

SA gets 9/10 for World Cup

Johannesburg - South Africa scored nine out of 10 for its organisation of the 2010 World Cup. "Nobody in the world is perfect, but the organisation of this first World Cup in Africa and in South Africa was pretty close," FIFA president Sepp Blatter told a 2010 World Cup wrap-up press conference in Johannesburg on Monday. "I was more than satisfied and happy with the smooth running of the tournament. It was a huge success for both South Africa and the continent of Africa. They can be proud of their achievements. They (SA and Africa) showed they can organise such an event successfully. "It was a question of trust and confidence. We as FIFA showed that and South Africa responded brilliantly." Blatter was full of praise for the 2010 Organising Committee, its chairman Irvin Khoza and CEO Danny Jordaan. The FIFA supremo added the people the people and government of South Africa also played a big role. "The SA government for backing and fulfilling all their guarantees and the South Africans for their warm hospitality. "Africa and South Africa deserve a big compliment for what they have achieved here during the past month." The biggest global sporting event on the planet started at Soccer City on June 11 and ended on Sunday at the same venue, where Spain became world champions for the first time by defeating the Netherlands 1-0 in a bruising final that went into extra time. Blatter said the South Africa public were the big winners: "Even when South Africa were eliminated in the first round and when the two big South American countries (Brazil and Argentina) failed to make the semi-finals, the tournament continued to grow and become a fantastic success. "It is down to the people of South Africa for the way they opened their arms to this event." Jordaan praised Blatter for bringing the World Cup to South Africa: "The president (Blatter) took a big risk in championing Africa and especially South Africa to stage the World Cup. "We sit here today glowing in the success of a fantastic tournament just completed, but had it gone wrong Blatter would have been made to answer. We thank him for his faith in us and made our dream come true." A total of 3.1 million spectators paid to watch the 64 matches of the tournament, which is the third highest aggregate attendance behind the United States in 1994 and Germany in 2006.

Niall Wilkins
First Secretary Political
South African High Commission
Trafalgar Square
London WC2N 5DP

Tel: 0207 451 7240
Fax: 0207 451 7283