

INAUGURAL PRESS RELEASE
HELEN SUZMAN: Fighter for Human Rights

U.S. Debut of South African Exhibition at the Inter-Cultural Center
Georgetown University, Washington, DC
March 21, 2009 – April 20, 2009

February 10, 2009, New York, NY... Helen Suzman, the iconic South African leader who devoted her life to the fight against apartheid, is the focus of a graphic panel exhibition HELEN SUZMAN: Fighter for Human Rights at the Galleria of the Inter-Cultural Center, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, from March 21-April 20, 2009.

On Wednesday, April 1, an opening reception will feature Dr. Frances Suzman Jowell, Helen Suzman's daughter, and Joseph Lelyveld, a Pulitzer Prize winning author and former executive editor of The New York Times who was a close ally of Suzman when he served as the newspaper's South African political correspondent. Both speakers will discuss Suzman from their unique perspectives. The reception starts at 5:00 pm in the Inter-Cultural Center. The remarks are scheduled from 6:30-7:30 pm in the auditorium of the Inter-Cultural Center. The public is invited free of charge.

Suzman was a member of the South African Parliament for 36 years, from 1953-1989. She was the sole opposition voice condemning apartheid during the 13-year period (1961-1974) when she was the governing body's only member of the Progressive Party. The exhibition explores nearly four decades of Suzman's life and vision through photographs, personal letters, quotations from speeches and news articles.

Organized by the Isaac and Jessie Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies and Research at the University of Cape Town under its director, Prof Milton Shain, this is the first presentation of the exhibition in the United States. This inspiring graphic panel exhibition captures her work, her courage, and her voice. It was conceptualized, researched, and written by Millie Pimstone and graphically designed by Linda Bester, will be presented in the United States. The exhibition includes photographs, personal letters, and newspaper articles. It tells, in part, of the animosity, anti-Semitism and intimidation Suzman faced throughout her career. It also highlights her enduring friendship with Nelson Mandela which began in early 1967 when she met him at the infamous Robben Island Prison where he was a political prisoner.

Suzman was nominated twice for the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of her contribution to the pursuit of justice in South Africa. She received the United Nations Award of the International League for Human Rights in 1978. In 1989, Queen Elizabeth conferred on her an Honorary Dame Commander (Civil Division) of the Order of the British Empire. Suzman died on January 1, 2009, at the age of 91. Flags across South Africa were flown at half-mast while tributes poured in from around the world.

The United States tour of the exhibition is sponsored by the Dobkin Family Foundation and the Tolan Family Foundation.

For more information about the HELEN SUZMAN: Fighter for Human Rights exhibition, contact exhibition manager, International Civil Rights Center & Museum, at 336-274-9199, or info@sitinmovement.org.