



11TH G20 PARLIAMENTARY SPEAKERS' SUMMIT



**Address by Hon. Cedric Frolick [House Chairperson:
Committees, Oversight and ICT in the National
Assembly of Parliament for the Republic of South
Africa] to the Pan African Parliament (PAP) Youth
Caucus on Hosting of the P20 Meeting of Young
Parliamentarians by the South African Parliament**

28 July 2025
Gallagher Estate, Midrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

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**Harnessing Parliamentary Diplomacy for the Realization of Global Solidarity,
Equality, and Sustainability**

Honourable President of the Pan African Parliament Hon. Senator. Chief Fortune Charumbira
Honourable Speakers and Leaders of African Parliaments
Honourable Members of the Pan African Parliament Youth Caucus,
Esteemed Young Parliamentarians,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is both a privilege and an honour to address this esteemed gathering of the Pan African Parliament Youth Caucus on behalf of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, as we prepare to host the 2025 G20 Speakers of Parliament Summit, also known as the P20.

Undoubtedly, this is a historic occasion for both the South African Parliament and the Pan African Parliament. Not only is this event historic in the sense that it marks the first joint meeting of the two parliaments, but equally so, it is a historic event because it comes few days after we have celebrated the International Nelson Mandela Day on 18 July to celebrate the life and legacy of the former South African first democratic president, President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

But more importantly, our gathering today is historic in that, for the first time since G20 formation, South Africa is holding the rotating presidency of the group, with a mandate running from 1 December 2024 to 30 November 2025.

Undoubtedly ladies and gentlemen, South Africa's G20 presidency holds considerable promise for the country and the entire African continent, offering a range of potential benefits. This involves advocating for equitable debt treatment and financial reforms tailored to meet the continent's specific needs.

Certainly, South Africa's G20 Presidency also represents a valuable opportunity for Africa to redefine its position in global governance and advocate for policies that advance equity, fairness and sustainable development

It is beyond a shadow of a doubt that, South Africa's presidency not only provides a unique platform but also stands as a significant opportunity to effectively advocate for the developmental interests and priorities of African countries on the global stage. The African Union (AU) as a member of the G20 further strengthens the impact of South Africa's presidency, offering a stronger, more cohesive voice for Africa in shaping and contributing to critical global economic discussions.

For the parliaments of the African continent, this presents an invaluable opportunity to align domestic legislative agendas with broader regional and global priorities. It encourages a deeper engagement on issues of economic cooperation, sustainable development, and equality, offering African parliaments a chance to reinforce their role in advocating for policies that reflect and address the developmental needs of the continent.

For the most part, South Africa's presidency under the theme 'Harnessing Parliamentary Diplomacy for realization of Global Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainability', creates a channel for African parliamentary representatives including the civil society to actively contribute to the dialogue on global economic matters, promoting the integration of African perspectives, concerns, and initiatives into the broader G20 discussions. This allows for a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to shaping policies that impact not only the African continent but also the larger global community.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is against this background that we are gathered here today.

We meet today with a shared sense of purpose — to ensure that the voices, hopes, and aspirations of Africa's youth are not just heard but meaningfully integrated into global decision-making processes. We are particularly pleased to be in the company of youth parliamentarians — because this occasion embodies the principle, so powerfully captured in the phrase: *"Nothing about us without us."*

Africa's Demographic Advantage: A Youthful Continent

Africa ladies and gentlemen is home to the world's youngest population. More than 60% of our people are under the age of 25. Our continent's median age hovers below 20. That is not just a statistic — that is our greatest opportunity.

The African Union's Youth Charter rightly recognises that our young people are Africa's most valuable asset. By 2050, we are projected to have the largest working-age population in the world. But the real question is: are we turning this demographic dividend into a development dividend?

In a world facing ageing populations, shrinking labour forces and innovation fatigue, Africa has what the world needs: vibrant, creative, youthful energy. However, without meaningful empowerment — in education, employment, health, and participation — this opportunity may very well become a ticking time bomb.

The P20 and Its Relevance to African Youth

Now coming to the main reason, we are here, the hosting of the P20 Speakers' Summit, by the South African Parliament- let me begin by being emphatic that this is more than a diplomatic event. It is a global stage where we can champion the urgent priorities of our youth.

South Africa is committed to placing youth development at the very heart of the P20 agenda. This includes:

- Promoting inclusive economic policies that address youth unemployment and inequality;
- Securing global commitments on education, digital access, and youth entrepreneurship;
- And ensuring that youth perspectives influence parliamentary diplomacy at the highest level.

But to do this effectively — we must speak with one voice. A united, Pan-African youth voice.

Challenges Facing African Youth

Undoubtedly, our youth face real and urgent challenges:

- Persistent unemployment,
- Unequal access to quality education and digital tools,
- Limited access to healthcare and mental health support,
- And barriers to entrepreneurship, innovation, and finance.

We must not accept a reality where millions of young Africans remain stuck in what has been called “waithood” — a prolonged and uncertain transition to adulthood, employment, and autonomy.

As the International Labour Organization (ILO) reminds us, more than 72 million African youth are not in education, employment, or training — and most of them are young women. This is a crisis we cannot afford to ignore.

What Should Be Prioritised at the P20?

We therefore urge that the following youth-centred issues take centre stage during the P20 deliberations:

- **Unemployment and Skills Deficit:** We must prioritise vocational training, green economy opportunities, and innovation hubs to bridge the gap between youth potential and job markets.
- **Education and Digital Inclusion:** We need global partnerships that fund STEM education, digital literacy, and inclusive higher education. Every African child must have access to the skills of the future.
- **Health and Well-being:** We must champion youth-friendly health policies, especially in mental health and reproductive health. No youth must be left behind due to lack of healthcare.
- **Entrepreneurship:** The P20 must create global pathways for youth-led enterprises by unlocking finance, mentorship, and access to markets — both local and global.

Youth and Africa's Development Frameworks

We must align our youth empowerment efforts with existing continental and global frameworks:

- **Agenda 2063** for instance, which is Africa's blueprint and master plan for transforming Africa into the global powerhouse of the future, envisions a *prosperous and inclusive Africa*, with young people at the heart of such transformation. Aspiration 6 speaks directly to: Eradicating youth unemployment, Empowering youth-led innovation, and ensuring no one — regardless of age or background — is left behind.
- **The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** is also our global blueprint that, amongst others, calls on us to advance: Good Health and Well-being (SDG 3); Quality Education (SDG 4); Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8) and; Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10).

Therefore, P20 under the South African Parliament Presidency presents a powerful forum to monitor these commitments and ensure that they are delivered **with and for** the youth of Africa.

AfCFTA and Youth Inclusion

But in addition to AU Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Let us not forget the transformative potential of the **African Continental Free Trade Area**. AfCFTA can be a game-changer for young Africans by:

- Creating a large market for youth-led businesses,
- Unlocking cross-border digital trade and innovation,
- And driving job creation in services, technology, and logistics.

We must ensure that youth voices shape AfCFTA implementation, including trade policies, e-commerce frameworks, and regional investment strategies.

Conclusion and Call to Action

Honourable Members,

The P20 Summit under South Africa's leadership is a historic opportunity to elevate Africa's youth on the global stage.

As such, we call upon you — the Youth Caucus — to:

- **Push for concrete outcomes** on youth issues at the P20;
- **Engage your national parliaments** to prioritise youth in lawmaking and oversight;
- **Collaborate across borders** to amplify innovation and entrepreneurship among African youth;
- And **leverage Agenda 2063, AfCFTA, and the SDGs** as interconnected frameworks to unlock the potential of our young people.

As I conclude Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to concur with a fellow MP, the Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Mr Alvin Botes (MP), regarding advancing youth inclusion in South Africa's G20 Presidency Agenda, particularly his view that "our objectives, outcomes and outputs for the G20 must be unapologetically youth-centred".

Indeed, Africa is watching. Our youth are watching and as we host various P20 related activities such as the Meeting of Young Parliamentarians, we should therefore always be reminded to be unapologetically youth-centred.

Lastly, let us make sure that the work we do here does not stay in conference halls and communiqués, but reaches **every county, every district, every province, every village**, and **every young person** across our beautiful continent.

Thank you very much, asante sana, merci beaucoup, muito obrigado