

# HOT TOPICS – JULY 2023

## NELSON MANDELA INTERNATIONAL DAY

This month, we focus on the legacy of Nelson Mandela. But who was he and why is he such an important and iconic person?



On July 18, 1918, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was born in Mvezo, South Africa.

Throughout his life, Nelson Mandela fought tirelessly against injustice and prejudice. You can gain a snapshot of key events in his struggle by clicking [here](#).

From 1964 to 1982 he was confined to the notorious prison island Robben Island, together with several other resistance leaders. He was then moved to prison on the mainland until his release in 1990. During his imprisonment, Mandela became a rallying point for South Africa's oppressed, and the world's most famous political prisoner" [Source: [Nelson Mandela – Facts - NobelPrize.org](#)]

In 1993, he was awarded the Nobel peace prize for his work "for the peaceful termination of the **apartheid** regime, and for laying the foundations for a new democratic South Africa.

"On 10 May 1994 he was inaugurated as South Africa's first democratically elected President ... true to his promise, Mandela stepped down in 1999 after one term as President. He continued to work with the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund he set up in 1995 and established the Nelson Mandela Foundation and The Mandela Rhodes Foundation" [Source: [Biography of Nelson Mandela – Nelson Mandela Foundation](#)]

### What is 'apartheid'?

"Apartheid, or "apartness" in the language of Afrikaans, was a system of legislation that upheld segregation against non-white citizens of South Africa. After the National Party gained power in South Africa in 1948, its all-white government immediately began enforcing existing policies of racial segregation. Under apartheid, nonwhite South Africans—a majority of the population—were forced to live in separate areas from

whites and use separate public facilities. Contact between the two groups was limited. Despite strong and consistent opposition to apartheid within and outside of South Africa, its laws remained in effect for the better part of 50 years. In 1991, the government of President F.W. de Klerk began to repeal most of the legislation that provided the basis for apartheid" [Source: [Apartheid: Definition & South Africa | HISTORY](#)]

Nelson Mandela died on 5 December 2013, in Johannesburg, South Africa, aged 95.

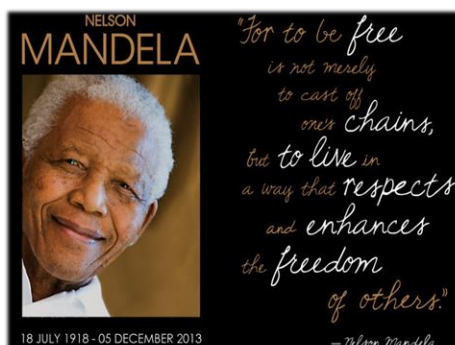
Click [here](#) to learn more about Nelson Mandela's biography.

### What is Nelson Mandela International Day?

**Nelson Mandela International Day is celebrated each year on his birthday – 18 July. It was officially declared by the United Nations in 2009, to recognise and acknowledge the contribution made by Nelson Mandela towards a culture of peace and freedom**

DISCUSS

In June 1964, Nelson Mandela (among others) was convicted at the 'Rivonia' trial (named after the Johannesburg suburb where they were arrested for acts of sabotage) and sentenced to life imprisonment. Mandela made a speech at the end of the trial, rather than testifying. Part of his speech was "I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities". Now that you know a little more about Nelson Mandela and his fight for freedom and equality as a civil rights leader in South Africa, think about the impact that his work has had on equality and justice. How does an apartheid regime compare to the freedoms that we have in England? What can you do to promote equality and diversity as a police officer? Use the knowledge from what you have read to discuss with your PDC the positive messages and actions that you can take to engender positive relationships with others and to respect and value differences.



If you require support regarding anything in this Hot Topic, please speak with your PDC, your line manager or your HEI staff