

# **NEWS RELEASE**

**Sunday, 08<sup>th</sup> January 2012**

## **President congratulates ANC on its centennial celebrations**

President Yoweri Museveni, on behalf of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) and the people of Uganda, congratulated the African National Congress (ANC) and the people of South Africa, for celebrating their centenary marking the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the ANC, the oldest African liberation movement.

He urged African leaders and people to guard their independence and sovereignty now that the whole of Africa is free from colonialism. "We always ensure our lives, but what insurance have we made for Africa's freedom?" he asked.

The President, who travelled to South Africa yesterday, was last night addressing the ANC membership and guests at the Centenary Banquet that was hosted by the ANC President and South African President, H.E. Jacob Zuma in Bloemfontein City.

Mr. Museveni saluted the ANC, the oldest African liberation movement for launching the Freedom Charter in 1959 which he described as "a master-stroke that was smart, correct and avoided racism but provided a correct diagnosis of our society." He recalled that he first interacted with the ANC in 1955 when he was in Primary 3 and their teacher taught them songs like *Nkosi Sikelela* Africa which was the ANC anthem. His second exposure, he said, was in 1967 at the University of Dar-es-Salaam where they formed a student solidarity group that identified students with Southern Africa Liberation Movements like the ANC, Mozambique's FRELIMO and Namibia's South West Africa's People's Organization (SWAPO).

He said he was actively involved with the ANC when, in 1989, Comrade Thabo Mbeki, led a delegation to meet and request the Ugandan leader for a home for ANC freedom fighters who were re-locating from Angola. He said Uganda provided them a home until South Africa attained their freedom in 1994. He said the two countries' leaders have since worked closely together to promote bilateral relations as well as strengthen African co-operation; adding that South Africa's freedom brought a lot of hope and experience to the rest of Africa in handling complicated struggles successfully.

The banquet that was also addressed, among others, by the Presidents of Namibia and Zambia respectively as well as former Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda, was attended by 15 Heads of State, 2 Prime Ministers and six former Heads of State.

President Museveni and other leaders later attended the lighting of the Centenary Torch by President Jacob Zuma at the Wesleyan Church, Waaihoek, at the Inter-Faith Centre Church where the ANC was launched 100 years ago on 8th January 1912. The Inter-Faith commemorative service was led by Church leaders who included Archbishop Desmond Tutu and attended by South Africa's Vice President Kgalema Motlanthe, former President Thabo Mbeki as well as ANC leaders and veterans.

**ENDS**