

# Freedom

## PARK TRUST

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### **Construction of Next Phase of The Freedom Park Kick-starts**

*23 July 2008, Pretoria*, On Wednesday, 23 July 2008, Freedom Park Trust hosts a two-part event: the soil-turning ceremony signaling the official launch of Phase IIA in the construction of the Park as well as the launch of a publication entitled "With Eyes Focused on the African Century", a booklet addressing issues of xenophobia, racism and tribalism in South Africa. The function starts at 10:30 and is hosted at The Freedom Park on Salvokop, Pretoria. A programme has been attached.

The soil turning ceremony marks the beginning of a new phase in the construction of The Freedom Park. According to Dr M.W. Serote, CEO of Freedom Park Trust, construction of Phase IIA of The Freedom Park, comprising, amongst others, the interactive museum //hapo, is set to start this month. "We have completed Phase I as well as the Intermediary Phase and the elements constructed during these phases, namely Isivivane and Sikhumbuto, are currently open to the public. We are now embarking on Phase IIA and the construction of //hapo, were the story of Southern Africa dating back 3.6 billion years will unfold."

The story will be told in seven epochs or eras that form the basis of the Southern African story, starting with the Earth epoch, which explores the earliest forms of life in this region and the geological origin of the land itself, and concluding with the Nation Building epoch, which begins with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and emphasises the efforts undertaken since 1994 to foster national unity.

Drawn from a Khoi proverb that translates into "A dream is not a dream until it is shared by the community", the term //hapo means dream.

Set for completion in the first quarter of 2009, Phase IIA will also comprise the Pan African Archives, which will form the knowledge base and information storage facility for the Park, as well as Vhuawelo, a place for meditation, self discovery, healing and spiritual connection.

The soil-turning ceremony will also serve as the official hand-over of the site to the contractor appointed for construction of Phase IIA, namely Fikile Stocks. "On 24 June 2008, a workshop was held to discuss the feasibility of completing this phase in early 2009. An acceleration programme has been implemented to meet this deadline," explains Dr Serote.

The second part of the ceremony entails the launch of a publication entitled "With Eyes Focused on the African Century". "This publication forms part of The Freedom Park's pledge to assist the nation in building a nation free from xenophobia, racism and tribalism. As a national and international icon of humanity and freedom, we will spare no effort to ensure that these issues that hinder reconciliation and nation building are discussed, debated and resolved," says Dr Serote.

The publication not only provides the possible historic causes for xenophobia, racism and tribalism in the South African context, but also explores the possible ways forward in addressing and embarking on resolutions for these issues. "Our research has identified a lack of knowledge and understanding as to where South Africa as a nation comes from as one of the main contributing factors to the xenophobic acts that have swept the nation. Our current young generation should share in our acute awareness of the significant role that other continental and international countries played in the freedom that we enjoy in this country. The fostering of such an understanding and appreciation will go a long way in facilitating mutual tolerance and respect," explains Dr Serote.

"Our aim with the launch of this booklet is to engage the nation in a dialogue on issues of xenophobia, racism and tribalism, but more importantly, on issues of reconciliation and nation building."

In honour of Dr Nelson Mandel's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on 18 July 2008, Freedom Park Trust has dedicated the first copy of this booklet to this visionary leader and Patron-in-Chief of The Freedom Park.

The Freedom Park is currently open for free daily tours. At present, entrance is free. Tours take place daily at 9:00, 12:00 and 15:00. Construction of Phase IIA will have no impact on areas open to the public. For more information on tours and visits, call 079 837 9092 or email [tours@freedompark.co.za](mailto:tours@freedompark.co.za).

**Issued by The Freedom Park Trust**  
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