



1 SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Many pivotal events in South Africa's history mark  
3 that country's struggle for democracy and racial equality; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1950 and 1952 the South African Government  
5 created race based policies that severely restricted access to  
6 land and movement by blacks; and

7 WHEREAS, During the 1950s, the African National Congress  
8 (ANC), formed in 1912 to bring all Africans together as one  
9 people to defend their rights and freedoms, was reenergized to  
10 aggressively fight for the rights of blacks; and

11 WHEREAS, A mass mobilization campaign began shortly  
12 thereafter in reaction to these laws, a consequence of which  
13 was the creation of the Freedom Charter, based on principles of  
14 human rights and racial equality adopted in 1955 at the  
15 Congress of the People in Soweto; and

16 WHEREAS, On March 21, 1960, during a rally protesting the  
17 laws that restricted movement of blacks, 69 unarmed people were  
18 killed by police officers in the Sharpeville incident; and

19 WHEREAS, In 1962, a new stage of international pressure on  
20 the South African Government to change its repressive policies  
21 began when the United Nations General Assembly adopted  
22 Resolution 1761 which called on its members to institute  
23 economic sanctions against South Africa; and

24 WHEREAS, Nelson Mandela, who secretly exercised his  
25 leadership in the ANC, was arrested and sentenced to five years  
26 imprisonment in 1962 for incitement; and

27 WHEREAS, Several of Mandela's senior ANC colleagues,  
28 including Walter Sisulu, were arrested, and Mandela was brought

1 from jail to trial with his ANC colleagues resulting in  
2 sentences of life imprisonment for Mandela and his colleagues;  
3 and

4 WHEREAS, During a protest march against being taught in the  
5 Afrikaans language in 1976, police fired on youth in Soweto,  
6 killing 13 year old Hector Petersen and at least three others,  
7 precipitating a massive flood of violence; and

8 WHEREAS, Stephen Biko, the founder of the new Black  
9 Consciousness movement, was killed as a result of police  
10 brutality in 1977; and

11 WHEREAS, In 1990, South African President F.W. de Klerk  
12 lifted restrictions on 33 opposition groups, including the  
13 African National Congress; and

14 WHEREAS, Nelson Mandela was released after 27 years of  
15 imprisonment on February 11, 1990; and

16 WHEREAS, Nelson Mandela and President F.W. de Klerk were  
17 jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993; and

18 WHEREAS, On April 27, 1994, South Africa held its first  
19 democratic elections and Nelson Mandela, as the leader of the  
20 ANC party, was elected unopposed as President of South Africa  
21 in 1994; and

22 WHEREAS, During his presidential inaugural speech, which  
23 was attended by the largest gathering of international leaders  
24 ever held in South Africa, Nelson Mandela called for a "time of  
25 healing" and stated that his government would fight against  
26 discrimination of any kind; therefore, be it

27 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-THIRD GENERAL  
28 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we recognize and

1 commemorate the tenth anniversary of South Africa's first  
2 democratic elections; and be it further

3       RESOLVED, That we remember and honor the individuals who  
4 contributed to and dedicated their lives to promoting and  
5 championing democracy in South Africa, most notably Nelson  
6 Mandela, Stephen Biko, F.W. de Klerk, Chris Hani, Helen Joseph,  
7 Thabo Mbeki, Walter Sisulu, Joe Slovo, Helen Suzman, Oliver  
8 Tambo, and Desmond Tutu; and be it further

9       RESOLVED, That we recognize the exceptional character of  
10 Nelson Mandela for his dedication to humanity, commitment to  
11 democratic ideals, and continued display of tolerance and  
12 spirit of conciliation for the world; and be it further

13       RESOLVED, That we recognize the pivotal events in South  
14 Africa's history that mark the struggle for democracy and  
15 racial equality; and be it further

16       RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the  
17 President of the Republic of South Africa.