



**REPORT OF THE 4<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF SOUTH AFRICA – CHINA  
PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE EXCHANGE MECHANISM (PPEM)  
DELIVERED BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING, DR NOMUSA DUBE-NCUBE IN HER CAPACITY AS  
THE COORDINATOR OF THE PPEM, 03 DECEMBER 2025**

Excellencies Co-Chairpersons of South Africa-China People-to-People Exchange Mechanism, Mr Gayton Mackenzie, Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture and State Councillor, Ms Shen Yiqin,

Your Excellency Co-Coordinator of the PPEM and Vice Minister of Education of the People's Republic of China, Mr Ren Youqun,

Honourable Vice Ministers and Deputy Ministers representing the Governments of the People's Republic of China and Republic of South Africa,

Senior Government Officials from both countries,

Esteemed guests, ladies and gentlemen

It is my singular honour to present the technical report of the 4<sup>th</sup> Session of South Africa-China People-to-People Exchange Mechanism. We deliver this report against the backdrop of a successful hosting of South Africa's G20 Presidency which culminated into the adoption of the G20 Leaders' Declaration in Johannesburg. The outcomes of the G20 leaders' meeting reflects not only the interest of the Global South but the aspirations of the African continent and her people.

We acknowledge the achievement of the G20 Working Groups covering the areas of education, culture, health, tourism, digital economy, women empowerment as well as research and innovation. South Africa and China jointly participated in all these G20 Working Groups. This is indeed testament to the elevated status of South Africa-China relations which is "All-Round Strategic Cooperative Partnership in the New Era".

In September 2024, His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa was hosted by His Excellency President Xi Jinping during the Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), this State Visit further deepened cooperation between South Africa and China.

In July 2025, His Excellency Deputy President Paul Mashatile led a South African delegation to participate in the 3<sup>rd</sup> China International Supply Chain Expo (CISCE) aimed at enhancing trade and investment and to deepen our supply chains with China. The Deputy President had an honour to meet with Vice President of the People's Republic of China, His Excellency Vice President HAN Zheng. In March 2026, Deputy President Mashatile and Vice President HAN Zheng will co-chair the 9<sup>th</sup> Session of the Bi-National Commission between South Africa and China.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Session of the PPEM is convened under the theme: *“Deepening South Africa-China People-to-People Exchanges: Advancing Global South Modernisation Together.”*

Since the last PPEM held in February 2023 in Cape Town, the education sector has made steady progress to improve education cooperation between South Africa and China. Key cooperation agreements were finalized which included amongst others a broader Agreement on Higher Education and Training signed in August 2023. In the implementation of this Agreement, we are pleased to report that the South Africa-China scholarship programme had been expanded significantly to provide more South African students with the opportunity to study in prestigious higher education institutions in China. It is anticipated that by end of 2025, more than 500 students would have taken up new scholarship opportunities in China.

The discussions are at an advance stage on the establishment of South Africa-China University Forum to coordinate the existing robust cooperation between Chinese and South African universities. In the area of technical and vocational education and training, we note the valuable contributions made through involvement of the public and private sector partners to improve the offerings of the vocational training in South Africa. We welcome the significant investment to the South African education sector made by Chinese-owned private sector companies such as Huawei and Yalong Intelligent Equipment Group. Working in partnership with Beijing Polytechnic College, the Department of Higher Education and Training is looking forward to the concept finalization to establish the China-South Africa Vocational and Technical Centre in South Africa.

Working with other five polytechnic colleges in China, South Africa will boost the Just Energy Transition skills portfolio by training the first cohort of 100 South African youth who are not in employment and not in any form of education and training.

We are delighted for the continuous support extended by the Chinese Ministry of Education with respect to the Chinese language in South Africa schools which is offered as an elective language. In this regard we value the role of the Chinese Confucius institutions located in various universities in South Africa. We appeal for continuation of the support and the secondment of Mandarin subject Advisor to be based in South Africa to assist the Department of Basic Education.

Under the China-South Africa Joint Committee on Science and Technology Cooperation, the Memorandum of Understanding on Young Scientist Exchange Programme has strengthened practical cooperation focusing on science, technology and innovation policy exchange, cross-border exchange of young scientists, joint flagship research projects and joint laboratories. Since 2023, several reciprocal exchanges of young scientists have taken place between the two countries, and the two sides are currently exploring the signing of a new MoU on the Young Scientist Exchange Programme. This MoU will allow for an increased participation by young scientists from both countries.

There has been a notable cooperation in the area of arts, culture and heritage, South Africa acknowledges the importance of the Agreement signed in 2007 in this regard. This Agreement serves as a cornerstone to deepen cooperation between Chinese and South African cultural institutions such as South African Heritage Resource Agency (SAHRA) and National Cultural Heritage Administration (NCHA). In the area of sport, South Africa welcomes the generous equipment donation by the Chinese counterparts towards development and improvement of tennis sporting code in South Africa.

Women empowerment, youth development and disability rights continue to be amongst the priority areas in the implementation of the South Africa-China PPEM programme. In this regard, there is a need to institutionalize and mainstream women, youth and the rights of persons with disabilities across all sectors of the PPEM.

Co-Chairpersons

In the efforts to build a capable, ethical and developmental state, the National School of Government of South Africa in partnership with the Chinese counterparts has organized over 1400 South African public officials to participate in various online short-learning programmes that had contributed to experience sharing in various areas of public administration.

In the field of communication and digital technologies, South Africa and China are jointly working on the implementation plan for the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the digital economy signed in 2022. In order to expand the scope of the cooperation, the two parties are also working towards the finalisation of the legal framework on enhancing artificial intelligence proposed by the Chinese National Development and Reform Commission. It is anticipated that this framework will be concluded in the next Bi-National Commission between South Africa and China.

China remains a strategic and priority market for South Africa's tourism industry. Since the last PPEM, the two parties collaborated through outreach programmes, skills development and capacity building in the tourism sector. A group of 15 South African Tour Guides are currently undergoing Chinese language training in Fujian, China. The Department of Tourism continues to champion initiatives aimed at unlocking tourism barriers and facilitating ease of access for Chinese travellers to South Africa.

The cooperation in the health sector is guided by the Declaration of Intent which is aimed at fostering ties between South Africa and China in the areas such as prevention and treatment of tumors and other major diseases, control and prevention of infectious diseases, advanced diagnosis and treatment technologies such as genomic sequencing, traditional medicine, vaccines and pharmaceuticals, cooperation on genomic surveillance with the biomedical research institute and the network for genomic surveillance. The collaboration will enable the creation of a training platform at the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) in South Africa. The draft MoU on cooperation in the Health sector will be ready for signature in the upcoming Bi-National Commission scheduled for Much 2026 in South Africa.

Thank you.