

Media Statement - 29 June 2021

South Africa reiterates its support for multilateral efforts aimed at tackling global challenges

The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor, said today, 29 June 2021, at meetings of the G20 taking place in Matera, Italy, that South Africa supports international efforts to tackle the health and socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Minister said South Africa regards “access to affordable vaccines for all” as one of the most immediate priorities. The Minister further said South Africa and India, in the context of the World Trade Organisation, are leading efforts to get a waiver on the intellectual property rights for COVID-19 vaccines.

Minister Pandor said: “Every effort must be made to support the rollout of vaccines to all. Defeating the virus is our common interest, as no one is safe until everyone is safe”.

South Africa shared the concern expressed by other G20 members regarding the impact that the global health pandemic is having on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals set by United Nations member states.

“Ensuring sustainable development in the current global environment will require concerted engagement in the UN system and other multilateral structures such as the G20 in promoting access to vaccines, post-COVID recovery, debt sustainability and liquidity, economic growth and the improvement of the social well-being and infrastructure through increased trade and investment as well as the fair and equitable movement of goods and services”.

The Minister said G20 countries must continue to work together “to deliver a free, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent, predictable and stable trade and investment environment, and to keep our markets open”.

Speaking in a meeting focussing on development, Minister Pandor said the global health pandemic is “exacerbating poverty, inequality, unemployment and has a disproportional impact on women and youth.” The Minister also spoke about illicit financial flows from Africa, which “drain our economies of much-needed domestic resources to fund sustainable development”.

On the margins of the G20, Minister Pandor met with her counterparts from the Netherlands and Spain, Minister Sigrid Kaag and Minister Arancha Gonzalez Laya respectively, for bilateral talks focussing on matters of mutual interest.

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