Mandela Addresses U.N., Plans To Wipe Out S. African Racism

By Stanley Meisler

SYNDICATION

Symbolizing one of the great paradoxes of the United Nations, Nelson Mandela addressed the General Assembly yesterday at a time when President South Africa and pledged to wipe out racism in his divided country.

"The road that we shall have to travel to reach this destination will by no means be easy," he said. "All of us know how stubbornly racism can cling to the mind and how deeply it can infect the human soul.

"And yet however hard this battle will be," he went on, "we will not surrender." Mandela said the symbolism for the United Nations was clear. For decades, the General Assembly had mounted a vigorous campaign against the racist apartheid system of South Africa. The drive, he said, had prompted many countries to impose embargoes, made South Africa a pariah among nations and contributed to the atmosphere that finally persuaded South Africa's white leaders to give up apartheid.

"The millions of our people," he went on, "have come to recognize the power of the sanctions. They are part of the liberation of South Africa and are part of the liberation of the whole African continent." Mandela said his country's past had "helped to inspire" the world and that South Africa's future would be "a source of inspiration for the whole of the world." Mandela added that the world's blacks faced a long struggle to free themselves from the "neutralization of poverty in all its forms."