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NADINE GORDIMER: A LIFE WELL-LIVED SERVING TRUTH IN SOUTH AFRICA'S DEMOCRACY

The Freedom of Expression Institute conveys our deepest condolences to the family, friends and those dear to Nadine Gordimer. Her death has brought sadness to those who were inspired by her literary contributions. The world will lovingly remember her for the humaneness she exemplified.

Gordimer, who has been referred to as 'the conscience of South African literature' was an unwavering critic of apartheid. She spoke and wrote with integrity and honesty; yet she was critical, vigilant, and analytical. She has been described as never interested in embracing the popular position. Seeking to capture the lived everyday realities of ordinary people, Gordimer wrote 'as if censorship did not exist', illuminatingly depicting her deep care and love for her country, South Africa, its culture, its people and its on-going struggle to realise its new democracy. Through her writings, Gordimer gave the 'voiceless' masses of our people a voice through which to claim agency over their lives and the realities of apartheid.

The FXI acknowledges and honours Gordimer for condemning the Protection of State Information Bill. While she acknowledged national security as being one of the premises for which the bill would be justifiable, she cautioned that accusing the press of exaggerating the intention behind it, is in itself a subtle form of censorship. She labelled the Secrecy Bill as a threat to media freedom, and saw it as an obvious means of concealing the corruption that has become a way of South African life for many. As she put it "...Censorship is never over for those who have experienced it. It is a brand on the imagination that affects the individual who has suffered it, forever".

Drawing inspiration from Nadine Gordimer's activism towards the promotion of free expression, the FXI will continue to defend the foundational right to freedom of expression. We therefore encourage fellow South Africans to honour luminaries like Gordimer in defending this right and also appreciating and acknowledging one another's right to free expression as well as the critical role that art in all its various forms, has to play in the development and growth of our democracy.

Executive Committee: Anton (chairperson), Raymond Louw, Nobuntu Mbelle, Indra de Lanerolle, William Gumede, Oupa Lebogo, Sam Radebe, Franz Kruger. **Executive Director:** Tusi Fokane