

## **SPEECH ON PRESENTATION CREDENTIALS - 25 JULY 2022**

Your Excellency,

Mr. President,

South Africa is born out of a difficult past. Our history is one of enforced division, oppression and sustained conflict.

On 27 April 1994 we cast aside centuries of discrimination and oppression to form a new society built on the foundation of freedom, democracy and respect for human rights.

Our road to democracy and the new SA was certainly not easy. We could only have achieved what we have been able to as South Africans, as a result of the unyielding sacrifice of thousands upon thousands of patriots.

Today, I take this opportunity to hand over my Letters of Credence to Your Excellency, in the month where we celebrate the birthday of Nelson Mandela, a prolific and distinguished freedom fighter, a politician, and a true giant of both the governing party and the South African Struggle for National Liberation.

President Nelson Mandela provided an early snapshot of the role the Democratic South Africa would seek to play in the global South and its key relations with countries of Latin America, and as we are striving to strengthen our South-South ties to help us fight against political as well as economic marginalisation.

South Africa is the strategic partner of the Bolivian Republic of Venezuela. Formal Diplomatic ties between the two countries were established in 1993; however, the exchange of diplomatic representatives was established in 1995 and 1998 respectively.

Mr President,

When we characterise the South Africa-Venezuela relations as being underpinned by historic ties of solidarity, for us these dates back to when the late ANC President Oliver Tambo and the best friend of Nelson Mandela criss-crossed the region mobilising material and diplomatic support and connecting with progressive governments and like-minded organisations during the 60s, 70s, and 80s.

I see my first task as being to build on the excellent work my predecessor Ambassador Nkosi has performed in this beautiful country with vast tourism potential and endowed with natural resources, and take them to the next level.

South Africa-Venezuela strategic bilateral relations have a potential to contribute to economic growth and also for the benefit of the poor and the marginalised of both countries.

The ANC of Nelson Mandela is a dependable ally of the government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and you can count on my country's dependability, Mr President.

Today we use our collective strengths to build the South African and the Venezuelan nation in order to deliver better life for all of our peoples. As people in South Africa, in Africa, in Latin America and all over the globe; even in the face of remarkable threat or evil such as racism, war, poverty and inequality - we hold a capacity for love; a capacity for the true and the good; for caring and sharing; a capacity for compassion; for transcendence; for reconciliation and peace; and a capacity for shared prosperity.

Our story - the South African story - is but simply a story of hope. We have exited the past. Today as South Africans we actively affirm with pride the dignity of an unfolding and developing country and the celebration of our collective

humanity. This auspicious occasion affirms our unity in the struggle against poverty, hunger and ignorance.

Mr President

In conclusion I now hand over Letters of Recall of my Predecessor and my Letters of Credence to Your Excellency in memory of Nelson Mandela and bring with me warm and fraternal greetings from my President, His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa.

I commit to strengthening the ties between South Africa and Venezuela, inspired by Madiba's values and dedication to the service of humanity.

I trust that all meets with Your Excellency's approval.

I THANK YOU!

**ADV. LINDIWE MASEKO**

**AMBASSASOR-DESIGNATE**