When you empower Women, you empower the Nation

Robben Island Museum Council Chairperson, Ms Bernedette Muthien welcomes guests at the annual Imbokodo Lecture, a prestigious event that honours and celebrates the Women who shaped South Africa.

On Thursday, 21 August 2019 Robben Island Museum (RIM) celebrated the Women who overcame adversity and helped build our nation and society. RIM’s annual Imbokodo lecture honoured the Women who stood against the apartheid regime. The event also celebrated those Women who are making waves in South Africa in various male dominated industries.

In recognising the women who stood the test of time, RIM’s Imbokodo Lecture series seeks to celebrate the social, cultural, and political achievements of women as a mark of respect for those who have sacrificed their lives and freedom for a just South Africa. The lecture highlighted the significant role that women such as Sophia Williams, Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, and Rahima Moosa, who led the 09 August 1956 march to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to hand over petitions opposing the Pass Laws of the time. This brave act signalled the unified strength of women and led to the slogan, “Wathint’ Abafazi, Wathint’ Imbokodo” (“You strike a woman, you strike a rock”).
The keynote address for RIM’s Imbokodo lecture was delivered by Dr Nomafrech Mbombo, Minister of Health in the Western Cape who spoke about equality for women and where we are in South Africa towards achieving gender equality. “At the heart of gender equality is the Right to empower one’s self for one’s future,” she highlights. “When you empower Women, you empower the nation.”

Dr Mbombo went on to explain the theme for this year’s Women’s month, #balanceforbetter, “equality is our goal, and access is our Right towards a balanced world. The theme ‘think equality, build smart and innovate for change’, importantly focuses on the social innovation for both genders where no one is left behind,” she explains.

RIM Council Member, Ms Vuyokazi Menye concluded the evening by saying “We are grateful to the democratically elected government for declaring August as Women’s month. The theme for this year’s celebration, ’25 years of democracy, Growing South Africa together’ for Women’s emancipation, we salute our forbearers who were at the forefront of the emancipation for Women; we are here standing high on their shoulders, on the shoulder of all those female heroines,” she said.
For more information on Robben Island Museum, please visit their website [http://www.robben-island.org.za/](http://www.robben-island.org.za/) and for regular update, visit their social media pages:

- Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/robbenislandDAC/](https://www.facebook.com/robbenislandDAC/)
- Twitter: [https://twitter.com/robben_island](https://twitter.com/robben_island)
- Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/robben_island/](https://www.instagram.com/robben_island/)