

THE ANC HAS TO CONCEDE FAILURE IN JOB CREATION

There was justified excitement and hope when on 3 June 2009, President Jacob Zuma, in his maiden state of the nation address stated that “Between now and December 2009, we plan to create about 500 000 job opportunities”.

Not much or nothing has come out of that except for semantics on the issue by people like Minister Doidge, the Minister of public Works.

It is the end of December 2009 and the word of the President has not borne fruit for the hungry and jobless people in the country. How long should people live on rhetoric?

The ambitious target set by the African National Congress has seen the loss of 484 000 jobs between June and September 2009 mainly in the formal sector.

Despite the good intentions of government to create jobs it has also come to light that the latest quarterly force survey indicates that 4 192 million working-aged adults were unemployed by the end of September 2009.

It looks like job creation is a mirage that will continue to recede without government catching up with. It is up to government to say so openly.

The creation of jobs hinges mainly on the labour laws of the country. Lowering the flag in respect of our excessively stringent labour laws could see more people earning a living and saving the state from doling grants as is the case at present.

We are aware that the government’s partner in the tripartite alliance is strictly opposed to finding a feasible solution like relaxing the labour laws. We however take solace in the recent statement by Zwelinzima Vavi and his co-chair Bobby Godsell who are urging that business and labour unions should consider wage cuts, wage freezes and short time as alternative options to retrenching workers.

We hope that as much as the labour unions put emphasis on a living wage for workers they will also note that legislated wages block potential competition and impede employment opportunities.

The time has come for those in authority in this country to govern and minister to the needs of the citizens of the country by providing them with jobs to enable them to live by the sweat of their brows

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