

# Zuma named Africa's Best President

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JOHANNESBURG: President Jacob Zuma has been awarded the title of Best African President for his role in the struggle for the country's liberation and on the continent at large.



The president was awarded on Tuesday evening, 10 November 2009, at the Africa Consciousness Media Leadership Awards organised to honor African individuals who have contributed in the African liberation and development.

Speaking at the event attended by African struggle veterans, Zuma encouraged fellow leaders to keep the promises they had made to the people and work together to ensure sustainable development of the continent.

"As Africa's leaders we have pledged to our people that we will strive for the eradication of poverty, disease and conflict. We have pledged to promote trade, investment, economic growth, skills development and stability on the continent."

He further urged African leaders to use partnership agreements as instruments to advance the cause of the continent and work for the unity of the African people at all times.

The president was referring to pacts such as African Peer Review Mechanism which was established to promote good governance as an effort to better the situation in Africa and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) which fosters economic integration and development.

"If we deviate or if we falter, we expect all of you - ordinary citizens, civil society, academics and the media - to sound the warning bells.

"Good leaders heed these warnings and respond constructively. They do not consider themselves to be above their people," he said.

Zuma was not the only South African recipient of an award. The late Afro-Pop legend Miriam Makeba was awarded with the Great Daughter of Africa award for her artistic role in addressing the challenges faced by Africa during the colonial era.

The Pata-Pata songbird, who was exiled for years after she was banned by the apartheid government travelled the world not

only performing her songs but also sending the message to the world about Africans' challenges.

The late First Lady of Nigeria, Stella Obasanjo, was honored with Best African First Lady of the Year.

Zuma said the awards served as a reminder that nothing can be achieved without the confidence, trust and support of fellow Africans.

"A true leader is guided by the needs and the collective wisdom of his or her people. These awards should therefore not be about status or prestige. They should be about service and sacrifice. Let us work together to ensure that they (awards) achieve these goals," he added.

Kenneth Kaunda, the first Zambian President and legendary African leader, also attended the event. He wished South Africa all the best in hosting a successful FIFA 2010 World Cup.

He said it was Africa's turn to show the world what she was capable of, adding that he was confident that the tournament would be a turning point for Africa's economic and tourism development.

Kaunda urged African leaders to emulate the likes of former President Nelson Mandela, Jomo Kenyatta, Oliver Tambo and Kwame Nkrumah who fought tirelessly for liberation and the development of Africa.

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