



South African Reserve Bank

Media Release

Embargo: Wednesday, 4 October 2017

Launch of commemorative coins to mark the 100th anniversary of Oliver Tambo's birth

In commemorating the birth centenary of Oliver Reginald Tambo, the South African Mint, a subsidiary of the South African Reserve Bank, is producing a R5 circulation coin and a series of collectible coins under the theme 'Freedom, Democracy and Culture'.

The new coins bear the 'Order of the Companions of OR Tambo', which was instituted in 2002 to honour international heads of state and eminent people for their friendship to South Africa. The elements of the Order feature prominently on the new R5 circulation coin, resoundingly acknowledging his contribution to the struggle for equality and inclusiveness.

The late OR Tambo, played a pivotal role in the country's struggle against apartheid. His stewardship of the liberation movement galvanised world opinion against the apartheid.

The new R5 coin, worth its face value, will enter into circulation from 1 of October 2017 and the other collectable coins will be available from the South African Mint and authorised dealers from 27 October 2017, OR Tambo's 100th anniversary.

The SARB encourages the public not to hold on to the circulation coins, when they receive them as change, as commemorative coins are made to be appreciated by everyone.

The coins continue the South African Mint Company (RF) Proprietary Limited (South African Mint) tradition of immortalising the country's stalwarts. The times in the life of OR Tambo depicted by the coins are epochal events in the history of South Africa.

Note to the Editors:

The South African Mint will continue to immortalise the country's iconic figures; it has chosen to depict the events in the history of South Africa that demolished the notion of apartheid and championed unity.

The R5 circulation coin

The elements of the Order of the Companions of OR Tambo feature prominently on the new R5 circulation coin, resoundingly acknowledging OR Tambo's contribution to the struggle for equality and inclusiveness. The reverse of the coin features a neck badge and walking stick. The obverse depicts the national coat of arms, year of issue '2017', and 'South Africa' written in both English and Xitsonga.

The symbols reflected on the coin include the Majola (mole snake) which, according to the African mythology, embodies friendship, protection and active support. The walking stick signifies support and commitment; and the universal yin and yang symbol suggests a meeting point for diverse spiritual energies.

The commemorative coin forms part of the existing coins already in circulation. The coin is worth its face value (i.e. R5 in the case of the new R5 OR Tambo circulation coin).

The collectible coins

The South African Mint will also unveil a precious metal tribute on the occasion to mark the birth centenary. The three collectible coins range depict OR Tambo during his youth and presidency of the African National Congress (ANC).

The coins will be available to the public individually and as a set. They can be purchased directly from the South African Mint as well as approved dealers.

The four-coin set consists of a 1 oz pure gold R500 proof coin, a 1 oz sterling-silver R50 proof coin, a base-metal R50 non-circulating legal tender coin and a R5 commemorative circulation coin. The three-coin set does not include the gold proof coin.

The reverse of the 1 oz pure gold coin features a stylised interpretation of OR Tambo representing his 'mission in exile', a term he used in reference to his ANC presidency during which the movement was banned, together with his full name, 'Oliver Reginald Tambo', the date '1917–2017', denomination of R500 and metal value '1 oz Au 999.9'.

The sterling-silver coin features on its reverse a stylised interpretation of OR Tambo as a young man, together with his full name 'Oliver Reginald Tambo', the centenary date '2017', the denomination of R50 and metal value '1 oz Ag 925 Cu 75'.

The reverse of the non-circulating legal tender coin features a stylised interpretation of OR Tambo together with his full name, 'Oliver Reginald Tambo', the centenary date '2017' as well as the denomination of R50 and metal value 'Cu Al Ni'.

This is the first time that the South African Mint is releasing a non-circulating, collectible legal tender coin made from the same base metal used in other South African circulation coins. The design has gone through the same approval process as other legal tender commemorative coins and has been approved by the Cabinet and the Minister of Finance, which makes it legal tender.

The coin, however, is non-circulating as it is not redeemable at banks and not for use to purchase products or services at face value. It can only be redeemed at the South African Mint for its face value of R50.

Proof coins refer to a special method of minting that brings out the finest detail of the coin's design, and are of the highest quality. The OR Tambo proof sets will be available in a limited number, making it an exceptional release from the South African Mint in OR Tambo's centenary year.

Issued by:

SARB Media Relations
Media@resbank.co.za
012 399 7118/7966