



STATEMENT FOR SOUTH AFRICA TO THE LEGAL G20

On behalf of the legal community of South Africa, the General Council of the Bar (GCB) of South Africa is pleased to take part in the inaugural session of the Legal G20. It is unfortunate that I could not participate directly in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil for the installation of the Legal G20 Group – but nonetheless I am very pleased to be able to present on behalf of South Africa to the Global Leaders present at the Legal G20.

The inaugural installation of Legal G20 is an important step forward for legal professionals from economies that constitute around 85% of global trade to more actively participate and contribute to the shaping of harmonising policies and laws, including critically the resolution of cross border disputes that affect our everchanging world.

As such the GCB of South Africa endorses the Charter of the Legal G20 Group and confirms that we are aligned to the purpose and the key principles set out therein. These are a) to promote multilateral cooperation; b) to foster the exchange of legal frameworks; and c) to enhance dialogue amongst those involved in or impacted by the creation and application of the law. South Africa, as a member of BRICS, in particular for the legal professionals, the BRICS Legal Forum, provides key learnings that can be considered for the Legal G20 in order to ensure legal professionals in the respective jurisdictions play a key role with the member state of the G20 to realise key economic and sustainable developments objectives are realised.

Further, South Africa as a member of the G20 and part of the African Union (which became a permanent member of the G20 in 2023), continues to provide investors from other G20 countries to South Africa (and broadly Africa) with significant investment and trade opportunities, in particular because of its location, infrastructure, financial and legal services sector – but through the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement. As such there are several economic and business benefits for G20 investors where the South African and broader the African legal professionals can play a pivotal role. These opportunities stretch from energy transition (in tapping into Africa's abundant minerals resources), AI, telecommunications and other technological advancements.

The legal profession in South Africa is dynamic consisting of attorneys and advocates. The countries provide investors



with the option of a range of specialist legal services to set-up their businesses and leading advocates and arbitrators for the settlement of complex disputes. As a legal profession we have fully embraced the use of technology in rendering services to clients, whether in our court systems, arbitrations or managing clients' risk by utilising AI tools. However, having said that – the South African legal profession is also faced with issues of transformation. For us at the GCB – we are steadfast to ensure inclusive access to high quality legal work to all members of the legal profession in South Africa and there are several initiatives the South African government and the legal profession itself have adopted to ensure a just transformation of the South African legal profession to be more representative of the South African society. As part of this we also need professionals (whether in-house lawyers or from law firms) from G20 countries to make concerted efforts to support the transformation objectives in South Africa and the African continent more broadly to involve African lawyers/advocates in your transactional/project works, financing or dispute settlement work. This broadly aligns to the commitments of inclusiveness set-out in the Legal G20 Charter as adopted.

In addition to some of the country-specific consideration, we are aligned to the Legal G20 Group's commitment to the Rule of Law and to the principles that govern multilateralism and international cooperation, including that whether in the private or public sectors, to support holistic and inclusive approaches to aid the resolution of global legal challenges and the implementation of a more just, equitable and sustainable world for all of us.

Having said that and in conclusion, we look forward to hosting the next Legal G20 during 2025 when South Africa will hold the Presidency G20. It will be the first time the G20 Summit will be held on Africa soil, and provides Africa with great platform to discuss key development issues and affirm its importance as a global economic player.

Thank you for your attention.

**Myron Dewrance SC, Chairperson
General Council of the Bar of SA**