



## national treasury

Department:  
National Treasury  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Enquiries: Communications Unit • Email: [media@treasury.gov.za](mailto:media@treasury.gov.za) • Tel: (012) 315 5046 • 40 Church Square, PRETORIA, 0002 • [www.treasury.gov.za](http://www.treasury.gov.za)

# MEDIA STATEMENT

## ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AFRICA EXPERT PANEL

### Background

The Government of South Africa assumed the G20 Presidency from the beginning of December 2024 until the end of November 2025.

The G20 comprises 19 of the world's most systemically important countries, the African Union and the European Union. Its work proceeds through the G20 Finance and Sherpa Tracks and culminates in an annual Summit of G20 leaders. The G20 Presidency and most of its meetings for 2025 are being held for the first time on African soil and provide a unique opportunity for the Government of South Africa to focus during its G20 Presidency on issues pertinent to Africa.

To date, during South Africa's Presidency, the Finance Track has hosted several in-person and virtual meetings. A broad range of issues were discussed in both sessions. The discussions were constructive and robust. G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors discussed the annual work programmes of the Finance Track working groups for 2025.

Consistent with the Presidency's intent to draw attention and G20 consideration to African policy challenges in 2025, an Africa Expert Panel has been established.

### About the Panel

At the global level, there have been quite a few initiatives launched, such as the Jubilee 2000 Debt campaign to address aspects, as it relates to global country debt levels.

However, during the South African G20 Presidency, the Africa Expert Panel will specifically consider matters as they relate to Africa. Africa is grappling with an unprecedented debt crisis.

This year African countries will pay close to \$89 billion in external debt service alone, with 20 low-income countries at risk of debt distress. More than half of Africa's 1.3-billion people live in countries that spend more on interest payments than on social issues such as health, education and infrastructure.

The high level of debt is unsustainable and undermines efforts towards sustainable development and poverty alleviation. There is a need for bold and urgent action on a comprehensive plan to deal with the high levels of debt of Africa and other developing countries.



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South Africa's Presidency of the G20 presents an opportunity for African countries to advance issues affecting the Continent. This will be achieved through dialogue and collaboration amongst African Member States' public sector, think tanks, and organised businesses to articulate common positions and priorities within the G20 framework.

The overall objective of the Africa Expert Panel is to offer strategic advice by exploring and defining strategies that advance Africa's collective developmental interests through increased voice, effective representation, and the achievement of a reformed and all-inclusive global economic policy through the G20.

The specific objectives of the Panel are:

- a. Utilising South Africa's Presidency of the G20 to advance Africa's developmental agenda
- b. Serving as a forum for in-depth and structured discussions on emerging global and domestic developments, and economic and development policies
- c. Producing a set of policy recommendations for each priority area, which the relevant Finance Track focus area could consider
- d. Building a knowledge base of policy and implementation lessons and best practices through the development of concept notes
- e. Catalysing consensus on African priorities with concrete strategies and recommendations to enhance Africa's participation and influence in the G20
- f. Acting as a platform for in-depth and structured discussions on emerging global and domestic developments and economic and development policies, and facilitate policy coherence
- g. Offering strategic advice to aid in making the most informed decisions about economic policy and development issues affecting Africa
- h. Facilitate Africa's access to expert knowledge and experience of economic policymaking to improve the quality of African economic policy design, implementation, and impact and better inform the public narrative on economic policy success and shortcomings; and
- i. Build a knowledge base of policy and implementation lessons and best practices.

The Africa Expert Panel will ensure we advance an African perspective in identifying key priorities for the continent's developmental interests in areas relevant to the work of the G20 Finance Track.

Overall, the Africa Expert Panel will be driven by evidence-based dialogue and the development of strategic policy directions while encouraging collaboration among diverse interest groups. This should help ensure better coordination and alignment between South Africa's and the African Union's positions.

The Africa Expert Panel will produce a High-Level Report with its key recommendations.



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Panel Members comprise:

1. Trevor Manuel, Chairman of Old Mutual Board (Chairperson)
2. Joel Netshitenzhe, Executive Director: Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (secretariat)
3. Anthony Musonda Simpasa, Officer in Charge Macroeconomic Policy, Debt Sustainability and Forecasting: African Development Bank
4. Carlos Lopes, Honorary Professor: Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance University of Cape Town
5. Daouda Sembene, Chief Executive Officer: AfriCatalyst (Senegal)
6. David Luke, Professor in Practice and Strategic Director: Firoz Lalji Institute for Africa (Sierra Leone)
7. Donald Kaberuka, Chairman and Managing Partner: SouthBridge
8. Esther Duflo, Professor: Massachusetts Institute of Technology
9. François Bourguignon, former Chief Economist at the World Bank: Director of the Paris School of Economics
10. Hanan Morsy, Chief Economist: United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
11. Hannah Ryder, Chief Executive Officer: Development Reimagined
12. Johann Kirsten, Professor & Director: Bureau for Economic Research, Stellenbosch University
13. Kevin Urama, Professor and Chief Economist: African Development Bank
14. Kuben Naidoo, Investec
15. Masood Ahmed, President Emeritus: Center for Global Development
16. Murray Leibbrandt, Professor: Research Chair: Poverty and Inequality Research, University of Cape Town
17. Ngaire Woods, Dean: Blavatnik School, Oxford
18. Patrick Njoroge, Former Governor: Kenya Reserve Bank
19. Alan Hirsch, Professor: Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance, University of Cape Town
20. Bright Simons, President: mPedigree (Ghana)
21. Fiona Tregenna, Professor of Economics: University of Johannesburg
22. Neva Makgetla, Senior Economist: Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies
23. Hans Peter Lankes, Deputy Chief Executive and Managing Director: ODI

“On behalf of the people of South Africa, I want to thank each panel member for accepting the invitation to serve on the Africa Expert Panel. I am confident that the insights and expertise of each panel member will assist in shaping Africa’s economic, development and financial engagements within such an international and systemic forum as the G20”, said Minister of Finance, Mr Enoch Godongwana.

For media enquiries, please contact [media@treasury.gov.za](mailto:media@treasury.gov.za).

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