



Some reflections ...

2010 marked another watershed moment in the history of our country, having successfully delivered the biggest event on the globe - the 2010 FIFA World Cup™.

On 2 December 2010, FIFA chose Russia and Qatar respectively to host the 2018 and 2022 finals of this global spectacle. Ten bids were received by FIFA and all of them, without fail, reflected on the excellence of

South Africa in the delivery of this event.

We are now the benchmark for future soccer world cups. The power of our efforts to move opinions, change perceptions and add to nation building ... plain for all to see. The perceptions of who we are and what we can deliver ... shifted forever. Pretty powerful stuff!

So how can we bring this same ethos and approach to all the intractable challenges we face? What do we need to do to replicate this success? How can we cause seismic shifts to ensure the sustainability of future generations? How can we ensure that our youth are gainfully occupied and are battle-ready to lead and take us to the next level? and - more to the point - how can we ensure that we engender a sense and love for reading and literacy (the greatest tool for progress) in all of our people?

I have mulled over this and many similar questions for months now and have concluded that a single-minded, unified, well-planned, clearly defined and collectively resourced effort put us on the path to success beyond our wildest imagination.

I have also concluded that the sum of all the small actions by literally millions of South Africans ensured that we shifted perceptions and delivered successfully. Each of us in an almost surreal, genetically coded and ordered way played our role - we were like strands of DNA all building the blocks of success. Small actions, when added together, can move mountains. Like a pebble thrown into a pond, the effects can be widely felt.

Libraries represent the greatest repositories of knowledge for our present and future generations. Human beings are set apart from other species on earth, not because of our ability to communicate (most animal species can do this), but because we are able to codify this communication in language, record it in the written word and, of course, preserve it in books, store it electronically or otherwise and disseminate it through institutions like libraries.

Libraries also represent spaces for people to interact, to meet and form bonds ... in this regard they play an extremely important role in building the social cohesion of our communities. Some would even argue that libraries represent important strands of societal DNA and building blocks for future generations.

I thank all who work in this industry, who are passionate about reading and literacy, who understand their role in engendering a sense of love and respect for books and who understand that the power to build and shape the DNA of our society lies firmly within their grasp.

Your actions, whether big or small, will accumulatively affect our people. You literally have the future of our species in your hands. I salute you for your efforts. Have a good break. You all deserve it.

Until next time ...

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