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CURRICULUM VITAE OF THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, WALTER MAX ULYATE SISULU

Born 18.05.1912 at Engcobo, Transkei. Attended missionary schools in the Transkei. Left school early. Thereafter self-educated.

1928 - 1929 Worked at a dairy and in the mines. 1930's left Transkei for Johannesburg, where he was active in Civic Associations.

1940 - Joined African National Congress.

1943/44 - Together with Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela became founder member of the ANC Youth League.

1944 - Married Albertina Nontsikelelo Sisulu.

1946 - elected to the Executive of the ANC in the Transvaal

1949 - Elected Secretary - General, member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC.

1952 - Led the Defiance campaign Against Unjust Laws, arrested for participation.

1955 - Participated in the Congress of the people, which adopted the Freedom Charter.

1956 - Arrested, with 155 other National Leaders for organising the Congress of the People. Charged with High Treason.

1960 - All accused, including Mr. Sisulu, acquitted and discharged. ANC and other democratic organisations declared illegal.

1960 - 1963 Active in the underground, joins Umkhonto We Sizwe the Military Wing of the ANC.

1963 - Arrested at Rivonia - the underground headquarters of the Liberation Movement.

1964 - Together with Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki and others, sentenced to life imprisonment on Robben Island.

1982 - Transferred from Robben Island to Pollsmoor Prison in the Cape.

1989, October:- released unconditionally after 26 years in prison.

1990 - After the unbanning of the ANC appointed Internal Leader of the organisation, charged with the responsibility of rebuilding the ANC as a legal, mass - based organisation.

1991, July - At the first national conference of the ANC in more than 30 years - elected Deputy President of the ANC.

WALTER MAX ULVATE SISULU
DEPUTY PRESIDENT
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

The story of Walter Sisulu, and the entire Sisulu family, is one of imprisonment, persecution, exile and suffering. However, it also is one of strong familial love, of determination to overcome apartheid and of personal and political triumph. Walter Sisulu's rise from a poor peasant in the Encobo area of the Transkei to become Deputy President of the African National Conference is a tribute to the human spirit and to the struggle for justice and democracy in South Africa.

Walter Sisulu was born in 1912 in Encobo to a peasant family. He left school at the age of fifteen to find employment to help support his family and moved to Johannesburg where he first worked in a dairy. He held several other labourial jobs in East London and Johannesburg over the ensuing years while becoming increasingly involved in union and political activities. These activities led to Mr. Sisulu's being branded early on as a "troublemaker" by employers and the authorities and these activities led to his joining the ANC in 1940. Mr. Sisulu's organizational talents, and his militant politics, earned him first the position of treasurer of the ANC Youth League and later, in 1949, Secretary-General of the ANC.

In 1950, Mr. Sisulu became co-chairman of the coordinating committee bringing together the ANC with the Indian Congress and the Communist Party. He spearheaded the organization of the Defiance Campaign in the early 1950's and was detained, arrested, banned and finally imprisoned in 1952 under the Suppression of Communism Act along with Nelson Mandela and others. Up until this time Mr. Sisulu's political philosophy was one of racially exclusive nationalism; he was ardently anti-white. However, following a visit to the USSR in 1953 where he was repelled by the authoritarianism of the Stalinist regime his views mellowed and he returned to South Africa more interested in creating a multi-racial Congress alliance. Mr. Sisulu played a leading role in organising the 1955 Congress of the People but was unable to attend as he had been forced to resign from the ANC in mid-1954 because of the tightening of his banning orders.

Mr. Sisulu secretly continued to work for the ANC and was one of 156 people arrested for high treason in 1956 and subsequently acquitted in 1961. During the 1960 State of Emergency, Mr. Sisulu was detained for several months and following the banning of the ANC and the PAC he was placed under house arrest. From 1961 to 1963, Mr. Sisulu was arrested on

numerous occasions for his support of the ANC until he finally went underground to join Umkhonto we Sizwe. On July 11, 1963 Mr. Sisulu along with Nelson Mandela, Ahmed Kathrada, Govan Mbeki and others were arrested at the ANC's secret headquarters at Lilliesleaf Farm. Those arrested were charged at the Rivonia trial and Mr. Sisulu was sentenced to life imprisonment on June 12, 1964 for planning acts of political sabotage. Walter Sisulu was incarcerated on Robben Island until 1982 when, along with Nelson Mandela, he was moved to Pollsmoor Prison. On October 15, 1989 Mr. Sisulu and six of his colleagues along with one PAC member were released from prison.

The prisoner releases in 1989 were followed by the unbanning of the ANC on February 2, 1990 and the release of Nelson Mandela one week later. Mr. Sisulu subsequently met with the external wing of the ANC in Lusaka and was asked to assume the position of Internal Leader of the ANC. This involved re-establishing ANC structures within the country and preparing for a national consultative conference in December 1990. Mr. Sisulu was a member of the ANC delegation which met with the government in May 1990 at Groote Schuur and was involved in numerous other meetings with the Government.

WALTER SISULU

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 re-organizing the ANC inside South Africa and presently serves as the ANC Deputy General Secretary with responsibility for the organization's day to day operations.

He married Albertina Sisulu in 1944. They have three sons and two daughters.

1991: Elected Deputy President of the ANC

* SHOULD READ: PRESENTLY SERVES AS HEAD OF THE INTERIM INTERNAL LEADERSHIP CORE OF THE ANC WITH RESPONSIBILITY

4. *Daily News*, 15 June 1982.
5. *The Star*, 8 August 1983.
6. *Rand Daily Mail*, 8 August 1983.
7. *Rand Daily Mail*, 25 February 1984.
8. *Daily News*, 26 February 1984.
9. South African Institute of Race Relations, *Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, 1985, 1987/88 and 1988/89*, Johannesburg, 1986, 1988, 1989.

WALTER MAX ULYATE SISULU

*Secretary General, African National Congress, 1949.
Member of joint planning council of Defiance Campaign, 1952.
Head of the interim internal leadership core, African National Congress, 1990.*

Deputy President, ANC
1991



Born into a peasant family in 1912 in the Encobo area of the Transkei, Walter Sisulu was raised by his mother and his uncle, who was a headman. He attended an Anglican missionary institute, but left in Standard Four at the age of 15, when his uncle died and he was forced to find employment in a Johannesburg dairy to help support his family.

Sisulu was of mixed ancestry and his light appearance set him apart from his peers. He was conscious of this and resented his family's deferential attitude to whites.

He returned home and underwent traditional Xhosa initiation rites, returning to Johannesburg in 1929 where he obtained work in a gold mine. He then moved to East London, was employed as a domestic worker, and briefly came into contact with Clements Kadalie's Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union.

Sisulu moved back to Johannesburg with his mother and sister in the early 1930s, and was employed in a number of factories. He studied

privately and took part in cultural groups, including the Orlando Brotherly Society, a Xhosa organisation which promoted an interest in tribal history and encouraged economic independence from whites.

In 1940, while working in a bakery, Sisulu was fired for his role in organising a strike for higher wages. Continually clashing with various other employers, he established a real estate agency, but this closed down after two years.

In 1940 Walter Sisulu joined the African National Congress (ANC) and later became treasurer of the ANC Youth League, adopting a militant and anti-white stand. During the war he campaigned against Africans joining the army, and became one of the ANC activists pressing for the adoption of a more radical form of nationalism within the organisation.

During this period Sisulu had his first clash with police when he was imprisoned after a scuffle on a train with a white ticket collector who had confiscated an African child's season ticket.

In 1946, at the time of the African mineworkers' strike, he tried to organise a general strike in support of the strikers' demands. He continued his work for the ANC, becoming a member of its Transvaal executive. In December 1949 he was instrumental in the ANC's acceptance of the Youth League's programme of action, and at the same conference was elected secretary-general, defeating Dan Thorne, the candidate of the ANC's left wing.

In 1950 the ANC, together with the Indian Congress and the Communist Party, formed a co-ordinating committee, and Sisulu and Yusuf Cachalia were appointed joint secretaries. Their first move was to call for a national work stoppage on 26 June 1950 to protest against the race laws.

James Moroka, ANC president at the time, lived in the Free State and was isolated from the day-to-day running of the organisation in the Transvaal. As a result Sisulu had to take over many of Moroka's leadership functions. He served on the joint planning council for the Defiance Campaign, led a group of passive resisters, and was arrested and imprisoned for a brief period before being banned under the Suppression of Communism Act.

In December 1952 Sisulu, Mandela, Moroka and others were tried under the Suppression of Communism Act for their leadership of the Defiance Campaign. All 20 accused were sentenced to nine months' imprisonment with hard labour, suspended for two years.

Sisulu was re-elected ANC secretary-general in the same month, and in 1953 spent five months touring China, the Soviet Union, Israel, Rumania and the United Kingdom. He appeared impressed with Soviet industrial development but was repelled by the authoritarianism of the Stalinist regime. This tour was a catalyst in mellowing his views from racially exclusive nationalism to support for a multi-racial Congress alliance.

His banning order preventing him from attending gatherings was lightened in mid-1954 when he was forced to resign from the ANC. Although he had played a leading role in organising the 1955 Congress of the People, Sisulu was legally unable to participate. However, he secretly continued to work for the ANC, and because of his changed attitude to co-operation with other racial groups in opposition to the government, he increasingly came under attack from the Africanist group in the ANC.

In December 1956 Sisulu was amongst the 156 people arrested for high treason. The preparatory examination of the Treason Trial began on 19 December 1956 in the Johannesburg Drill Hall, and lasted for nine months. Sisulu remained a defendant in the subsequent hearings, which ended in March 1961 when he and all remaining accused were finally acquitted.

During the 1960 state of emergency Sisulu and many of his co-trialists were detained for several months.

Following the banning of the ANC and Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), Sisulu was placed under house arrest. During 1962 Sisulu was harassed by police and arrested six times, but charged only once. Finally, in March 1963 he was convicted for furthering the aims of the banned ANC and for organising the May 1961 stay-at-home protest. He was released on bail pending an appeal, and placed under 24-hour arrest. On 20 April 1963 he went underground to join Umkhonto we Sizwe and on 26 June made a short broadcast from a secret ANC radio station.

On 11 July 1963 Lilliesleaf Farm, the ANC's secret headquarters, was raided by police. Sisulu, Govan Mbeki and others were detained there, and Sisulu was held in solitary confinement for 88 days. He was charged in the Rivonia trial in October 1963, and on 12 June 1964 sentenced to life imprisonment for planning acts of political sabotage. The following day Sisulu, Mandela and the other convicted Rivonia trialists were sent to Robben Island.

In April 1982 Sisulu was admitted to Groote Schuur hospital in Cape Town for 'routine medical examination'. In the same month he and Mandela were moved from Robben Island to Pollsmoor prison, Cape Town.

On 15 October 1989 the South African government released Sisulu, six other ANC leaders and a PAC political prisoner. This was followed by the unbanning of the ANC on 2 February 1990 and the release of Nelson Mandela a week later.

Sisulu subsequently met with the external wing of the ANC in Lusaka and was asked to lead the ANC internally. This involved re-establishing ANC structures inside the country and preparing for a national conference to be held inside South Africa on 16 December 1990.

Sisulu formed part of the ANC delegation which met with repre-

sentatives of the government at Groote Schuur, Cape Town, during May 1990.

He is married to Albertina, president of the Transvaal United Democratic Front, and they live in Soweto. They have five children.

SOURCES

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5. Tom Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, Johannesburg, 1983.