



MINISTRY
COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X860, PRETORIA, 0001 – iParioli Office Park, 1166 Park, Hatfield, PRETORIA

Tel: +27 12 427 8000 – Email: Media@DCDT.gov.za URL: www.dcdt.gov.za

**ADDRESS BY MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES,
HON. KHUMBUDZO NTSHAVHENI, AT THE ASSOCIATION OF COMMS AND
TECHNOLOGY LAUNCH**

DATE: 11 AUGUST 2022,

VENUE: MELROSE ARCH, GAUTENG

Programme Director

The CEO of ACT, Ms Nomvuyiso Batyi

The Executive leadership of all Telcos

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon

Let us start by congratulating the inaugural Chief Executive Officer of the Association Ms, Nomvuyiso Batyi for being a trailblazer and charting a path that will be travelled by generations to follow. We of course also thank the executive leadership of our telecommunications operators for this great initiative to come together and form this association. At some point it seemed impossible, however against all tides we are here today to witness the birth of this great idea.

The birth of this Association asserts the popular African proverb, “If you want to go fast go alone, if you want to go far go together.” Earlier this year at the Department’s Budget Vote I remarked that “the work we do is not for us. It is an investment for future generations. Therefore, we cannot aim low, no matter how daunting the tasks and how big the obstacles. The tasks at hand and those that lie ahead demand that we remain resolute, focused, and intentional.” This cannot be more



appropriate than it is to you today. Generations hereafter will write and talk about today as a beginning of an era of collaboration that transformed the ICT sector. It is indeed a privilege to be part of such a milestone event in history.

After 15 years of hitting a brick wall on the licencing of the high demand frequency spectrum, we saw ICASA successfully auctioning the spectrum earlier this year after telecommunications operators reached an out of court settlement, and all of them are allocated a trench in it. The auctioning of the spectrum saw ICASA contributing R14 Billion into the national fiscus, a great milestone achieved through the unity of collaboration of our telcos.

For a while in our country, we have been crying about network signal challenges, the auctioning and the release of the high demand frequency spectrum will bring about fundamental change in that area and will thus assist in bridging the digital divide which exists in our society.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a way of leveraging partnerships that will assist in accelerating digital transformation, our Telcos have led the way. Part of bridging the digital divide will also mean reducing data costs. Data has become the new high way. Without data it means there is no communication, meaning noting moves and our society will become stagnant.

As a growing sector, we have a responsibility to the socio-economic development of our country. The ICT sector must be accessible to everyone regardless of their colour and economic status. To this end we have tabled to Cabinet and received approval for a revised model of the country's broadband programme, the SA Connect Phase 2. It is a programme that will ensure that South Africa achieves the goal of universal access to the internet by 2024.

One of the ways that we have proposed to the industry as a way of bridging the gap and accelerating digital transformation, is that as soon as the spectrum rollout commences, there are social obligations that Telecommunications operators must fulfill. Let us not falter in our commitment to the nation to connect the remaining public service facilities (Schools, Hospitals, Police Stations, and Traditional Authorities) within 36 months.

Programme Director,

When Covid hit us in 2020, children in rural areas were unable to receive their basic right, (education) due to non-connectivity, whereas children of the urbanised sectors of our society continued online with their lessons. We want this to be a thing of the past. No pandemic or national disaster must ever disturb the culture of teaching and learning or even healthcare services.



I am glad I am part of this launch. I am here today as proof that when we work together, we can take the ICT sector in our country to greater heights. With this partnership, communications costs will be lowered, we will be able to bridge the digital gap, we will most importantly deal with the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment, and inequality.

I wish this association success in all its endeavours at making an impact in the lives of our people.

I thank you

