



PARLIAMENT
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12 February 2025

Mr R O Lamola
Minister of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO)
Private Bag X152
Pretoria
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Dear Minister Lamola,

REQUEST FOR EXPANSION OF LOCAL INVOLVEMENT IN G20 WORKING GROUPS

As South Africa's G20 Presidency gets underway, it is concerning to note that the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) seems to be limiting and restricting the participation and engagement of local think tanks, civil society organisations, and policymaking organisations, especially those outside of the African National Congress' (ANC) ideological purview, in the various working groups such as Labour20 (L20) and Business20 (B20) as part of the broader Think20 (T20). More worryingly, it is apparent that the L20 platform is being dominated by the African National Congress' party political interests through the sole participation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

In the spirit of both South Africa's G20 presidency, as well as the Government of National Unity's statement of intent, there must be far more inclusive representation on the various G20 engagement groups to ensure that a truly evidence-based and data-driven approach is employed to solve some of our country's most pressing issues as we leverage crucial international best practice. Furthermore, the G20's engagement groups cannot serve as platforms which advance the party-political interests and policies of any single party.

As a result of the above, I am making a sincere request to you to extend formal invitations to a wider range of local think tanks, civil society organisations, and policymaking organisations to participate in the T20 and broader G20 engagements groups such as the L20 and B20. These should include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. The National Employers Association of South Africa (NEASA);
2. The Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE);
3. The Brenthurst Foundation;
4. The South African Institute of Race Relations (IRR);
5. Sakeliga;
6. Centre for Risk Analysis.

In addition to this request, I would like to recommend that all G20 engagement groups take place with an open invitation to any interested groupings in our country, and not specifically with sanctioned political involvement. We as the Democratic Alliance would like our country's G20 presidency to inform our own much-needed policy change and governance reform to benefit all South Africans. We must ensure that the G20 is not a party-political talk shop, but a meaningful international engagement involving all sectors of South African society with an interest in our shared progress and sustainable development.

I trust that you will consider the above proposals, and I look forward to your favourable response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ryan Smith', enclosed within a hand-drawn oval shape.

Ryan Smith
Democratic Alliance
International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO)