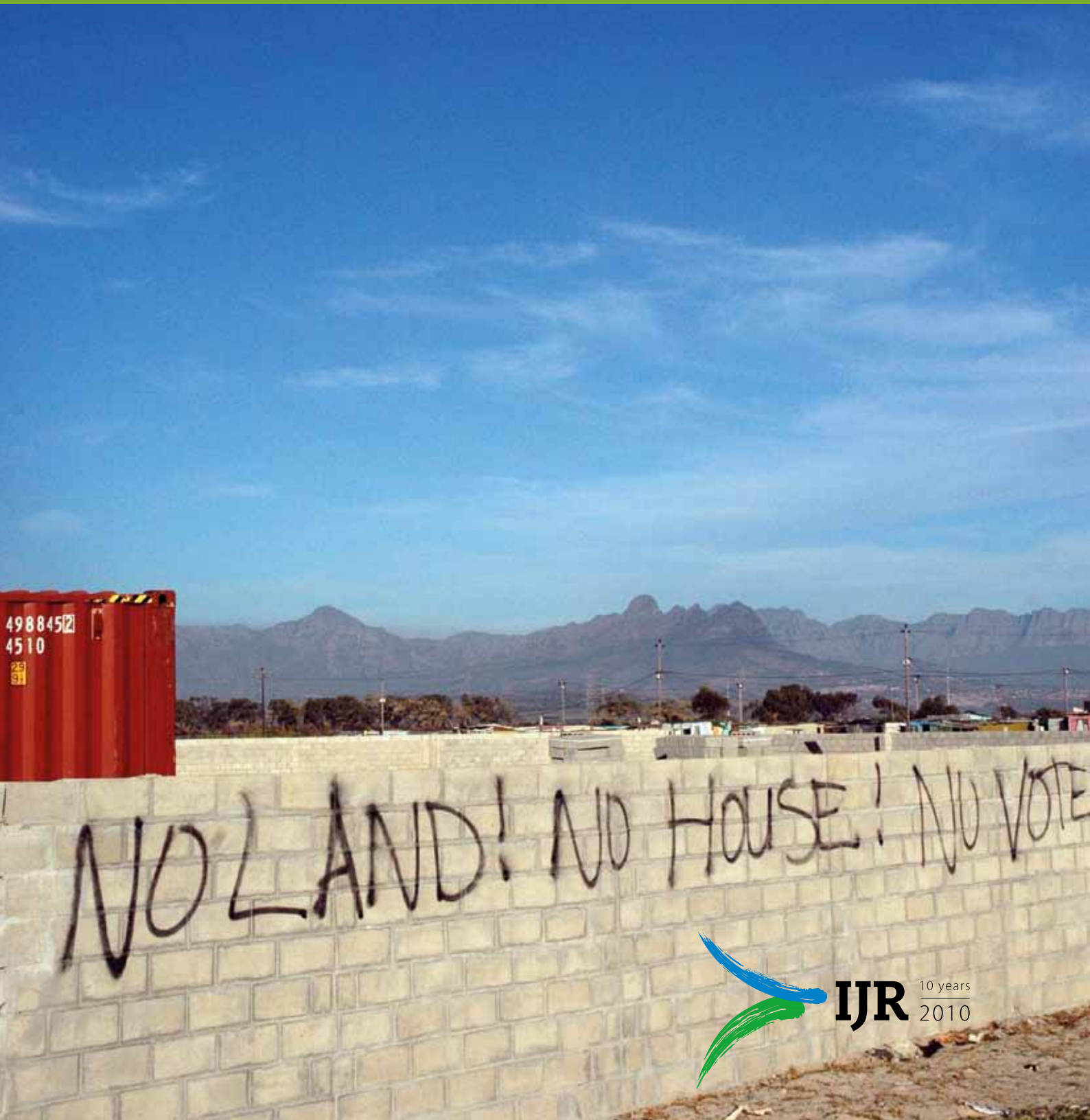


SA Reconciliation Barometer 2011

SA RECONCILIATION BAROMETER SURVEY: 2011 REPORT



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2010

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SA Reconciliation Barometer Survey: 2011 Report

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ACRONYMS

AA	affirmative action
AMPS	All Media Products Survey
ANC	African National Congress
ANCYL	African National Congress Youth League
AWB	Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging
BEE	black economic empowerment
CBO	community-based organisation
CEE	Commission for Employment Equity
DA	Democratic Alliance
DOCS	Department of Correctional Services
DOJCD	Department of Justice and Constitutional Development
EA	enumerator area (census)
EAP	economically active population
EE	employment equity
EEA	Employment Equity Act
JSC	Judicial Services Commission
JSE	Johannesburg Stock Exchange
GDP	gross domestic product
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
HPCSA	Health Professions Council of South Africa
ID	Independent Democrats
IES	Income and Expenditure Survey
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IJR	Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
LSM	Living Standards Measure
MTBPS	Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement
NA	National Assembly
NEDLAC	National Economic Development and Labour Council
NPC	National Planning Commission
PAIA	Protection of Access to Information Act
POIB	Protection of Information Bill
PR	proportional representation
SAPS	South African Police Service
SARB	South African Reconciliation Barometer
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Planning Commission (NPC) was established in 2010 with a mandate to ensure greater inter-departmental planning within government, developing a long-term plan for the country, and drafting a vision for South Africa. In June of this year, the NPC released a diagnostic report on the current challenges facing the country, which was followed by a Draft National Plan for public consultation and input in November.

The foremost challenges currently facing the country were identified as, in broad terms: high unemployment; low educational quality, for black people in particular; inadequate infrastructure; significant spatial development challenges; a resource-intensive and unsustainable growth path; an ailing public health system unable to cope with the national disease burden; uneven public sector performance; and corruption (NPC, 2011a).

A specific diagnostic was also conducted on progress in nation-building, and the National Plan reports that despite progress in the country since the transition to democracy in 1994, South Africa remains deeply divided and characterised by high levels of inequity and inequality. These 'disturbing' divisions were ascribed to economic underperformance and deeply entrenched patterns of historic privilege and deprivation (NPC, 2011f: 412).

Few in South Africa would likely disagree with the challenges identified by the NPC, although these findings are nonetheless difficult to hear. However, the tabling of the National Plan provides an important opportunity for an honest and constructive stock take, and one that is well-timed for what has been a difficult year for the country. Twenty-one has provided ample evidence of the growing gap between South Africa's few 'haves' and millions of 'have-nots'. Protests ostensibly over 'service delivery' have reduced in numbers but have become increasingly violent, as demonstrated by clashes between law enforcement officials and citizens in Tafelsig and in Ficksburg, where community leader Andries Tatane was allegedly killed by police. In October, thousands of ANC Youth League (ANCYL) members marched from Johannesburg to the Union Buildings in Pretoria, where they demanded 'economic freedom in our lifetime' (ANCYL, 2011).

This year has also brought clear indications of just how quickly public opinion can become extremely polarised, often along historic dividing lines and with little neutral space for dialogue in between. Controversy erupted over the outcome of ANCYL president Julius Malema's hate speech trial in the Equality Court, as well as over Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu's revitalisation of a wealth tax proposal first tabled by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

That South Africa remains a deeply divided society has been a discouragingly consistent finding of the SA Reconciliation Barometer (SARB) survey, conducted by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) since 2003. This remains a clear conclusion from the 11th survey round, conducted in 2011, as well as an accompanying series of qualitative focus groups carried out this year. Nonetheless, there are

also important and positive signals of progress in reconciliation, social cohesion and nation-building, not least of which is government's renewed commitment to prioritising these important components of our shared social fabric through the National Plan and Vision for 2030.

Against the backdrop of the third round of municipal elections in May, the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey finds that trust in local government among South Africans remains considerably lower than in the provincial or national spheres or Parliament. Citizens are moderately confident in the power of their vote to make a difference within their community, but few inroads have been made in increasing trust in public and elected leadership since 2010. Qualitative focus group texts, supported by recent research from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), also suggest room for more voter education around electoral processes and procedures. In 2011, percentages of South Africans who believe peaceful protests and strikes are justified when human rights are being violated have declined slightly. However, 12% believe that more violent and destructive protest is justified under these circumstances, and a comparable percentage indicates that they have participated in demonstrations of this kind within the last year.

As the year has progressed, South Africa has faced growing economic insecurity, particularly as debt crises in northern economies have begun to deepen. Finance minister Pravin Gordhan reported in his October Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) speech that despite signals of economic recovery and increased job numbers following losses brought on by the 2009 recession, growth prospects are less optimistic than previous estimates, and more instability may be yet to come. In the early months of 2011, South Africans' perceptions of their own economic security were comparable to those reported in 2010, but this may change by 2012.

Many South Africans continue to support government initiatives to achieve a workforce that is representative of race, gender and disability. However, proposed changes in labour legislation and the Employment Equity Act (EEA), which would mean the consideration of national rather than provincial demographics in application and compliance, were not supported by most citizens according to survey results.

In June of this year, the NPC's Diagnostic Overview found that 'South Africa remains a divided society and the major dividing line is still race' (NPC, 2011a: 26). The subsequent National Plan suggests that a common goal for the country should be to reach a point at which 'South Africans become more conscious of the things they have

in common than their differences' (NPC, 2011f: 414). Consecutive rounds of the SA Reconciliation Barometer have found that South Africans continue to associate strongly with identity groups based on language, ethnicity and race. This remains true in 2011, but is not necessarily an obstacle to nation-building, as many South Africans still believe a more united country is both desirable and possible. Levels of day-to-day interaction, as well as the formation of deeper social relationships, between South Africans of different historically defined race groups have improved gradually since 2003, although this occurs with greater frequency among those from affluent households. Further, the gap between rich and poor continues to be identified as the biggest social division in the country, ahead of political party membership, race, infectious disease, religion or language.

Appropriate treatment of the past remains a challenge in 2011, as evident through the controversy surrounding Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu's revitalising of the TRC's wealth tax proposal. Both the Reconciliation Barometer survey results and qualitative focus group texts suggest that many South Africans feel the past is better left in the past, and views are divided over the teaching of history to so-called 'born-frees'. National consensus still exists that apartheid was a crime against humanity and that the state committed atrocities against anti-apartheid activists, but there is a great deal of uncertainty about whether government has done enough to prosecute perpetrators or to support their victims.

The SA Reconciliation Barometer measures progress in reconciliation through six complex hypotheses and indicators, which are: political culture, human security, cross-cutting political relationships, dialogue, race relations and historical confrontation. However, many South Africans simply want to know whether or not we have 'reconciled' overall since 1994. The response: some believe we have, many others believe we have not, and many others are uncertain. While there is a majority view that the country has made progress in reconciliation since the end of apartheid, fewer agree that the TRC was a success or that they have experienced reconciliation in their own lives. In the words of one focus group participant from Worcester in the Western Cape, reconciliation remains 'something we're still dreaming about'. Opinion is also highly polarised on issues such as the singing of historic songs, and renaming of public places and facilities at state expense.

The challenges that face the country at present are difficult, but they are not insurmountable. The tabling of the Vision for 2030 may prove to effectively open up a public space for constructive dialogue about these challenges, and how best to move forward as a country. While this will indeed be a welcome outcome, efforts to continue to work toward a more reconciled, inclusive and cohesive country should not be put on hold.

I. INTRODUCTION

In May of 2010, just after his first year in office, President Jacob Zuma announced the establishment of a National Planning Commission (NPC) that would be tasked with developing a long-term plan for the country, ensuring greater inter-departmental coordination on cross-cutting national issues, and the drafting of a vision for South Africa (Reuters, 2010; NPC online).

This year the NPC, led by minister for planning Trevor Manuel and a team of 25 prominent commissioners, began its work of diagnosing the main challenges facing the country at present and proposing new strategies for going forward.

The Commission's first Diagnostic Overview and dedicated issue-based reports were released in mid-2011, and a draft National Plan tabled for public consultation and input was published in November. Many South Africans would likely agree that the issues identified as the main challenges facing the country are accurate. These issues are, in broad terms: high levels of unemployment; low educational quality, particularly for black people; inadequate infrastructure; significant spatial development challenges; a resource-intensive and unsustainable growth path; an ailing public health system unable to cope with the national disease burden; uneven public service performance; and corruption (NPC, 2011a).

Following a specific diagnostic on nation-building, the National Plan reports that despite evident progress in the country since the transition to democracy in 1994, South Africa remains profoundly divided and characterised by high levels of inequity and inequality. Opportunity continues to be defined by race, gender, geography, class and language. 'That these differences exist is not surprising,' according to the NPC, but 'that they remain so stark 17 years after the end of apartheid is disturbing.' Factors that have contributed to the continued life of the status quo are named as economic underperformance, public policy implementation that has 'not reversed the inherent privilege attached to race', and persistent and deeply entrenched patterns of 'historic privilege and deprivation' (NPC, 2011f: 412).

Though it would be difficult to disagree with this view, the NPC's findings are nonetheless difficult to hear, particularly given the rainbow-nation optimism that much of the country embraced in the early and mid-1990s. It is not always easy to own up to our own shortcomings, particularly when presented so starkly. However, the NPC's diagnosis of division also provides South Africa with a very important opportunity for an honest social, economic and political stock take, and one that is well-timed in what by all accounts has been a difficult year for the country. Twenty-eleven has provided us with ample evidence of the ever-growing gap between South Africa's few 'haves' and millions of 'have-nots'. Nowhere is this clearer than in our streets. In October, thousands of members of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) marched from Johannesburg to the Union Buildings in Pretoria, where they made the following call: 'we, the youth of South Africa, the unemployed, marginalised, homeless, the

economically downtrodden, and all of us who wish to have access to quality free education, housing, electricity, and sustainable livelihoods demand urgent economic freedom in our lifetime' (ANCYL, 2011).

Localised protests over 'service delivery' have reportedly diminished in frequency but also become more violent and destructive (Karamoko, 2011: 1). Ficksburg community activist Andries Tatane, allegedly killed by police during a protest in April, has become a symbol of the clash between frustrated, disenfranchised citizens and a government that is unresponsive or unable to meet their demands. Similar tensions between citizens and government were evident in the Western Cape in the lead-up to the May local government elections, when backyard dwellers 'invaded' and occupied vacant land in Tafelsig before facing the police's rubber bullets, teargas and water cannons (Underhill, 2011; Hofmeyr, 2011b).

There have also been clear indications of just how quickly public opinion can become extremely polarised, often along historic dividing lines and with little neutral space for constructive dialogue in between. A storm of controversy and contestation erupted over the outcome of ANCYL president Julius Malema's hate speech trial in the Equality Court, and more broadly around the issue of appropriate cultural texts befitting of an inclusive democracy. Constituencies of organisations such as Afriforum and Tau-SA, which brought the charges against Malema, perceived his singing of *Dubula iBhunu* (loosely translated as 'shoot the Boer') as a direct and ominous threat. Conversely, many others in the country felt the court's 'banning' of these lyrics as unjust treatment of one historic anthem among an important canon of songs that bolstered the fight of anti-apartheid activists, and continues to inspire support for South Africa's ongoing democratisation process (Hofmeyr, 2011a; Esau, 2011).

The public reaction to Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu's revitalisation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) proposal of a wealth tax levied on elite South Africans revealed another such fault line. Rather than viewed as an effective catalyst for redress and support for those whose lives have not improved substantively since the end of apartheid, or a positive approach towards disrupting the patterns of 'historic privilege and deprivation' that the NPC refers to, Tutu's comments were met with cries of 'racism' and illegality. These appeared particularly vehement from among segments of that population where such a tax would likely generate the most revenue for anti-poverty measures (see Du Toit, 2011; SAPA, 2011b). The subtext of this debate was one in which acknowledgement, shared responsibility and culpability, and redress for the broad and lasting

social and economic consequences of apartheid were treated as completely unpalatable, and this sentiment was captured well by a participant in a qualitative focus group on reconciliation conducted earlier this year: 'Reconciliation according to my understanding is that media put white people there to apologise.' / 'For being white.' / 'To say sorry for the years of apartheid and I am sick and tired of that shit, sorry for that' (Group 5).

That South Africa remains a deeply divided society has also been a discouragingly consistent finding of the SA Reconciliation Barometer (SARB) survey, conducted annually by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) since 2003. It is also a clear conclusion emerging from a series of accompanying qualitative focus groups on reconciliation, also conducted around the country in 2011. As a young participant from Cape Town commented, 'I think the pot is boiling over. I think people put on a smile, they act happy and act peaceful and that but my opinion is that people are boiling over and some pots are going to boil over' (Group 1).

It is clear that much substantive work remains to be done before the NPC's vision of a united nation, in which 'South Africans will be more conscious of the things they have in common than their differences', can be achieved (NPC, 2011f: 414). Nonetheless, there are also clear and positive signals of progress in reconciliation, social cohesion and nation-building, and democratic consolidation, and these should not be overlooked. Not least among these is the important commitment that government has made to prioritising measures that promote social cohesion and national unity in the Vision for 2030. The Reconciliation Barometer also finds, for example, that most South Africans still believe that a united country is both desirable and possible, that levels of interactions and social relationships between people of different historically defined race groups have gradually increased, and that there is collective interest and commitment to moving ahead from the past, albeit less consensus on exactly how this will happen. Perhaps the Vision for 2030 will provide us with direction on this challenge.

This report presents the findings of the 11th round¹ of the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey, conducted in April and May of 2011. The survey provides accurate, reliable and longitudinal public opinion data on progress in reconciliation across six main indicators, as discussed in more detail in section II: political culture, human security, cross-cutting political relations, race relations, historical confrontation and dialogue. This year's survey report also emphasises answering some of the 'big questions' debated in the public sphere in 2011, from

attitudes on the power of the vote in local government elections to approval of the singing of struggle songs, employment equity (EE) policy and government re-naming initiatives.

The structure of this report is as follows: section II provides an overview of the research methodologies used in conducting both the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey and the qualitative focus groups conducted this year. Section III focuses on local government elections, democratic participation and political efficacy. Section IV examines the current economic climate, and evaluates attitudes towards economic transformation initiatives and EE policy. Then, section V reports on how strongly South Africans associate with historic identity groups, how they understand the 'biggest divisions' in the country and prospects for national unity. Section VI explores public opinion about the past, with a particular focus on the treatment of perpetrators of apartheid crimes, while section VII unpacks the 'big question': have we reconciled or not?

NOTE

1. The SA Reconciliation Barometer survey was first conducted in 2003. Survey rounds were conducted bi-annually in 2003 and 2004, and once each year from 2005 until the present. For purposes of ease of presentation and consistency between reporting periods, rounds 2 (mid-2003) and 4 (mid-2004) are excluded from this analysis. Data from all survey rounds is available in publications free to download from the IJR website.

II. METHODOLOGY

The South African Reconciliation Barometer is a nationally representative public opinion poll that has been conducted by the IJR since 2003. It is the only survey in South Africa at present that provides a longitudinal measure of progress in reconciliation since the transition to democracy in 1994.

In addition to tracking and reporting trends and year-on-year change, it is among the project’s founding goals to collect reliable and accurate data that can meaningfully inform public and policy debates, particularly where these risk over-reliance on assumptions, rhetoric and stereotypes as is sometimes the case in discourse around reconciliation, social relations and nation-building.

As discussed substantively in the 2010 SARB report, reconciliation is conceptually complex and inherently difficult to measure, like many other facets of social change (Lefko-Everett *et al*, 2010). For this reason, the survey tests reconciliation through six main hypotheses and indicators that inform the measures used in the questionnaire, as shown in Table 1. These indicators are: human security, political culture, cross-cutting political relationships, historical confrontation, race relations and dialogue.¹

The Reconciliation Barometer survey is carried out through face-to-face interviews conducted around South Africa, and using a quantitative questionnaire developed by the IJR that includes approximately one hundred survey items. All questions are close-ended, and the majority are in the form of five-point Likert scales. Sampling, piloting and interviews are conducted by Ipsos-Markinor, and form part of the bi-annual KhayaBus, which focuses on measuring social and political trends. A national sample is drawn that is representative of the South African adult population aged 15 and above, and in 2011 includes approximately 2 000 metro and 1 560 non-metro inhabitants, with an equal gender split. The sample frame is based on the 2001 census enumerator areas (EA). Following random selection of EAs, secondary sampling is conducted at the household level, before a final stage of selecting respondents aged 15 and above. Random sampling ‘ensures that each person in the South African adult population has an equal probability of being chosen to do the interview’. As a representative sample, the ‘results of the survey can be projected onto the South African population as a mirror image of trends in attitudes and perceptions amongst adult South Africans in general’. In 2011, a sampling error of 1.7% with a confidence interval of 95% was achieved (Ipsos-Markinor, 2011).

Prior to the commencement of fieldwork in 2011, a pilot interview was conducted to test several new and revised questions. Ipsos-Markinor subsequently reported that the pilot was successful, and no problems were encountered with these questions (Ipsos-Markinor, 2011).

Fieldwork was carried out between 5 April and 29 May 2011, in all provinces of South Africa. Interviews were conducted in six languages, according to the preferences of respondents: English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Sotho, Xhosa and Tswana. Ipsos-Markinor ensures a minimum back-check of 20% of interviews conducted by each fieldworker to ensure accuracy and consistency (see Appendix B for full sample). The metro sample is then weighted according to race, metro, gender and age, while the non-metro sample is weighted by community size, age, gender and province, based on 2010B All Media Products Survey (AMPS) data (Ipsos-Markinor, 2011).

Table 1: SA Reconciliation Barometer hypotheses and indicators, 2004–2011

Human security: If citizens do not feel threatened, they are more likely to be reconciled with each other and the larger system.	Physical security; economic security; cultural security
Political culture: If citizens view the institutions, leadership and culture of the new system as legitimate and accountable, reconciliation is more likely to progress.	Justifiability of extra-legal action; legitimacy of leadership; legitimacy of Parliament; respect for the rule of law
Cross-cutting political relationships: If citizens are able to form working political relationships that cross divisions, reconciliation is more likely to advance.	Commitment to national unity; commitment to multi-racial political parties
Historical confrontation: If citizens are able to confront and address issues from the past, they are more likely to be able to move forward and be reconciled.	Acknowledgement of the injustice of apartheid; forgiveness; reduced levels of vengeance
Race relations: If citizens of different races hold fewer negative perceptions of each other, they are more likely to form workable relationships that will advance reconciliation.	Inter-racial contact; inter-racial preconceptions; inter-racial tolerance
Dialogue: If citizens are committed to deep dialogue, reconciliation is more likely to be advanced.	Commitment to more dialogue

In 2011, the SA Reconciliation Barometer project also commissioned a series of 18 qualitative focus groups that were conducted around the country, with two main goals: first, to further validate the hypotheses, indicators and measures used in the annual survey; and second, to explore understandings on reconciliation with more depth than can be captured using a quantitative approach. Qualitative texts from these focus groups are used throughout this report.

Recruitment, facilitation and transcribing of the focus group discussions was carried out by Citizen Surveys in five provinces: the Western Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and the Free State. Focus groups were conducted in English, Afrikaans, Sotho, Zulu, and Xhosa, and often in multiple languages. All groups were constituted of participants of mixed gender, but within pre-defined age groups and homogeneity according to historically defined race groups.² Focus group participants were also selected on the basis of politically moderate views, meaning that they were drawn from the 'middle of the political spectrum', and were also chosen with consideration to including the views of specific groups, such as youth, persons with disabilities, the unemployed, and social grant and pension recipients. Selection criteria also prevented the participation of more than one

person from a single household, more than one person from a single family tree, more than two persons who knew each other well, or more than two persons residing in the same street, block of flats or employed in the same workplace. All focus groups were recorded, then translated and transcribed into English (Citizen Surveys, 2011). Where focus group texts are quoted in this report, they are attributed to a specific group but not any individual participant. (See Appendix C for full group composition.)

NOTES

1. Originally the survey was based on seven hypotheses, which were then reduced to six. The original seven hypotheses and related indicators are shown in Appendix A.
2. The findings of previous rounds of the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey support the research premise that many South Africans feel most comfortable discussing sensitive issues, such as those related to race relations, with others they believe to be in their same historically defined race group.

III. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Democratic participation was at the heart of South Africa's national transition and since the first round of the SARB, the survey has hypothesised that reconciliation is more likely to happen when citizens view public institutions, leadership and democratic culture as legitimate.

Professor James Gibson, who worked closely with the IJR at the time of the survey's development, described this as a 'predisposition to recognise and accept the authority of the major political institutions' of democratic South Africa (Gibson, 2004: 4). A number of questions included in the SARB test confidence in public institutions and elected leaders, respect for the rule of law, and views on how justified citizens are to protest in different circumstances.

Fieldwork for this year's survey was conducted in the lead-up to the May local government elections. In both previous municipal polls, held in 2000 and 2006, voter turnout has been lower than rates at provincial and national elections. With evidence of high levels of protest during 2009 and early 2010, often over dissatisfaction with service delivery or specific complaints related to housing, water provision, sanitation, and electrification (Karamoko, 2011: 7, 31), many anticipated that voter turnout to the polls would remain low in 2011. In the Western Cape in particular, speculation that voters would intentionally spoil ballot papers or stay away from polling stations in protest escalated after community-based organisation (CBO) Abahlali baseMjondolo convened a summit with the slogan 'No Land! No House! No Vote! (Our votes are conditional)', and when police began to clash with 'land invaders' in Tafelsig (Abahlali baseMjondolo online; Hofmeyr, 2011a). In statements to the media, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) predicted that voter turnout could even be lower than recorded in 2000 (48.05%) and 2006 (48.40%) (Mataboge *et al.*, 2011; IEC online). After the ballot papers were tallied however, the national turnout rate was calculated at 57.64%, with higher than average rates in the Western Cape (64.37%), Northern Cape (63.36%), KwaZulu-Natal (61.53%) and the Eastern Cape (58.16%) (IEC online).

Confidence in leadership and public institutions other than local government has also been tested during 2011. One such test has been through public response to the Protection of Information Bill (POIB), popularly known as the 'Secrecy Bill', which was first tabled in Parliament in 2010. The bill focuses on classifying secret state information, and in fact replaces apartheid-era legislation, but was widely referred to as 'draconian' in its first versions and the subject of significant criticism. Twenty-eleven saw a protracted debate and amendment process and numerous protests at Parliament held by the Right2Know campaign. It was tabled again in September, withdrawn temporarily, and then passed a vote in the National Assembly (NA) on 23 November. The Right2Know advocacy campaign has warned that the bill will mean 'harsh prison sentences' and a lack of protection for whistleblowers disclosing state secrets, possible incarceration of those who don't disclose coming into possession of a state secret, the

trumping of the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA), reduced public accountability for state security agencies, and 'no independent appeals mechanism available to citizens who wish to access information that may have been classified as secret without justification' (Right2Know, 2011).

Although subsequent to the conclusion of fieldwork for the SA Reconciliation Barometer, several other important events deserve mention, and may potentially impact on survey results in early 2012. In July, public reaction was mixed in response to Cabinet approval of a bill amending the Judges' Remuneration and Conditions of Employment Act, and paving the way for President Zuma to extend the term of Chief Justice Sandile Ngcobo's term for a further five years (Bauer, 2011). Despite Ngcobo's relative popularity, the constitutionality of the amendment was challenged and Ngcobo himself resigned. This challenge was then upheld by the Constitutional Court just days later, but rather than a quick recovery in the eyes of some members of the public, President Zuma faced another round of vociferous criticism when he announced the nomination of Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng as Ngcobo's replacement. The decision to make public Mogoeng's interview with the Judicial Services Commission (JSC) was an important and progressive one. However, Mogoeng's past judgments came under intense public scrutiny, and gender advocacy groups accused the judge of exercising leniency in cases involving violence against women, domestic abuse and marital rape (Kendal, R. 2011; Southern African Litigation Centre, 2011). While many likely appreciated the opportunity to observe Mogoeng's interview, there was also a pervasive sentiment that public input was relatively inconsequential in the appointment process when the judge was ultimately appointed Chief Justice.

Another significant development during 2011, with potential to influence future rounds of the SARB survey, was the publication of a series of damning investigative reports by the office of the Public Protector, which has brought perceptions of new rigour to this independent 'watchdog' institution. A report on an investigation into lease agreements entered into by the South African Police Service (SAPS) for new premises in Durban implicated both public works minister Gwen Mahlangu-Nkabinde, who then lost her portfolio in a Cabinet reshuffle in October, and national police commissioner Bheki Cele, now suspended pending the findings of a board of inquiry established to look into allegations of his misconduct (Office of the Public Protector, 2011a; The Presidency 2011b). The findings of a later investigation into allegations of a breach of the Executive Ethics Code also led to the replacement of Cooperative Governance and

Traditional Affairs minister Sicelo Shiceka in October: events that may impact on public evaluations of the effectiveness of the office, as well as of leadership and Parliament in 2012 (Office of the Public Protector, 2011b; The Presidency 2011b). In the unscheduled press briefing at which this Cabinet reshuffle was announced, the president also launched a commission of inquiry to look into the arms deal over the coming two years.

All of these issues have been extensively debated and deliberated in the media and other public forums during 2011, but relatively little information is available about macro-level public opinion, and this can be found in the results of the SARB survey.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS, 2011

During a year in which turnout at local government elections was expected to be extremely low, the Reconciliation Barometer measured both confidence in this important public institution and citizen views on the power of voting. Unfortunately, confidence remains far lower in this sphere of government than at the national or provincial levels. In 2011, only 43% of South Africans indicate that they have confidence in local government, compared to far more positive evaluations of provincial (56%) and national (65%) government, Parliament (61%) and The Presidency (65%). Confidence in local government has, in fact, never again reached its highest levels as recorded by the SARB survey, at 50% in 2006.

Although little variation was recorded between provinces, average confidence in local government was highest in the Northern Cape (on a scale of 1 to 4, $m = 2.66$) and lowest in the Eastern Cape (on a scale of 1 to 4, $m = 2.10$).

Higher than expected voter turnout at the 2011 local government elections was an important signifier of greater democratic participation. However, South Africans still seem uncertain about the power of the vote, and the ability of individuals to effect real change within their communities. Just over half (53%) agreed that voting in this year's local government elections would make a difference for their communities, but about one-third (33%) were uncertain and 15% disagreed. In a somewhat less positive finding, only 40% of South Africans agreed that people 'like themselves' have the power to influence decisions made by local government that affect their communities. A further 27% disagreed and 33% were uncertain. Interestingly, on average voters in the North West agreed the most strongly that voting made a difference (on a scale of 1 to 5, $m = 3.97$) and that citizens could influence local government decision-making (on a scale of 1 to 5, $m = 3.50$), though turnout at elections was lower than the national average in that province (53.47%) (see Figure 2).

Issues related to voting and elections were also discussed extensively during the qualitative focus groups conducted this year, and particularly in relation to questions of whether elections in South Africa are 'free and fair'. The SARB survey does not include evaluations of the IEC, but both the lack of substantive challenges to the 2011 election results and other sources of public data suggest that the institution enjoys relatively high levels of public confidence. Though concluded several years ago, the IEC received a relatively positive

Figure 1: Confidence in government institutions, 2006–2011

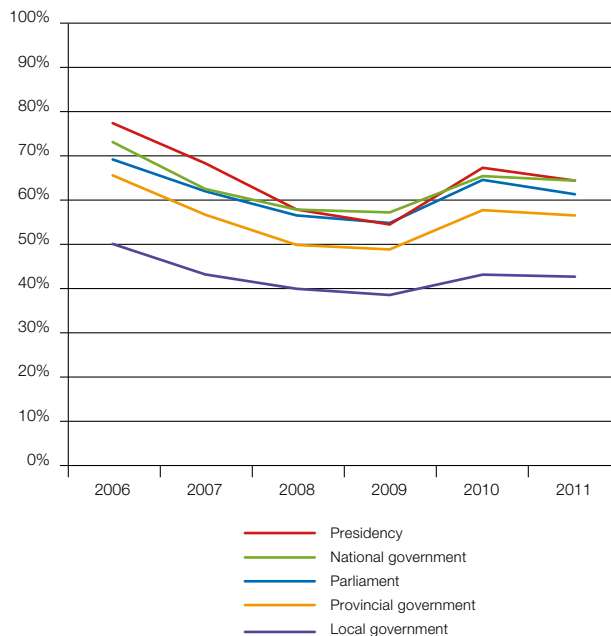
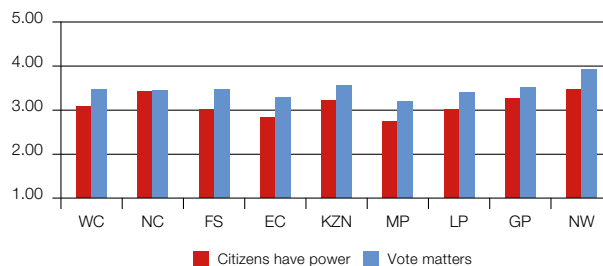


Figure 2: Average (mean) political efficacy by province, 2011



evaluation of its performance by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of Chapter 9 and Associated Institutions in 2007, in which it was commended for its international reputation based on professional credibility, effective internal governance measures and outreach to youth organisations (Parliament of South Africa, 2007: 46; 48–50).

A study conducted in 2010/2011 by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) found that trust in the IEC increased by 19% between 2009 and 2010 (IEC and HSRC, 2011). However, the study also found relatively low levels of understanding about 'voter processing', as well as 'greater awareness of voter education programmes (58%) than actual involvement in programmes (35%)', and this finding is consistent with some of the interview texts captured in the IJR focus groups. This lack of understanding was evident in numerous groups across different provinces, and participants of different ages and historically defined race groups. Specific confusion seems to have been created by the common media message used by political parties that not voting means 'giving your vote' to another party:

I think the elections are fair. But there is that issue of where you register but don't vote and then your vote goes to the majority party in that area... It was explained to me that they can check to see who registered but who didn't vote and then the vote goes to the party that is the majority in that area. I speak under correction. (Group 3)

There is something there. If you look at the media, everyone is voting for the opposite party and canvassing for them and then the ANC wins, it's shocking. And for the voter turnout it was less than 50% or so and then you see the amount of votes and you think wow, did they bring Martians in or something to vote? (Group 15)

I heard that if you register to vote and don't vote then your vote automatically goes to the ruling party. / They always say that if you don't vote they give your vote to the other parties. / But if you've heard it before and we also heard about it, there must be something to it. (Group 9)

...they [the IEC] should not employ people who are affiliated with certain political parties we do not understand how they get employed by the IEC. We are not sure how they going to handle the ballot papers. (Group 11)

I would like clarity on this voting issue. How would a person be sure that all people have voted when the voting representatives favour certain political party, are there any votes they hide? I am saying since they have number of voters, is there a point where they destroy the other votes? (Group 16)

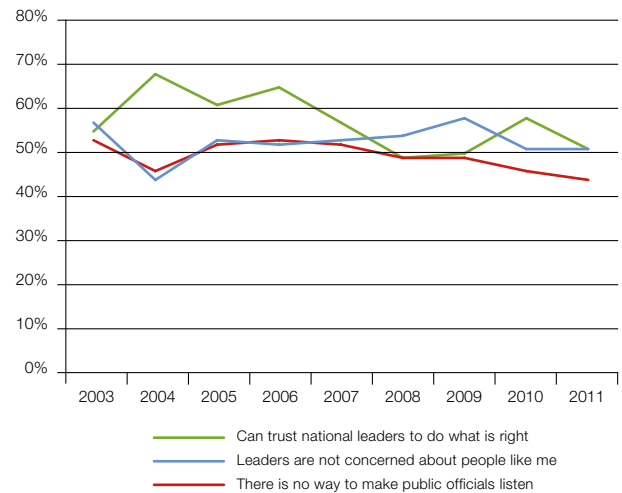
...the ballot system is outdated. Why can't we use our cell phones or whatever technology, because what I noticed where I was voting there was a person coming afar Dangwana side with a lot of ballot paper which I did not know where they come from, and it look like this person was collecting people around they were going to hide somewhere and let them vote. So I was very suspicious. That is why I would say I don't trust the IEC system. (Group 17)

Comments of this kind signal a need for continued and effective voter education and engagement – an area in which the 2007 Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of Chapter 9 and Associated Institutions found the IEC to be 'not sufficiently innovative' at the time¹ (Parliament of South Africa, 2007: 49). This could potentially lead to greater confidence and participation in elections in future.

TRUST IN LEADERSHIP

Perhaps more than ever before, this year's local government election brought national political leaders to the campaign trails, particularly in the highly contested Western Cape: the only province governed by the opposition Democratic Alliance (DA). Political stakes changed in the bid to control the Cape Metro in 2010, when the Independent Democrats (ID) announced a merge with the DA, despite a former

Figure 3: Trust in leadership, 2003–2011



rivalry between the two parties (DA and ID, 2010). Its relatively small membership numbers aside, the ID won a substantive share of the votes in several Western Cape municipalities in the 2006 elections, including 10.82% in the Cape Metro (10.63% at ward level, and 11.02% of proportional representation [PR] votes), and upwards of around 25% in Matzikama, Swellendam and Oudtshoorn (IEC online). With ID founder Patricia de Lille as DA mayoral candidate for the City of Cape Town in 2011, the party achieved an outright victory at polls in the metro area, with 60.69% of ward and 61.15% of PR votes (IEC online). Campaign posters picturing DA leader Helen Zille, together with the ascendant De Lille and national party spokesperson Lindiwe Mazibuko – who has since been elected parliamentary leader – depicted a united, racially inclusive and women-led leadership team. This may have appealed to voters, particularly given the relative weakness of the ANC in the Western Cape following the loss of the 2009 provincial elections, and a national party image subjected to some strain, not least by ongoing controversies surrounding ANCYL president Julius Malema.

Nonetheless, despite these and other changes within political parties and the public sector, the 2011 Reconciliation Barometer finds levels of trust in leadership to be relatively unchanged since 2010. As shown in Figure 3, just over half of all South Africans (51%) still believe that the 'people who run the country are not really concerned with what happens' to people like themselves, and this remains a worrying finding. A further 44% agree that 'if public officials are not interested in hearing what people think there is really no way to make them listen', although as shown in Figure 3, this percentage has declined from a recorded high of 53% in 2006. The percentage of South Africans who believe they can 'trust the country's national leaders to do what is right' has fallen from 58% in 2010 to 51% in 2011.

PARTICIPATION IN PROTESTS

Collective dissatisfaction in South Africa is often shown through public demonstrations, and Shauna Mottiar and Patrick Bond of the Centre for Civil Society (CCR) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal have found

that protests have ‘reached extremely high levels and since 2005 [are] estimated at an average of more than 8 000 “Gatherings Act” incidents per year’ (2011: 2).² Although, according to Karamoko (2011), protests have occurred with less frequency in 2011 than in 2009 and early 2010, violent demonstrations have also become more commonplace. Clashes between police and protestors in Ficksburg, which led to the death of Andries Tatane, and in Tafelsig in Cape Town are stark illustrations of this change.

The SARB has asked South Africans about how justified they believe various forms of protest to be since the first survey round was conducted in 2003. Consistent with Karamoko’s (2011) findings that numbers of protests have declined since mid-2010, so too has the justifiability of such actions among citizens, which peaked in 2009. In 2011, 45% of South Africans believe that participating in demonstrations is justifiable when an individual believes his or her human rights are under threat, and 43% agree that strikes are justifiable in these circumstances. These figures have declined from 53% and 51% in 2009 respectively, as shown in Figure 4.

Evaluations of the justifiability of participating in violent protests, including those in which forceful methods such as the damaging of public property are used, have also declined slightly, from a high of 16% in 2010 to 12% in 2011. This appears somewhat inconsistent with Karamoko’s findings, although perceptual approval and recorded incidents cannot be directly compared and it is a marginal decline.

The addition of several new survey questions in 2011 introduces an interesting new dimension to the longitudinal data collected on the justification of protest since 2003. This year, South Africans were also asked about how frequently they themselves participated in protests during the previous year. Figure 5 shows a sizeable difference between the percentages of people who agree that demonstrations and strikes are justified, and those who frequently³ take part in protests themselves. While 45% of South Africans believe demonstrations are justifiable, only 21% reported personal participation; similarly, 43% of South Africans believe strikes to be justifiable, but only 19% reported having participated in a strike in the previous year. In both cases, public approval substantially exceeds individual behaviour or practice. The same, however, is not true in the case of violent protests in which forceful methods are used: 12% of South Africans view these as justifiable, and another 12% report that they have participated in protests of this kind. This high level of reported participation, which translates to more than one in ten South Africans, is indeed of concern.

Figure 4: Justifiability of protest, 2003–2011

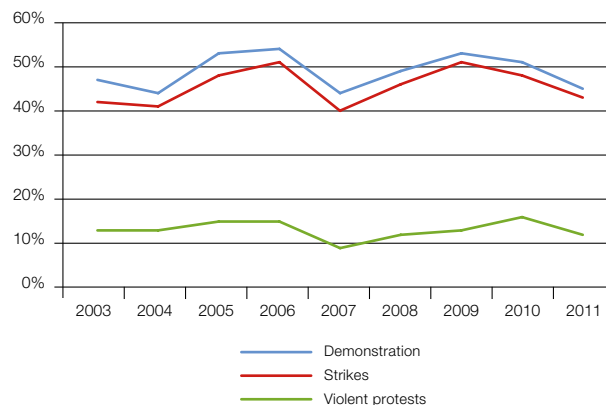
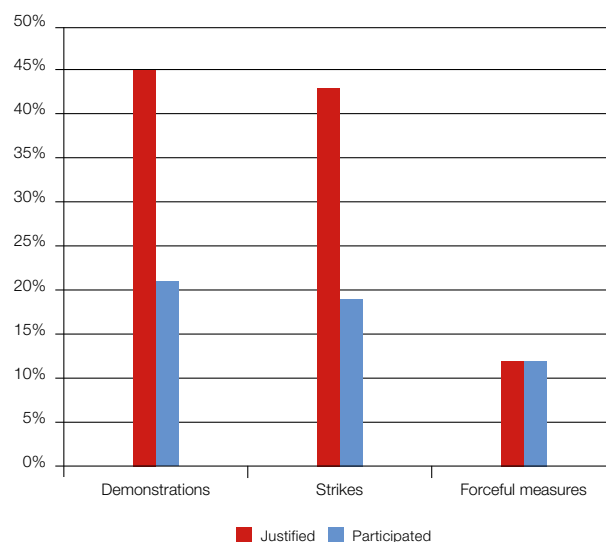


Figure 5: Justification versus participation in protests, 2011



NOTES

1. New innovations in communication seem to have been subsequently introduced, for example, through the ‘Love Your SA’ campaign used in the 2011 elections.
2. The Centre for Civil Society operates a Social Protest Observatory, available at: <http://ccs.ukzn.ac.za/default.asp?2,27,3,1858>.
3. This is reported as a cumulative percentage of South Africans who indicated that they always, often or sometimes take part in protests.



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SA Reconciliation Barometer | Newsletter

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Local elections like nobody's business

Will South Africans turn out at local government elections in May, asks KATE LEFKO-EVERETT, or continue to air their grievances in the streets?



It's where we queue when our rates are in arrears. Where we go to complain about blackouts, or when the brimming pothole in the road outside threatens to overflow.

To contest, and grudgingly pay traffic fines. Report illegal dumping. Apply for a new wheelie bin. Seek refuge when our homes are flooded by the Cape winter rains.

It's the local municipal office, and despite the many achievements by this sphere of government around the country, a visit can often be a frustrating, demoralising and undignified experience.

For some, like the hundreds of protesting residents of Rietfontein and Ficksburg who have been recent targets of police rubber bullets, engagement with local government through standard bureaucratic channels has apparently proved fruitless.

South Africa's 283 municipalities are constitutionally mandated to provide basic services and infrastructure to the communities within their boundaries, as well as to promote local economic and social development and ensure a safe and healthy environment. The perhaps less tangible, but equally critical tasks of this sphere are, according to section 152 of the Constitution, to 'provide democratic and accountable government for local communities' and to encourage active citizen participation at local level.

However, many will agree that local government's delivery track record is often reviewed with grim distaste, and never more so than in the lead-up to elections, as councillors vie to retain their positions and political parties bicker over policy and performance.

For better or for worse, citizens appear to take only limited interest in the heightened horse-trading that happens around local election times. Fewer than half of all registered voters (48%) turned out at local government elections in both 2000 and 2006, compared with a far higher 77% in national elections in 2009 and 2004.

It is not difficult to understand why, when so many South Africans have not experienced the delivery that this constitutional mandate prescribes. In 2004, 60% of households in 155 municipalities did not have access to water in their homes or on their properties. Sixty percent of households in 203 municipalities did not have access to flush toilets. In a further 122 municipalities, 60% had no electricity.

Fast-forward to 2010, when Deputy Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) Yunus Carrim acknowledged that still, only about half of all South Africans (54%) around the country have access to all four basic services

delivered by local government: water, sanitation, electricity and refuse removal.

Further, access differs dramatically according to province. A clear majority of residents of the Western Cape (88%), Gauteng (79%) and the Northern Cape (71%) live with access to these four basic services. This, however, is not the case in other provinces, with access levels at only 38% in the North West, 33% in the Eastern Cape and an unbelievable 15% in Limpopo.

Though perhaps intuitive to most of us, research also confirms that a majority of South Africans view these services – and the social, economic and psychological benefits they bring – as minimum, essential features of a decent and dignified life in this country. The 2006 Social Attitudes Survey conducted by the HSRC found that nine in ten respondents view mains electricity in a home as ‘essential’, and 85% described street lighting in the same way. More than three-fourths also described having a flush toilet at home and living in a neighbourhood without rubbish in the streets as ‘essential’. A slightly lower 62% viewed having a bath or shower at home as among the minimum living standards that South Africans should not do without.

Dissatisfaction with local government is also evident in the findings of the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey, conducted annually by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR). When asked about confidence in local government, survey respondents perennially report far lower approval levels than in respect of provincial or national institutions. In 2010, more than half of all South Africans (55%) indicated that they have little or no confidence in local government.

Deputy Minister Carrim has commented, ‘Clearly we have to accelerate service delivery. We have no choice. For as much as we have made significant progress since 1994, we have simply not done enough.’ The consequence of this, he suggests, is that ‘the people, who are the ultimate judges, have announced their verdict repeatedly through the constant service delivery protests and in other ways’.

Carrim has correctly cautioned that not all issues that have inspired recent spates of protest action fall within the ambit of the local sphere, including housing, job creation, education and safety and security.

However, in a pervasively protesting society, the contribution of service delivery failures to the untransformed and undignified daily lived experiences of many South Africans

South Africa’s 283 municipalities are constitutionally mandated to provide basic services and infrastructure to the communities within their boundaries, as well as to promote local economic and social development and ensure a safe and healthy environment.

should not be underestimated. Municipal IQ finds that action specifically directed against local government accounts for two-thirds of all protests in South Africa since 2004, and these have affected 40% of all local and metro municipalities. Research released last year by the Community Law Centre has also found that, in addition to a rise in numbers, such protests have become increasingly violent.

Government’s planned response is indeed an ambitious one. Vision 2014 imagines universal access to affordable basic services, the formalisation of all informal settlements, reduced infrastructure backlogs, and clean cities with effective waste management systems in place, all in the next three years.

The CoGTA department has also adopted a Local Government Turnaround Strategy that emphasises the need to improve the quality of leadership in this sphere, as well as improve on accountability, transparency and performance. Led by the clarion call that ‘Local Government is Everyone’s Business’, the strategy aims to ‘restore the confidence of the majority of our people in our municipalities, as the primary delivery machine of the developmental state at the local level’.

However, with elections rapidly approaching, it remains to be seen whether or not South Africans will truly begin to take up their local grievances at the ballot box. Or, though the need for strong messages from voters to local government representatives has perhaps never before been greater, will South Africans once again stay away from polling stations in their numbers, like nobody’s business?

Kate Lefko-Everett is senior project leader of the Reconciliation Barometer at the IJR.



IV. ECONOMIC SECURITY AND WORKFORCE TRANSFORMATION

Within South Africa and around the world, the past year has been characterised by a further round of looming economic insecurity, with the consequences of debt crises in a number of European countries reverberating through international markets.

In his Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) speech in October, finance minister Pravin Gordhan reassured South Africans that economic recovery has continued since the 2009 recession, although cautioning that there are 'still winds of uncertainty in places that seem far away, which can rapidly affect us, for better or worse'. Referring to the 'shock waves' produced by financial crises in the US and the UK, he conceded that while 'at the time of the 2010 MTBPS we thought we would see a sustained improvement in the global recovery and in our economy', this was 'not to be' in 2011 (National Treasury, 2011: 2–3; 7).

Reduced growth estimates for the coming years is news that few South Africans can afford to hear. Although the impact of the 2009 economic recession is often described as constrained when compared with other countries, job losses are thought to have exceeded 800 000 between 2009 and 2010 (Patel, forthcoming). Gross domestic product (GDP) growth also contracted sizeably, from 2.7% in 2008 to -1.7% in 2009 (The Presidency, 2010: 4–5). Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) has reported that the 'impact of the 2009 economic recession continued to be felt in 2010 as the economy struggled to create jobs'. Its review of labour-market dynamics in South Africa during 2010 reveals, among other findings, a loss of about 395 000 jobs in total across most sectors (StatsSA, 2010: i).

Some positive developments in employment figures appear evident as we near the end of 2011, with an increase in the numbers of employed South Africans by about 343 000 from the third quarter of 2010 (see Table 2). However, susceptibility to a further economic downturn remains palpable: the now-international 'occupy' movement that started on Wall Street in September was reproduced on the stoep of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) in October, and weeks later ANCYL members marched on the Union Buildings demanding 'urgent economic freedom in our lifetime' (ANCYL, 2011).

The social impact of this economic insecurity is not lost on Gordhan, nor on government as a whole. His MTBPS speech alluded to President Jacob Zuma's call for a 'country where millions more South Africans have decent employment opportunities, which has a modern infrastructure and vibrant economy and where the quality of life is high'. This vision aside, Gordhan also confirmed a more worrying and present reality: one in which there is 'rising indignation' over issues of unemployment, inequality, environmental degradation, corruption and the abuse of power, as well as 'impatience at the slow pace and poor outcomes of international cooperation' and 'anger about the impact of financial and governance failures on ordinary people, on employment and on livelihoods' (National Treasury 2011: 2, 5).

Table 2: Quarterly employment statistics, 2010–2011 (in thousands)

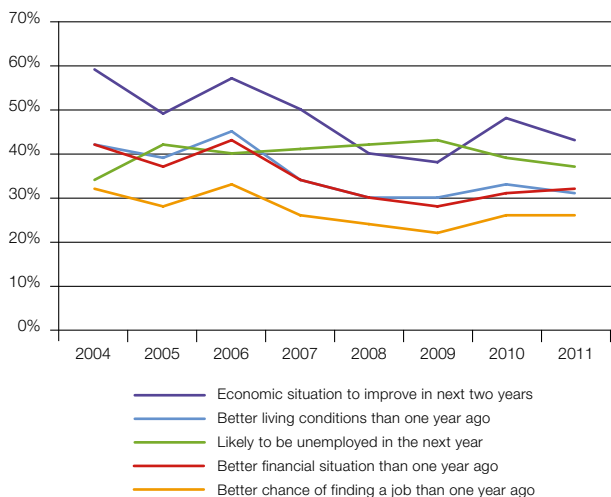
	Oct–Dec 2010 (Q4)	Jan–Mar 2011 (Q1)	Apr–Jun 2011 (Q2)	Jul–Sep 2011 (Q3)	Year-on-year change (Q3)
Employed	13 132	13 118	13 125	13 318	2.6%
Formal (non-agricultural)	9 163	9 219	9 198	9 436	4.3%
Informal (non-agricultural)	2 225	2 179	2 213	2 160	-0.6%
Agriculture	627	603	598	624	-2.5%
Private households	1 117	1 118	1 117	1 098	-1.9%
Unemployed	4 137	4 364	4 538	4 442	1.0%
Not economically active	14 924	14 832	14 772	14 795	0.6%

Source: Statistics South Africa Quarterly Labour Force Surveys, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c.

ECONOMIC SECURITY

Minister Gordhan's reading of the current climate of social instability, frustration and impatience – both locally and internationally – is accurate, albeit one that appropriately characterises conditions in South Africa over the past few years, and not just during 2011. Although this year's survey results indicate a slight recovery from the low points recorded during the 2009 recession, evaluations of personal and national economic wellbeing remain considerably less positive than during opinion peaks in 2004 and 2006, as shown in Figure 6. In 2011, only 26% of South Africans believe their chances of finding a job are better this year than they were in 2010, and only 32% that their own financial situation has improved over the same period. A further 37% believe they are likely to be unemployed over the coming 12 months: a figure that corresponds with the expanded unemployment rate¹ of 36.9% for the second quarter of 2011 published by StatsSA (2011c: 11). Nonetheless, 43% of South Africans believe that the economy will improve over the next two years, although this is slightly lower than the 48% recorded in 2010.

Figure 6: Economic security, 2004–2011



EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Issues of workforce transformation and employment equity policy gained particular prominence during 2011, with the Department of Labour tabling draft amendments to four bills: the Labour Relations Amendment Bill, 2010; the Basic Conditions of Employment Amendment Bill, 2010; the Employment Services Bill, 2010; and the Employment Equity Amendment Bill, 2010 (Department of Labour, 2011). Proposed amendments to section 42 of the Employment Equity Act (EEA) provoked a particular backlash with regard to compliance: while the version of the Act currently in practice states that the ‘demographic profile of the national and regionally economically active population (EAP)’ should be taken into account in application, the draft amendments propose the removal of both the terms ‘regional’ and ‘national’. A statement issued by The Presidency indicated that the intention behind these proposed changes was that employers would ‘have the flexibility to decide whether to use regional or national demographics depending on their operations’ (The Presidency, 2011a).

The Solidarity trade union was quick to state, however, that a failure to take into account regional and provincial demographics could have consequences for the job security of ‘close to 80%, that is, about one million, of all economically active coloured people in the Western Cape [who] will be over-represented’, as well as ‘more than 300 000 Indians in KwaZulu-Natal’. The union termed the amendments the provisions for ‘a large-scale social engineering programme’, and adding tinder to this political fire, released YouTube footage of government spokesperson Jimmy Manyi commenting on an ‘over-concentration of coloureds in the Western Cape’ during a 2010 interview on Kyknet’s *Robinson Regstreeks* show (Solidarity, 2011). Manyi was quoted as stating the following:

I think it’s very important for coloured people in this country to understand that South Africa belongs to them in totality not just the Western Cape. So this over-concentration of coloureds in the Western Cape is not working for them. They should spread in the rest of the country...so they

must stop this over-concentration situation because they are in over-supply where they are so you must look into the country and see where you can meet the supply.² (Graham, 2011)

Manyi, who at the time of the 2010 interview served as deputy director-general of labour, was also lambasted in the media, most prominently by planning minister Trevor Manuel. In an open letter splashed across newspaper front pages, Manuel countered that Manyi’s comments reflected his intent to ‘carve away the basic premise of the Employment Equity Act’, as well as the infiltration of racism into the ‘highest echelons of government’ (Manuel, 2011).

The President’s response has been to assure members of the public that the proposed EEA amendments will not ‘in any way affect negatively the employment opportunities for the Coloured and/or Indian population’ but rather would make it ‘easier for employers to comply with the law and create more job opportunities for all the designated groups’ (The Presidency, 2011a). As of November 2011, the bills remained with the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) despite a request by the labour minister for finalisation by the end of October (BusinessLIVE, 2011).

Despite some speculation that Solidarity’s release of the Jimmy Manyi Kyknet interview was strategically timed to damage the ANC’s prospects at the polls, just weeks before local government elections, the reality is that EE remains an emotive and politically charged issue. This is, not least, attributable to its relatively limited impact: last year, acting chairperson Mpho Nkeli described the annual report of the Commission for Employment Equity (CEE) as ‘discouraging because it indicates a very slow progress on transformation and potential to erode the insignificant achievement made to date’ (CEE, 2010: iv). In 2011, 73% of top managers in South Africa are white, 81% are male and only 1% are persons with disabilities (CEE, 2011: 9).

For others, prospects for – to use Nkeli’s terms – eliminating ‘unfair discrimination at the workplace’ while simultaneously providing for ‘fair discrimination to ensure that Africans, Coloureds, Indians, women and people with disabilities are equitably represented at all occupational levels’ remain difficult and problematic (CEE, 2010: iv). Opponents to EE often cite its perceived contradiction to the founding constitutional value of non-racialism. Kogila Moodley and Heribert Adam observe that on these grounds, the ANC has been ‘accused of re-racialising society through affirmative action policies’ (2000: 56). An audience member commenting anonymously on a dialogue event convened in May by the Reconciliation Barometer project and the Rethinking ‘Race’ and Affirmative Action in the United States and South Africa project strongly objected to the continued use of ‘race to categorise people’ by speakers and panel participants. Another, commenting online on the Employment Equity forum page of the Reconciliation Barometer blog, raised concerns over the racialised nature of economic inequality in South Africa, described as ‘a problem which is literally on our doorstep to see every day’:

Go to work and you’ll see who fills the management, middle management and executive posts? = White people. Go outside and see how many ‘white people’ are hugging the street corners in a vain attempt to find

employment for the day, not many? Who drives the expensive cars, and who live in the nicer areas. Please people, it's as clear as day...³

There was also clear evidence of divided views on EE – though often used interchangeably with 'affirmative action' (AA) and 'black economic empowerment' (BEE) – within the texts of the reconciliation focus groups. This was particularly common among participants who felt they were ineligible to benefit from EE, in spite of the fact that some belonged to the 'designated groups' targeted for 'fair discrimination': these are, according to current legislation, South Africans described as 'black people, women and people with disabilities', and 'black people' include 'Africans, coloureds and Indians' (EEA, 1998: Chapter 1). Some focus group participants made the following comments:

Like as they said with the rugby, is someone deserves to be there then we'll be happy that they are there. If someone gets a job because of their skin colour or if someone gets placed in a team because of their skin colour you are not going to be happy for them because they don't deserve to be there. (Group 1)

Let everyone must be equal. Don't judge because I've a qualification and he doesn't but because he is black he will get the job or he's white... Don't do that. Treat each one equally. Don't say in my workplace I can only take 20% of coloured, 50% of white... (Group 2)

I trained to be a fireman in Kimberley for six months. And when I was done I applied here in Worcester. I was told no, it's affirmative action... They said 'Sorry, Sir. The door is open. You can go.' And I'm still walking. (Group 3)

At our work we must be 70/30 – 70% black and 30% white... Why can't it be 50/50? There's inequality. (Group 9)

I think now they are catering for... / Darker skinned people. / No, I would say women first. Depending on the applicants they would select the demographic based on where the applicants are from. (Group 14)

If I and a black person go for an interview today, I can be totally qualified for that job but the black person will get it. If the black person don't get, I get, next thing the place is burnt down. That's how it is. (Group 15)

Despite dissenting views of this kind, the results of the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey confirm that there remains a high level of support for the principles behind interventions to achieve a more representative workforce in South Africa: in 2011, 70% of South Africans approved of national prioritisation of making institutions representative of all races. A further 71% approved of prioritising a workforce representative of both genders, and 69%, of physical ability and disability. However, the results of the Iposos-Markinor socio-political trends poll – also conducted during round one of the KhayaBus in 2011 – indicate somewhat less consensus around the effectiveness of policy implementation by government. Forty-six percent of South Africans (46%) believe government is handling

implementation of AA in the public sector 'not very well' or 'not well at all'. An additional 33% believe government is handling implementation 'fairly well', while only 7% believe this has been handled 'very well'.

A new survey question added to the SA Reconciliation Barometer in 2011 also asked about the extent to which South Africans agree that the composition of a workforce should be provincially, rather than nationally representative, in following on the proposed amendments to the EEA. Survey results suggest that a majority of South Africans may disagree with these changes: 59% agree that the workforce in their province should be provincially, and not nationally representative. A further 21% were uncertain, and only 11% disagreed.

NOTES

1. The 'expanded' unemployment rate includes discouraged job seekers, and at 36.9% is much higher than the official rate of 25.7% reported for the same period (see StatsSA, 2011c: 2, 11).
2. This footage can be viewed online through Solidarity's YouTube stream, on http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oBqCD_498hY (accessed 10 November 2011).
3. The Employment Equity forum can be accessed online at <http://reconciliationbarometer.org/employment-equity-forum/>.

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Employment Equity: Ticking Boxes or True Transformation?

On 4 May, the IJR co-hosted a public dialogue on employment equity with the Rethinking 'Race' and Affirmative Action in the United States and South Africa project. Here are excerpts from presentations made by panelists Dr Zimitri Erasmus, Ian Ollis, James Ngculu, Kashif Wicomb and Ernst Roets.

ZIMITRI ERASMUS, UCT

In my view, the specific objective of employment equity (EE) is to create opportunities and increase access for those historically excluded from the semi-skilled and skilled job market, and from further education – people excluded specifically on the basis of apartheid race categories, gender and disability. Its broader objective is to enable the successful use of such opportunities with a view to building a more socially just society, and with a view to cultivating learning and work settings in which the experiences and voices of all residents of South Africa can be heard, valued and challenged.

The meeting of these objectives has been highly uneven, partly because most forms of EE implementation have focused more on numbers of people from the different apartheid race categories, than on the ethos of social justice that is meant to accompany those numbers. Demographics have overtaken the politics of EE, in light of South Africa's history of exclusion. This is not to say that the way these demographics are used is not itself political.

Furthermore, those who have until now benefited from EE have for the most part been among the privileged in their respective communities. In other words, EE programmes have in most cases been implemented separately from issues of broader social justice.

For me, one facet of the most effective way of realising these goals is to have a multi-pronged strategy that aligns EE with issues of broader social justice, such as poverty, unemployment, and access to services. In other words, while EE attempts to reach the semi-skilled and the skilled, we also



need to reach the unskilled and the poor with programmes that change their daily lives. For example, it does not serve the aims of social justice if the demographics of a local government structure are prioritised over and above the need to deliver effective care and services to poor communities in cases in which local government posts are left vacant if a black person, woman or disabled person is not appointed.

Another facet of a more effective way of realising these goals is to think about ways in which we might move away

from using apartheid race categories as proxies for disadvantage, toward indicators that encompass the issues we are trying to address.

Our approach to EE implementation should be modified based on what we have learned from both its positive and negative outcomes over the last years. And, to use the terms of Adam Habib and Kristina Bentley, this means moving away from a nativist approach to EE toward a more civic approach.

KASHIF WICOMB, Black Management Forum

Transformation, by definition, is a process of change from one qualitative state to another. It can be applied to an individual, an organisation, a product or service, and this is what government essentially aims to achieve through broad-based black economic empowerment (BBBEE) and employment equity (EE).

As South Africans, we must accept the importance of addressing apartheid's lasting effects. We must also dispel the myths that BBBEE and EE exclude members of particular races or minority groups by design. Affirmative action is actually about inclusion, and not discrimination. Section 42 of the EE Act, which focuses on assessments of compliance, refers to the need for 'suitably qualified people from and amongst the different designated groups', who are 'equitably represented within each occupational category and level in that employers' workforce'.

Without relying excessively on the 'numbers game', recent statistics underscore the need for equity interventions. According to the Commission for Employment Equity, in 2009 South Africa's economically active population (EAP) was 74% African, 11% coloured, 3% Indian and 12% white. These proportions are clearly not replicated in top management structures across the country, in which only 20% are filled by Africans, 5% by coloured people and 7% by Indians. Sixty-four percent of top senior management positions are filled by our white compatriots.

These data confirm, first, that transformation has not yet been achieved, and further, that current employment practices have not translated into discrimination against minority groups. The sectors that are least transformed are retail, motor repair services, wholesale, trade and commercial agents and allied services.

These sectors also lack codes of conduct, or charters that map out employment objectives.

Government, as legislators and the custodians of BBBEE, has focused its transformative efforts on achieving change in five key areas: ownership, management and control, EE, preferential procurement and enterprise development. The private sector has honed in on the issue of enterprise development in particular as an area with prospects for new trade and opportunities for the creation of semi- and low-skilled jobs, as well as in preferential procurement. These emphases are an important contribution, because it is



the duty of society at large to address the need for greater economic participation, and not only the state.

I encourage you to consider that when we engage with youth, we should not speak about carrying CVs in one's backpack, but rather about carrying business plans. We need youth to become job enablers, to form businesses and use BBBEE for this purpose.

Provide services to the corporate sector instead of standing in the queue asking for a job. If you understand transformation in this context, it is possible to see that EE and BBBEE are in fact inclusive processes.

JAMES NGCULU, African National Congress

In the past, the colonial and apartheid regimes operated on institutionalised inequality in South Africa, specifically by race. For us within the African National Congress (ANC), the need for measures to reverse the consequences of these policies and encourage greater equality were self-evident. Following the transition to democracy, the Constitution has enjoined South Africa to take measures to redress past racial, gender and other forms of discrimination in order to bring about greater equality. Employment equity (EE) and affirmative action (AA) are among these measures.

First conceptualised by Canadian judge Rosalie Silberman Abella in 1984, employment equity refers to a process for achieving greater equality in workplace opportunities. It recognised that systemic discrimination had to be consciously addressed, and that this could potentially encourage greater stability and national identification.

South Africa promulgated EE legislation in 1998, with the purposes of: promoting equal opportunity and eliminating discrimination, redressing disadvantages, and ensuring equitable representation in all occupational categories and



date. Earlier this year, Reserve Bank Governor Gill Marcus announced that 19% of senior positions in South Africa are held by women, compared to 17% in Canada, 14% in the USA and 8% in Australia.

While improvements in racial representation are still required, South Africa has already surpassed developed countries with regard to gender.

South Africa faces a choice: either to devise policies that accelerate greater equality, or to leave matters to other forces and invite chaos. To me it is obvious which course of action makes the most sense.

IAN OLLIS, MP, Democratic Alliance

I currently represent the Democratic Alliance (DA) on the parliamentary portfolio committee on labour, which will soon be working to improve on proposed draft amendments to the Employment Equity (EE) Act. As these have not been entirely accepted by the public, they are being redrafted by the labour department and debated within the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC), before ultimately returning to parliament. The time, therefore, is right for this discussion.

There seems to be relatively wide acceptance that the EE Act is not achieving its goals. Our committee has heard presentations emphasising the need for post-apartheid redress, particularly for severely disadvantaged South Africans without skills and facing bias in the workplace. Secondly, we need to turn this situation around, and think of ways to go forward.

Certainly, 'box-ticking' is problematic at present. Every government form requires the ticking of boxes. I am a gay South African and there is no box for this, though some maintain that we were previously disadvantaged. However, categories reinforce the problem, rather than representing the dream we have for South Africa's future.

Prospects for increasing equity are also compounded by issues of high unemployment and skills shortages. Even South Africans with university degrees are not finding jobs today. Our legislation really needs to take into account a longer-term view, and incorporate skills development and training. Current shortfalls are not going to be alleviated quickly or easily. New forms of social engineering are not a solution to the problems caused by apartheid. Rather, legislation needs to help 'normalise' our current situation.

To share an anecdote, the black man sitting next to me on the plane this morning is deputy chair of a large independent mine in South Africa. When I asked him about his impressions of EE legislation, he responded that it should be scrapped. When I asked why, he replied: 'All we are achieving with [EE legislation] is changing shares between companies, from one privileged group to another. We are not doing anything about the large numbers of unemployed people, many of them black, who don't have jobs. You give points because of changes

levels in the workplace. Designated groups benefitting from EE, identified by race, gender and physical ability, were specifically marginalised and subjected to state-mandated prejudice under apartheid.

Many South Africans today have embraced a collective amnesia, believing that apartheid respected merit in the workplace more than the current system and that government orchestrated a systemic purge of the public service to make room for postapartheid appointees after 1994.

In fact, during the negotiated transition the 'Sunset Clauses' crafted by Joe Slovo meant that apartheid-regime civil servants – black and white – were able to work out their contracts and stay on in the new government if appointed by vocation. Members of the 'old guard' who left of their own volition received handsome severance packages. These 'golden handshakes' appear to have been quickly forgotten.

Vacated posts were, of course, filled with competent candidates, the majority of whom were black. However, there was – and remains – urgency to the implementation of greater workplace equity, and the 1998 EE legislation was a measure to move matters along. Yet reports from Statistics South Africa and the SA Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR), among others, still indicate that black graduates are far less likely to find suitable employment within six months of graduating than their white counterparts.

The record suggests that when left to its own devices, the private sector will systemically discriminate. Of 3 952 directors of JSE-listed companies, 3 311 are white, and only 5% are women.

Both EE and AA are designed to render themselves unnecessary, and ultimately bring about an environment in which the state no longer needs to intervene to bring about equity. These policies have indeed yielded positive results to



in the faces of companies, and among their shareholders.

I would like to see points awarded to the guy with nothing who starts his own business, builds that company up from nowhere, and employs people. He's helping so many people, not just changing the colour scheme of boards and shareholders.'

We definitely need to bring about change in South Africa and we have not arrived yet by any means. However, the current system is not working well, and box-ticking and stereotypes have been inculcated in the legislative process. We need to find a better way.

ERNST ROETS, Afriforum

I would like to start by referring to the case of Renate Barnard case, a police officer who applied for a new opening in her department in 2005. The position focused on promoting service delivery within the SAPS, and Barnard's application received almost 90% approval based on her performance and experience. She was rated almost 20% better than the applicant in second place, and was unanimously recommended for appointment. However, because she was a white woman, she was not offered the job.

The position was re-advertised. Barnard re-applied, again receiving almost 90% approval from a new panel. She was once again recommended for appointment, this time to more senior officials, but was once again turned down.

When Barnard applied for the position a third time, a decision was taken to discontinue the process altogether. Perceiving this to be racial discrimination, Barnard took her case to court, and won. The police department filed an appeal, in which it argued that consideration of racial

demographics in the workplace should carry more weight than service delivery.

While we are unsure of the outcome of the case, it is a good illustration of our concerns over affirmative action (AA). The dramatic irony of AA in South Africa is the difference between its aims and its outcomes. We live in a very unequal country, and we have tremendous concerns about poverty. Addressing these issues is a non-negotiable starting point, over which there is little disagreement. However, practically speaking, politicians and decision-makers are contemplating how to rule out the categorising of people by skin colour, and in fact their response is to do just that.

The first issue relates to our understanding of equality. AA purports to be a response to the need for greater equality, but the debate has been reduced to statistics alone. There is a perception that if we have two different people fulfilling the same job, equality has arrived. There is no consideration of deeper, substantive equality.

Another main concern is that our current policy is outcomebased, when we should be focusing on in our inputs. If a team of runners wants to reach the finish line at the same time, this does not mean having different starting points. Rather, there needs to be investment in proper training facilities, the building of a good gym, and provision of the right takkies.

The International Labour Organisation recommends that AA should not be a permanent clause in legislation, but should rather be a temporary tool for eradicating racialism. That's not what we see in South Africa today.





V. WHAT KEEPS SOUTH AFRICANS APART?

As discussed in section I of this Report, the NPC's November release of the Vision for 2030 was preceded by a series of diagnostic assessment reports on material and human conditions, institutions and governance, the economy and nation-building (National Planning Commission, 2011a–g).

The nation-building diagnostic begins by observing that 'successful societies generally can unite in common purpose' before asking whether or not South Africans can 'overcome a legacy of division and unite around a progressive, non-racial, non-sexist and pro-poor programme that promotes prosperity for all?' The diagnostic finds that while 'goodwill is there', the current 'pragmatic reality' is that South Africa remains 'a divided society and the major dividing line in society is still race' (NPC, 2011g: 1; NPC, 2011a: 26). Certainly, there can be little doubt that historic divides along racial lines continue to keep us apart, but the findings of the SA Reconciliation Barometer also point to more complex social fault lines beyond race alone.

IDENTITY AND RACE RELATIONS

Even though 17 years have passed since the transition to democracy, many South Africans continue to associate strongly with a range of social identity groups, rather than a single shared national identity. This is acknowledged within the Vision for 2030, which states that a common goal for the country should be to reach a point at which South Africans in fact become 'more conscious of the things they have in common than their differences' (NPC 2011f: 414): it seems we have not reached this point yet.

This conclusion is supported by numerous consecutive rounds of the SA Reconciliation Barometer, including that conducted in 2011. South Africans continue to identify the groups they associate with most strongly as based on language, ethnicity and race. Most also find these groups to be a positive source of personal affirmation, security and self-worth. Although identity formation and group membership are complex social and historical processes, the nuance of which is not necessarily captured through a quantitative research instrument, survey results suggest that association with language, ethnic and racial identity groups is stronger for most people than that with a national identity as a South African or a regional identity as an African. Cumulatively, those who respond that they associate most strongly with others of the same language, ethnic group or race have reached about 50–60% of South Africans in recent survey rounds. Only 11–14% generally respond that they think of themselves as South Africans first (see Table 3).

This pattern has continued in the 2011 round of the survey. As shown in Table 3, 18% of South Africans associate most strongly with others who speak the same language, 19% with those of the same ethnic

group and 19% of the same race. Further, 73% agree that belonging to this main identity group makes them feel good about themselves, 65% that it makes them feel important, and 63% that it makes them feel secure.

Table 3: Primary association, 2007–2011*

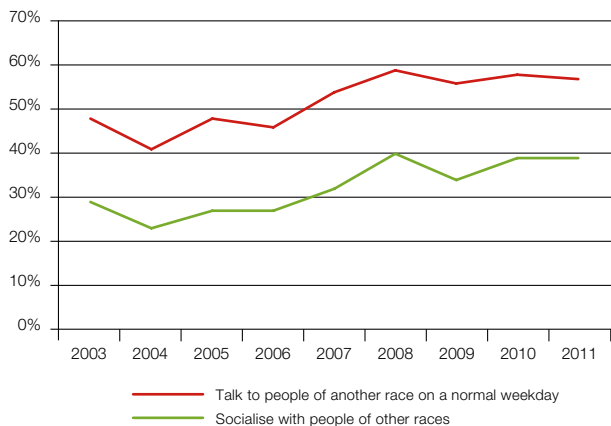
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Language	20%	24%	19%	21%	18%
Ethnicity	15%	18%	19%	19%	19%
Race	12%	12%	11%	15%	19%
Primarily South African	11%	12%	14%	14%	13%
Neighbourhood	9%	7%	8%	9%	7%
Religion	7%	5%	7%	6%	6%
Class	7%	6%	5%	5%	6%

* Categories with responses of ≤5% are excluded from this table, and are as follows: membership in a social, sport or savings club; work colleagues or other students; age group; gender; or those who consider themselves to be 'primarily African'.

However, having a strong association with one main identity group does not necessarily mean that South Africans are pessimistic about prospects for nation-building overall. In 2011, 66% agree that creating a united country is a desirable goal and 60% that this is possible, although many are also uncertain (21% and 23% respectively). There is also moderate agreement that South Africans are more united after the 2010 Soccer World Cup at around 52%, although about 30% are also uncertain. But to what extent have improved relationships increased across these historic dividing lines in more sustained ways?

The finding of the Diagnostic Overview is that racism and prejudice have declined and 'we have infinitely more interaction, as equals, between black and white South Africans' (NPC, 2011a: 26). This is generally consistent with the SA Reconciliation Barometer findings, although there was little recorded change between 2010 and 2011. As shown in Figure 7, 57% of South Africans indicate that on an ordinary weekday, they sometimes, often or always speak to people they perceive to be of other race groups, which has increased from a low of 41% in 2004. Nonetheless, 19% rarely speak to people of other

Figure 7: Interaction and socialisation, 2003–2011



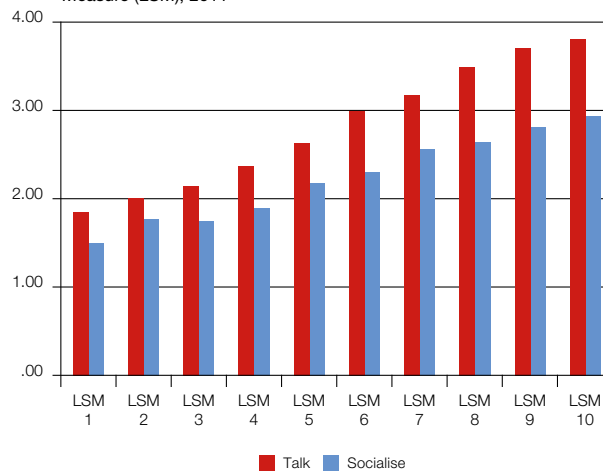
racism, and 23% never do. The SA Reconciliation Barometer also explores whether or not South Africans form deeper social relationships across historic race lines, and here some change is also evident: Thirty-nine percent (39%) of South Africans report that they sometimes, often or always socialise with people from other race groups in more intimate settings, such as their own home or the homes of friends. Seventeen percent (17%) rarely socialise across race lines, and 42% never do.

Attitudes towards social relationships, or racism and prejudice as the NPC suggest, are a possible and partial explanation for these levels of contact and socialisation. Within the SARB survey results this year, individual interest in increased interaction with South Africans of other races was a significant predictor of both levels of day-to-day contact and socialisation in more intimate settings: put very simply, South Africans who want to speak with those they view to be from a different race group are more likely than others to do so, and this may seem to be a common-sense conclusion. However, as found in previous survey rounds, household living standards¹ are also a significant predictor of both daily contact and socialisation. As illustrated by Figure 8, people from households with the lowest living standards are least likely to speak or socialise with people of other race groups, and those in the most affluent households are far more likely to do so. This is perhaps to be expected, given the lasting spatial legacy of apartheid. As long as South Africans continue to live and work in relatively homogenous communities, these patterns will be difficult to change.

BIGGEST DIVISION IN THE COUNTRY

Since first conducted in 2003, the Reconciliation Barometer survey has also always sought to identify the ‘biggest divisions’ in South Africa. Although South Africans associate strongly with language, ethnic and racial identity groups, in most survey rounds the ‘gap between rich and poor’ – or income inequality – has been consistently identified as the country’s biggest divide. According to the 2010 Development Indicators published by The Presidency, the national Gini coefficient for 2009 was .679, based on calculations from the Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) Income and Expenditure Survey (IES)

Figure 8: Average (mean) contact and socialisation by Living Standards Measure (LSM), 2011



(The Presidency, 2010: 25). While calculation based on AMPS data by Servaas van der Berg and Derek Yu for the 2010 Transformation Audit find a slightly lower Gini coefficient of 0.64 for 2009, this level of inequality remains among the highest in the world (Hofmeyr, 2011c: 99). The Development Indicators also reports that in 2009, 65% of South Africans lived below an expenditure poverty line of R551.78 per person per month (in 2008 constant rands), and 46% below an income poverty line set at the same value (The Presidency, 2010: 26).

In 2011, income inequality continues to be the most frequent response to the question of the ‘biggest division’ in South Africa, at 32%. Political party membership is the second most frequent response given at 22%, followed by race at 20% (see Table 4). This perception of the significance of the divide between rich and poor was also evident in the focus groups conducted by the IJR, as was the anger, frustration and impatience alluded to by Minister Gordhan in his MTBPS speech in October (National Treasury, 2011: 2, 5). Comments from the qualitative texts included the following:

People still categorise each other according to class. There’s your top, then you get your middle class, then you get your lower class. No one has moved beyond those categories. That is why you cannot have true reconciliation if people in the same communities still have that outlook. There cannot be true reconciliation. (Group 3)

Before we had social classes that were based on race. Today we have classes based on your social status. How much money you have. (Group 4)

Poverty and richness, those two are alienating each other, we do not communicate anymore... (Group 5)

...with our leaders, we put them where they are, they forget we put them where they are. Once they reach the top they forget where they come – there are people who earn a lot of money who do not deserve and there are a lot of people who are poor and there’s no balance between rich and the poor. (Group 11)

Table 4: Biggest division in South Africa, 2011

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Political parties	22%	28%	18%	19%	12%	22%	23%	25%	22%
Income inequality	30%	24%	31%	30%	31%	29%	27%	25%	32%
Disease or HIV/AIDS	14%	16%	21%	18%	21%	17%	19%	16%	14%
Religion	7%	7%	6%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%
Race	20%	20%	17%	20%	21%	19%	19%	21%	20%
Language	6%	5%	6%	6%	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%

Then the bad thing now is the rich is getting richer and neglecting the poor, if you are poor you remain there that really makes us sad, beside that South Africa can be a good place to live in. (Group 16)

The only good thing here is our freedom but the problem is that not everyone is enjoying, the rich are extra rich and the poor are extra poor. People go to vote and people are misled, they don't have toilets they don't have water, people still go to fetch water at the river, and yet they vote all the time people are not being told the truth. (Group 17)

The question of whether economic inequality is an obstacle to reconciliation is one that emerges in these narratives, and also one that was included for the first time in the 2011 survey round, and with interesting results. Overall, 46% of South Africans agree that reconciliation is 'impossible' while people who were disadvantaged under apartheid continue to be poor. A further 33% were uncertain or did not know, while only 17% feel reconciliation is possible under these circumstances.

TALKING ABOUT RACE

Despite the frequency with which race emerges in national public discourse – and often in highly contested ways, as discussed further in section VI – survey results show that many South Africans still do not feel comfortable having frank discussions about race with others they perceive to be different from themselves. This will likely be a challenge to forthright dialogue about the future of the country. When asked about circumstances in which they would feel comfortable revealing their 'true thoughts' about racial issues, 38% of South Africans answered that they would never do so with people of different race groups, and 33% that they would never do so in a public place, like school or at work.

Table 5: Comfortable revealing true thoughts about race, 2011

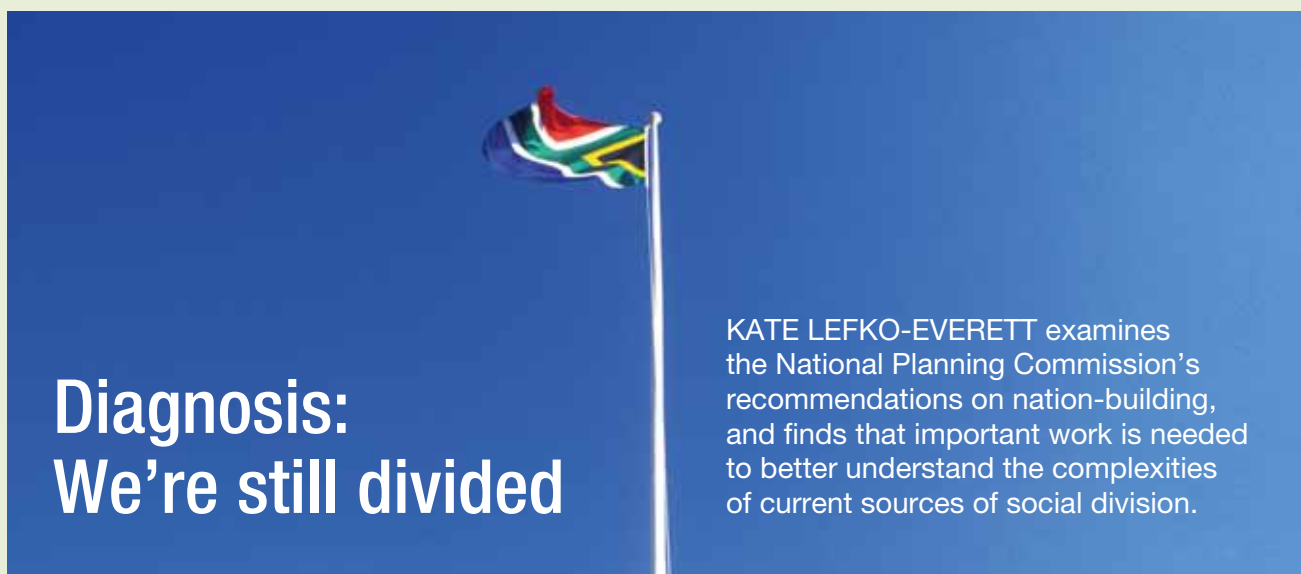
	Always	Under certain circumstances	Never	Refused/ Don't know
When in a public place, like school or work	20%	37%	33%	11%
With family and friends at home	35%	34%	24%	8%
People from your own race group	26%	39%	28%	8%
People of different race groups	17%	36%	38%	10%

NOTE

1. The Living Standards Measure (LSM) is a composite variable based on survey items including water reticulation in a household, ownership of basic consumer goods, and level of urbanisation.

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In June of this year, Minister in the Presidency Trevor Manuel released the highly anticipated first report of the National Planning Commission (NPC) since its establishment in 2010, entitled simply the Diagnostic Overview.

The NPC's mandate, as captured in a green paper first tabled in 2009, includes strengthening government's ability to plan for the long term, increasing coherence and prioritisation across departments, and mobilising South Africans around a set of common national goals and values.

The report sets out nine key challenges facing South Africa, which have been identified by 25 appointed NPC commissioners.

These are, in broad terms: high unemployment; low quality of education for black people in particular; inadequate infrastructure; significant spatial development challenges; a resourceintensive and unsustainable growth path; an ailing public health system unable to cope with the national disease burden; uneven public service performance; corruption; and finally, that South Africa remains a highly divided society, even after 17 years of democracy. The report also contains elements of the draft vision statement for 2030.

Speaking in Parliament, Manuel framed the release of the Diagnostic Overview as the beginning of a process of 'engagement about our collective future as a nation', and one

that will involve 'dialogue, consultation, debate and analysis'. According to the report, it is hoped that this will lead to contributions, and ultimately broad acceptance and support of the 2030 vision.

This engagement process appears to have begun with considerable steam over the last few months; in addition to several provincial consultations, the NPC recently hosted an online 'NPC Jam'. With more than 10 300 logins and 8 700 individual posts over a 72-hour period, many of them by young people, the NPC has described the Jam as the 'biggest online dialogue ever held in Africa'.

The release of the Diagnostic Overview represents an important starting point in the work of the NPC, as do these first consultations. And while it will be very important to intensively analyse their findings, I would also suggest that few in South Africa would disagree with the Commission's initial prognosis.

We know that there is an urgent need to improve education and skills development, and to increase labour-market participation.

We know that service delivery varies significantly and is not universally equitable, transparent or efficient for all citizens. We also know that we need to begin building more inclusive and productive cities which are also sustainable.

In fact, some among us might look forward impatiently to the prospect of 'quicker fixes' before 2030. But our appetite for 'quick fixes' is exactly what the NPC aims to mitigate, particularly when these come from different corners of government, and even at times appear to be competing or contradictory. In this sense, the role of the Commission will be to rein in, sharpen, streamline and generally cohere policy and programmatic initiatives across various departments and agencies into a surer direction for the state as a whole.

Although a relatively new body, the NPC's path – perhaps ironically at times – will be eased in some sectors by the tried and tested, and sometimes discarded, interventions, policies and programmes of the recent past. From the RDP and Batho Pele, to GEAR, JIPSA, ASGISA, BEE, OBE and the New Growth Path, South Africa has chalked up both successes and lessons learnt in the fields of human, physical and economic development, even if these are of the 'what not to do' variety in the worst-case scenarios. These focal areas also have legislative and policy homes in dedicated national and provincial departments.

More elusive, perhaps, will be addressing the challenge of overcoming South Africa's deep social divisions. Brought to life in the Constitution, this cross-cutting challenge occupies a more nebulous, grey policy space shared by various agencies, including the Presidency, the departments of social development, justice and constitutional development, and arts and culture, and the Chapter 9 and other independent institutions. Further, the Diagnostic Overview remains just that – an overview – and will require an additional keen and incisive dissection of the current state of affairs before responses or future plans are developed, particularly with regard to the challenge of social division.

Much of the focus of the Overview in this regard, as well as of the subsequently released Nation Building Diagnostic, is on race as the foremost social cleavage in the country today. Both documents also refer to social fault-lines created by language, ethnicity, urbanisation, gender and patriarchy, and economic class, but as the Overview states, the 'major dividing line is still race'.

Certainly, there can be no question that divisions along historically defined racial lines persist. Further, there is no doubt that racism, prejudice and stereotyping remain sources of lurking rot in post-apartheid South Africa.

However, recent research also suggests that sources of social division are in fact complex and changing, and have not remained static since 1994. Earlier this year, the nationally representative Reconciliation Barometer survey found that a majority of South Africans believe that economic inequality – and not race, ethnicity, language, or religion – is the biggest division in South Africa today. This percentage increased from 25% in 2010 to 32% in 2011. A further 22% of South Africans believe the biggest division in the country is that between members of different political parties, while 20% believe it exists between citizens of different historically defined race groups.

The Reconciliation Barometer survey also evaluates public

The Diagnostic Overview remains just that – an overview – and will require an additional keen and incisive dissection of the current state of affairs before responses or future plans are developed.

perceptions regarding changes in South Africa since 1994. In 2011, 49% of South Africans believed relations between different historically defined race groups have improved since the transition to democracy. Only 20% believe that the gap between rich and poor has narrowed during this time, and in fact, 49% believe economic inequality has worsened.

Importantly, the Reconciliation Barometer also consistently finds that interaction, and the development of close social relationships and friendships across historic racial lines, is significantly linked to income inequality. Socialisation is dramatically more prevalent among South Africans from affluent households with high living standards, and declines enormously among poorer households.

These findings are also confirmed by the narratives of ordinary South Africans around the country, as captured in a recent qualitative study on non-racialism conducted by the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation. In focus group discussions, numbers of South Africans suggested that 'it's money that tears us apart', and that 'if we can't be one in our economy, we can never be one as a nation'. As the results of the Reconciliation Barometer suggest, some felt that socialising across socio-economic class lines is difficult because 'if you're in the same class bracket, you connect'; others explained that 'rich people find it easier to accept each other', and that 'all poor people of all races have a lot in common'.

A final stark and important finding was the view among some South Africans that race matters much less for the economic elite. Research participants commented that they felt 'rich people do not care about race issues', that 'the rich do not bother about race and colour' and that 'rich people don't care about race because they have money and they can do what they like'.

Taken together, these research results show a changing social landscape. They allude to both the possibility of new social formations and solidarity groups, and emergent and deepening sites of exclusion – fault-lines that we mustn't underestimate or overlook as we attempt to work towards a more inclusive, cohesive and unified South Africa.

That the NPC has begun to frame this critical national conversation is an important first step, as is its call for ongoing public engagement on questions including how best to build a strong national identity that transcends race, and how to reverse deepening inequality. It is now important that civil society, public and academic institutions, and citizens take the initiative to respond.

Kate Lefko-Everett is senior project leader of the Reconciliation Barometer at the IJR. A version of this article first appeared on sabc.co.za.

APARTHEID MUSEUM

MOA

VI. CONFRONTING THE PAST

A number of the controversial public debates that have emerged over the course of 2011 have raised significant questions about South Africa's treatment of the past, from Desmond Tutu's revival of the TRC wealth tax proposal to calls for a faster pace of economic transformation and to a highly contested column in the *Sowetan*, in which author and filmmaker Eric Miyeni likened *City Press* editor Ferial Haffajee to a 'black snake in the grass' who would 'probably have had a burning tyre around her neck' in the 1980s (Miyeni, 2011) – and subsequently lost his regular column (De Lange and Nkomo, 2011).

LEAVING THE PAST IN THE PAST?

The Reconciliation Barometer survey hypothesises that if South Africans are able to confront and address issues of the past, there is also a higher likelihood of reconciliation (see Table 1). However, a clear divergence in views over the treatment of the past emerged in analysis of the qualitative focus groups conducted this year. Most groups included participants who were of the view that South Africa's past is better left 'in the past', and that alternative treatments present obstacles to reconciliation:

We were not part of that – why must we bring the past to the future? It's just going to create more problems. (Group 1)

I don't know if this exists but the day Madiba came out of jail...to me that was almost like the new beginning, forget the past, whatever. (Group 2)

I say let's leave the past in the past and move forward. (Group 3)

That is what I want, I have done it – stop saying sorry for the stuff I have done it, let's just forget about the past, really. (Group 5)

...the past did happen. And nobody can change what happened in South Africa and to keep looking at it won't help. So just leave it in the past. If we keep remembering the past we won't move ahead. (Group 7)

There is a little bit of reconciliation but if we keep going back to films that reflect apartheid it brings back the hatred if they could stop showing those films we can forget about the past... (Group 8)

I can't see how the situation under apartheid can still influence things in South Africa today. Because a lifetime has already passed, so that excuse no longer makes any sense. (Group 9)

Our past is delaying us and our beliefs. (Group 10)

I think like it's hard for you to go forward if you keep looking back, like people always looking back at apartheid. So how are you going to move forward if you have one eye

looking back over your shoulder. Like, acknowledge this has happened and move on. (Group 14)

I want to agree that this thing of digging into the past, chanting these songs, the more we sing these songs it instigate people to feel grudges. (Group 17)

Other focus group participants felt that it is important to remember the past, and to ensure that the 'younger generation' understands South African history:

The government is obligated to correct past wrongs. And there are people of other colours who were hurt. And we all carry guilt. And it must be corrected. (Group 4)

A true South African who knows our history where we come from where we are and where do we want to go. (Group 11)

The younger generation should be educated about the past and the history of South Africa. (Group 12)

You see, we don't know anything about what happened in those days, who ever published the history books, history itself, the renaissance – that's the reawakening of the past, what we read in it, that's what knowledge we have. (Group 15)

In several focus groups, differences of opinion on the treatment of the past led to considerable discussion and debate:

No, we must not tell them [young people]. / Yes, they need to know what happened in the past. / They need to know our history. / They do not even care about voting because they do not know the importance of voting. (Group 16)

We have to look in the first place what caused the conflicts before thinking about forgiving each other even though we look at white people we want to forgive them we always think about the past, how many people they killed – so history comes back. / I don't think it's important I think it will destroy our children I think when we teach our children about them. It will destroy them when we teach children about the past, completely forget the past. (Group 11)

Notably, the many focus group texts that captured a common interest in forgetting about the past are also coherent, to a large degree, with the 2011 findings of the SARB, in which 70% of South Africans agree that they want to ‘forget about the past’ and just move on with their lives, although a further 24% are uncertain¹ and only 6% disagree. Table 6 shows that variation in responses according to race groups is limited. Overall, 52% of South Africans also agree that they are trying to forgive those who hurt them under apartheid: although this question is intended to recognise the broad social consequences of apartheid for all South Africans and not victims of human rights violations alone, there is a high rate of uncertainty in responses, and particularly among white people (61%) as shown in Table 6.

Despite this evident tendency to want to move on from the past, the Reconciliation Barometer still finds relatively high levels of consensus about the ‘truths’ of apartheid, which remains important. Eighty percent (80%) of South Africans still agree that apartheid was a crime against humanity, and 73% that the state committed ‘horrific atrocities’ against anti-apartheid activists (see Figure 9).

TREATMENT OF PERPETRATORS OF APARTHEID CRIMES

During 2010 and 2011, a number of cases of high-profile perpetrators of apartheid crimes have remained in the media and the public sphere. The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) has been pursuing charges of misconduct against practising cardiologist Wouter Basson since 2007. Basson has become known as ‘Doctor Death’ for his role as head of the apartheid government’s chemical and biological warfare programme from 1982 to 1992 (SAPA-AFP, 1999; SAPA, 2011c). Media reports in 2010 suggested that President Zuma met with incarcerated Vlakplaas commander Eugene de Kock to discuss a potential pardon offer in exchange for information about apartheid perpetrators that was never revealed during the TRC, but this has not happened to date (SAPA, 2010). Also last year, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DOJCD) published a list of

Table 6: Individual treatment of the past by race, 2011

		White	Asian/Indian	Coloured	Black
I want to forget about the past and just get on with my life	Agree	75%	85%	74%	68%
	Disagree	3%	1%	4%	7%
	Uncertain*	22%	15%	21%	25%
I am trying to forgive those who hurt me during apartheid	Agree	33%	60%	54%	54%
	Disagree	6%	2%	10%	8%
	Uncertain*	61%	38%	37%	38%

* This category represents combined ‘uncertain’, ‘don’t know’ and ‘not applicable’ responses for ease of presentation. All of these responses are common in this set of questions.

Figure 9: Acceptance of the past, 2003–2011

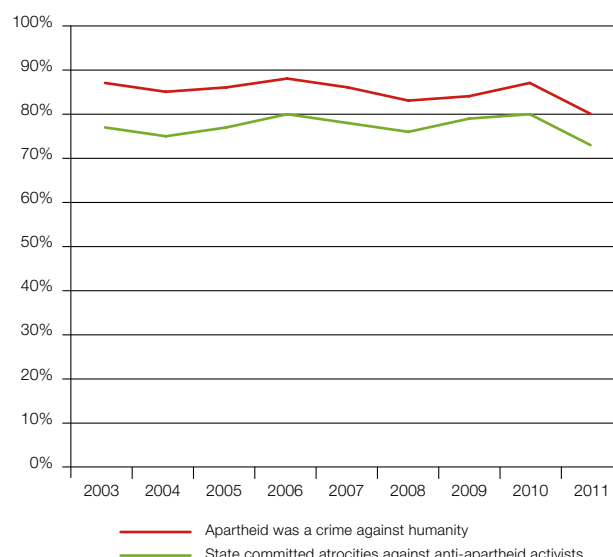


Table 7: Treatment of the apartheid perpetrators and victims by race, 2011

		White	Asian/Indian	Coloured	Black	Total
Government has done enough to prosecute perpetrators of apartheid crimes	Agree	49%	50%	41%	46%	46%
	Disagree	13%	17%	32%	19%	19%
	Uncertain*	38%	34%	27%	35%	35%
Government has not done enough to support victims who experienced human rights abuse under apartheid	Agree	22%	23%	41%	39%	37%
	Disagree	30%	28%	22%	21%	23%
	Uncertain*	47%	49%	37%	40%	41%
Those who committed crimes under apartheid and did not confess to the TRC should not be released from prison	Agree	22%	46%	31%	39%	36%
	Disagree	33%	18%	28%	21%	23%
	Uncertain*	45%	36%	41%	40%	41%

* This category represents combined ‘uncertain’, ‘don’t know’ and ‘not applicable’ responses for ease of presentation. All of these responses are common in this set of questions.

names of prisoners eligible for pardons that included former apartheid 'law and order' minister Adriaan Vlok, former police chief Johannes van der Merwe, the four Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) members convicted of the 1995 Kuruman attacks, and 'Worcester bombers' Cliffie Barnard and Daniel Coetzee.²

Questions in the SARB survey about the treatment of perpetrators of apartheid crimes often reveal a high level of uncertainty, perhaps due to a lack of awareness about the status of these cases. In 2011, close to half of all South Africans (46%) agree that government has done enough to prosecute perpetrators of apartheid crimes, while 35% are unsure and 19% disagree. At the same time, 37% of South Africans still feel that support to victims of human rights abuses has not been sufficient, as shown in Table 7. A new survey question was also added to explore attitudes around the release of apartheid perpetrators who did not confess to the TRC: again, levels of uncertainty were very high at 41%, while 36% of South Africans opposed such releases and 23% supported them.

NOTES

1. This includes 'uncertain', 'don't know' and 'not applicable' responses.
2. For full list, see <http://reconciliationbarometer.org/2010/10/political-pardons-recommendations-tabled/>.



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Take heed of Tutu tax

The recent stir caused by Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu's suggestion of a wealth tax for privileged South Africans should not overshadow the merits of this proposal, writes FANIE DU TOIT.

Tutu's comments came at the book launch of well-known theologian John De Gruchy's *The Humanist Imperative*, which focuses on restoring humanity and dignity to South Africans, and echoes one of the TRC's most discussed proposals: that of a once-off wealth tax as a gesture of reconciliation. Subsequent debate has explored questions of whether such a tax would be levied on white South Africans or on all affluent citizens, and if in fact the state is the best vehicle to administer such a gesture.

Tutu's essential contention has been that our reconciliation process is unfinished. Its completion requires more than a 'business as usual' attitude from those who live in affluence alongside fellow citizens in desperate need. 'How is it possible that in such a well-resourced country so many people go to bed hungry at night?' Tutu asks.

The counter-remark that income tax is a sufficient contribution to alleviating the plight of disadvantaged citizens is simply disingenuous. That a larger proportion of white South Africans is able to pay taxes can without doubt be ascribed to our apartheid past. Paying tax is a legal obligation and without it to bolster the economy white South Africans would suffer together with all other citizens.

White interest groups, including the FW de Klerk Foundation and Solidarity, have described Tutu's call as unconstitutional,



The essence of this message is that all of us – black and white – need healing. And for healing to occur we need each other.

an indictment on the humanity of white South Africans, and a potential catalyst for repolarising society. My questions to these organisations are simple. What alternatives can you propose that would promote reconciliation and a more inclusive, fair society? Do you think that South Africans have really reconciled, and that those of us who have benefitted from the past are now free once again to get on with our lives despite rampant and growing inequality in our society?

I do not doubt Tutu's intentions for one moment. He has never been interested in humiliating white South Africans; rather, he has prioritised rehabilitating *the humanity* of white South Africans.

His philosophy is surprisingly uncomplicated: the dignity of black and white South Africans cannot be restored in isolation from each other. We need each other for mutual healing and our ultimate survival. Our unique past requires exceptional measures, not only in economic terms, but also as far as our collective psyche is concerned, in order to restore this mutuality which apartheid sought to nullify.

Tutu has also maintained that 'bygones do not in fact become bygones, but always return to haunt us', referring to phenomena such as self-hate, violence and a reckless disregard for life.

'We thought that things would improve with time, but we were wrong,' said Tutu.

The essence of this message is that all of us – black and white – need healing. And for healing to occur we need each other; without it none of us have a future in this country. In Tutu's view, a wealth tax would be a significant gesture that could become a catalyst for healing.

The failure to understand this message on the part of white interest groups is a tragic missed opportunity. In the years immediately following the political transition, white South Africans have largely been left in the lurch by their leaders' half-hearted approach to nation-building. This has contributed to a significant sense of alienation from the rest of the population. A new gesture, whether in the form of a wealth tax or something else, is arguably necessary to end this sense of isolation.

It's time we learnt from our past. In 2001 a group of white South Africans launched the 'Home-for-All Campaign', which worked to persuade members of this group to simply acknowledge – not even apologise for – the source of their privilege by contributing a symbolic amount to a centrally administered fund. This promising initiative was endorsed

by the entire Springbok team, but the Sunday paper, *Rapport*, torpedoed it with a headline that read something like, 'Whites required to apologise and pay up'.

This Campaign drew an important distinction between 'acknowledgement' and 'apology' – one that the *Rapport* clearly failed to notice. When black South Africans ask for acknowledgement and a symbolic gesture, what white South Africans hear is a demand for contrition and payment. But there is a huge difference. Our European protestant roots may have something to do with how we've understood, or failed to understand, the request – we always seem unable to hear what black South Africans are actually saying.

Reconciliation demands exceptional gestures that challenge conventional ways of doing things. Why is acknowledging privilege so important? Recognising facts honours and empowers others as well as one's self, and can lead to effective action. A culture of lying and eternal confession leads to powerlessness and permanent paralysis. The unique once-off tax would therefore present white South Africans with the opportunity to take a proactive step to making a difference in the lives of fellow citizens.

For this reason it would perhaps also be better if the state didn't manage such a tax. Greater impact would be achieved if prominent white South Africans in sports, politics, culture and business endorsed the cause and gathered up resources. Support of this kind could also lead to smaller local initiatives, hopefully to the benefit of thousands or even millions. Launching this initiative would also send a profound message to those whose lives have not changed much in the new political dispensation.

Even if we disagree with the historical grounds for restitution, the pragmatic ones cannot be ignored for much longer. If recent events in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa have taught us anything, it is that social inequality is not sustainable. The material well-being of all South Africans is becoming increasingly intertwined with that of the most marginalised in society. Seen from this perspective, an appropriate gesture of recognition and commitment is also an investment in a better and shared future. All South African 'haves' – black and white – should know this. And given South Africa's history of racial privilege, it is morally incumbent on white South Africans to take this first step.

Dr du Toit is executive director of the IJR.



VII. ARE SOUTH AFRICANS RECONCILED?

As shown in the previous sections of this report, the SARB survey measures reconciliation in complex ways and according to multiple different indicators. These include evaluations of human security, political participation and confidence in democratic governance institutions, and changes in the quality of dialogue and relationships between South Africans of different historically defined race groups (see Table 1).

Yet, while exploring these issues using instruments of appropriate precision is fitting to the complexity of the concept of reconciliation – which has taken on numerous meanings and imagery, from the ‘rainbow nation’ to cathartic religious experiences and the basic absence of conflict – many people simply want to know how far South Africa has come since the transition to democracy in 1994, and is this ‘far enough’?

TRUE RECONCILIATION OR PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE?

The 2011 qualitative focus groups provided critical insight into these questions. Some South Africans appear very confident about the state of reconciliation in the country, as described by the following research participants:

Yes, I think we are experiencing true reconciliation.
(Group 6)

Since 1994, there is no more violence. People came together and voted and forgave each other. We now live in a democracy. We have freedom of speech, unlike before.
(Group 12)

However, many others appeared less certain, and frequently described current conditions as ‘peaceful coexistence’ rather than ‘true reconciliation’, which was thought to be non-existent, a distant dream and a ‘pretence’. Interview texts included the following comments:

...there’s protests going on and stuff like that. I think the pot is boiling over. I think people put on a smile, they act happy and act peaceful and that but my opinion is that people are boiling over and some pots are going to boil over.
(Group 1)

I think one day soon we will probably have a civil war as well the way things are going now.
(Group 2)

It’s become extremely hard for people to reconcile with each other. Because people have very many different views and they fight constantly...instead of reconciling people are fighting more and drifting further and further apart. I think it’s very difficult to reconcile at this particular time.
(Group 3)

It’s something we’re still dreaming about. / Nobody wants to take responsibility. / ...I think it depends on the individual... But mass reconciliation? I would say no.
(Group 4)

Reconciliation according to my understanding is that media put white people there to apologise./ For being white. / To say sorry for the years of apartheid and am sick and tired of that shit, sorry for that.
(Group 5)

I think it’s not the true reconciliation. We have got great pretenders. There is still apartheid, there is still segregation. / This reconciliation is sad. It’s not fully accepted. Because there is no replacement. Because how do I forgive the person who killed my child. That is what I find most difficult. I think that part will never be right... And forgiveness is something that you cannot see through the naked eye.
(Group 6)

What I realised white people do not apologise for anything.
(Group 11)

There is no reconciliation it’s just pretence. / The reconciliation doesn’t exist.
(Group 13)

Since Mandela’s release, there have been reconciliation because that is what he wanted, there is still peace besides, needed at the bottom.
(Group 16)

It doesn’t exist, the reconciliation. I wish people when they ask for forgiveness they could be forgiven I’ll make an example with this man that murdered Chris Hani each year that man is asking for forgiveness...
(Group 17)

This year, the Reconciliation Barometer survey introduced a new set of questions that aim to explore who feels most ‘reconciled’ in South Africa, and to what extent. They focus on both personal feelings and experiences of reconciliation and national evaluations of progress, with moderate results overall.

First, South Africans were asked about their general assessments of progress in reconciliation since 1994, which yielded relatively positive responses: 59% overall agree that South Africans have made progress in reconciliation since the transition to democracy. While there are relatively high percentages of ‘uncertain’ responses, disagreement

Table 8: Individual experiences of reconciliation, 2011

		White	Asian/Indian	Coloured	Black	Total
South Africans have made progress in reconciliation since the end of apartheid	Agree	57%	73%	54%	60%	59%
	Uncertain*	31%	18%	27%	28%	28%
	Disagree	7%	6%	16%	10%	10%
	Not applicable	5%	4%	4%	3%	4%
The TRC succeeded in bringing about reconciliation in SA	Agree	39%	47%	39%	49%	47%
	Uncertain*	43%	43%	39%	36%	37%
	Disagree	14%	6%	16%	12%	12%
	Not applicable	5%	4%	6%	3%	4%
I have experienced reconciliation in my own life	Agree	35%	37%	41%	36%	36%
	Uncertain*	18%	18%	21%	24%	23%
	Disagree	15%	11%	17%	24%	22%
	Not applicable	32%	34%	21%	16%	19%

* This category represents combined 'uncertain' and 'don't know' responses for ease of presentation. All of these responses are common in this set of questions.

constitutes less than 10% of responses overall, except among Coloured South Africans at 16% (see Table 8). There was also moderate agreement (47% overall) that the TRC succeeded in bringing about reconciliation, although this question elicited an even higher 'uncertain' response rate at 37%, and only 12% of South Africans disagreed outright.

The survey then asked South Africans about the extent to which they feel they have experienced reconciliation in their own lives: a question that yielded low to moderate agreement rates across all different race groups, from 35–41% (see Table 8). Levels of uncertainty in response to this question varied only marginally, from 18–24%. However, some differences appear within other response categories: a higher percentage of black South Africans (24%) disagree that they have experienced reconciliation than other groups, while greater percentages of white (32%) and Asian/Indian (34%) South Africans felt the question was not applicable to them in comparison with other groups.

As new survey items, it will be interesting to see potential for change in these responses in the coming survey rounds. However, high levels of uncertainty and 'not applicable' responses suggest that South Africans may still be unsure of the meaning of reconciliation, how it can be effected in everyday life, and the kinds of evidence that might signal progress. This possibility was captured in comments made by focus group participants in Johannesburg, who stated:

It's not easy for us to understand what reconciliation really is. / When you talk about forgiveness, there are people who don't know who to forgive and for what... The word reconciliation is going to take a long time because nobody is telling us what it is. Because if you tell a person to reconcile, they don't know what they should do. (Group 6)

RECONCILIATORY GESTURES

The 2011 round of the Reconciliation Barometer also explored approval for the singing of historic struggle songs – the issue at the heart of Julius Malema's Equality Court case – and government expenditure on the renaming of public streets and facilities with titles consistent with South Africa's new democratic and constitutional values.

Fieldwork for this survey round was completed before the Equality Court ruled in September that the lyrics of *Dubula iBhunu* (loosely translated as 'shoot the Boer') were 'discriminatory and harmful', and results yielded widely divergent responses (Republic of South Africa in the Equality Court, 2011). There was a statistically significant difference¹ in agreement that South Africans should be allowed to sing 'historical songs from before 1994, even if against the constitution', between respondents of different historically defined race groups. Agreement was highest among black South Africans (51%) and disagreement was highest among white South Africans (53%), as shown in Table 9. Responses to the outcome of the ruling, if measured in future, may also reflect disparities of this kind. As the IJR's Jan Hofmeyr argued in an article published in the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* newsletter earlier this year entitled 'A trial that should never have been', the legal bid by Afriforum and Tau-SA meant that the 'court was asked to pronounce on its interpretation of a provision which is intended to protect the dignity of all citizens. Yet, in practice any judgment was bound to be viewed as a mutually exclusive validation of the distinct traditions of the two parties.'

This year has also seen the continuation of efforts to rename public places and streets reminiscent of apartheid and its political leadership, and to promote new kinds of memorialisation. In January, the Department of Correctional Services (DOCS) announced a competition

Table 9: Approval of 'struggle songs' and renaming, 2011

		White	Asian/Indian	Coloured	Black	Total
South Africans should be allowed to sing historical songs from before 1994, even if against the constitution	Agree	17%	27%	24%	51%	43%
	Uncertain*	25%	30%	27%	27%	27%
	Disagree	53%	22%	43%	19%	26%
	Not applicable	5%	10%	6%	4%	4%
It is important to rename cities, streets etc. that remind us of apartheid, even if it is expensive	Agree	15%	18%	22%	47%	40%
	Uncertain*	26%	21%	22%	27%	27%
	Disagree	52%	54%	49%	22%	29%
	Not applicable	7%	7%	8%	4%	5%

* This category represents combined 'uncertain' and 'don't know' responses for ease of presentation. All of these responses are common in this set of questions.

to rename eleven of its facilities around the country.² However, in her April departmental budget speech, DOCS minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula alluded to a lack of support for this initiative, commenting: 'it is unfortunate that some among us have adopted a simplistic view that this is being done at the expense of more pressing issues that need our attention given the challenges of the department. We do not agree' (Department of Correctional Services, 2011). In July, the City of Cape Town renamed the Eastern Boulevard highway as the Nelson Mandela Boulevard (City of Cape Town, 2011).

Views on renaming appear equally divided in South Africa. When asked about whether or not they agreed with the renaming of cities, streets or other public facilities that 'remind us of apartheid', even if this is costly, statistically significant differences were apparent between respondents of different race groups.³ A majority of white (52%), Asian/Indian (54%) and coloured (49%) South Africans disagreed with renaming when it comes at a high cost. Comparatively, agreement was highest among black South Africans at 47%.

NOTES

1. For Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Main sample ($n = 3,554$, $p \leq .01$); Random subsample 1 ($n = 500$, $p \leq .01$); Random subsample 2 ($n = 500$, $p \leq .01$).
2. See <http://reconciliationbarometer.org/2011/01/renaming-of-11-sa-correctional-facilities/>.
3. For Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Main sample ($n = 3,554$, $p \leq .01$); Random subsample 1 ($n = 500$, $p \leq .01$); Random subsample 2 ($n = 500$, $p \leq .01$).

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A trial that should never have been

JAN HOFMEYR responds to the outcome of ANC Youth League president Julius Malema's hate speech trial.

While the South Gauteng High Court's verdict in Julius Malema's hate speech trial may have surprised many, the eventual polarising impact of a ruling either way was never in doubt. The extreme tone of public responses to its outcome thus far – elation and outrage, with very little in between – is telling because it not only underscores our high levels of social division, but also the extent to which ordinary citizens on both sides of the debate felt they had a vested interest in its outcome.

It is a trial that should never have been. Technically, the court was asked to pronounce on its interpretation of a provision which is intended to protect the dignity of all citizens. Yet, in practice any judgment was bound to be viewed as a mutually exclusive validation of the distinct traditions of the two parties.

Inevitably the perception for some – and hence the reality – would be that judgment also amounts to a pronouncement on the legitimacy of deeply rooted emotive claims to dignity, apart from those generic rights linked to citizenship. In as far as its ability to forge social harmony is concerned, the court, and by extension the judiciary, was therefore ultimately set up for failure.

When questioning the wisdom of filing the case at all, the broader question also needs to be asked as to why Afriforum would have opted for this zero-sum strategy when surely more constructive resolutions were possible? A series of events over the past year suggest that Afriforum's absolutist approach is not unique, and that it mirrors the rigid terms that have framed many other debates during the same period.

The long list includes, but is not limited to, recent excessive wage demands backed up by tacit threats of, and actual, violence; equally excessive increases in executive pay

that defy reason when more restraint would have sown sensitivity and possibly even solidarity towards the growing number of unemployed; the splitting and re-racialisation of organised business at a juncture where the economy can least afford it; the no-tolerance attitude of the police that has resulted in at least one publicly televised killing of an innocent protestor; and, more recently, the reactionary response of several predominantly white organisations to suggestions by Archbishop Emeritus Tutu that white South Africans ought to contribute more financially towards undoing the injustices of apartheid.

While these responses may have diverse origins, they share an underlying tone of intransigence, which increasingly seems to gain the upper-hand in our national debates at the expense of inclusive and consensus-seeking processes. It is a discourse of suspicion and anger that only caters for winners and in which the cost of losing is too high to bear. As a result, stakeholders in opposing camps, across social and economic policy spectrums, are becoming increasingly combative. And for the same reason, the situation is becoming increasingly untenable.

Surely South Africans in all spheres could have done more to avert situations like this, where we constantly seem to be driven to the brink. Economic injustice, of course, represents our society's most pronounced fault-line, but the origins and consequences of its deep structural roots cannot possibly be eradicated overnight. In the absence of quick-fix solutions, we need to find new ways of talking to each other, and to invest in existing institutions that hold the potential to expedite more inclusive forms of social transformation.

Against this backdrop, it is not unreasonable to argue for more urgency within government to empower the so-called Chapter 9 institutions in terms of their jurisdiction and

resources. As institutions that have been tasked to protect the values of the Constitution, they have the potential to mitigate the potential impact of polarising court cases at a much lower level of administration. Yet the Asmal Report, which suggested far-reaching changes to their functioning, seems to be gathering dust in Parliament's library.

Organised business and labour should work together to create jobs in ways that promote the longevity of businesses as well as the interests of workers. Too often it appears as if their bargaining processes are informed by sectional interest rather than by the greater, and more sustainable, economic good. The same could of course be said for unity within the ranks of business itself.

An unfortunate reality in societies as polarised as ours, is that topics of meaningful conversation are not conveyed directly between the appropriate people, but are instead 'mediated' almost exclusively by the media. We don't seem to debate these issues enough around tables in towns and cities across the country, which makes it more critical for this sector to execute its mandate inclusively and with a heightened emphasis on quality as well as with sensitivity towards the kind of society in which we live.

It should, finally, also be incumbent upon civil society to ask itself whether its organisations are doing enough to create platforms where non-threatening conversations can take place that ultimately promote shared understanding and inclusive outcomes. This sector is known for its emphasis on deliberation, yet more attention ought to be paid to the way in which we deliberate as opposed to the number of hours spent doing so.

However, a growing realisation of the unsustainability of the status quo is taking root across the abovementioned sectors. Increasingly, people seem to realise that, besides the genuine historical grounds, there are also pragmatic considerations that could threaten our prospects for a common future if not addressed with more urgency. As this article argues, we need a new way of talking, or as some have referred to it, a new national dialogue. While the outcome to the Malema hate-speech debacle has been discouraging, it should also serve to rally all of us across the social spectrum to prevent its recurrence. We can ill-afford not to.

*Jan Hofmeyr heads the Policy and Analysis Unit of the IJR.
A version of this article first appeared on www.sabc.co.za.*



Surely South Africans in all spheres could have done more to avert situations like this, where we constantly seem to be driven to the brink.



VIII. CONCLUSION

The National Plan and Vision for 2030, as well as the findings of the SA Reconciliation Barometer survey and the texts of the 2011 qualitative focus groups, confirm that this year has been one in which national and individual experiences and evaluations of reconciliation have been firmly tested.

Confidence in the legitimacy and accountability of democratic institutions and leadership are important precursors to reconciliation, and these were shown to be somewhat in deficit during the third round of local government elections since 1994. South Africans rely on local government every day. It is at the coal face of interactions between citizens and the state, and the administrator of basic services that are critical not only for the fulfilment of constitutionally guaranteed socio-economic rights and improved health, livelihood and educational outcomes, but also for greater human dignity. Higher-than-expected voter turnout may be a signal of greater citizen engagement with this sphere of government, but equally, increasingly violent and destructive 'service delivery' protests may foreshadow events yet to come. The SA Reconciliation Barometer finds that low levels of both public confidence in local government and trust in elected leadership and public officials are reason for concern, and areas that require dedicated efforts towards improvement. Qualitative focus group texts also reveal a lack of understanding of electoral processes and procedures, and point to a need for more voter education and outreach.

The wellbeing of the South African economy remains intertwined with that of international markets, and will likely be negatively affected by debt crises in a number of northern economies in the months to come. Greater economic insecurity, particularly when recovery from the 2009 recession has just begun in earnest, has the potential to erode social cohesion and prospects for reconciliation. Already, the gap between rich and poor continues to take up a growing share of explanations about why South Africa remains deeply divided, and underpins both high levels of protest and increasingly vocal demands for 'economic freedom in our lifetime'. Economic policy and decision-making in other regions remain largely outside of our control, but it is important that South Africa continue focusing on reducing inequality and creating jobs, alleviating poverty and strengthening social security, particularly in difficult times to come. Although evaluations of its implementation are not entirely positive, significant public support still exists for the principles of EE and economic transformation, and there may still be

room for this to become an effective policy tool for change. However, for this to happen, public opinion to the labour law amendments currently underway should also be taken into account, so these high levels of support remain intact.

It is an important finding of the SA Reconciliation Barometer that most citizens continue to support the goal of national unification, despite strong associations with other identity groups based on language, ethnicity and race. Rather than attempting to unite through aiming to diminish these strong associations, the tabling of a new Vision for 2030 allows for new consideration of a more inclusive and tolerant national identity going forward.

The results of both the Reconciliation Barometer survey and focus groups suggest that while many South Africans still accept the 'truths' about the country's history, there is less agreement over how to deal with the past. The feeling among many South Africans that the country is ready to move forward is an important one, but this should not be at the expense of glossing over unresolved trauma or latent sentiments of frustration, distrust, anger, guilt and blame. A failure to address these unresolved issues and sources of division may ultimately mean that they are reproduced, and live on in younger generations. This may in fact be a fitting time for new and constructive national conversations that are forward-looking, that challenge the difficulties South Africans have in talking openly with one another at present and that involve young people.

In 2011, the answer to the question of whether we are reconciled is that some believe we are, but most are uncertain or believe we are not. Though progress has been made, challenges remain as to how South Africans move forward together and continue to bridge historic dividing lines. While we can hope that the new Vision for 2030 can bring us together in this challenge, but we should also not wait for it to do so.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Original SA Reconciliation Barometer hypotheses and indicators, 2003

Table A1: Original SA Reconciliation Barometer hypotheses and indicators	
Human security: If citizens do not feel threatened, they are more likely to be reconciled with each other and the larger system.	Physical security; economic security; cultural security
Legitimacy of the new political dispensation: If citizens view the institutions, leadership and culture of the new system as legitimate and accountable, reconciliation is more likely to progress.	Justifiability of extra-legal action; legitimacy of leadership; legitimacy of parliament; respect for the rule of law
Cross-cutting political relationships: If citizens are able to form working political relationships that cross divisions, reconciliation is more likely to advance.	Commitment to national unity; commitment to multi-racial political parties
Dialogue: If citizens are committed to deep dialogue, reconciliation is more likely to be advanced.	Commitment to more dialogue
Historical confrontation: If citizens are able to confront and address issues from the past, they are more likely to be able to move forward and be reconciled.	Acknowledgement of the injustice of apartheid; forgiveness; reduced levels of vengeance
Commitment to socioeconomic development: If citizens are able to commit themselves to transformation and redress, the national reconciliation process is more likely to progress.	Willingness to compromise
Race relations: If citizens of different races hold fewer negative perceptions of each other, they are more likely to form workable relationships that will advance reconciliation.	Inter-racial contact; inter-racial preconceptions; inter-racial tolerance
Source: Lombard, 2003: 3–4.	

Appendix B

Achieved SA Reconciliation Barometer survey sample, 2011

Table B1: SA Reconciliation Barometer sample, 2011				
	Achieved sample	% split	Weighted sample	% split
Female	1 772	50	17 519	51.1
Male	1 772	50	16 765	48.9
Black	2 604	73.5	26 010	75.9
Coloured	439	12.4	2 993	8.7
Indian	154	4.3	928	2.7
White	347	9.8	4 353	12.7
15–24 years	877	24.7	9 870	28.8
25–34 years	835	23.6	7 962	23.3
35–49 years	1021	28.8	8 899	26.0
50+ years	811	22.9	7 554	22.1

Source: Ipsos-Markinor, 2011.

Appendix C

Location and composition of SA Reconciliation Barometer focus groups, 2011

Table C1: SA Reconciliation Barometer Focus Groups, 2011

#	Province	Area	Age	Race	Language
1	Western Cape	Cape Town – Southern Suburbs	16–24	White	English
2	Western Cape	Cape Town – Southern Suburbs	25–49	Coloured	English
3	Western Cape	Worcester	16–24	Coloured	Afrikaans
4	Western Cape	Worcester	25–49	Coloured	Afrikaans
5	Gauteng	Johannesburg	25–49	White	English
6	Gauteng	Johannesburg	50 and above	Black	Sotho/Zulu
7	Gauteng	Pretoria	16–24	White	Afrikaans
8	Gauteng	Pretoria	25–49	African	Sotho/Zulu
9	Free State	Heilbron	25–49	White	Afrikaans
10	Free State	Warden	16–24	Black	Sotho
11	Free State	Warden	25–49	Black	Sotho
12	KwaZulu-Natal	Ladysmith	16–24	Black	Zulu
13	KwaZulu-Natal	Ladysmith	25–49	Black	Zulu
14	KwaZulu-Natal	Phoenix DBN	25–49	Indian	English
15	KwaZulu-Natal	Chatsworth DBN	16–24	Indian	English
16	Eastern Cape	Mount Frere	50 and above	Black	Xhosa
17	Eastern Cape	Mount Frere	25–49	Black	Xhosa
18	Eastern Cape	Umtata	16–24	Black	Xhosa

Appendix D

Interest in speaking to people of other race groups and LSM as significant predictors of daily contact and socialisation

Talking to people of other races	R Square	p
Main sample (n = 3554)	.198	.000
Random subsample 1 (n = 500)	.233	.000
Random subsample 2 (n = 500)	.317	.000

Predictors: 'If you had a choice, would you want to talk to [GROUP] people' and Living Standards Measure.
 Dependent variable: On a typical day during the week how often do you talk to [GROUP] People?

Talking to people of other races	Main Sample		Subsample 1		Subsample 1	
	Beta*	p	Beta*	p	Beta*	p
Living Standards Measure	.316	.000	.374	.000	.381	.000
Choice of talking to people of other races	.261	.000	.246	.000	.347	.000

Predictors: 'If you had a choice, would you want to talk to [GROUP] people' and Living Standards Measure.
 Dependent variable: On a typical day during the week how often do you talk to [GROUP] people?
 *Standardised coefficients.

Socialising with people of other races	R Square	p
Main sample (n = 3554)	.100	.000
Random subsample 1 (n = 500)	.092	.000
Random subsample 2 (n = 500)	.132	.000

Predictors: 'If you had a choice, would you want to talk to [GROUP] people' and Living Standards Measure.
 Dependent variable: When socialising how often do you talk with [GROUP] people?

Socialising with of other races	Main Sample		Subsample 1		Subsample 1	
	Beta*	p	Beta*	p	Beta*	p
Living Standards Measure	.230	.000	.257	.000	.234	.000
Choice of talking to people of other races	.179	.000	.125	.000	.237	.000

Predictors: 'If you had a choice, would you want to talk to [GROUP] people' and Living Standards Measure.
 Dependent variable: When socialising how often do you talk with [GROUP] people?
 *Standardised coefficients.

The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) is an independent, non-governmental organisation established in 2000 in the wake of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), with the aims of ensuring that the lessons of South Africa's successful transition to democracy remain fundamental principles central to government and society as the country moves forward. Today, the IJR works to build fair, democratic and inclusive societies across Africa after conflict.

Since 2003, the IJR's Political Analysis programme has conducted the South African Reconciliation Barometer survey: an annual national public opinion poll that measures citizen attitudes towards reconciliation, transformation and national unity in post-apartheid South Africa. Change in these complex social trends is measured through six key indicators: human security, political culture, cross-cutting political relations, race relations, historical confrontation and dialogue. As one of the few dedicated social surveys on reconciliation in Africa and worldwide, the Barometer has become an important resource for encouraging national debate, informing decision-makers, developing policy and provoking new analysis and theory on reconciliation in post-conflict societies.

The SA Reconciliation Barometer has been extremely successful in terms of its objectives and indicators. As yet, no other institution in South Africa has embarked on a similar project. To ensure its ongoing relevance, it will be important to listen to the views of people around the country, and hear their thoughts about national reconciliation. The research instrument is of great value, not only to the Institute, but the country as a whole.

Jan Hofmeyr, manager of the IJR Political Analysis Programme

The SARB is an amazing project ... It is an extremely important kind of research and I think that its scope should be broadened (include more respondents and ask more questions). It should be the starting point for policy-makers to design reconciliation-oriented policies (on a national and grass-roots level).

Dr Annelie Verdoolaege, Ghent University

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For more information, visit the IJR website at www.ijr.org.za or the SA Reconciliation Barometer Blog at www.reconciliationbarometer.org.

