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Media Statement

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480 000 jobs created claim VS 900 000 job loss, who is fooling who!

Many fellow countrymen were recently baffled following President Jacob Zuma's sketchy State of the Nation Address (SONA), which asserted that the government was able to create 480 000 jobs out of the 500 000 that he promised to deliver within six months last year. It is understandable if people react hysterical because it is common knowledge that almost one million people across the country lost their jobs due to recession the same year he said 480 000 jobs were created. Only this year did he explain that he was referring to those jobs that were created through the Expanded Public Works Programme, which were mainly temporary and unsustainable and that did very little to move any significant number of people out of poverty and the unemployment trap. As a result, many who found themselves jobless and hungry took the initiative to join the already swollen informal trading sector.

The last report of the Statistics South Africa's Quarterly Labour Force Survey released last year also reflected an increase in vast retrenchment when compared to the previous seasons. The same report also signified an increase of discouraged unemployed who have given up the hope of finding work. Few weeks after the release of this report, the President made an appeal for government to be afforded the opportunity and sufficient time to deliver while at the same time admitting that it may not be feasible to create 500 000 jobs as promised. Therefore, the affirmation that 97% of job creation was achieved in the Expanded Public Works Programme need to be backed by substantial evidence as a way of demonstrating a sound governance and accountability to citizens.

The President also seemed to have used a 'quite diplomacy' regarding the acts of cabinet ministers and departments who went on rampage splashing the taxpayers purse purchasing luxury vehicles. Unequivocally, instilling a sense of conscientiousness into the 'ethos of government' cannot be equated to splashing R42.6 million by government on purchasing luxury vehicles alone amidst the backdrop of recession, no gal.

The announcement that the ruling party will cease from appointing its cadres in the leadership positions of government and municipalities is most welcomed. Surely, this will go a long way in creating a more inclusive democracy rather than the perpetuation of elite democracy and an eroded culture of self-wealth accumulation. This trend paints a picture of government leadership insensitivity towards its people. It's high time that we invest in government leadership which possess impeccable values such promoting self-sufficiency for self and group interest; common victory for justice, peace and human dignity; exhorted morality, prosperity, nonviolence, non-sexism and non-racialism. Similarly, it of utmost importance that those in the echelons of power in government should possess true moral values such as respect life in wholeness; responsibility; quest for peace and justice; human dignity and human rights; values of truth, honesty, love and compassion etc. Thereof, it is only then that we will be able to realise the provision and acceleration of basic amenities and services being prioritise.

It remains to be seen whether the President's many noble pronouncements, promises and commitments will be implementable or they will just become the usual rhetoric and semantics synonymous with politicians.

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