Message from H.E. Koleka Mqulwana, High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa in Kenya
on the occasion of the unveiling of the busts of Nelson Mandela and Dedan Kimathi
at the Dedan Kimathi University of Technology.

Every year on 18 July South Africans together with the international community honour our former president and international icon Nelson Mandela in the celebration of Nelson Mandela International Day. In 2018 the day was not observed as a normal International Mandela Day where citizens' across the globe donate 67 minutes of their time to performing good deeds, but was used as an opportunity for us to remember the time in which transformation gained traction in our country and celebrate the man who made a meaningful contribution. This saw the decision to observe the year 2018 as the Nelson Mandela Centenary by the Heads of State and Government (HOS/G) of the African Union at the 30th Ordinary Session of the Assembly held on 28 – 29 January 2018. The theme under these celebrations was ***"Be the legacy: Celebrating the birth of a world icon and a life of service***" with the idea is to do something that will benefit those around us.

The year 2018 also marked the centenary of the birth of Albertina Sisulu a prominent leader and fearless champion of democracy and human rights.. The theme for the centenary is: Albertina Sisulu **"A woman of fortitude" in recognition of her courage, discipline, integrity and love for her country**. Ma Sisulu was truly a woman of fortitude. Her strength, resilience and the will to carry on shone like a beacon in the darkest days of apartheid. Albertina Sisulu dedicated her life to her country and its people. She will forever be remembered as a fearless leader in the struggle and a mother to the nation. She worked tirelessly towards creating a better and more equitable South Africa.

In keeping with the themes and history, the High Commission partnered with the University of Dedan Kimathi to celebrate the legacy of Nelson Mandela and Dedan

Kimathi. History indicates that Nelson Mandela's visit to the Republic of Kenya in July 1990 was aimed at paying homage to the Mau Mau. So renown was the Legacy of Dedan Kimathi that Nelson Mandela was drawn to the country by three aspects, which were to visit Dedan Kimathi's grave, meet his widow and the former Mau Mau commander. This inspired the High Commission to partner with the University of Dedan Kimathi, in order to celebrate the legacy of these two struggle heroes, who shared common traits of courage, passion, integrity, selflessness and humility. The centenary of Nelson Mandela seeks to create a society that values these qualities and live by them.

We embrace values of our heroes and heroines and continue to honour their legacies through humanitarian acts and initiatives that acknowledge their never-ending quest to change the world for the better. The overarching objective is to inspire individuals to take action to help change the world for the better, and in doing so build a global movement for good.

We hope that the busts that will be unveiled in the University's heroes garden will be a constant reminder to our youth that the future of the African continent depends on them. They have a huge role to play in shaping the direction of the continent, just like the generation of Nelson Mandela, Mama Sisulu and Dedan Kimathi. The youth must believe that just as our icons, they have the power to turn their lives around and contribute to the development of Africa.

I thank you

