

Mandela Remembrance Walk & Run celebrated in numbers around the world

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The Nelson Mandela Foundation and the Gauteng Provincial Government have hailed those who participated in numbers in this weekend's annual Mandela Remembrance Walk & Run, which was held as a completely virtual event this year.



While the thousands who normally converge on the Union Buildings to commemorate Madiba's legacy and contribution on the date of his passing annually on 5 December were absent due to the Covid global pandemic, the event was still a powerful, poignant one.

Participants from across South Africa and countries including Spain, Guatemala, Zambia, Algeria, United Kingdom, South Sudan, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Germany and Canada joined the event and participated virtually from around the world.

"We were really gratified by the many people who had registered to participate after we had urged them to do so virtually from home this year. We were particularly touched by those who ran in the rain from Kgosi Mampuru prison to the Union Buildings, to run the route Madiba's remains took as he lay in state at the Union Buildings after his passing," said Nelson Mandela Foundation CEO, Sello Hatang.



Football icon Kalusha Bwalya participated with a crowd of people from Lusaka, Zambia, while wheelchair tennis star Kgothatso Montjane was another who showed her commitment by participating in the event, which is open annually as a social event with options of a 5 kilometre walk or 10 and 21 kilometre run.

“These days both globally and locally, it is hard to dream. Madiba’s dream was a South Africa that in real life is what the constitution outlines in theory, and ensures dignity for all our people. We continue to dream and hope, for respect for the rule of law and for a strong economy to ensure we employ as many young people and women as possible, and that we ensure our society is one that is united as our constitution calls on us to be,” added Hatang, who said this year’s Mandela Remembrance Walk & Run was particularly significant as it took place on the 25th anniversary of Madiba signing South Africa’s constitution into law.



The world-renowned Soweto Gospel Choir were on hand to evoke and celebrate Madiba's vibrant spirit at a small, private wreath laying ceremony at the Union Buildings, as were Poet Bohlale, Focalistic, Msaki and Dr Nothembi Mkhwebani on this important day in the country's history.

"Hosting the event virtually is a move we had to take at the 11th hour, because we needed to appreciate the situation this province finds itself in. We could not let this day pass without honouring the great work that our global icon has done in liberating this country. We are glad that we were able to be joined by individuals both locally and internationally to celebrate the global icon that he is. Tata Madiba loved this nation and believed that many of its problems, especially as it relates to social cohesion, could be resolved through sport," said Mbali Hlophe, Gauteng MEC for Sport, Art, Culture and Recreation.

All proceeds raised from the event will be donated to the Nelson Mandela Foundation to continue promoting Madiba's legacy.

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