

G20 Johannesburg declaration launches AI for Africa initiative; US stays away

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Source: <https://www.sanews.gov.za/node/78414>

Text saved 18 Oct 2026 (the page as published).

SHA-256 of the saved text: 1f141e82f7d0a4c8b5457efef705c7dce63e5301d7be7772998d04761f9e556b

G20 Leaders' Summit declaration 'revolutionary' for Africa, Global South

Saturday, November 22, 2025

"The world is here, the African continent is here, [global] institutions are here. Multilateralism has been affirmed. The multi-polar world is in real action."

These were the words of Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ronald Lamola, following the announcement that the G20 Leaders' Summit has adopted a declaration.

The Minister spoke to the media on the sidelines of the first day of the two-day Leaders' Summit on Saturday.

The historical summit – held on the African continent for the first time – is being held at the Nasrec Expo Centre in Johannesburg.

"We see this as a platform that affirms multilateralism. Multilateralism has served the world very well since the second world war and this platform is affirming that," Lamola said.

He noted that the venue chosen to host the summit is symbolic of South Africa's aims to build a world of mutual cooperation.

"We are glad that we are talking about a number of issues to bridge between the Global South and the Global North. Is it not ironic that we have placed it here in Soweto...which used to be a black township [and] on my right is Joburg North which used to be an only white area.

"We have brought everyone here to say that this is the bridge that the global north and south must breach so that all of us can work together for the best and for the benefit of humanity," he noted.

On the declaration itself, particularly on digital transformation and artificial intelligence, the Minister said it is a pivotal step for Africa.

"On the African continent, very few content creators get any resources...TikTok, Apple and so forth. But this G20 speaks about how the African continent must not just be a consumer of artificial intelligence but it must be at the source of innovation, research, data centres and all those platforms.

"So, this is very key also for young people of this continent...this being a youthful continent. This G20 will revolutionise how the African continent participates in the global economy.

"We are really glad as the South African government that finally... [the G20 Presidency] has culminated into a progressive declaration...that will revolutionise how the global south participates and plays in the global economy," Lamola remarked.

This as Presidential Spokesperson Vincent Magwenya earlier confirmed that the leaders of the G20 have reached a consensus for a G20 Leaders' Summit declaration to be adopted.

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"[The declaration] has been adopted by the leaders here at the summit. We were edging closer and closer to that unanimous adoption and now we have a summit declaration adopted," said Magwenya.

In his opening address at the Summit earlier, President Cyril Ramaphosa said the first-ever G20 Leaders' Summit on African soil must reflect the aspirations of both the continent and the wider global community. READ | G20 must reflect aspirations of Africa and the world

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