

AFRICA CULTURE WEEK

AFRICA TODAY: A SILENT RECOVERY



Herb
125 The Grove
E. 125
London W5 3SL

~~Herb~~
~~125 The Grove~~
~~E. 125~~
~~London W5 3SL~~

October 25-November 2, 1997
African Student Union
Michigan State University

- early 1990s
- feels like home + immigration + tourism
- T.R.C. - more + more like Africa country
- R.I.M.
- Reem last
- New again
- Libya, Mali, Cuba
- Europe took hundreds of yrs to
- Neon organ
- national

AFRICA CULTURE WEEK DINNER

PROGRAM

6:00-8:00 pm	Dinner & Live Music	<i>The Steel Band</i>
	Introduction of MC	<i>Brima Ngombe</i>
8:00-8:05 pm	Opening Remarks by MC	<i>Isaac Kalumbo</i>

SPEAKERS

8:05-8:10 pm	Introduction of Guest Speakers	<i>Angela & Ezabele</i>
8:10-8:20 pm	Reverend Lester Stone	
8:20-8:30 pm	Ahmed Kathadra	
8:30-9:00 pm	Messages of Support	
	FGSA	<i>Larry Campbell</i>
	BSA	<i>Rukei Draw</i>
	AAW	<i>Maria Wanzala</i>
	CSA	<i>Warren Southerland</i>
	African Studies Director	<i>Dr. David Wiley</i>
	Assistant Provost	<i>Dr. Lee June</i>
	ASU Advisor	<i>Geneva Smitherman</i>
	ASU President	<i>Somadoda Fikeni</i>
	Awards Presentation	<i>Tangeni & Rose</i>
9:00-9:20 pm	Traditional Dance	<i>Amka Africa</i>
9:20-9:30 pm	Live Music	<i>The Steel Band</i>
9:30-10:00pm	African Wedding Attire Show	
10:00-10:30pm	Traditional Dance	<i>Rangira Group</i>
11:00-11:05pm	Wise Words & Vote of Thanks	<i>Thompson Tsodzo</i>
		<i>Nkhelebeni Phaswana</i>
11:05pm	Dance	<i>Carribean Spice</i>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Our sponsors and supporters at MSU and environs.
Special thanks to the Task Force Committee.*



The Ahmed Kathrada Collection

Michigan State University

Ahmed M. Kathrada is a veteran of the South African liberation struggle, one of the famous Rivonia trialists and a long-serving political prisoner on Robben Island and at Pollsmoor Maximum Prison. Kathrada was born of Indian immigrant parents on August 21, 1929, in Schweizer-Reneke in the then Western Transvaal. He became a political activist while still a teenager when he got involved in the activities of the Communist Party and the Transvaal Indian (Youth) Congress. In the 1950s, he participated in many campaigns of the Congress Alliance alongside ANC-leaders like Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu. He was one of the accused in the Treason Trial (1956 - 1961) against 156 leaders and activists of the liberation movement. After the banning of the ANC and other organizations in 1960, he continued his political activities in spite of detentions and increasingly more severe house arrest measures against him. He went underground in early 1963. In July of that year, he was arrested at the internal headquarters of Umkhonto we Sizwe at Rivonia. Although not a member of the military wing of the ANC himself, In October 1963 he became one of the accused in the Rivonia Trial, charged with sabotage and attempting to overthrow the state by violent means. At the end of the trial in June 1964, Kathrada together with Mandela, Sisulu, Mbeki, Mlangeni, Motsoaledi, Mhlaba and Goldberg, was sentenced to life imprisonment. He spent the next 18 year with his colleagues in the isolation section of the Maximum Security prison at Robben Island. In October 1982 he was moved to Pollsmoor Maximum Prison in Cape Town to join Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Raymond Mhlaba, and Andrew Mlangeni who had been moved there a few months before. With the exception of Mandela, the Rivonia Trialists were finally released in October 1989. While in jail at Robben Island and in Pollsmoor, Kathrada completed BA degree in Arts and Bibliography, as well as an Honors degree in History and African Politics. Following the unbannings of February 1990, Kathrada served in the ANC National Interim Leadership Committee and the Interim Leadership Group of the SACP. He gave up the latter position when he was elected onto the ANC National Executive Committee at its conference in July 1991. In 1994 Kathrada was elected as a National Assembly member for the ANC and in September 1994 he was appointed political advisor to President Mandela in the newly created post of Parliamentary Counselor.

The Ahmed M. Kathrada Collection consists of microform copies of his prison correspondence, personal notebooks and documents from his prison years, and the Pollsmoor Prison Library list. There is also a printed catalog available for the collection to assist the researcher. It is perhaps the most extensive personal collection of prison papers available for the apartheid years.

The largest part of the collection is Kathrada's prison correspondence, which dates from 1964 - 1989. In his 25 years in prison, Kathrada wrote some 950 letters and sent a large number of cards to family members and friends. He received some 850 letters and several hundred postcards. Most of these letters date from the 1970s and 1980s since in the early years at Robben Island the number of letters he was allowed to send or receive was extremely limited (only two a year in 1964 - 65 and four in 1966 - 67!). The collection contains more than 90% of his prison letters for the period of 1964 - 1974. A fairly large number of Kathrada's outgoing letters (i.e. the carbon copies he made) are missing as they were confiscated by the prison authorities at Robben Island and never returned to him.

Interference with prisoners' correspondence by the prison censors was a frequent and highly irritating feature of prison life, especially during the 1960s and 1970s at Robben Island. The prison letters of Kathrada show many examples of this censorship: incoming letters mutilated by scratching or even cutting out passages which were deemed "undesirable" or outgoing letters which had to be rewritten (sometimes more than once) for similar reasons. The letters that survived mostly deal with family and

personal matters, general issues of a non-political nature, his studies, life in prison (although restricted), recollections from the years before 1964, etc. Kathrada and other political prisoners were not allowed to write to known political activists and censorship focused explicitly on political issues and information about the living conditions in jail, including the situation of his fellow prisoners. Yet the letters provide fascinating information on all these subjects; they especially give a rich and detailed picture of the person Ahmed Kathrada -- as a leading political prisoner of South Africa's main liberation movement, but above all as a thoughtful, caring, and compassionate human being, deeply committed to the universal struggle against racism and injustice.

The Ahmed M. Kathrada Collection is a gift from Mr. Kathrada. The original materials are held by the Mayibuye Centre for History and Culture at the University of Western Cape, which provided the microform copies, the printed catalog, and the preceding text.

The Ahmed Kathrada Collection
Special Collections Division
Michigan State University Libraries
East Lansing, MI 48824 - 1048

Inquiries about tours, the content, or access policies of the collections may be addressed to the Head of Special Collections at the address above.

Telephone: 517 - 355 - 3770; Fax: 517 - 353 - 5069.

The Ex-Political Prisoners' Fund and Artists for a New South Africa

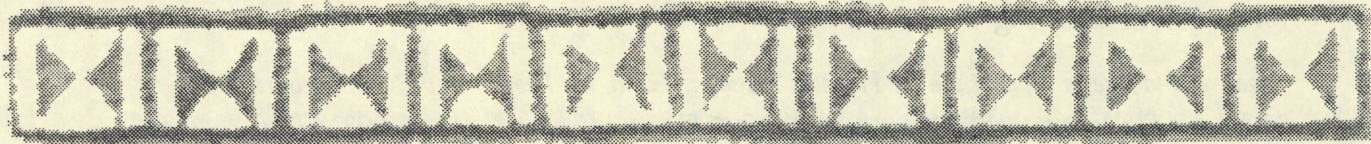
The Ex-Political Prisoners' Fund is a new organization established by President Mandela and other South African leaders once in prison. The organization's purpose is to provide aid to former political prisoners whose sacrifices and suffering contributed significantly towards the birth of the new South Africa, but who are now in dire straits and in urgent need of assistance.

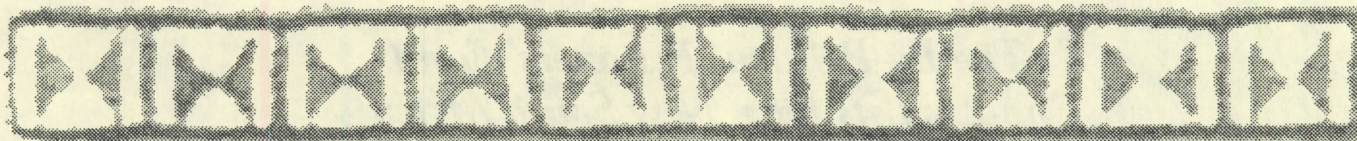
The Fund is currently working to identify and assess the specific needs those ex-political prisoners who, due to advanced age, physical or mental infirmity, lack of employability or other circumstances, are not able to provide sufficiently for themselves or their families.

The Ex-Political Prisoners' Fund was formerly launched in South Africa in October of 1996 at the world premiere of MANDELA. The Fund is chaired by Ahmed Kathrada who was convicted and served 26 years in prison with Mr. Mandela and is now Parliamentary Counselor to the Office of the President as well as a Member of Parliament. Artists for a New South Africa is honored to be working on behalf of the Ex-Political Prisoners' Fund in the U.S.

Artists for a New South Africa (ANSA) is a non-profit organization of artists, entertainment industry professionals and others who are committed to a democratic South Africa with equal rights and opportunity for all people. ANSA was founded in 1989 by Alfre Woodard, Danny Glover, Blair Underwood, Mary Steenburgen, CCH Pounder, Robert Guillaume and friends to support the struggle against apartheid. ANSA now works to help rectify the social problems which are apartheid's legacy. In partnership with South African leaders, artists, agencies of the new government, non-profit organizations and grassroots groups, ANSA works to provide needed resources and to mobilize continued international support to help heal the wounds of the past and build a just and democratic future.

Since 1995 ANSA has shipped over half a million dollars of donated books and medical supplies to impoverished South African communities and helped to raise one and a quarter million dollars for the Ex-Political Prisoners' Fund and the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund. Other ANSA programs include: disseminating micro-grants to small community economic development projects; providing arts and media training for South African students, emerging artists and disadvantaged professionals; serving as an information resource and liaison between South Africa and the U.S. arts and entertainment community; preserving the history of the anti-apartheid struggle for future generations; spreading the call via the media for increased international support, investment, artistic exchange and tourism; and working to advance civil rights in the United States.





***A message about the Ex-Political Prisoners' Fund
from President Nelson Mandela:***

"Last year's reunion on Robben Island of more than 1,200 political prisoners was a stirring and inspiring occasion. Many of us had been incarcerated on Robben Island, others in prisons around the country. Our crime was to challenge the might of the apartheid state and proclaim our birthright. On that day we met as free men and women, rejoicing in our status as citizens of a united, non-racial and non-sexist democracy. Our presence turned the notorious island into a symbol of freedom.

But there was a darker side to that occasion. We came from every point and corner of the country. We were drawn from across the spectrum of our society: government; business; teachers and students; people of religion and professionals; farmers; workers and many more for whom the transition to democracy had brought opportunities to use their talents to the full in building a better life for all South Africans. We were shocked by the plight of many of our colleagues. Some were literally in tatters. Others had with difficulty come long distances. There were bad tales of homes with little food, close to starvation. Some were having to cope with blindness or disabilities, with meagre resources.

Galvanised by this experience, an Ex-Political Prisoners' Committee was formed the very next day. Chaired by Ahmed Kathrada, it was given the mandate to look into the plight of former political prisoners and find ways to alleviate their hardship...That is why the Ex-Political Prisoners' Fund is being launched...I am personally deeply honoured to be associated with so worthy a cause. I wish to make an earnest and heartfelt appeal to all of you and to individuals and organisations in every sector of society, to generously support this fund.

We often pay tribute to the sacrifices that were made in the course of our struggle. Now that we have thrown off oppression, we dare not allow hardship to afflict the lives of those who fought so that we should live in a free and just South Africa. Let us honour our former political prisoners. Let us join hands to ensure that they all may live with dignity."

If you would like to support the Ex-Political Prisoners' Fund, send your tax-deductible contribution to:
ANSA / 9000 W. WASHINGTON BOULEVARD / 2ND FLOOR / CULVER CITY, CA 90232 /310-204-1748

Ahmed A. Kathrada

Ahmed Kathrada was born to Indian immigrant parents in 1929. He became a political activist while still a teenager. In the 1950s he participated in many campaigns of the Congress alliance alongside African National Congress (ANC) leaders, including Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu.

He was one of the accused in the treason trial (1956-61) against 156 leaders and activists of the liberation movement. In 1963 he was arrested and charged with sabotage and attempting to overthrow the state by violent means.

He was sentenced to life imprisonment along with Mandela and others and spent the next 18 years in the isolation section of the maximum security prison at Robben Island, before being transferred to Pollsmoor Maximum Prison in 1982 where he remained until October 1989 when he was released. While in prison he completed three Bachelor of Arts degrees in Bibliography, History and African Politics.

In 1994 he was elected as a National Assembly member and later as a member of Parliament and Parliamentary Counsellor to President Mandela.

During his 25 years in prison he wrote some 950 letters and sent cards to family and friends. He received some 850 letters and several hundred postcards.

The letters show many examples of censorship and interference with prisoner's correspondence: letters mutilated by scratching or even cutting out passages deemed "undesirable," or outgoing letters which had to be rewritten.

The donation of this collection to the MSU Library is a reflection of the long-standing relationship between the African National Congress (ANC) and Michigan State University (which was the first university in the country to divest its holdings in South Africa in protest of apartheid.)

MSU, College of Arts & Letters
320 Linton Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824

The Honorable Ahmed M. Kathrada
c/o Robert Vassen
English Language Center
A-714 Wells Hall
Campus

You and your spouse/guest are cordially invited
to a Reception hosted by
Professor and Mrs. John W. Eadie

in honor of

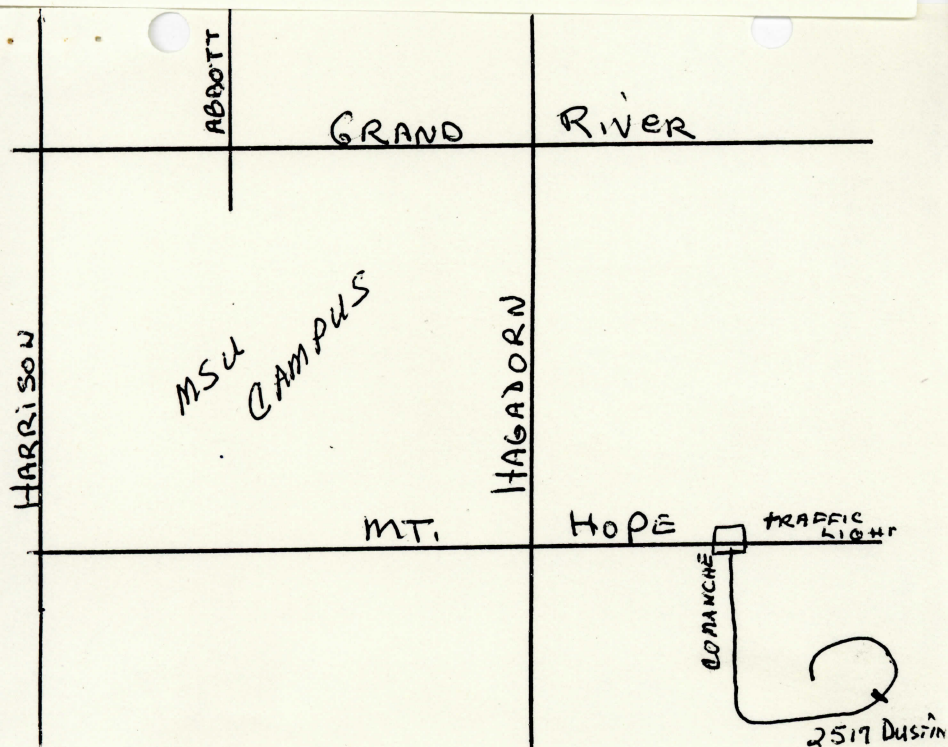
the Honorable Ahmed M. Kathrada
Member of Parliament and
Parliamentary Counsellor to the President of South Africa

Monday, 24 November 1997

6:30 p.m.

2517 Dustin Road, Okemos

RSVP: Regrets Only, by Friday, 21 November
353-9290 or eulenbe2@pilot.msu.edu



Please Come

For Dinner in honor of Ahmed Katheraka
When Sunday November 23rd 6:00 pm
Place 1108 Nautical Drive - Okemos
RSVP Betsy Eldredge + David Plank
347-2053