



Kgalema Petrus Motlanthe

Former President of South Africa

Mr Kgalema Petrus Motlanthe was born on 19 July 1949 in Alexandra Township, Johannesburg. In the 1970s, while working for the Johannesburg City Council, he was recruited into UMkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the then armed wing of the banned ANC. He was part of a unit tasked with recruiting members for military training outside the country. On 14 April 1976 Mr Motlanthe was arrested with others for furthering the aims of the ANC and was kept in detention for 11 months at John Vorster Square in central Johannesburg. In 1977 he was found guilty on three charges under Terrorism Act and sentenced to an effective 10 years imprisonment on Robben Island. After his release in 1987, Mr Motlanthe was tasked with strengthening the trade union movement in the country.

To this end, he worked for the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) as a national office-bearer responsible for education. Among other things, he was involved in training workers to form shop-steward committees. In 1990 when the banning on the ANC and other political organisations was lifted, Mr Motlanthe was tasked with re-establishing ANC structures in the Gauteng Province. In 1992 he was elected General Secretary of NUM, succeeding Mr Cyril Ramaphosa who had been elected Secretary General of the ANC. Mr Motlanthe also served two five year terms as Secretary General of the ANC from December 1997 to December 2007.

At Polokwane he was elected as deputy president of the ANC and served in this capacity from December 2007 to December 2012. In 2008 he joined parliament and was appointed by President Thabo Mbeki as Minister in the presidency. In September the same year when Mr Mbeki was recalled and forced to resign he subsequently became South Africa's third elected president and served for eight months to finish Mbeki's term. When President Jacob Zuma took over in May 2009 he appointed Mr Motlanthe to serve as the Deputy President. He served in that position from May 2009 until May 2014, when his term came to the end. He now heads the Kgalema Motlanthe Foundation that was established when he left office of government.