



KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY DR CHANA PILANE-MAJAKE, MP, DEPUTY MINISTER FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION AT THE BRICS CONFERENCE ON GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM, UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA, 17 JULY 2023

Programme Director and Principal of the National School of Government
Acting Vice-Chancellor of the University of Pretoria Prof Tawana Kupe

Members of the diplomatic corp

Partners from the BRICS countries

Commissioners of the Public Service Commission

Directors-General, heads of state entities and senior public officials

Academia

The media

Esteemed guests, speakers and participants present here today

Participants on the virtual platform from the global community.

Programme Director, let me take this opportunity in welcoming our international guests to South Africa, and express appreciation at the interest shown in being a part of this BRICS pre-summit conference, that is aligned to the BRICS Summit theme: “**BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development, and Inclusive Multilateralism**”. As a country and government, we are extremely honored to take the chairmanship of BRICS, under the leadership of President Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa, and taking over the baton from the Peoples’ Republic of China. This year marks the 15th BRICS Summit, that will take place from 22-24 August 2023 in South Africa.

Drawing from the theme of the Summit, Multilateralism is a form of cooperation between at least three or more states that comprise certain elements or principles that shape the character of the arrangement or the institution.

Our focus is to build partnership between BRICS and Africa to unlock mutually beneficial opportunities for increased trade, investment, and infrastructure. In this regard, South Africa's five priorities for 2023 that are also women and youth focused and are as follows:

1. Developing inclusive partnerships towards an equitable just transition.
2. Upscaling education and skills development for the future.
3. Unlocking opportunities through the African Continental Free Trade Area.
4. Strengthening post-pandemic socio-economic recovery and realization of Agenda 2030 through Sustainable Development.
5. Strengthening multilateralism, reform of global governance institutions, and strengthening participation of women in peace processes.

As a build-up towards the BRICS Summit, Cabinet of Ministers in South Africa approved a series of meetings and events, one of which is this pre-summit Conference on Governance and Public Administration Reform that is being hosted today. The Conference is also aligned with the second priority of "transforming education and skills development for the future." with the view to building **capable, ethical and developmental state**. The concept "developmental state" resonates with rapid ascent of the East Asian Tigers (Japan, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore etc) as economic and political forces of the our time.

It is their success that propels Africa to aspire for developmental state realisation. For this reason, mother Africa through the AU has engineered and approved the African Union's Agenda 2063, with the intention of building strong institutions to enhance cross boarder economic development and good governance. Government Institutions must at all levels have the capacity to prioritize, design, implement and monitor development activities. Agenda 2063 can only be realised through

accountable, ethical, capable, developmental states across the entire continent of Africa.

South Africa has committed to building a developmental state that efficiently guides national economic development by mobilising and directing resources in a manner that enhances realisation of developmental goals. South Africa's clear vision for growth and development is outlined in the National Development Plan in the context of realization of socio-economic rights and redistribution of wealth to redress the apartheid inequalities of the past.

A developmental state must be able to direct and promote economic development by establishing a strong public sector that promotes an investor-friendly climate, small business development, effective state-owned enterprises, and driving strategic investment programmes. We believe that it is in the interest of the government of South Africa to encourage fair and competitive economic engagements to ensure that the country is on the cutting edge of global economic growth path.

The government of South Africa is more certain that the BRICS partnership has the ability support South Africa and the African continent at large on the journey towards economic recovery. This will contribute to making Africa's economy to be globally competitive, reduce the cost of doing business, attract investments, and stimulate economic growth, thus alleviating poverty and unemployment.

Future positioning of the National School of Government

Esteemed guests, this Conference brings together government departments and training and development institutes from the BRICS bloc and related countries. You will share my appreciation for the fact that

public administration remains a critical tool in delivering basic services to citizens and especially the most vulnerable. Without capable public institutions, there is a risk of collapse of governments and other sectors of society. Building capable institutions requires an investment in building human capabilities to be diligent, masterful and innovative. The most important human resource component thereof being performance management. Knowledge management must be made a priority for relevant and appropriate placement of the workforce toward achievement of goals as prescribed by specific mandates of government departments. Thus the importance of skills audit to match available skills with specific job requirements, at the same time identifying skills gaps.

The National School of Government in South Africa remains a key institution to drive the developmental state agenda of building state capacity. This year marks 10 years of establishment of the School during which time growth path towards making education, training and development more accessible.

The NSG programmes focus on on-the-job training and development in the public service for public servants, senior managers and executive leaders. – including preparing unemployed youth graduates to enter public service and make it a career of choice.

The reach of the School has also grown in the African continent, with bilateral agreements and the African Management Development Institutes' Network (AMDIN). Internationally, the NSG has solidified its footprint with partnerships more especially with People's Republic of China accelerating capacity building.

Drawing from lessons and benchmarking from counterparts, the NSG is currently working on its future repositioning on factors such as approach to challenges posed by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) that requires urgent attention as South Africa continues to move towards modernization and digitization of government services. Digital and future skills are a vital component of South Africa's human resource capacity growth path.

Programme Director, as I conclude, I am pleased that this Conference is taking place as we prepare to celebrate the life and times of Tata Nelson Mandela tomorrow the 18th July that has been earmarked as 67 Minutes of Nelson Mandela International Day. The legacy of Madiba will live forever, here and around the world. A proponent of peace. Let me take the opportunity to share with you the most profound message from his infamous 1990 interview he had with Mr Ted Koppel who was the then Anchor for Nightline ABC news. In the many responses he gave to questions posed, he commented that: *"One of the mistakes which some political analysts make is to think their enemies should be our enemies. Our attitude towards any country is determined by the attitude of that country to our struggle"* This approach is what today guides South Africa's stance on international relations that encourages peaceful resolution of any form of conflict in line with the UN universal declaration for human rights. Without peace, development will remain a pipe dream.

Esteemed guests let's work together to building a better BRICS, a better Africa and a better world.

I thank you.