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MEDIA STATEMENT

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South Africa and the Netherlands Strengthen ICT Partnership to Drive Digital Innovation and Cybersecurity

The Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT), led by Deputy Minister Mondli Gungubele, yesterday (03 March 2026) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Netherlands Ambassador at Large for Cyber Affairs, H.E. Ernst Noorman, marking a significant milestone in bilateral digital cooperation.

The MoU outlines collaboration in key areas of mutual interest between South Africa and the Netherlands, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), Digital Skills Development, Cybersecurity, and cooperation on international platforms.

Speaking at the bilateral meeting, Deputy Minister Gungubele reaffirmed the strong bilateral ties between the two nations.

“Through this partnership and our shared commitment to digital transformation, we will accelerate innovation, strengthen collaboration, and unlock new opportunities for growth, while safeguarding our online spaces to ensure they remain secure, resilient, and inclusive for all.,” he said.

Netherlands Ambassador at Large for Cyber Affairs, H.E. Ernst Noorman, also underlined the significance of the agreement. “This Joint Declaration of Intent serves as the next step in the already close collaboration between the Netherlands and South Africa on cyberspace, digitalisation and emerging technologies. Capitalising on the opportunities in these fields and countering the challenges, cannot be done in unison and we are pleased that we are taking on these tasks together with South-Africa,” he said.

The partnership creates new opportunities for strategic collaboration, including:

- **Cyber and Tech diplomacy:** Facilitating discussions on key cyber issues addressed in international fora, including responsible state behaviour in cyberspace, information integrity, cybercrime, digitalisation and emerging technologies.
- **Exchanges on AI governance and regulation:** cooperation on artificial intelligence, including exchanges on regulatory approaches and AI ethics. This cooperation aims to support South Africa’s supervisory capacity and help develop AI systems aligned with European Union market standards. Exploring exchanges on public sector algorithm registers and transparency frameworks, building on the Netherlands’ approach and aligning with South Africa’s Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), particularly its principles of fairness and explainability.
- Supporting innovative approaches to cyber and digital capacity building, including education, skills and talent support, such as the joint Southern Africa–Netherlands Cyber Security School. Connecting South African universities and AI research hubs with Dutch researchers, institutions and AI laboratories, while encouraging academic exchanges and joint research initiatives.

Both countries share a common vision of promoting best practices and technical expertise that accelerate digital transformation while upholding human rights principles.

This agreement further strengthens cooperation between South Africa and the Netherlands, positioning both nations to harness digital technologies responsibly, foster innovation, and build inclusive and secure digital economies.

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