

# JACOB GEDLEYIHLEKISA ZUMA



## Deputy President of the ANC

*Deputy President of the ANC (since 1997)*

*Member of ANC NWC, NEC*

*Former Deputy President in the South African Government (1999-2005)*

Jacob Zuma was born on 12 April 1942 in Inkandla, KwaZulu-Natal Province.

His father died at the end of World War II, after which his mother took up employment as a domestic worker in Durban. He spent his childhood moving between Zululand and the suburbs of Durban, and by age 15 took on odd jobs to supplement his mother's income.

Owing to his deprived childhood, Jacob Zuma did not receive any formal schooling. Heavily influenced by a trade unionist family member, he became involved in politics at an early age and joined the African National Congress in 1959. He became an active member of Umkhonto We Sizwe in 1962, following the banning of the ANC in 1960.

While on his way out of the country in 1963, he was arrested with a group of 45 recruits near Zeerust in what was then the western Transvaal (now the Northern West Province). Convicted of conspiring to overthrow the government, he was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment, which he served on Robben Island.

After his release, Jacob Zuma helped mobilise internal resistance and was instrumental in the re-establishment of ANC underground structures in the then Natal province, (KwaZulu-Natal) between 1973 and 1975.

He left South Africa in 1975 and for the next 12 years, based first in Swaziland and then Mozambique, dealt with thousands of young exiles who poured out of South Africa in the wake of the Soweto uprising.

He lived in several African countries working for the ANC, where he rose rapidly through the ranks to become a member of the ANC National Executive Committee in 1977. He also served

as Deputy Chief Representative of the ANC in Mozambique, a post he occupied until the signing of the Nkomati Accord between the Mozambican and South African governments in 1984. After signing the Accord, he was appointed as Chief Representative of the ANC and was one of a few who remained in Mozambique to carry out the work of the organisation, crossing in and out of South Africa on a number of occasions.

Jacob Zuma was forced to leave Mozambique in January 1987 after considerable pressure on the Mozambican government by the PW Botha regime. He moved to the ANC Head Office in Lusaka, Zambia, where he was appointed Head of Underground Structures and shortly thereafter Chief of the Intelligence Department.

He served on the ANC's political and military council when it was formed in the mid-80s.

Following the unbanning of the ANC in February 1990, he was one of the first ANC leaders to return to South Africa to begin the process of negotiations, and was instrumental in organising the Groote Schuur Minute between the FW de Klerk regime and the ANC that reached important decisions about the return of exiles and the release of political prisoners.

In 1990, at the first Regional Congress of the ANC in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), he was elected Chairperson of the Southern Natal region and took a leading role in fighting violence in the region. This resulted in a number of Peace Accords involving the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP)

In 1991, at the first ANC National Conference held in South Africa after the unbanning of the organisation, he was elected the Deputy Secretary General of the ANC.

In January 1994, he was nominated as the ANC candidate for the Premiership of the KZN province. He is generally regarded as the person most instrumental in achieving the peace that is now enjoyed by the people of KZN and in October 1998 he was honoured with the Nelson Mandela Award for Outstanding Leadership in Washington DC, USA.

After the first national democratic elections in South Africa in 1994, Jacob Zuma was appointed as Member of the Executive Committee (MEC) of Economic Affairs and Tourism for the KZN provincial government.

He is also a patron of the KZN Reconstruction and Development Project (RDP) Bursary Fund, which is linked to the RDP section of the Department of Economic Affairs and Tourism. He established this bursary fund, using funds that each cabinet member of the KZN province was given to use on any project of their choice. Owing to his rural background and empathy for the poorest of the poor, he decided to use his allocation to help educate poor people in rural areas by establishing the bursary fund. The fund focuses mainly on primary school children in the rural areas but has, from 1999, started assisting students at tertiary institutions. There is currently in excess of 1,000 pupils being assisted at primary level and 10 at tertiary institutions.

In December 1994, Jacob Zuma was elected National Chairperson of the ANC and chairperson of the ANC in KZN. He was re-elected to the latter position in 1996.

He was elected Deputy President of the ANC at the National Conference held at Mafikeng in December 1997.

Jacob Zuma was appointed Executive Deputy President of South Africa in June 1999.

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## **Profile of Jacob Zuma**

### **Personal**

- Date of birth: 12 April 1942, Inkandla, KwaZulu-Natal.

### **Current Positions**

- Executive Deputy President of South Africa (17 June 1999)
- Leader of Government Business in the National Assembly (June 1997)
- Deputy President of the ANC (December 1997)
- Chairperson of the South African National Aids Council
- Chancellor, University of Zululand
- Patron of the Jacob Zuma Bursary Fund (since 1998)
- Patron of the Peace and Reconstruction Foundation
- Patron of the Albert Luthuli Education and Development Foundation

### **Career/Memberships/Positions/Other Activities**

- Heavily influenced by a family member who was a trade unionist, he became involved in politics at an early age.
- Joined the African National Congress (ANC) (1958).
- Became an active member of Umkhonto We Sizwe (1962).
- Whilst on his way out of the country, he was arrested with a group of 45 recruits near Zeerust in the North West Province.(1963)
- Convicted of conspiring to overthrow the government, he was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment on Robben Island. (1963)
- After his release in December 1973, he worked to mobilise internal resistance and was instrumental in the re-establishment of ANC underground structures in the then Natal, now KwaZulu-Natal. (1974-1975)
- Left South Africa in 1975 and for the next 12 years was based first in Swaziland and then Mozambique. During this period he was involved in underground work with President Mbeki and others, giving leadership to the ANC structures operating inside South Africa. He also dealt with the thousands of young exiles that poured out of South Africa in the wake of the Soweto uprising in June 1976
- Lived in several African countries working for the ANC and rose rapidly through the ranks to become a member of the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the ANC

(1977)

- Served as Deputy Chief Representative and later Chief Representative of the ANC in Mozambique, until 1984, the year of the signing of the Nkomati Accord between the Mozambican and South African governments.
- Served on the ANC's Political-Military Committee and the Political Committee when it was formed in the mid 80's.
- Appointed Head of Underground Structures and shortly thereafter, Chief of the Intelligence Department at the ANC Head Office in Lusaka, Zambia. (1987)
- Was one of the first ANC leaders to return to South Africa to begin the process of negotiation, following the unbanning of the ANC. (1990)
- Instrumental in organising the Groote-Schuur Minute between the FW de Klerk Government and the ANC that reached important decisions about the return of exiles and the release of political prisoners. (1990)
- Elected Chairperson of the Southern Natal and took a leading role in fighting violence in the region, this resulted in a number of Peace Accords involving the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) (1990)
- Elected the Deputy Secretary General of the ANC during the National Conference held in South Africa after the unbanning of the organisation. (1991)
- Deployed in KwaZulu-Natal because he felt that he had a role to play in bringing about peace and stability in the then highly volatile region. (1994)
- Nominated as the ANC candidate for the Premiership of the KZN Province.(1994)
- Appointed Member of the Executive Committee (MEC) of Economic Affairs and Tourism for the KZN provincial government. (1994)
- Elected National Chairperson of the ANC and Chairperson of the ANC in KZN. (December 1994)

### **Awards/Decorations/Bursaries**

- Honoured with the Nelson Mandela Award for Outstanding Leadership in Washington DC, US. (1998)
- Received an Honorary Doctorate of Literature from the University of Fort Hare (2001)
- Received an Honorary Doctorate of Administration from the University of Zululand (2001)
- Received an Honorary Doctorate of Philosophy from Medical University of Southern Africa (2001)

**Source: The Presidency, 12 July 2001**