

## **Toast remarks by President Thabo Mbeki and President Hosni Mubarak at the luncheon in honour of President Mubarak**

Tuesday 29 July 2008, Presidential Guesthouse, Pretoria

### **President Thabo Mbeki**

Your Excellency President Hosni Mubarak;  
Your Excellencies Ministers, Deputy Ministers;  
All the public representatives;  
Governor of the Reserve Bank;  
Our business and trade union leaders;  
Our friends from Egypt and distinguished guests.

Indeed Mr President it is my great honour and privilege to welcome you and your delegation to this Southern part of our continent. Your presence here among us is indeed historic and timely because it affords us the opportunity to congratulate you on the 56th Anniversary of the Revolution in your country.

I know we have done this before, but your Excellency let me once again thank you personally as well as the people of the Arab Republic of Egypt for the work you've done to help us defeat the Apartheid crime against humanity.

I also want to thank you on the gracious hospitality my delegation and I received during our recent visit to Sharm El-Sheikh on the occasion of the Summit of the African Union.

Your Excellency, Africa's history is as rich as it is massive and too wide to cover in the few minutes afforded here. But what is indisputable is that Africa is the birthplace of humanity and civilisation. All Africans, wherever they may be, are proud to be associated with this continent primarily because, among other things, Egypt and the great valley of the Nile bequeathed to humanity a lasting civilisation. Such that today humanity can engage in the art of writing and many can live better and fulfilling lives because our ancestors in Egypt presented succeeding generations with the science of medicine.

Today humanity enjoys the benefit of metallurgy, of engineering, of architecture, of astronomy, of mathematics and many other sciences because of the pioneering work done by our African peoples during the years of the great years of the Pharaoh years.

Hence your Excellency we are proud to claim that Africa is the mother of civilisation and Egypt undoubtedly stands as the regal head.

Your Excellency, the African renaissance vision which we share so passionately is inspired by the seminal and lasting impact that the great Egyptian civilisation has made on the lives of the peoples of the world.

Accordingly, we are indeed strengthened by the fact that today Egypt is one of the leading African countries that worked together to ensure that the regeneration of Africa becomes a reality to the programmes of the African Union and its development programme NEPAD.

Your Excellency, the task that faces all Africans in the twenty first century is to do everything that needs to be done, to ensure that all the programmes that were identified by the AU and NEPAD, not only succeed but these help permanently to help change for the better the living conditions of all our peoples.

It is our collective task to ensure that these programmes become so successful that Africans would always and everywhere walk tall among the peoples of the world.

Your Excellency, it is part of our responsibility to help in whatever ways we can to find a permanent solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and bring to an end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

And I must again, President, convey our real appreciation and thanks for the work that you've done over so many years and continue to do with the matter of the Palestinian issue.

Our countries, President, normalised diplomatic relations after our freedom in 1994. Since then, we have entered into more than 20 bilateral agreements, while at the same time our state enterprises have concluded a number of Memoranda of Understanding. We have also signed an agreement on the establishment of a Joint Commission for Cooperation, which provision for regular engagement of our Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

Your Excellency we need to speed up the ratification of the agreements on the promotion of the reciprocal protection of investments and trade, matters that we discussed earlier today.

At the same time, we are happy that other agreements are in force such as the Agreement on the Avoidance of Double Taxation, agreements in tourism, science and technology. Our economic relations are also strengthened by a number of South African and Egyptian companies operating in both our countries.

Again your Excellency it is good that together our two countries convene regular bilateral commissions with seven of such meetings having taken place. And clearly we have a responsibility together to increase our collaboration in such critical areas as science and technology, agriculture, mining, education, sports and culture. We also have a responsibility to collaborate better in addressing the many and varied challenges facing our continent.

Together we will ofcourse be part of the leading forces that strengthen South-South cooperation and ensure that we constantly and consistently collaborate to advance both the African Agenda and the South agenda.

Egypt and South Africa indeed do share a vision of an African continent that is politically strong and independent, a continent that is economically developed and prosperous whose citizens live in conditions of peace and security. A continent whose people engages in dynamic and sporting activities and must learn from one another; a continent that treasures its past and, inspired by the great successes of the past, faces the future with confidence and courage.

Together we should use the confluence you occupy to help accelerate the regeneration of Africa. I have no doubt, your Excellency, that the renaissance of Africa will continue to inform the work done by the sister peoples of Egypt and South Africa as well as the peoples of our continent as a whole.

Once more a very warm welcome President to you and your delegation. And much appreciation indeed for the rich discussions that we've held this morning.

Ladies and gentlemen, please rise and join me in a toast to the good health and prosperity of His Excellency, President Hosni Mubarak and to the friendship between the peoples of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Republic of South Africa.

### **President Hosni Mubarak**

Dear President Mbeki, allow me at the outset to express once again my gratitude for your kind words, welcome and hospitality. I come to South Africa with a message of friendship from Egypt to your brotherly people.

Egypt, Africa and the whole world sided with your peoples struggle against Apartheid. We followed with admiration and support the battle fought by Mandela and his fellow warriors to bring the racist regime to an end.

You have been, President Mbeki, one of those warriors. You have contributed a lot to the victory of your people during the many years you spent in exile away from home. When the battle against racism was won, your achievements to your country and your people have been truly remarkable.

Egypt had her fight against colonial occupation many years ago. We feel proud of the role we played in support of African liberation movements during the colonial era.

We take pride of our role in launching the OAU, the AU and NEPAD. Egypt's stand on commitments of the African course, interests and positions will remain unwavering.

My visit to your beautiful country reflects our keen desire to boost our relation and cooperation, not only for the sake of our two countries and peoples but also for the sake of Africa and its courses.

Our continent has many challenges in common. Together we face the challenge of armed conflicts, peace and security, economic growth, development, soaring prices of food, energy as well as ways and means to make a better future for our peoples.

Together we confront the threat of marginalisation in the age of globalisation with the problems it poses and the gains it offers. Together we can make a difference and achieve a lot for our two peoples and for Africa.

With our unique location at the North and the South of the continent we are best entitled with the two major gateways into Africa. Our weight, stature and role at the regional and the international level leave the door wide open for a fruitful enhanced cooperation in the interests of our two countries and Africa.

I shall leave South Africa tomorrow fully confident of the future of our bilateral relations and the future of our pan-African action.

Ladies and gentlemen I invite you to join me in a toast to wish President Mbeki the best of all of his health and success. To his brotherly people more achievements and progress. And to the relations between our two countries further consolidation. Thank you.