

**Tribute given by Alexi Bizos at the Special Official Funeral Service of
George Bizos, Category 1 at the Hellenic Community Hall next to
the Cathedral of Saints Constantine and Helen at 11 a.m. on
Thursday 17th of September 2020.**

Good morning. Καλημερα σας (Kalimera sas), Sawubona

Thank you for your attendance in honouring our father. I would like to make some acknowledgements.

Importantly I mention our late Mother upfront, Arethe Ekaterine who died 3 years ago on the 2nd of September 2017.

I would also like to acknowledge my partner Jane Lipman, and my sister-in-law Anna for their tireless efforts and support in making sure that my father was comfortable in his waning years. It is sad that my brother Kimon and sister-in-law Mary and their children could not be with us today. Their care and support even at a distance in our father's last years is much appreciated. Also my nephew Nicholas, my niece Eleni and my daughter AnaSofia who in this time of COVID assisted in the last few weeks in our father's increasing frailty. I am confident that their presence through our father's final stretch in his Odyssey was comforting to both them and our father, and grandfather. I am sorry that the grandchildren overseas were not able to be part of this process. I also acknowledge Ntoko Phale and Grant Gondwe for their care work over the years.

On behalf of the family I would like to thank you Mr. President for your initiative and phone call to me last Friday morning in wanting to declare a Special Official Funeral, Category 1, flying the flags at half-mast and so honouring our father. Our family has shared our father with nation for so many years, why would it be any different in his passing.

In less than a week we have had to put together, in consultation with your office the funeral programme under difficult circumstance in the time of COVID. On reflection it has been quite a task in ensuring that the protocols of our Orthodox Church that date back short of two millennia and that of the state do not clash, all the while attending to concerns of our family. The dictates of principle and compromise have had to come to the fore and I believe that my brother Damon and I have been well schooled in this regard by our father.

I acknowledge the presence of Matthew Chaskalson. Matthew in a telephone conversation tried to suggest that with the limitation in numbers that he make space for another. We would have nothing of it as we honour the deep friendship and work that both our fathers did over decades.

I also acknowledge Nosizwe Nokwe, daughter of Duma Nokwe. Our father spoke so fondly and vividly of his friendship with Duma at a time that the apartheid regime so desperately tried to forbid such friendships. Thank you Nosizwe, and we are so pleased that last year we could finally get our families together for a lunch, and spit braai. Our father appreciated it very much.

I have been in touch with Ma Graca Machel, who so deeply wanted to be here but is stuck in Maputo due to COVID restrictions. Our telephone conversations are replete with echoes of the most special friendship that our father had with Tata Mandela.

The Legal Resources Centre was home to our father since 1991. I acknowledge the presence of Thandi Orleyn, Chair of the Board of Trustees, and Nersan Govender, National Director of the LRC. Also, Janet Love is here, the former National Director, who in her tenure a few years ago, together with the Trustees took the initiative in

establishing the George Bizos Human Rights Award. As awards go, the first went to our father, and last year the second was awarded to retired Deputy Chief Justice Moseneke. Our family looks forward to working with the LRC so that the institutional arrangements necessary in selecting and profiling recipients and their causes are durable and long lasting.

I would also like to acknowledge the presence of Sello Hatang of the Nelson Mandela Foundation. Sello's care and wit in his kind and gentle interactions with our family, and the tremendous help he has given since our father passed has been invaluable. Sello, we look forward to working with you and the Foundation in preserving our father's legacy. His legacy is Tata Mandela's legacy.

And there are so many in the legal profession whose lives he touched, and he was touched by. Too numerous to mention, though I think it would be opportune to acknowledge Advocates Sydney Kentridge and Denis Kuny who I expect would be viewing these proceedings from home. Mentioning any others would put me in a difficult position as there are so many. You know who you are.

There are also so many other acknowledgements that are needed. As a family we have been overwhelmed by the outpouring through letters of condolence, and press statements in regard to our father's passing.

Numerous institutions such as the University of the Witwatersrand and the Nelson Mandela Foundation, the Federation of Hellenic Communities of South Africa, the HIP Alliance and NADEL, are going to be hosting memoria and symposia in honour of our father. Details will be posted on www.georgebizos.com On this website there are links to SAHETI School and the George Bizos SAHETI Scholarship and Bursary Fund that were so dear to him. Any donations to the LRC

and/or the Scholarship Fund in his memory would assist in continuing his legacy.

I would like to focus on my father's legal work, and some unfinished business. Since the TRC and the publication of his first of three books "No One to Blame" in 1998 he has together with others wanted to hold perpetrators of excess, violence and murder to account. His retort to critics of the TRC was that the TRC recommended the prosecution of 300 named persons. The fact that there has been little action in that regard should not be laid at the door of the TRC. Similarly, the Farlam Commission of Enquiry into the Marikana Massacre.

The recent re-opened inquest in the Timol case, and the impending reopening of others gave tremendous hope to our father that justice will be done. We commend the efforts of lawyers such as Attorney Moray Haythorn, and Adv. Howard Varney and the Timol Family in this regard. Just as our father was mentored by the likes of Issy Maisels, Brahm Fischer and Vernon Berenge, it is now up to the younger generation to continue the odyssey to justice and through that freedom. Let us hope that George Bizos' legacy is not dishonoured through inaction.

Let us give expression to George Bizos famously saying at the Farlam Commission that apart from the LRC representing the family of a victim, the LRC's client was the Constitution.

Born a Greek, stateless for 31 years, yet becoming a proud patriot and South African citizen, some say a hero. Died a South African and a Greek, but above all, a human being.

On a lighter note, when asked who he would support in a soccer **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**match between South Africa and Greece, he would say he hoped it was a draw.

Hamba Kahle, Dad. May you rest in eternal peace with our mother at your last resting place.

Αιώνια του η μνήμη, may his memory be eternal.

- - END -

(1240 words)