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To honour Mandela, UN asks everyone to devote 67 minutes to public service



Nelson Mandela in February 2005

15 July 2011 –

To mark the second annual [Nelson Mandela International Day](#), the United Nations is encouraging people around the globe to perform 67 minutes of public service – one minute for every year of the South African leader’s own service to humanity.

The call is part of the “Take Action! Inspire Change” campaign by the Mandela Foundation in recognition of the contributions made by Mr. Mandela, as a human rights lawyer, freedom

fighter, prisoner of conscience, international peacemaker, and the first democratically-elected president of a free South Africa.

“Together, the best way we can thank Nelson Mandela for his work is by taking action for others and inspiring change,” [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon said in a [message](#) for the Day.

In November 2009, the UN General Assembly declared 18 July – Mr. Mandela’s birthday – “Nelson Mandela International Day” in recognition of the former South African President’s contribution to the culture of peace and freedom.

In a separate [video message](#), Mr. Ban calls on people everywhere to embrace Mr. Mandela’s message to change the world and make it a better place. “Tutor a child. Feed someone less fortunate. Care for your environment. Volunteer at a hospital or community centre. Be a part of a global movement to make the world a better place.

“Together, we can help people achieve the dignity and liberty that are their birthright. That is the best way we can honour Nelson Mandela,” he stated.

On Monday, which is Mr. Mandela’s 93rd birthday, senior officials, diplomats and staff from the UN will gather in New York’s Central Park to perform public service to mark the Day.

Also in New York, an interactive [exhibit](#) called “Take Action! Inspire Change” will be displayed at UN Headquarters at which visitors can learn about Mr. Mandela through a range of video and audio materials, as well as make their pledge to “67 minutes of service” in a message that will be sent to Mr. Mandela himself.

Other UN offices around the world will also mark the Day by undertaking activities in their local communities.

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