



**MINISTRY
OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL
TECHNOLOGIES REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag X 860, Pretoria, 0001, Tel: +27 12 427 8162 / Private Bag X 9151, Cape Town, 8000 Tel: +27 21 469 5223 URL: <http://www.dcdt.gov.za>

OPENING REMARKS BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES, HON. MONDLI GUNGUBELE AT THE 11TH BRICS COMMUNICATIONS MINISTERS MEETING

HE Sonia Faustino Mendes, Vice Minister of Communications, Brazil

HE Andrey Zarenin, Deputy Minister of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media, Russia

HE Dr. Pemmasani Chandrar Sekhar, Minister of State for Communications, India

HE Yunming Zhang, Vice Minister of Communications, China

HE Meisam Abedi Koushalshah, Deputy Minister of ICT in Technology and Innovation and International Affairs, Iran

HE Mai Taha Mohamed Khalil, Ambassador of Egypt to Brazil

HE Leulseged Tadesse Abebe, Ambassador of Ethiopia to Brazil

HE Edi Yusup, Ambassador of Indonesia to Brazil

Mr Abdulraman Almarzooqi, Director Policies and Programs Department, UAE

Mr Bruno Ramos, Regional Director, ITU

We would like to thank and congratulate Brazil for its hospitality and for its excellent chairing of the BRICS this year.

We recognize that they have introduced themes that are of common priority for all and also managed to maintain continuity from the previous chairs.

For South Africa, particularly, these themes, including discussions on Digital Public Infrastructure create a firm foundation for consensus in the same discussions in the G20 that we are presiding over this year.

Chair, if I may take this opportunity to share some of the strides South Africa has made since our last meeting.

Core to any successful digital economy is an agile digital infrastructure.

South Africa has expanded its network infrastructure, as we now have over 42% geographic coverage on 5G.

Amongst the successes is expanding access to 1.4 million households in rural areas- contributing to 75% South African households having access to the internet.

In 2024, we published the National Data and Cloud Policy to accelerate the rollout of the digital infrastructure, ensuring data privacy and security, and promoting open data and data interoperability whilst preserving data sovereignty.

To ensure digital uptake, we launched the National Digital Transformation Roadmap on the 12th of May this year, to ensure the single view of the citizen of all e-services and to enable efficient planning on side of government and business.

In the next 3 years, we have a target to rollout the Digital ID, Digital Payment and data-exchange throughout government and the public.

Many of our successes we owe to the collaboration and partnership amongst the BRICS partners.

So today, we look forward to discussions of these and the other priority areas, to learn from and exchange best practices from our BRICS brothers and sisters.

Lastly, for now, we welcome our newest member, Indonesia to the growing BRICS family.

Thank you.