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PRESS RELEASE

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Attention: News Editor
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Bafokeng Express Respect for Madiba's Vision and Values

Amid our overwhelming sadness at this giant loss, the Bafokeng are thankful for Ntate Madiba's life of sacrifice for us all. Today we can also celebrate the life and legacy of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, a man who personified the values we seek to build in our community. In admiration and humility, and in light of his spirit of inclusiveness, we will always respect him, even as one of our own forbearers. We will seek to live and expand his legacy.

Despite his long and hard road, Madiba was a warm-hearted man of compassion, but also a practical man of planning and building: he had a long-term vision for South Africa that allowed him to see beyond the seemingly intractable challenges of the moment. He was able to gather others to believe in and support this vision, leading by the power of his convictions, his drive for equality and the spirit of reconciliation, rather than by focusing attention on himself. He was a principled yet humble leader and by expressing strong values and living by them consistently in his personal and professional life, he used his position to inspire those around him to think differently about themselves, their fellow citizens and their contributions to a collective future.

Madiba grew up in the context of a traditional community with traditional decision-making structures, and drew on the power of consultation and consensus throughout the course of his leadership. This made him all the more inclusive, approachable and influential. He shared the traditional understanding of the need to address the holistic person – the individual as a social and emotional being, linked into a wider community – which strengthened his ability to find common ground with former enemies and allies alike. When the shape of our current democratic state and society were being negotiated, Nelson Mandela insisted on the need to build on, not reject, our particularly African cultures and structures, culminating in the integration of traditional governance into our Constitutional dispensation.

In recognition of Madiba's legacy, we undertake to continue working towards a strong, mutually supportive and efficient partnership between traditional and municipal systems of governance, since we share the same aims: dignified and prosperous communities.

Go well, Ntate, you will always be with us.

Kgosi Leruo T Molotlegi, on behalf of the Royal Bafokeng Nation

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