

Press Release

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South African Institute of Race Relations
The power of ideas

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Put the #CommonSense views of South Africans at the heart of policy – IRR

With the current failure of leadership in South Africa, and Tito Mboweni's medium-term budget policy statement scheduled for 30 October, the Institute of Race Relations (IRR) today launches its #CommonSense campaign to voice the clear priorities of South Africans.

The daily experience of millions of South Africans and the data the IRR analyses daily underline the fundamental point that the people of South Africa are good, decent, #CommonSense people. The vast majority are non-racial, hard-working, honest people who, in the words of the Constitution's preamble, 'recognise the injustices of our past', and who want to 'heal the divisions of the past'.

'The promise of the democratic era has been left unfulfilled for too many people whose disadvantage, overwhelmingly caused by apartheid and exacerbated by bad post-1994 government policy, has remained a cruel and persistent reality,' says Hermann Pretorius, the IRR's campaigns co-ordinator.

IRR CEO Dr Frans Cronje adds: 'Redress is important, especially in a country such as ours where so many people were on the receiving end of a cruel and uncaring racist state.'

The #CommonSense views of ordinary South Africans should be the basis on which all government decisions are made, especially those on how it plans to spend citizens' hard-earned money. Only by listening to these views can real redress become a reality.

To bring about the redress South Africans deserve, politicians, parties, and governments must realise that

- South Africans want job creation, fighting corruption, better education, and fighting crime to be the top priorities of government;
- The majority of South Africans feel that race relations are now better than they were in 1994;
- The majority of South Africans want people to be appointed on merit, with special training for disadvantaged people, irrespective of race;
- The majority of South Africans want sports teams to be selected on merit and not race quotas;
- The majority of South Africans don't care what the race of their child's teacher is, as long as that teacher is good;
- The majority of South Africans feel that politicians use talk of racism and colonialism as excuses for their own failures; and
- The majority of South Africans agree that more jobs and quality education are the solutions to end inequalities between races.

If those in or seeking power are willing to actually listen to the views of ordinary South Africans, real redress and progress for all is possible. The IRR strongly urges all politicians and political parties to make the #CommonSense of South Africans the basis for their actions and the decisions that will shape South Africa's future.

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