

NEWS

Sisulu speech

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international pressure - will South Africa be able to chart an independent economic and political future in today's international climate?; and the role of women in the ANC. Sisulu often passed the microphone to his assistant, or Victor Moitie, president of the ANC in Canada, who either

brushed the questions aside or gave weak answers.

Overall, Sisulu's speech was inspirational, and where he lacked concrete solutions, he compensated with hope and confidence.

"We are confident that we cannot be defeated, we have not been defeated before, and we cannot be defeated now on the eve of transferring power to the people," he said. "But all these steps will require each and everyone of you to take interest, to do something."

- Walter Sisulu was born on May 18, 1912. Forced to leave school at an early age he became a gold miner and later went to work in a bakery where he was fired for attempting to organize a union.

- He rose to prominence in the ANC in the 1940s, becoming first Treasurer of the ANC Youth League and, in 1949, the first full time General Secretary of the ANC.

- Along with Nelson Mandela, Sisulu was one of the architects of the ANC's *Defiance of Unjust Laws* Campaign, launched in 1952. This led to a series of arrests and banning orders which saw him arrested as many as six times in one year.

- In 1961 Sisulu helped launch the ANC's military arm, Umkhonto We Sizwe, serving as its political Commissioner and helping to set up regional commands.

- In June 1964 Sisulu, along with Nelson Mandela, was convicted of treason, sentenced to life imprisonment, and sent to South Africa's notorious Robben Island prison.

- Released after 25 years in October 1989, Sisulu immediately plunged back into the struggle. He has been a key figure in reorganizing the ANC inside South Africa and presently serves as Head of the Interim Internal Leadership Core of the ANC with responsibility for the organization's day to day operations.

- In 1991 he was elected Deputy President of the ANC.

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