:00

Venue: Isifundo A3, South Campus, University of the Free State

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