



MINISTRY
COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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SPEECH

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SPEECH BY MINISTER SOLLY MALATSI DCDT GOVERNANCE, COMPLIANCE AND DELIVERY WORKSHOP

Colleagues, leaders of our entities, and valued partners thank you for joining us today as we seek solutions to boost the performance of all entities in the DCDT portfolio.

2024 ushered in a defining chapter for governance in South Africa with the establishment of the Government of National Unity. **More than a mere shift in administration, it marks a commitment to** collaboration, ethical leadership, and reinforcing confidence in the institutions that serve our nation.

For those of us gathered here today, the GNU is not just a political reality—it **is also a professional obligation**. It demands that we set a new standard for leadership, for service delivery, and for the governance of our entities.

Governance reform under the GNU may be our duty but is so much more than that in the context of the DCDT.

It is an **opportunity for unlock South Africa’s digital transformation**, rather than just avoiding failure.

At its core, the GNU is guided by three overarching priorities:

1. Driving inclusive economic growth and job creation
2. Reducing poverty and tackling the high cost of living
3. Building a capable, ethical, and developmental state

As the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies, our role is crucial in turning these priorities into reality.

We are not merely **enablers of technological advancement**; we are the architects of South Africa's digital future. To align with the GNU's mandate, the Ministry has outlined the following key priorities:

1. **Connectivity & Access to the Internet & Devices** – We must ensure universal internet access, affordable devices, and reduced data costs so that every South African has meaningful digital opportunities.
2. **Digital Skills Development** – Equipping our people with the necessary digital skills to thrive in an increasingly technology-driven world.
3. **Productive Use of Digital Technologies** – Promoting internet usage beyond social networking, expanding access to government services, e-commerce, education, and entrepreneurship.
4. **A Supportive Environment for Digital Inclusion & Investment** – Making South Africa the most attractive destination for ICT investment in Africa and ensuring our state-owned entities are viable and sustainable.

To achieve all of these, we will need functional and stable entities which many of you in this room have the honour of leading.

Each of you, as leaders of the entities within this department, carries the responsibility of translating these priorities into action. **You are not merely overseeing institutions—you are shaping South Africa's digital trajectory, and as such, the country's ability to unlock our nation's latent economic potential.**

The **choices you make, the standards you uphold, and the urgency with which you act will** define whether we seize the opportunities of the digital age or allow them to pass us by.

The Importance of the Department

The Department of Communications and Digital Technologies is the foundation **upon which South Africa's digital future is built.**

In a world where digital infrastructure and skills define economic success, **our work is not optional; it is essential.**

The decisions we make will determine whether South Africa thrives in the digital economy or is left behind in an era where **technological progress is rapidly deepening the divide between those who are connected and those who are excluded.**

Around the world, we have seen how investing in digital transformation can lift entire nations, create jobs, and bridge inequality.

India's rapid expansion of digital financial services has enabled millions to access banking for the first time. **Kenya's mobile money revolution** has lifted families out of poverty. **China's investment in e-commerce has driven economic participation** in even its most rural communities. These examples are proof that **digital transformation is an engine for progress.**

But the inverse is also true. Countries that **fail to prioritize digital infrastructure, skills development,** and the digital economy risk stagnation.

Without action, we face entrenching the digital divide — leaving millions of South Africans without connectivity and digital literacy.

This will ultimately lock many out of much-needed economic opportunities, unable to access jobs, education, or even basic services.

As DCDT, we have **a critical role to play in empowering the people of our nation** and ensuring South Africa achieves competitiveness on the global playing field.

The scale of our inequality means that our responsibility is greater than most.

Access to connectivity is not just a tool of convenience—it is a pathway to economic freedom. Digital skills are a lifeline to employment and innovation. **The policies we implement, the governance we strengthen, and the urgency with which we act will define** whether an entire generation of South Africans has the means to compete or is left behind.

This is why governance in our sector cannot be sluggish, why compliance cannot be an afterthought, and why underperformance is not an option.

We are not just regulating industries—we are shaping the future of South Africa's place in the world. Every decision we take must be driven by this urgency. It is time to deliver.

Assessing Our Performance

Governance and compliance are the backbone of any institution's ability to deliver. They dictate whether **an entity fulfills its purpose or becomes a burden** to those it is meant to serve.

In our case, **it also determines whether our people's access to opportunity is improved.**

That is why we are here today—not to simply reflect on performance, but to hold ourselves accountable.

We must use this opportunity to confront the realities of where we stand, **to acknowledge both progress and shortcomings, and to reaffirm our commitment to excellence.**

Some entities have set a strong example, proving that accountability and governance lead to real impact. **Others continue to struggle with inefficiencies that undermine service delivery and public confidence.** We cannot continue in a state where progress and failure exist side by side. **The responsibility to ensure a stable, high-performing sector falls on each of us** in this room.

Some entities such as NEMISA are showing signs of commendable governance and operational success and provide useful lessons from which we all can learn.

Others such as the SABC and Postbank are exhibiting encouraging improvements which will lay the foundation for better audit and performance outcomes.

On the one hand, entities like ICASA, USAASA, USAF, and SAPO remain stagnant.

What worries **me more is the regression of audit outcomes** at SITA, FPB, BBI and Sentech.

Across all these entities, **there are common factors contributing** to the undesirable status quo. **Weak internal controls, violation of procurement processes,** insufficient consequence management, and a general failure to adhere to governance agreements, Mols and even internal policies **are some of the major contributors to the unhealthy state of our entities.**

Conclusion

Colleagues, for too long, the DCDT has been **defined by the crises within its entities.** This cannot be our legacy.

Governance is a concept that is about more than just compliance. It is the **foundation upon which we build institutions and convert plans into results,** so that we can deliver an ever-evolving digital ecosystem in South Africa.

Strong and proactive leadership, ethical decision-making, and accountability **are not optional extras.**

They **are the fundamental tools** we need to unlock the progress we all know is possible.

Those entities that have demonstrated progress **show us what is possible.** Their success is not accidental – **it is the result of disciplined governance, strategic leadership, and an unrelenting focus on delivery.**

If some of our institutions can succeed in this, then it is possible for all of them to achieve the same.

While I will always be **a cheerleader of our successes**, we must **avoid complacency** at all costs.

We must move away from **firefighting and reactive management** and **build institutions that are stable**, future-focused, and driven by excellence.

The pursuit of excellence must become our permanent obsession.

Underperformance must be addressed decisively.

Governance failures and financial mismanagement must face real consequences.

But beyond compliance, we must build institutions that are not only functional, they must be exemplary.

This is the only way our department can fulfil its critical role in shaping South Africa's future. We are the custodians of digital transformation, the enablers of connectivity, and the architects of an inclusive digital economy.

If we fail in our mandate, we do not just fail ourselves—we **fail the millions of South Africans who rely on us to deliver the foundations for progress.**

Today's work, and the work that follows, **demands urgency and precision.**

We must **restore good governance, enforce compliance, and rebuild trust in our institutions**, without delay and compromise.

Our entities will either be the **backbone of South Africa's digital transformation**—or the reason we fall behind.

We cannot afford to simply manage decline. We must lead transformation, and we must do so now with fierce urgency.

I hope that at the end of this workshop **we will commitment to a pathway for success, drawing on best practices where they are already showing meaningful progress and commit a framework** for elevating professionalism, excellence and delivery in all entities.

Thank you