

[USA](#), 2010, 88 Minute Running Time  
Genre/Subjects: [Biographical](#), [Documentary](#), [Historical/Period](#), [Political](#)  
Program: [Documentary Films](#)  
Language: English

**DIRECTOR:** Michael Henry Wilson  
**Producer:** Carole Wilson, Michael Henry Wilson  
**Editor:** Rick Blue, Terry Kelley, Jason Rosenfield  
**Screenwriter:** Michael Henry Wilson  
**Cinematographer:** Dominique Gentil  
**Principal Cast:**

When apartheid ended in South Africa, the threat of catastrophic civil war loomed behind the celebration. The country's black majority had been oppressed for 80 years under the governance of white Afrikaners, often suffering terrible brutality. The only hope for the nation lay with a man who had been imprisoned for decades: Nelson Mandela.

*Reconciliation* chronicles Mandela's career as head of the African National Congress, his 27-year stint in prison, his release and his ascension to leadership of a postapartheid nation. Through archival footage and interviews with such key figures as Archbishop Desmond Tutu and former president FW de Klerk, this moving documentary reveals how the hardships Mandela endured prepared him to guide his country through dangerous times and bring its disparate peoples together. Woven into the story are interviews with Clint Eastwood, whose 2009 drama *Invictus* tells the story of how South Africa's rugby team, with a nation united behind them, triumphed in the 1995 World Cup.

Eastwood was himself profiled by filmmaker Michael Henry Wilson in *Clint Eastwood: A Life in Film* (SDF30); but it was in a private meeting with the Dalai Lama, the subject of Wilson's best-known documentary, *In Search of Kundun with Martin Scorsese* (SDF21), that *Reconciliation* had its start. The Buddhist leader encouraged Wilson and his wife, producer Carole Wilson, to seek out Mandela and Tutu for their next project. The result makes clear that the struggle for equality is not over. The elimination of poverty, endemic to the country's black population, is the next frontier. But the film shows promise for the future in eloquent footage depicting the next generation, for whom racial integration is now the norm—and in whom the elders of the Rainbow Nation, who have brought it through such dangerous times, place their hopes.

—Val Moses

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