



**Remarks by Brigadier General S. Mahlobo at the  
African and Caribbean Commonwealth War Memorial Press Launch of the Fundraising  
Single “I Have a Song” at the Palace of Westminster, Friday 26 February at 6pm**

Excellences, Members of the Armed Forces and Diplomatic Corps, The African and Caribbean Diaspora Community, Members of the Press, Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Government and People of South Africa I am delighted to be here today.

It has been a long road to the unveiling of this important memorial. We all look forward to seeing its permanent placement in later this year.

The sculpture is a fitting dedication to the valiant but often unsung African and Caribbean soldiers who fought for Britain in the First and Second World Wars.

It is an important acknowledgement of every individual of colour from the Southern Hemisphere Armed Forces, and of their rightful place in history.

The names of the African and Caribbean regiments which contributed to the war effort have been engraved on the memorial for all to see. And this is how it should be.

We hope this will serve to draw more attention to the contribution of the servicemen and women who made the ultimate sacrifice by enlisting on behalf of Great Britain.

It would be wonderful should the placement of the memorial provoke interest within the wider community of the role and the terrible sacrifices made by our African and Caribbean forefathers in the theatre of war.

This includes the story of the sinking of the SS Mendi, one of South Africa's greatest military tragedies. The memorial also highlights the critical role of the South African Native Labour Corps, which, we believe, has unfortunately been overlooked in General History books.

As South Africans celebrating 22 years of democracy this April, we must continue to reclaim the history of our people, our ancestors.

Today's launch is timely, coming a week after we commemorated The Mendi tragedy at Southampton. Let us always honour our heroes as best we possibly can. As their descendants we can never forget their ultimate sacrifice as they offered their services in a war so far from home.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Once again I would like to thank all who have been involved with the project, and also all of you who have taken the time to mark the launch with us today.

I thank you.