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December 5, 2013

CARDIN STATEMENT ON NELSON MANDELA

Washington, DC – **U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD)**, a senior member of Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a member of its Subcommittee on African Affairs, and Chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, released the following statement on the passing of former South African President Nelson Mandela:

“Humanity has lost one of its greatest leaders with the passing of Nelson Mandela. My prayers go out to his family and all the people of South Africa. He was a personal hero of mine, and of those who work to uphold human rights around the world. Ten thousand days in prison were not enough to break Mandela’s spirit and his devotion to the freedom of all people. He led his nation not only in overcoming the divisions of racism, but in reconciling and healing.

“Mandela’s influence does not end with his passing. His story and moral courage has changed countless lives forever. As he once said, ‘the true test of our devotion to freedom is just beginning.’ State and federal lawmakers across the U.S. looked to Mandela as an inspiration when crafting laws that mandated divestment from South Africa’s cruel Apartheid regime. I had the privilege of serving as Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates when we passed such legislation. Years later, our Nation is still striving to follow in Mandela’s footsteps and fully realize his dream of peace and equality for all of mankind. ”