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Article: The wealth of our country belongs to all

The 2010 World Cup Final draw has come and gone. The event was without a doubt a glittering occasion that made our country a centre of global attraction. Needless to say, what is at the centre of discontentment is how will the economic opportunities that come with the World Cup tournament be shared equitably amongst all South Africans. This is against the backdrop of the alarming figures of Statistics of South Africa, which signifies that almost one million people lost their jobs due to global economic crisis.

Already, many of the unemployed have swelled the informal economy sector operating in street corners of cities and townships as hawkers in order to flee from the life of abject poverty. Though the public have been mobilised to rally behind their national team and contribute towards the success of the World Cup show, only the formal sector, which comprises of tourism, finance, transport and recreation industries etc seems to be the only ones having the potential and better positioned to make financial gain from this upcoming global enthralling event.

History will indeed judge us if we don't give the poorest of the poor such as informal traders an opportunity to at least for short space of time make a living during the 2010 World Cup. As things stand, the current economic system is incapable of meeting the demands of millions living in poverty and at the margins of society. In addition, what we have is an elite democracy that perpetuates a system of economy gain by the few in the echelons of power. It received backing of Presidents, government and attracted attendance of high profile personalities in entertainment, cricket, athletics and off-course soccer greats.

ESSET is of the view that majority of our people across the country cannot experience a better life for all beside government creating jobs, overcoming poverty and providing equal access to economic opportunities for all.

Since the draw for the World Cup tournament recently, the excitement across the country, continent and the globe has continued to grow as demonstrated by increase in match tickets purchases especially by the locals. Though the public have been mobilised to rally behind their national team and contribute towards the success of the World Cup show, only the formal sector, which comprises of tourism, finance,

transport and recreation industries etc seems to be the only ones having the potential and better positioned to make financial gain from this upcoming global enthralling event. In contrast, municipalities across the country where the stadia for the 2010 soccer event are build have informed local informal traders (almost one million due to recession) that for the duration of the tournament, they would not be allowed to sell their goods to customers not less than five metres from the match venues. A confirmation of the sad reality that the World Cup is not for everyone.

In conclusion, it seems clear that our current led government may have diverted from the values of the Freedom Charter, which amongst others promised the following;

- ✓ South Africa will belong to all who live in it, black and white and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people;
- ✓ Never shall the people be robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality;
- ✓ Our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities;
- ✓ Only in a democratic state, based on the will of all people, will people be restored to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief;
- ✓ The national wealth of our country, the heritage of South Africans, shall be restored to the people;
- ✓ All people shall have equal rights to trade where they choose, to manufacture and to enter all trades, crafts and professions.

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