



**CLOSING REMARKS BY HONOURABLE MINISTER RONALD
LAMOLA ON THE OCCASION OF THE FORMAL PRESENTATION OF
THE 2025 G20 SOCIAL DECLARATION**

**BIRCHWOOD HOTEL
BOKSBURG, EKURHULENI
GAUTENG PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

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Mr President, last you assigned me to attend and address the social summit in Rio, Brazil last year and you gave me a clear mandate that I must commit that South Africa will continue with the social summit during our G20 Presidency this year.

We promised to carry forward the innovative practice and courageous example set by Brazil in holding an inclusive G20 that centred the voices of people on the margins.

We also promised to extend the G20's work beyond engagement groups to include civil society organisations working at the grassroots level.

I believe that we have kept that promise.

As we bring this Social Summit to a close, let me share the following messages:

International relations are far too important to be left to governments alone. This has long been the mantra of civil society.

You were the ones who sounded the alarm about the risk that a new minerals boom could usher in yet another era of extraction and plunder without beneficiation at source.

You reminded us that women and children pay the price for the debt crisis.

Your voices have made it clear that the Sustainable Development Goals will remain a dream unless the world tackles inequality.

Your movements have constantly reminded us that inequality is bad for democracy.

You insisted that the climate crisis, food insecurity, conflict, war and youth marginalisation are all urgent matters that need solutions now.

You have persistently argued that developing countries deserve a real seat at the table.

You have said, loud and clear, that Africa must graduate from rule-taker to rule-maker in matters that affect our continent and its peoples.

We must all work together to sustain this platform of the social summit in future G20 as it brings inclusion.

There is no doubt that the South Africa G20 Social Summit Declaration will add value to the 2025 G20 Leaders' Declaration to be adopted in the coming days.

Let us leave South Africa not with a sense of resignation, but with renewed vigour.

Let us not put a pause on our campaigns and advocacy.

Let us be like the dancer in the poem 'Bandung Dance' by one of Africa's great poets – Keorapetse Kgositsile.

The dancer who defies fatigue.

The dancer who carries her fire.

Like this dancer, may we defy fatigue and dance on. May we refuse to waver in our commitment to solidarity, equality and sustainability.

Thank you.