

# The First Poor Peoples World Cup on African Soil

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At the shadow side of the mountain, 36 teams from 40 different communities came together yesterday to play the one thing they like the most: SOCCER!

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2010, the Poor Peoples World Cup successfully kicked-off their first day of matches at the Avendale soccer fields, next to Athlone stadium in Cape Town. Early in the morning, the first minibuses with soccer teams arrived from all over Cape Town to play their first games in this Poor Peoples tournament. Everybody was excited and the atmosphere was amazing, considering the bad weather forecasts.



**A LOCAL SOCCER TEAM PROUDLY REPRESENTING THE NETHERLANDS**

At the meeting where the programme of the day was discussed, the coordinators explained that this tournament is not only for the soccer teams, but also for the whole community and for the people who struggle everyday against water and electricity cut-offs and against evictions from their homes and working places. The message during the meeting was clear: while the poor people in Cape Town and in South Africa as a whole are suffering, the rich are enjoying themselves in the expensive stadiums at the expenses of the poor.

After we stood still at these facts, we moved on with inspiring speeches from Martin Legassick (housing activist/ UWC Emeritus Professor), Michael Premo (Housing is a Human Right) and Ashraf Cassiem (Chairperson/coordinator of the Anti-Eviction Campaign). Besides all the 36 teams and their supporters from their communities, this event also attracted local and international journalists, researchers and international radio and television broadcasters.

All the traders and communities - that were negatively affected by FIFA related urban renewal projects and by the implemented by-laws - were invited to this tournament: a tournament that is FREE and open to everybody. Because this tournament is by and for the local communities, international branches are the only ones that are excluded from these areas as they robbed our informal traders from their livelihoods! All the money that tourist spend there, won't benefit the local economy but will flow back overseas.



Therefore, in contrast to the FIFA World Cup, we have created our own contra-World Cup for the poor communities by the poor communities that is not exploiting people or marginalizing people, but involving people and creating new spaces of exposure and participation.



For the second day of the Poor Peoples World Cup, we invite all the local and international media to our tournament, to provide our soccer teams and our (evicted) communities and traders a platform where they can give voice to their stories, their struggles and what brought them together to join the PPWC and the march (23 June). We further invite international football teams and scouts to come to our games, to talk and to play football with our local teams and to fulfil the dreams of many soccer players; as this will create a once in a life time opportunity for them to meet their favourite soccer teams.

To all the tourists: don't stay only in the controlled spaces bounded by FIFA rules and regulations, but move beyond these areas to experience the true spirit of what the game of soccer is all about!! Come to our Poor Peoples World Cup next Sunday in Delft and support your favourite team/country!!! Through this support you can let these communities feel and know that people care about them and that they are not forgotten even if they live far away from the places where all the action happens.



We hope to welcome you all (again) next Sunday at 10 AM at the Delft Central Sports Field (main road in Delft)!

*For more information, please contact one of the AEC coordinators: Pamela Beukes: 078 5563003, Jane Roberts 074 2384236 (coordinator for the Delft area), Mncedisi Twalo 078 5808646, Gary Hartzenberg 072 3925859, or Willie Heyn 073 1443619. Ashraf Cassiem is unfortunately not available until Sunday, June 20.*