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an agency of the  
Department of Sport, Arts and Culture

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## Attention: News Editors, Journalists

### Press Release: Luthuli Museum hosts a Chess Tournament in commemoration of the life of Mrs. Nokukhanya Luthuli

March 3 is an important day that is celebrated at the Luthuli Museum as it marks the birth of Chief Albert Luthuli's wife Mrs. Nokukhanya Luthuli, wife to Chief Albert Luthuli who was the President General of the African National Congress and led the liberation movement in the 1950s and the 1960s.

Mrs. Luthuli was a woman of rare qualities, a pillar of strength and resilience as a mother and a wife to Chief Luthuli during the most trying times in the history of South Africa anti-apartheid resistance politics. She embodied humility and selflessness, distinguishing herself as a leader away from limelight of political office and popular public opinion.

In celebration of Mrs. Nokukhanya Luthuli's life the youth of Groutville who form part of the **Chief Albert Luthuli Chess Club, supported by the Luthuli Museum will host a Chess Tournament at the Luthuli Museum on 19 March. The tournament will start at 7:30 am and finish at 16:30 pm.**

The tournament will be rated, and participants will accumulate points for their growth in this sport, placing them in a better position for selection to other chess games. The tournament will be adjudicated by a qualified arbiter Mr. Sphamandla Nkosi.

Participation in the tournament is open to Junior Primary School, Senior Primary School, and High School learners. Entry is free and the winners will be awarded with medals and a trophy.

It is befitting that Mrs. Nokukhanya Luthuli's achievements are certainly an inspiration for men and women today – and will indeed be an inspiration for future generations.

Mrs. Nokukhanya Luthuli did not only take care of her family, but she also never forgot the importance of grounding oneself in the basics of what society needs and having a clear vision of the future that South Africa needs. It is because of this principle that the youth of Groutville hosts such a tournament in skills development.

For further information contact Luthuli Museum Public Relations Officer, Zinhle Nyembe on email [profficer@luthulimuseum.org.za](mailto:profficer@luthulimuseum.org.za)

### **Notes to editor**

Mrs. Luthuli was a highly qualified teacher. Upon her marriage in 1927 to a fellow teacher and colleague at Adams College, she resigned from her post to become a housewife and look after her ailing mother-in-law. Within the few years of their marriage, she supported Albert Luthuli's decision to give up a better paying teaching position and heed a call to take up chieftaincy in Groutville, in 1936. Within seventeen years into Luthuli's chieftaincy, he was deposed by National government for his participation and leadership of the African National Congress. This meant a loss of his meagre income leading to an increase to a burden of making ends meet at a crucial time within a family where the older children were either receiving college or post-school education. She consistently encouraged her children to help in tilling the soil, repeatedly saying, "You do not know what the future holds for you". This could have been a veiled reference to herself who had set out to receive education that was denied to girls, yet she had given up a career and taken up subsistence agriculture as a means of survival for her family.

Her political consciousness could be traced back to her father Chief Dlokolo Bhengu's traditional court, where her family's history migration and colonial subjugation were instilled into her from an early age. In the 1920s while teaching at Adams College, she had met influential women associated with the 'Daughters of Africa'. During the World War II, she recruited women into the same association to contribute to the war effort. In 1955, the Groutville ANC branch nominated her as a delegate to the Bloemfontein ANC National conference. Subsequently, she was part of the delegation to the royal palace of King Bhekuzulu ka Solomon to register a grievance of the extension of passes to women.

Chief Luthuli proudly announced his recognition of her support and contribution to the world upon the receipt of Nobel Peace Prize in Norway in 1961. The symbolic handing over to her in his speech and press release was an expression and acknowledgement to the world that indeed his wife was a pillar without which an iconic political giant would have risen.

The toll of her hard work and persecution from the apartheid government manifested itself with an early onset of rheumatism that worsened with age, leading to her demise at the ripe age of 92 in December 1996. Through her life, she never held back to dedicating her time to her community and the nation. Ultimately, she was victorious, and fruits of her hard labour had ripened through the fall of apartheid, leaving the world a much better place.