



**MINISTRY
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**SPEECH BY MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & CO-OPERATION
MR. RONALD LAMOLA DELIVERED AT THE G20 SOCIAL SUMMIT
DELIVERED IN RIO DE JANEIRO ON 16 NOVEMBER 2024**

H.E. President of the Republic of Brazil, Mr Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva,
Head of States and Government of the G20 Members and Invited Countries
Your Excellencies, Foreign Ministers in attendance
Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me first congratulate President Lula and the Brazilian team for this innovative idea to elevate the participation of social and civil society groups in the work of the G20.

South Africa strongly believes that civil society serves as a vital engine connecting the G20 member countries with the voices and needs of everyday individuals, often referred to as the grassroots. In this context, we wholeheartedly applaud Brazil's courageous initiative in organising this important meeting.

Your Excellencies, as South Africa, we assure you that it is ready to assume G20 Presidency for 2025 from 1 December 2024.

To truly make South Africa's G20 Presidency a People's G20, we have embraced the vibrant and dynamic African leadership style, renowned for its inclusivity, participation, and consultation for the common good. The colourful tapestry of our diverse nation will be woven into our every thread to represent the voices and contributions of our diverse population.

We believe that this approach will transform our people from mere spectators into active weavers of our collective future, ensuring that their hands and hearts shape the outcomes of South Africa's G20 Presidency. Through this rich, collaborative process, we create a living mosaic of shared aspirations and achievements, reflecting the true spirit of our nation.

This further resonates with our chosen theme: **“Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainability.”** Our call is a heartfelt plea for unified effort and mutual support among member nations, urging us to stand together in the face of common challenges. We envision a world where equal opportunities are not just a dream but a reality for all, where every individual has the chance to thrive.

This commitment extends beyond our present needs, ensuring that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own. Together, we can weave a future that is not only just and equitable but also sustainable, nurturing the hopes and dreams of those who will inherit the world we build today.

We aim to build on the remarkable work of the past G20 Presidencies, who have laid a foundation for the reform of global financial architecture with a clear intention to build fairness into the global financial system and ensure that the reform agenda delivers the intended impact and outcomes, reflecting the needs and demands of developing countries.

It is our view that the SDGs remain the most relevant benchmark for the development priorities of developing countries and must remain central to the work of the G20. For this reason, South Africa intends to use its G20 Presidency to action the Pact of the Future, which World Leaders adopted at UNGA79 on 22 September 2024.

We believe that the Pact of the Future is a ‘once-in-a-generation’ opportunity to forge global consensus and make progress on priorities such as the SDGs

Furthermore, we are cognizant of the commendable work done by the social and civil society partners to raise the level of ambition in global commitments when the world is more divided. We endeavour to strengthen our relationship with the engagement groups to deliver the G20 to the people.

We note the recommendations made by various engagements on Brazil's priorities for its G20 Presidency. Furthermore, we note with interest the call to mainstream children and adolescents' rights and interests in the G20's work. We look forward to further engagement on this.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Like Brazil with the G20 Social Summit, it believes that more space needs to be created to allow for greater civil society participation in the G20's work. Whilst the creation of G20 Engagement Groups has somewhat democratised the G20, Engagement Groups are largely comprised of formal professional groupings such as the B20, L20, P20, U20, Y20, W20, and C20. More can be done to enhance civil society participation further.

An inclusive G20 is no longer an option but an imperative. Thus, we wholeheartedly commend Brazil's innovative inclusion of the Favelas 20, G20 Favelas, and other marginalised groups who often bear the brunt of hunger and poverty. This inspired initiative shines a light on those who are frequently overlooked, ensuring their voices are heard and their struggles acknowledged.

It is a powerful testament to the spirit of solidarity and inclusivity, reminding us all that true progress is only possible when we uplift every member of our global community.

This approach not only addresses immediate needs but also paves the way for a more equitable and compassionate world.

I look forward to welcoming you to South Africa, where we will host many engagement group meetings, including the social summit.

I thank you.