



## **EFF STATEMENT ON SOUTH AFRICA'S PARTICIPATION AT THE 2024 OLYMPICS**

Monday, 12 August 2024.

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) extends its congratulations to the athletes who represented South Africa at the 2024 Paris Olympics. One Hundred and Forty Nine (149) athletes represented South Africa earning us a total of six (6) medals.

We also congratulate our fellow African countries who participated, particularly Kenya, for its remarkable performance in securing eleven (11) medals.

However, while we celebrate TeamSA victories, we must be alive to the fact that harsh realities continue to plague South African sports. The lack of transformation across many sporting codes remains a stark reminder of the ANC government's failure to undo the systemic inequalities.

Thirty years after the oppressive apartheid government denied Africans equal rights, the race demographics of TeamSA do not reflect our nation's diversity. This highlights the fact that access to sports, like so many other areas of our society, is still largely determined by race and class. The government has failed to dismantle the entrenched barriers that prevent the majority of our people from participating in and excelling in sports.

The Ministry of Sports, Arts, and Culture has failed to focus on the fundamental barriers that exist for black children to achieve sporting excellence. Instead of eradicating these barriers, the department is a corrupt entity for the politically connected and infamous for issuing condolences.

The continuous economic marginalisation of blacks and Africans in particular means that the majority of South Africans are excluded from sports that require expensive training and equipment. The exclusion is not just a reflection of economic inequality but is also a deliberate perpetuation of racial exclusion in sports.

We call on the Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture to use the same energy, that is misdirected on social media hype, and instead focus on dismantling the systemic barriers that prevent the majority of our people from accessing and excelling in sports.

Furthermore, on the exclusion of Russia from participating in the 2024 Olympics - while we appreciate that sport sanctions can be a tool for addressing oppressive regimes - in this instance, it was weaponised to take a vindictive stance against Russia for defending itself against the Ukraine.

This is particularly hypocritical given that apartheid Israel was not sanctioned while continuing to commit acts of genocide against the Palestinian people. This selective application of sanctions reveals the underlying bias and the use of sports as a political tool by imperialist forces, which the EFF strongly condemns.

**ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS**

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