

# **MEDIA RELEASE: *Target 80K (80,000) Jobs Campaign*** **Launch**

**Campaign Launch:** Light Square, Adelaide, Tuesday May 31<sup>st</sup>, 12pm.

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Anti-Poverty Network SA, with support from Uniting Communities, is proud to launch the *Target 80K (80,000) Jobs* campaign – our drive for an extra 80,000 jobs to be created in SA.

Unemployment is a devastating experience for individuals and harmful to communities. Solving our unemployment crisis requires an accurate understanding of the problem we face.

In South Australia, the latest data reveals there are only 9,800 jobs vacancies, but 89,600 job-seekers – both the unemployed and the underemployed, those looking for more work – desperately competing over them. This is unacceptable.

“Target 80K Jobs will fight for a new, more honest conversation on unemployment, and for genuine job creation. Instead of the tired, unfair game of blaming the unemployed for being out of work, labelling them as 'lazy', we want to shift the focus onto the real problem: the fact there are clearly not enough jobs to go around”, Pas Forgione from Anti-Poverty Network SA said.

“Governments need to first admit this simple but devastating fact, and then commit to creating enough jobs for all. In SA, the discrepancy between the number of jobs and the number of job-seekers would be bridged with the creation of an extra 80,000 jobs.

It is time for governments to accept responsibility for the jobs crisis, to end the scape-goating and distractions. And time for governments to concede that simply leaving job creation to the market, to the private sector, is not a fair or realistic strategy for creating enough jobs for all”, Mr Forgione said.

We need a concrete strategy for maintaining old jobs and developing new jobs – and not just any jobs, but real, fair jobs that offer people financial security and stability.

Unemployed person Kat Lee said, “as an unemployed person aged over 55, I have found it extremely difficult to find a job. Employers want recent work history, and the longer you are out of work, the harder it becomes to get work. Newstart makes it even harder, there is not enough to pay rent and bills, let alone buy new clothes or get a hair cut, or see a dentist or doctor. Being older means barriers as it is, let alone trying to survive way below the poverty line.”

Increasing Newstart Allowance by at least \$50 per week, as recommended by numerous business and welfare groups, and trade unions would not only provide much-needed relief to job-seekers, especially the increasing number of long-term unemployed people trapped in poverty by an unfavourable labour market. It would also stimulate local economic activity by giving those on very modest incomes extra spending power.