

OTR/002/0020/2

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA : PRESIDENT DR OLIVER REGINALD TAMBO

Born 1917 in Bizana District in the Eastern Cape.

Educated at Ludebe, the Holly Cross Mission, and set academic records at St. Peter's Secondary School from where he matriculated with a first class in 1938. Awarded a scholarship he obtained a B.Sc from Fort Hare in 1941. He was expelled during a student strike the following year, while studying for diploma in education.

1943-47: Science and mathematics teacher at St Peter's Secondary School.

1952: Qualified as an attorney and established a law partnership with Nelson Mandela - the first African legal partnership in South Africa.

One of the founders of ANC Youth League, serving successively as national secretary, Transvaal President and national Vice-President. Moving into the leadership of the African National Congress, he was first elected to the National Executive Committee in 1949, and has been returned to the NEC at every subsequent election.

Though prohibited from attending gathering and restricted to the Johannesburg-Benoni Magisterial District in 1954, he continued his political activities. He was elected Secretary-General of the ANC in 1955 and Deputy-President in 1958.

In December 1956 a fortnight after being accepted as a candidate for ordination, he was one of the 156 South Africans arrested and charged with treason. A year later he was among those discharged from the Treason Trial, and he was subsequently served with new 5 year banning orders.

Convinced that mass arrests, indefinite detention of leaders and a ban on the ANC was imminent, the National Executive decided that Oliver Tambo should leave the country immediately to serve as foreign spokesman. He left the country after the Sharpeville massacre, a few days before the ANC was declared an illegal organisation.

Following the death of Nobel Laurette, Chief Albert Luthuli, he was elected President General of the African National Congress. He has travelled the world representing the ANC, and appeared before the United Nations, and many other national and international platforms. Esteemed and respected even by those who do not share his views, he is acknowledged at the

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UN, the Organisation of African Unity, the Non-Aligned Movement and among many western countries as the leader of the oppressed majority in South Africa. Many Heads of State and Government claim him as a friend. He has received many honours and awards.

Tambo's leadership is openly acknowledged not least by the regime, and is acclaimed by the people in political speeches and in popular songs as well as in opinion polls.

AFRICA - CULTURES INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE

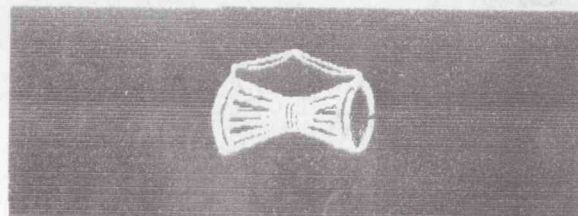
VIZIRAT

Carré n° 6, Ancien Pont B. P. 1245

Tel. : 31 46 34, Telex 1121 Cabinetelox

Telegram : Africa-Cultures

COTONOU (BENIN)



*Let us Revive and Promote our
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CULTURES

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COTONOU, 09 JANVIER 1991.-

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THE HON. OLIVER TAMBO
PRESIDENT
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
JOHANNESBURG 2001, SOUTH AFRICA.

Dear Mr. Tambo,

I have the honour to inform you that Africa-Cultures International Institute has nominated you as the recipient of an Honorary Doctorate (Honoris Causa) from the National University of Benin to be awarded in the framework of the proceedings of the 7th Panafrikanist Congress to be administered in Cotonou, Benin from 11-15 February 1991.

The Staff Director of the Officer of the Rector of the National University of Benin informs me that the Rector of the National University of Benin and the Minister of National Education welcome our recommendation.

This is to respectfully inquire whether you would accept the honour and whether you would be available to personally attend the Award Ceremony to be scheduled between 11 and 15 February 1991.

The Honorary Degree Awards Ceremony will take place in a magnificent and auspicious setting. Since March 1990, Benin has been peacefully evolving towards democracy through a process of civilized consultations between all sectors of the society.

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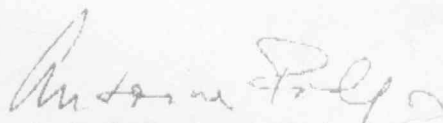
This historically unprecedented process of renewal will culminate in Presidential elections in March 1991. Your visit here would represent a source of immense inspiration to the people of Benin.

It is understood that upon receipt of an indication of your acceptance, the Government of Benin would officially communicate with you directly regarding the conferring of this Award.

Although official quarters in Benin are well informed of your stature, a copy of your curriculum vitae is respectfully requested.

Kindly communicate your response to my attention via fax at 229-313-701.

Please accept these assurances of my highest consideration.


Antoine Jean Polgar
Coordinator

