

Addressing poverty, conflicts best gift for Mandela: Radebe

The best gift the world can give former President Nelson Mandela is to renew its commitment to eradicating poverty, conflicts and violence against women and children, says Justice Minister Jeff Radebe.



(Image: GCIS)

Addressing the UN General Assembly in New York on Mandela Day on Wednesday, Radebe said that as the world celebrated Mandela's 94th birthday, it was important to remember the plight of millions of people, women and children who are subjected to brutality, oppression, violence and gross violations of human rights across the globe.

He noted that the former president had dedicated his entire life to the course of freedom, justice and equality for the people of South Africa and Africa.

"He led our nation with humility through a difficult period of transition and national reconciliation. Even when he was a president he remained committed to the cause of justice and human dignity. The improvement of the quality of life of our people was his foremost concern."

Mandela committed himself and did everything he could to address the challenges of poverty, underdevelopment and the scourge of wars and conflicts in the African continent, the minister pointed out.

"...the best gift we can give to President Mandela for his birthday is to renew our commitment and resolve to the eradication of poverty and underdevelopment; to end violence against women and children and continue to advance gender equality all over the world; and to comprehensively address conflicts and wars," he said.

The world owed it to Mandela to continue to improve the lives of the world citizenry in a spirit of love and selflessness, Radebe added.

Mandela Day presented an opportunity for the UN to reflect on efforts and endeavours in the service of humanity.

"Mandela Day will have no meaning if we are not taking the opportunity to redirect and refocus this Organisation on matters that are of concern to the majority of humanity. In spite of our diversities as Member States we are all bound together by the common principles espoused in the Charter of the United Nations and our collective resolve to build a peaceful, united and caring world," he said.

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