



small business development

Department:
Small Business Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA ADVISORY

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TO ALL MEDIA HOUSES

South Africa, International Trade Centre to host first-ever Global Small Business Ministerial during G20

Republic of South Africa is partnering with the International Trade Centre (ITC) to host the first-ever Global SME Ministerial meeting to convene ministers from across the world that are dedicated to the millions of small businesses that form the backbone of the global economy.

In the year of South Africa's G20 presidency, this initiative will take place in Johannesburg on 22-24 July 2025.

The country through the Department of Small Business Development has partnered with ITC to co-host this inaugural Ministerial, which will centre around the theme "Navigating New Business Frontiers" focusing on how SMEs can drive economic transformation in their countries by enabling three key areas:

- Access to finance
- Digital connectivity
- Green transition

Ministers will work during the ministerial on these three areas for SMEs and will set a roadmap to address the most pressing challenges faced by small and medium-sized enterprises to operate, develop or scale up. SMEs make up 90% of businesses worldwide.

The Global SME Ministerial will include a Business and Innovation Space where policymakers will also engage with private sector leaders to drive innovations by small



businesses, boost networks between SMEs and potential investors, showcase success stories and provide the Ministers with tangible experiences from different continent.

Under the umbrella of the SME Ministerial, ITC will organize a leadership dialogue for the global network of Trade Promotion Organizations, feeding into the Ministerial round tables

Honourable Stella Tembisa Ndabeni, Minister of Small Business Development of South Africa, said: “The G20 represents a vital platform for fostering global cooperation and collective action, where the world’s leading economies come together not just to discuss challenges, but to find solutions that drive sustainable growth, reduce inequality, and promote shared prosperity.”

ITC Executive Director [Pamela Coke-Hamilton](#) said:

"The world needs a space where SME issues can be discussed at the highest levels. A space where we can create roadmaps, together, for action. A space that opens new opportunities for cooperation and sharing ideas.

This will be a space that will not lose sight of the big picture goals, nor the small and medium-sized businesses whose successes or failures will define our future.

This kind of space is sorely needed. “Small firms drive tangible, lasting change from the ground up on global issues from climate change to women’s economic empowerment to digital connectivity, if they have the skills and resources to act. They are not only beneficiaries but drivers of sustainable, inclusive trade.

By pivoting from commodity extraction to value addition, investing in diversification of products and markets, and strengthening regional links to reduce dependency on a handful of countries, developing countries can take steps to stabilize the global trading system, at a time of uncertainty and instability.

South Africa’s G20 presidency marks the first time the African continent hosts the intergovernmental forum, on the heels of the African Union becoming a permanent member, bringing together development and economic priorities.

For further information, contact ITCMinisterial@intracen.org



Notes for the Editor

About the International Trade Centre – ITC is the joint agency of the [World Trade Organization](#) and the [United Nations](#). ITC supports small and medium-sized enterprises in developing and transition economies to become more competitive in global markets, thereby contributing to sustainable economic development within the frameworks of the Aid-for-Trade agenda and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

For more information, visit www.intracen.org.

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About the Ministry of Small Business Development –

The Department of Small Business is leading and coordinating an integrated approach to the promotion and development of entrepreneurship, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises as well as Cooperatives, to ensure an enabling legislative and policy environment to support their growth and sustainability. The Department provides financial and non-financial support the MSMEs and Cooperatives in South Africa.

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