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**WORLD CUP SPONSORSHIP REAPS REWARDS FOR MTN**

**JOHANNESBURG, 13 April 2011** - Sponsorship of the 2010 World Cup has paid handsome dividends for MTN, with the cellphone operator emerging with the best reputation among South Africa's top ten listed companies in the 2011 RepTrak™ Pulse survey.

MTN's score increased by a significant four points from the 2010 survey, most probably because its sponsorship of this major sporting event helped the brand to build emotional connections with its consumers, according to the internationally respected Reputation Institute.

The survey, which is conducted annually and now in its sixth year in South Africa, measures the reputation of the ten largest listed South African companies based on revenue. Excluded are those companies not easily recognisable by the general public, as well as those that are wholly owned subsidiaries of another company.

Last year's top company, Standard Bank, did not manage to retain its leading position, dropping from 71.26 points to 70.10 points. The Reputation Institute noted that the bank had been impacted by a number of poor public relations episodes, which may have accounted for the drop in its ratings.

Amongst the banks, ABSA also performed well, with a two-point increase and moved to overall 2nd among the top ten listed companies. Nedbank showed the most improvement with a significant three-point increase in RepTrak™ Pulse score, coming in at 6<sup>th</sup> overall position in the survey

Reputation Institute's South African Managing Director, Dominik Heil, points out that South African cellphone and financial services companies perform better than their global counterparts, which tend to score poorly amongst their respective consumers.

"This can be at least partly attributed to the efforts of the Reserve Bank and Treasury in maintaining prudent oversight and a well regulated fiscal environment in South Africa, in which financial services companies are generally not permitted to operate in a risky manner or give loans to customers who cannot pay them back. It can also be attributed to legislation such as the Consumer Protection Act providing some of the most progressive consumer protection in the world," Heil said.

Turning to the drivers of corporate reputation in 2011, Heil said that while products and services remained very important, leadership is now the second most important issue that people care about.

"It's a sign of the difficult economic times that leadership is really important now. People want to know about and see the person with whom the buck stops. The message from this year's survey to companies is that their CEOs play an increasingly important role in driving and protecting the reputation of the company, and must be visible in their communication with the public," Heil added.

In addition to the JSE's top ten listed companies Reputation Institute also surveyed Eskom, First National Bank and Vodacom (results not shown in charts provided) to get insight into the reputation among industries that feature strongly among the top ten companies. Vodacom scored 72.97 with no change from last year's score and would be ranked just behind MTN. First National Bank has slightly lost ground with scoring 71.86 and is now on a par with ABSA. Eskom moved from 42.32 to 54.44 and achieved one of the largest improvements ever recorded in the history of this study, admittedly though off a relatively low base.

Heil said that Eskom's improved performance could be largely attributed to the highly visible leadership of CEO Brian Dames and Eskom Chairman Mpho Makwana.

"Their transparency and honesty in not glossing over significant problems and being honest about what lay ahead for consumers reflected strong leadership resulting in this greatly improved performance by the electricity supplier," Heil said.

Heil added that this year's survey also highlighted the importance of a company's overall contribution to the wellbeing of society.

"Our survey respondents are giving increasing prominence to the issue of companies being run in a way that is cognisant of the realities of their society. Recent changes in Arab countries have largely stemmed from opposition to corruption in society, and how it robs large parts of society of vital economic opportunities and benefits they rightfully deserve. Similarly, in South Africa, corporates are often seen to be run in a way that favours small elites to the exclusion of much of society at large. Our survey indicates that people are concerned about this and find it easier to identify with companies that contribute to their stakeholders and society appropriately and equitably."

The survey is conducted annually in January and February and obtains over 3,000 ratings from the economically active segments of the general public – LSM 6+ in four major provinces (Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape, Eastern Cape).

The scores of the top ten listed companies in the 2011 RepTrak™ Pulse were as follows:

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| MTN            | 73.91 |
| ABSA           | 71.86 |
| Old Mutual     | 70.82 |
| Standard Bank  | 70.10 |
| Sasol          | 69.10 |
| Nedbank        | 67.66 |
| Sanlam         | 66.91 |
| Anglo American | 62.97 |
| Telkom         | 62.75 |
| SAB Miller     | 58.26 |

Ends

### **About the 2011 South Africa RepTrak™ Pulse Study**

The 2011 South Africa RepTrak™ Pulse was conducted in January and February. A RepTrak™ Pulse score is a measure of corporate reputation calculated by averaging perceptions of four indicators—trust, esteem, admiration, and good feeling—obtained from a representative sample of at least 300 local respondents who were familiar with the company. Scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 100, RepTrak™ Pulse scores that differ by more than +/-0.5 points are significantly different at the 95% confidence level. Country reports from the 2011 RepTrak™ Pulse findings can be downloaded at [www.ReputationInstitute.com](http://www.ReputationInstitute.com) and the I report will be available after 14 April 2011.

### **About Reputation Institute**

Reputation Institute is the world's leading reputation consulting firm. As a pioneer in the field of brand and reputation management, Reputation Institute helps companies unlock the power of reputation. With a presence in 30 countries, Reputation Institute is dedicated to advancing knowledge about reputation and shares best practices and current research through client engagement, memberships, seminars, conferences, and publications such as *Corporate Reputation Review* and *Reputation Intelligence*. Reputation Institute's Global RepTrak™ Pulse is the largest study of corporate reputations in the world, identifying what drives reputation and covering more than 2,500 companies from 41 countries annually. Reputation Institute provides specific reputation insight from more than 15 different stakeholder groups and 24 industry categories, allowing clients to create tangible value from intangible stakeholder feelings.