Messages . . .

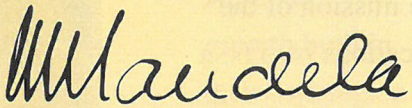
WE HAVE WON THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY

The arrival of a long dreamed-of democracy has given us the chance to build a South African nation. The raw materials of freedom, of justice, of equality before the law, have become part of the fabric of our lives. For South Africans, this is, and will remain always, a moment of profound importance in our lives.

Among all the new opportunities which are now offered to the previously disenfranchised majority of our country is the freedom to enter into business, into entrepreneurial enterprises, to express new ideas, energy and ambition. A rising generation of black businessmen and women is entering the marketplace, both in their own companies and as members of the more progressive white organisations. They are setting out to create a new business world, one both national and international in its scope.

They have the freedom now to achieve `Impumelelo', which is the Xhosa word for `success', and the subject of this publication. The Top 300 Black Empowerment Companies is about these men and women, and the companies they are building. It is both highly relevant and very topical, and will continue to be in future editions, published annually. Linked with a website, the Businessweb, a South African first, it brings together a vision not only of black business leaders, their products and services, but also of their larger aspirations for the community, of the vision of an African Renaissance.

The Top 300 Black Empowerment Companies provides a showcase of this emerging sector, assisting both local and overseas companies in choosing areas for profitable investment. I have no hesitation in supporting its aims and believe that this directory will become a key reference work for South African business and industry in the future.



Nelson Mandela