



MINISTRY OF FINANCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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SPEECH BY MINISTER OF FINANCE

SPEECH BY MINISTER OF FINANCE, MR ENOCH GODONGWANA AT THE 8TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AFRICAN UNION'S SPECIALISED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (STC) ON FINANCE, MONETARY AFFAIRS, ECONOMIC PLANNING, AND INTEGRATION

02 October 2025

Your Excellencies fellow Ministers,
Governors,
Heads of Multilateral Institutions,
Heads of Delegation, and
Distinguished delegates,
Good morning,

It is my great honour to be here and deliver the opening remarks for the 8th Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration. This meeting is very crucial, as we confront a shared challenge under the theme “Bridging Africa’s Health Financing Gap in a Changing Geo-Economic Context: Challenges and Potential Solutions.”

This theme provides a crucial opportunity for robust engagement about our requisite preparedness and suite of interventions available, if required, of our health sector and how these will be funded. Coordination between the finance and the health sector has never been more important due to experiences from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our continent’s health sector is facing a phalanx of multiple crises. It is underfunded, overstretched and faces a distressing decline in Official Development Assistance (ODA). This challenge adds on the existing increase in our debt-service obligations and diminished fiscal space to make available for domestic health spending. These challenges demand that we take charge in strengthening the resilience of our health financing whilst strategically weaning ourselves off external financing that is becoming less reliable.



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However, today, we are gathered at a unique opportunity. South Africa is hosting the G20 Presidency for the year 2025 and being mindful that this G20 is on behalf of the entire African Continent. As such, we deliberately and thoughtfully cast our Presidency as a G20 Presidency for and on behalf of Africa - her people, her health and her soil. We consider this a profound responsibility, one that South Africa has embraced with a clear vision and a commitment to championing the voice of the continent and the Global South. The responsibility is not for us only, and we dare not fail the Continent.

As a result, this herculean responsibility runs through the theme we have carried for this G20 Presidency; and that is "*Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability*." That we are in this together as a territory and a people; bound by history, freedom struggles and destiny, bright and prosperous as we desire it to be.

It is important that we link the theme to the theme of this important STC meeting.

First, through "Solidarity," we recognize that global health challenges require collective solutions. South Africa is supporting a new global compact on health financing, a model that is proactive and not crisis driven and is solidarity based.

Second, through "Equality," it is a reality that the continent's health financing gap is an issue of global inequality. We are pushing for reforms to the global financial architecture to make it more equitable and representative. A key priority of our G20 Presidency is addressing the unsustainable debt burdens that destroy developing economies and prevent developing economies from investing in critical public services, including healthcare.

Third, through "Sustainability," we must ensure that health financing is sustainable, not just for a single financial year but for generations to come. This means strengthening our own domestic resource mobilization and finding innovative ways of financing our health sectors. We need to explore a range of solutions, including increasing our budgetary allocations, and commit to increasing the share of our national budgets dedicated to health, in line with the Abuja Declaration. There is a need to explore innovative fiscal policies to increase revenue, through targeted taxes on products harmful to health, such as tobacco and alcohol and



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improve the efficiency and transparency of our public financial management to make sure that every resource allocated for health is used effectively.

Our private sector should not be left behind. We should create an enabling environment for both our public and private sectors to join hands and unlock investment and explore public-private partnerships across the healthcare infrastructure value chain.

Through the G20, we are proactively promoting a global framework to combat illicit financial flows and to ensure a fair and just international tax system. This will unlock billions of dollars in revenue that are currently lost to our economies, and funds that could be reinvested in our health systems in strengthening primary healthcare, and in building a resilient health workforce.

I will have an opportunity to speak about our G20 Priorities in detail later this afternoon. I will also have the privilege of sharing the floor with Mr Trevor Manuel, our former Finance Minister who I asked to lead the G20 Africa Expert Panel that was established to identify key priorities for the continent's developmental interests in areas relevant to the work of the G20 Finance Track.

Having had a sneak preview of the Draft Report of the Panel, I want to be bold and unequivocal: we must continue the work, urgently so, to stabilize our economies by strengthening domestic markets, bolstering institutions and accountability, and protecting the vulnerable. Whilst it is true that the world economy is undergoing fundamental changes as demographic shifts and technological advancements reconfigure global markets, this moment too is a transitory one. There are new opportunities for change and growth on the African continent. A new thumping pulse in our veins, if you will.

The energy transition and new technologies, including artificial intelligence, create new prospects for development and global economic interaction. The prospect of a multipolar world presents the African continent with opportunities to break free from old modes of development and trade. New investments and new sources of investment finance are emerging. There are opportunities to draw upon new spaces for pragmatic policy



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experimentation and autonomous development. New forms of multilateral cooperation and new partnerships for development are being forged, quite literally as we speak.

Africa holds the keys to the solutions for the challenges the world faces. Africa's youth are striving for development across the continent, demanding change. The continent's critical minerals, renewable energy advantages, agricultural land, and biological resources make it a central pillar of tomorrow's healthier world, and an indispensable partner in achieving it. A new and reimagined developmental approach is required that restores confidence in the promise of development as an empowering partnership. Africa can again be the fly-wheel around which a new vibrancy can emerge.

This calls for new principles of global co-operation, more effective global finance for investment and economic transformation in Africa. The old development models will no longer work, and the era of aid is largely over. I agree entirely, African countries must now approach development through the lens of sharper investment discipline.

Our discussions today on the continent's health challenges, the widening financing gap, the strategies we need to pursue and our collaborations and policy reforms that we must undertake, must anchor the discussions we, as South Africa and Africa, will take to the global stage.

Let us work together over these two days to ensure that we leave this gathering with a coordinated and strategic continental response to Africa's health financing challenges.

We stand ready to work with fellow Ministers to build resilient health systems that protect our people, strengthen our economies, and secure our continent's future.

I thank you for your attention.

Ends.