

## World Cup fires African identity of young whites

Ask any group of young white South Africans in Cape Town's Long Street who they are supporting after the exit of their national soccer team Bafana Bafana from the World Cup - and the answer is unanimous - Ghana.

"I feel much more African now than I did before the World Cup started," said 17-year-old student Storm Barry. "It started with wearing the Bafana shirt but now that they are out I'm supporting any African team," she said.

Many South Africans say the experience of following their team's World Cup campaign together has left them feeling more unified as a nation, but some young white South Africans also describe feeling more linked to the African continent through the tournament. "Ghana are the last African team, and they are representing all of us. I'd say we've all shifted our support to Ghana now South Africa is out," said 18-year-old student Josh Lurie. While young white South Africans might have been more likely to visit the United States than Ghana he said, there was a new African consciousness in the young. "It's different with the older generation. I've heard older people say they will support the United States. But here on Long Street during the World Cup I've met young Ghanaians and Cameroonians and I feel much more aligned to Africa."

Huge expectations were invested in the World Cup's six African competitors, but only Ghana progressed from the group stage, although South Africa filled local hearts with pride in beating France. "I think young white South Africans are definitely feeling more a part of the continent. The older generation don't have as much trust and pride in this country as we do, but I'm really proud of South Africa hosting this World Cup and I feel African," said 20-year-old Cape Town student Cheneal Puljevic, out looking for a place to watch the football. "We are the future of this country and I think it is a really important change," she added. Ghanaian student Kwame Boachie-Yiadom, carrying a heavy drum as he searched for a football screen said: "I think it may be premature to say the World Cup has broken down barriers and changed things. But I do feel a new openness."

Sourced by SA - The Good News via Reuters

Niall Wilkins  
First Secretary Political  
South African High Commission  
Trafalgar Square  
London WC2N 5DP  
Tel: 0207 451 7240  
Fax: 0207 451 7283