

MEDIA STATEMENT

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ATTENTION: News Editors/ Reporters

For Immediate use:

MINISTER NZIMANDE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE XXVII EUREKA MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE AND THE GLOBAL INNOVATION SUMMIT

The Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Dr Blade Nzimande will be participating in the XXVII Eureka Ministerial Conference in Lisbon, Portugal from the 22 to the 23rd June 2022.

The Eureka Ministerial Conference will be held under the Chairpersonship of Portugal.

The Eureka Network was established in 1985 as a pan-European research and development funding and coordination organization. The Network, which has subsequently grown to have a global reach, aims to coordinate efforts of governments, research institutes and commercial companies with regards to innovation. The Network specifically supports international cooperation in market-orientated research and development in all technology sectors.

South Africa joined the Network on the 20th June 2014 and its membership is extended to 2025.

The Department of Science and Innovation has been representing South Africa, also being the only African country in the Network. Importantly, the benefit for South Africa of participation in the Network is access to market opportunities across Europe and beyond while leveraging funds for the National System of Innovation (NSI).

During the conference, Minister Nzimande will speak on the topic "Eureka as a key driver for sustainability and innovation".

The Minister will also attend the Global Innovation Summit (GIS). The event is a meeting place for business and innovation agencies to share knowledge, network, collaboration and secure future business growth opportunities. These involve showcasing the most promising innovations, highlighting the work from main stakeholders of the global innovation ecosystem from private sector research to academia.

Minister Nzimande will be accompanied by a group of ten (10) innovators from the South African National System of Innovation (NSI) who will participate in the Eureka Global Innovation Summit innovation awards which are meant to recognize most innovative projects and to honour innovators amongst the Eureka members countries.

The South African innovators will participate in sessions according to their thematic areas and will have opportunities to pitch their project ideas, showcase concepts and profile South Africa as a preferred international partner.

At the margins of the Ministerial conference, Minister Nzimande will have a bilateral meeting with the Portuguese Minister of Science, Technology, Higher Education, Elvira Fortunato. Amongst the issues to be discussed by the Ministers includes the Square Kilometer Array (SKA), the AIR Centre, space collaboration, oceans economy, climate change, the exchange of students, academics and joint research projects.

Minister Nzimande will also have meetings with other global leaders responsible for Higher Education, Science and Innovation who will be attending the conference, with a specific focus to promote Africa's participation in these engagements.

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