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Dual goals of World Cup not contradictory

IT IS tempting to see the legacy that 2010 needs to leave behind in terms articulated exclusively in the language of "social justice". In other words, there is a body of thought that posits that, for 2010 to have been deemed successful, the primary beneficiaries must be the poor, marginalised and impoverished.

The argument is that, in the run-up to 2010 and, indeed, after the event, the value of the spectacle must be measured by the number of jobs created (particularly in the "second economy"); the extent to which services to the poor have been accelerated; how the public transport system has been enhanced to cut — and make more safe and reliable — commuting time between place of residence and work; the net contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) to allow redistribution and social grant programmes to gain momentum; and whether other Reconstruction and Development Programme and "welfare-based" objectives can be fulfilled.

The latest annual Human Sciences Research Council survey of public perceptions on 2010 revealed that one in three South Africans expects to benefit personally from job creation through 2010, presumably through some sort of large public works programme or other.

There is also a growing body of thought that argues that 2010 can make significant inroads in changing the anomalous form and structure of our cities, brought on by decades of apartheid spatial planning.

I have always maintained that issues of growth and equity as mutually reinforcing concepts are crucial if 2010 is to meet with the kinds of successes we hope, including in the planning stages.

I have also argued that the success of the event will be measured not only in terms of how we make SA's cities more competitive globally, but in terms of how an undertaking to the poor and indigent can be fulfilled. I stand by that.

What has been of concern to me most recently, however, is the framing of this debate in mutually exclusive terms. In other words, we either create jobs and improve the plight of the poor by doing so, or we focus on the



and a debate needs to start with much urgency around these issues if this World Cup is to be truly beneficial to all South Africans.

What is required is an immediate consensus on the part of all stakeholders and constituencies that if we work together, pool resources, align visions, collectively chart processes and conjointly identify targets, the end result will truly benefit SA as a whole, not just specific sectors.

While competing discourses

'2010 will create jobs, but not solve our unemployment problems'

on development are important as we begin in earnest with the planning and the roll-out of large programmes required to make 2010 a success, this must not come at the expense of a collective vision — one based not just on consensus (which, after all, is often about compromise) — but one grounded in what is best for SA, given our challenges and prospects.

This meeting of minds will agree that not all urban "ills" will be solved by 2010 nor, conversely, will SA immediately join a global



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hierarchy — an elite list, as it were — of competitive economies.

It will also agree that 2010 will create jobs, but not solve our unemployment problems; that it will improve our public transport system, but not solve the public transport problem; that it may help accelerate service delivery in some of our urban townships, but only marginally.

Further, it must agree that 2010 will position the country more competitively, but not before we get more of the basics right — like crime and industrial policy; that we will have world-class facilities to attract mega-events in future, but for the large part these are likely to be under-utilised; that there is likely to be a positive net contribution to the GDP, but that 2010 is unlikely to deliver a 6% growth rate.

We need to arrive at a national consensus, driven by our leaders, on what kind of legacy 2010 is realistically and practically able (or likely) to leave behind. Legacy outcomes are not zero-sum games. We need an urgent stakeholders' compact of sorts as the increasing importance of talking with one voice gains momentum.

Regrettably, neither the national government nor the local organising committee have taken the lead here and we are running out of time!

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opportunities created by 2010 to attract foreign direct investment that will help grow the economy 6% per annum.

We cannot, so the argument goes, do both. This is where, I surmise, we are getting it wrong. These goals are not contradictory.

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