Traders under attack

It has become a boringly predictable reality that when countries prepare for an event such as the World Cup, the authorities and big business use the event as an excuse to clear the streets of informal traders. According to official reports, the City of Cape Town employed 20 extra metro police officers to the Informal Trading Unit, to deal with street traders. Their first point of attack is the street traders who are trading at intersections. In the first week of September 2009, the Informal Trading Unit confiscated goods of traders including rugby flags, flag poles, rugby jerseys, cell-phone chargers from traders which they claim traders were selling illegally. More clean “up campaigns” are expected in the run up to 2010.

Mitchells Plain Town Centre traders facing eviction

More than 500 traders at Mitchells Plain Town Centre are facing eviction. This threat of eviction follows a long standing intention of the City of Cape Town officials to “upgrade” the Mitchells Plain CBD and make it a prohibited area for informal traders with the exception of a limited number of trading bays for informal traders, this have turned trader against trader and conflict that COCT officials appear to be fueling.

Town Centre traders are not new to harassment and illegal confiscations, on the 13 March 2008, the SAPS and Metro Police, backed by the Army and the Dog Unit, raided the Town Centre, claiming to be targeting criminal activity, but without warning, police began breaking down the traders stalls and removing their goods. This incident and the ongoing threat of eviction led to the establishment of CHATA (Concerned Hawkers & Traders Association) to fight the evictions and unite traders at the Town Centre, but the COCT is refusing to recognize CHATA. According to CHATA, the national treasury allocated millions of rands for the upgrade of the Town Centre but this is only benefiting big businesses in the area.

Durban Early Morning Market traders take legal action against eThekwini Municipality

It is not only Cape Town traders who are facing problems and evictions. Traders at the Early Morning Public Market in Durban are facing a battle for their livelihoods as the market is part of development linked to FIFA World Cup deadlines. More than 2000 traders and their families stand to loose their livelihoods if this market is demolished. (see page 3)

Cape traders unity talks

With the help of StreetNet International, COSATU and SAMWU, the leaders of traders associations across Cape Town have been holding talks for the past month, to discuss the formation of an umbrella body for traders in the Cape in order to build unity and a voice for traders. A general assembly of all traders is planned for the 12 October 2009 to launch this new umbrella body for traders. (see page 2)
Cape Street Traders Unity Talks

Over the years many attempts were made to unite traders in the Cape, but these attempts all failed because of disunity amongst traders, but the leaders of a number of traders associations have committed themselves to end the petty infighting and create a united voice for traders in the Cape. In the past month traders associations in the Cape Metro started fresh talks with the help of StreetNet International, SAMWU and COSATU. These talks are aimed at discussing unity amongst traders and the formation of an umbrella body of traders associations, so that traders can speak with one voice and build a united front in the face of the constant attacks and harassment that traders are facing. The traders associations that have been attending these meetings include:

Black Pirates (Grand Parade), Bus Terminus (Grand Parade), Hanover Street, Historical Traders, Top Vest, Masakhane Small Business Association, Town Centre Hawkers, Gatesville Traders Association, Chata, Bellville, Parow, Langa, Nyanga Terminus and a number of other traders associations.

Cape Traders General Assembly

All Traders are invited to attend this very important general meeting of traders:

On: 12 October 2009 10am to 4 pm
Where: City Hall, Darling Street, Cape Town

Agenda:
- Guest Speakers
- StreetNet World Class Class Cities for All Campaign
- Report of traders unity talks
- Adoption of the Cape Traders Manifesto
- Way forward & plan of action
- Election of interim steering committee

Building a United Voice for Traders in the Cape

Draft Manifesto

We the traders of the Cape hereby declare our commitment to build unity and establish an umbrella body of traders associations to:

- Build unity and solidarity amongst traders
- Fight for the rights of traders
- Advance the economic interest of traders
- Provide support services for traders
- Establish relationships with organizations that can help advance the interest of traders
- Represent traders in negotiations with government authorities
- Build public awareness and support for traders
- End Zenophobia and the attacks on traders from other countries

Traders General Assembly

A general meeting of all trader in the Cape is planned for the 12 October 2009 at the City Hall. The matters that will be discussed at this meeting include:

1) The formation of an umbrella body of traders associations in the Cape,
2) The rights and responsibilities of members, a plan of action
3) The adoption of a manifesto that will guide the umbrella body
4) Election of a steering committee to draft a constitution and launch the umbrella body

Leaders of traders associations outside SAMWU offices
StreetNet International launched the World Class Cities for All Campaign in November 2006 at COSATU House in Johannesburg, to protect the rights of informal traders in the run up to the FIFA World Cup. It has become a predictable reality that when a country prepares to host a big event like World Cup, local government and big business use the event as an excuse evict traders and build “World Class Cities” that favour big business.

Who are we: Led by StreetNet International WCCA Campaign partners include the following civil society organisations: trade union organizations, (including municipal workers’ unions), social movements, children’s rights organizations, womens organizations. The Campaign in South Africa challenges the traditional elitist approach to “World Class Cities” in preparation for the FIFA World Cup in 2010. The Campaign is seeking to create a new, more inclusive concept of “World Class Cities for All” with the participation of street vendors and other groups of the (urban) poor and to prevent forced eviction of street traders without proper alternatives being provided.

Join the Call of the World Class Cities for All Campaign

World Class Cities for all !

No relocation without alternatives !

Negotiation and social dialogue !

Nothing for us without us !

The Battle of the Early Morning Market in Durban

The Early Morning Market is situated at the very busy Warwick Junction in Durban, more than 460,000 people pass through this market everyday. Many of the more than 2000 traders at the market have been trading there for more than 40 years. Despite the historical significance of the market and the impact it will have on traders and the local economy, the eThekwini Municipality are going ahead with plans to demolish the market to make way for a shopping mall in time for the FIFA World Cup. What we are witnessing at the market is local government siding with the super rich against the poor and marginalised. After a marathon battle with the municipality traders have lodged a High Court application in Durban to prevent the municipality from demolishing the market. According to the high court papers the development of a mall is in direct conflict with all town planning development and proper participation did not take place with all the relevant stakeholders.

A number of organizations, architects & members of the public have joined the call to stop the demolition of the Early Morning Market and a Early Morning Market Support Group (EMMSG) have been formed. Stakeholders of the market have taken it upon themselves to discuss plans of designing the development that they want and that is aimed to accommodate all informal traders in the area. Listed to assist with this project is ASIYE ETAFULENI, KZN Institute of Architects and other private architects with technical skills. Upon completing this design, it will be presented to both the City and the province.

Placard demonstrations at the Early Morning Market
Open Letter to Premier Helen Zille & the Mayor of Cape Town Dan Plato

Call for a moratorium on the eviction and harassment of traders

We the under mentioned traders associations in the Cape are calling on you to honour the promises you made in the recent elections, to promote job creation, economic development and to support small business. We therefore call on you to recognize informal trade as a legitimate business that provide an income to traders and their families and call for a moratorium on the evictions and harassment of traders.

We also call on you to recognize that the legacy of apartheid will impact on the economic opportunities that the 2010 World Cup will generate in that most of the opportunities will be concentrated around the Cape Town CBD, Waterfront and Atlantic Seaboard, and that you make adequate provision to ensure that the opportunities are spread by:

- Formally adopting an inclusive concept of “World Class Cities for All” with the participation of street vendors and other groups of the (urban) poor – with a strong focus on women and other vulnerable street vendors who traditionally have been the first to lose their livelihoods and be the most invisible in previous plans for “World Class Cities”.

- Undertake to ensure that no individual or group of street vendors shall be unduly disadvantaged by any urban improvement or urban renewal initiatives in preparation for the FIFA World Cup of 2010.

- Undertake that any relocation of street vendors, informal market vendors or hawkers in operation prior to any urban improvement or urban renewal initiatives shall necessarily include viable and acceptable alternatives which are accessible to even the poorest traders, including women and traders with disabilities.

- Undertake to engage in participatory consultative processes with any persons or interest groups who may be affected in any substantive or material manner by any aspect of urban improvement or urban renewal initiatives envisaged in the creation of World Class Cities.

- Undertake to engage in social dialogue or substantive negotiations with any potentially affected persons or groups or their democratically elected representatives, in any situation where urban improvement or urban renewal initiatives may have a bearing on their work or livelihood.

- Establish multi-stakeholder negotiating forums to ensure inclusive non-sectarian negotiations and consultations processes, in preparation for the FIFA 2010 World Cup.

- To develop a comprehensive plan, in consultation with traders, to establish more public markets, facilities and business support services for traders.

Thanking you in anticipation

Cape Traders Coalition