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MEDIA RELEASE:

Subject: Lindiwe Sisulu condemns the recent Ukraine flag incident in Cape Town as an insult to all Africans.

ANC stalwart and anti-apartheid freedom fighter Lindiwe Sisulu, who is a Founding Member, and Patron of the Sisulu Foundation for Social Justice, as well as Jurist in the Laureate of the Leo Tolstoy International Peace Prize Committee, has condemned the recent Ukraine flag incident in Cape Town as an insult to all Africans.

The laureate of the Leo Tolstoy International Peace Prize was announced in Moscow on the 9th of September 2024. The historic stage of the Bolshoi Theatre hosted the first awarding ceremony of the Leo Tolstoy International Peace Prize, dedicated to the birthday of the outstanding Russian writer. The ceremony was attended by representatives of the jury from different continents, high-profile public figures of the Russian Federation, international guests, ambassadors of the Prize, diplomats, parliamentarians, famous cultural professionals. Sisulu who is the only Committee Member of the Jury from the African Continent expressed herself on the sidelines of the media press briefing following a series of questions from journalists.

The ceremony was declared open by the Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation for International Cultural Cooperation Mikhail Shvydkoy. He read out a greeting from the President of Russia Vladimir Putin, which stated, in part:

"I consider your project to be an important and demanded initiative designed to help consolidate the international community around the noble ideas of maintaining global peace and security, protection of human rights and freedoms, formation of the new just multipolar world order based on the principles of sovereign equality and respect for each other's legitimate interests, and the rule of international law."

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Then the floor was taken by Pierre de Gaulle, the recently elected Deputy Chairperson and Member of the Jury, a prominent public figure, and the grandson of the former President of France Charles de Gaulle. He highlighted the significance of the Prize and its role in uniting a peaceful public, creating a safe and just multipolar world, and humanizing relations between countries and people.

Valery Gergiev, Chairman of the Jury, Director General of the Bolshoi Theatre, People's Artist of Russia, announced the winner. The Prize was awarded to the African Union (AU).

"Thanks to the efforts of this authoritative International Association, aimed at defending their national sovereignty, various formats of the regional integration process have been launched, contributing to the social and economic development of Africa, numerous social, cultural, educational, and other programs and initiatives are being implemented, primarily addressed to young people", said Valery Gergiev during the ceremony.

The laureate was represented at the ceremony by His Excellency Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission. He expressed his gratitude to the jury for their appreciation of the African Union's peacekeeping efforts in Africa and expressed readiness to continue to ensure peace and security on the continent. Mr. Mahamat was awarded the International Peace Prize laureate diploma and the custom-engraved gold medal with the image of Leo Tolstoy. The diameter of the medal is 65 mm, its weight is 247.9 g. The medal is manufactured by the Moscow Mint from 585 gold with the gilding from 99.9 gold.

The Leo Tolstoy International Peace Prize is awarded from 2024 for outstanding achievements in activities aimed at countering and at preventing a nuclear catastrophe; significant contribution to ensuring universal and equal security based on the rule of international law, solving global problems of our time; active peace-making and tireless efforts in defence of human rights and freedoms. Reflecting on the unveiling of the Mandela Statue in Moscow, Sisulu viewed the official dedication of the Mandela statue as a new symbol in the long history of friendship between Russia and South Africa. The Moscow monument to Nelson Mandela symbolizes the recognition of his celebrated contribution to the fight for human rights and the liberation from

colonial oppression on the African continent as only the latest in a series of Russian tributes to one of Africa's most revered heroes. She described the incident by the Ukrainians in Cape Town as desperate, reprehensible, and an insult to the memory of her uncle Nelson Mandela, which all Africans would deplore.

“It was with great horror that I learnt that in South Africa someone had allowed Ukrainian nationalists to mount the very spot from which Madiba gave his first official speech after being released from decades of incarceration, to practically desecrate that sacred memory for Africans and all supporters of freedom and justice.”

In what Sisulu called a perfect example of performative white supremacy, she said if Ukrainians are searching for a positive role in Africa, they should follow the historical example of Russia which has a history spanning centuries of respect for African peoples and the dignity and sovereignty of African countries. The Ukrainians responsible for that despicable spectacle, at a memorial site of importance to Africans everywhere, clearly know nothing of Nelson Mandela's philosophy to commit such an act of blatant dishonour, especially as South Africans are mourning the state of the country in the wake of the last election and the establishment of a GNU with the DA, which sacrifices almost all the national aspirations of a majority of South Africans for genuine political sovereignty, economic self-determination and peaceful human development with the rest of the African Continent.

Sisulu said the incident is clearly one of a series of cynical attempts to open a new front in the propaganda war by NATO and its partner countries in Africa to generate political support for the NATO-backed war in Ukraine, which Africans have decidedly rejected. Hence the incident is not just an assault on the South African consciousness, but a rejection of the stance that African countries have largely taken in this unfortunate matter. Such attacks are becoming more frequent, from Cape Town to Ouagadougou to Nairobi, underscoring the importance of a Pan-African resistance, to the aggressive use of neocolonial symbolism to bully African countries into acting against our own interests and against our historical friends and allies.

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