



MINISTRY
COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MEDIA STATEMENT

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POLICY CONFERENCE MARKS URGENT RENEWAL OF SOUTH AFRICA'S DIGITAL POLICY LANDSCAPE

The Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies, Solly Malatsi, has called for a bold, collective effort to renew South Africa's digital policy and regulatory environment so that it keeps pace with rapid technological change and the country's development priorities.

Addressing leaders from government, industry, academia and civil society, the Minister said that outdated frameworks and fragmented decision-making are holding back South Africa's potential to build a thriving, inclusive digital economy.

"We cannot govern tomorrow's digital economy with yesterday's rules," Minister Malatsi said. "Our challenge is not the lack of ideas or innovation; it is the slow pace of reform. South Africa needs a digital policy framework that reflects the realities of today and the opportunities of the future."

The Minister emphasised that this renewed drive for reform will require the active participation of all stakeholders, ensuring that policy renewal is not only government-led but co-created with those who live the consequences of these decisions.

During a day of dynamic conversation, stakeholders shared their inputs on what they believe government's policy priorities must be, with the following issues highlighted:

- The ICT sector is an enabler of growth for all sectors in the economy, but clarity and consistency are required in the policy environment to create an enabling environment.
- Urgency is required to convert talk into action and delivery. Streamlined regulatory approvals, reduced red tape and improved coordination between government departments and institutions are necessary to fast-track partnership and growth.
- Connectivity only works if everyone is connected. Affordable access to data and devices and a Universal Service Access Fund that speeds up connectivity is critical.
- South Africa has not shortage of skills, knowledge or innovativeness, but government must get better at unlocking those skills, so that local innovations can be developed for local problems.

The engagement formed part of a broader process to rethink and modernise the digital policy environment, addressing gaps in legislation, improving regulatory coordination, and ensuring that technology serves people and communities.

The Department confirmed that this initiative marks the start of a sustained dialogue with stakeholders across the digital ecosystem, with follow-up sessions planned to translate these priorities into tangible policy and programmatic action.

Issued by the Ministry of Communications and Digital Technologies

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