

World Cup 'has helped promote Nelson Mandela's legacy'

The World Cup has brought South Africans closer and advanced the legacy of Nelson Mandela, a government minister and the head of the Nelson Mandela Foundation both said Thursday.

Speaking in a panel discussion on racism hosted by FIFA at Soccer City, Achmat Dangor, chief executive of the Nelson Mandela Foundation, said he had witnessed unprecedented scenes of unity during the tournament.

Watching the game in a fan fest in Cape Town, he had seen South Africans of all races and foreigners singing from the same hymn sheet, with a common instrument - the vuvuzela.

"I have never seen people mingle like that in Cape Town, which can be a very segregated city," he said.

"The World Cup has helped promote Nelson Mandela's legacy," he said, referring to the anti-apartheid icon's tireless efforts to promote racial reconciliation in the once-segregated country.

Human Settlements Minister Tokyo Sexwale, who was jailed alongside Mandela on Robben Island for resisting white minority rule, also found the tournament was helping "to consolidate us as a nation."

That nation was characterized by its racial, cultural and religious diversity, which made it "one world in one country," Sexwale said.

This was the first World Cup where all foreign fans could feel truly at home, because they were indistinguishable from their hosts, he said proudly.

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

Tel: 0207 451 7240

Fax: 0207 451 7283