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I love my country and will always call South Africa home, but lately I have started to question whether I truly have a future here. I have come to a stage in my life where I'm making critical decisions concerning my future, considering I'm in matric next year, this will impact and ultimately mould the rest of my life. Whether I should stay in SA or not is one of the biggest dilemma I face.

I know that I speak on behalf of a lot of the youth when I say that with less job opportunities, crime, corruption, an ineffective government and extremely high costs of living, leaving SA seems to be the only way to ensure a secure future for myself and that really upsets me.

Our country has faced and overcome huge obstacles in the past and I do believe that there is hope for SA, but there are big changes that need to come about before I can honestly say that I feel my future is secure in this country.

At the moment, it seems to me that the government is focusing on the wrong things, such as street name changes and spending excessive amounts of money on weapons, instead of providing homes, food, work opportunities and basic health care to the people.

They have lost touch with the needs of the man on the street and are instead focusing on whether they are happy, rich and able to fly their friends and family around in private jets and take their friends and family on huge shopping sprees.

We elected them to represent, lead and care for us, but as our government, it feels like they are just not doing their jobs.

I realise that running a country can't be the easiest of tasks, however, when someone runs for presidency they are fully aware of the responsibilities they have and they should understand the importance of doing their jobs properly.

Speaking and complaining about crime, corruption and other problems in our country seems very clichéd but until these problems are addressed at grassroots levels and we can actually see an improvement, they are going to remain clichés and the cause of dissatisfaction among the people within our country.

There is only so much an individual can do to find a solution to our country's problems and that is why it is so vital that the people at the top, that is our government, shift their focuses to addressing and finding solutions to our country's problems as they are the ones who have the power to make a change. We have events such as the xenophobic attacks as well as a high crime rate because the basic needs of food and shelter have not been met for many of the individuals in our country.

As a result of this the people have been reduced to animal instincts and behaviour, for example defending their territory by burning down an outsider's home in order to protect the little that they have to survive.

As much as there are people who are resorting to crime in order to meet their needs, they are not the real criminals. I believe that once their requirements are met through various opportunities, they will no longer resort to crime in order to survive. The government should not generalise and make excuses for criminals and criminal behaviour. The real criminals are only a very small percentage of individuals who have a large impact on our society. These individuals should be identified and dealt with and then we'll see a decrease in the crime rates. We must remember that increased crime is a world wide problem and is dealt with as such in the rest of the world. If we identify and deal with criminals in the same way, we need not believe we live in a crime-ridden country.

As a member of the youth I have many ideals and dreams of the type of country that I would like to be living in. I have no intention of leaving this country but in order for me to really want to stay here I need to be in a safe, economically sound, corruption free and truly equal country. I'm prepared to do all that I can to help contribute to a society that gives me, and others the opportunity to function in a completely equal and non prejudicial environment. As much as it's not always pleasant to admit this, we all need to work in order to achieve our goals, ultimately leading to a better country. We can't simply sit back and expect this to happen for us. We are all equally a part of this country and therefore we all need to give and receive on an equal basis. As part of the youth of this country, none of us need to feel less recognised for our abilities and contributions than any other.

I am Monique Rall, and I do want to be here to share in one of my country's greatest achievements, that being the 2010 Soccer World Cup as this is a showcase of what we are capable of. It is easy for us to criticise the government and at the same time, sometimes rightly so, but we must also recognise what they have achieved. We all have a part to play in a country and as "Nike" would say, "Just do it!"