

The Presidency of South Africa

National Orders

The Order of Mendi for Bravery in Gold

Awarded to Matola Raid Martyrs (1981 -) for

Paying the supreme price for freedom and for sacrificing their lives in pursuit of a just, free, non-racial and non-sexist democratic society.

Profile of Matola Raid Martyrs

The apartheid racist regime, in the early hours of 30 January 1981, led their forces of darkness in an attack at Matola in Mozambique that claimed the lives of 15 cadres of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the former military wing of the African National Congress (ANC).

The names of the South Africans who died, and who are being honoured today are the following:

1. Mduduzi Guma
2. Lancelot Hadebe
3. Mandla Daka
4. Daniel Molokisi
5. Steven Ngcobo
6. Vusumzi Ngwema
7. Thabang Bookolane
8. Krishna Rabilal
9. Themba Dimba
10. William Khanyile
11. Motso "Obadi" Mokgabudi
12. Collin Khumalo
13. Levinson Mankankaza

14. Albert Mahutso

15. Vuyani Mavuso, who was kidnapped during the raid, and was later executed when he refused to cooperate with apartheid security agencies to betray his comrades.

The attack demonstrated the callous and brutal nature of the racist apartheid regime and confirmed the correctness of the United Nations Resolution to declare apartheid as a crime against humanity. The raid was not only a violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Mozambique, but also a true manifestation of the violent nature of apartheid that was already common in South Africa where thousands who fought for freedom and democracy were either killed, detained or forced into exile.

Addressing a Frelimo Rally in Maputo on 14 February 1982, commemorating the first anniversary of the Matola Raid, the late ANC President, Cde Oliver Tambo, alluded to this when he eloquently described "the Matola invasion as a raid, which insulted the sovereignty of the Mozambican people, defiled their national dignity, violated their territorial integrity and challenged the very concept of African independent statehood".

The Matola Raid led to the mounting of the struggle for freedom, justice and democracy, both in South Africa and all over the world. The armed struggle, mass action, underground work and international solidarity against apartheid was intensified more than ever before, culminating in the attainment of freedom on 27 April 1994.

Subsequently, both the Mozambican and the democratic South African governments are building a monument to honour all who fell during the tragic Matola Raid so that their names live on forever in the history of our country as well as the country where they lie buried.

They represent the blood-cemented relationship between the people of Mozambique and South Africa. The monument will be officially opened in December 2011.

The monument will be a commitment to the everlasting friendship between the two countries and its peoples; a commitment to ensure that racist discrimination and oppression never raise their ugly head in the two countries and, not least, in the world. We are proud to honour the martyrs of the Matola Raid with the Order of Mendi for Bravery in Gold for the supreme sacrifice any human being can pay for freedom.