



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
MRS THEMBENI KAMADLOPHA-MTHETHWA'S WELCOMING
REMARKS OF THE BRICS MEMBERS**

CEDARA, UMNGENI MUNICIPALITY

Date: 29 November 2024

I am honoured to receive the Chinese and SA BRICS Skills Development, Applied Technology, and Innovation Working Group to the Province of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. We are pleased to welcome you to Cedara, our headquarters and campus for Cedara College of Agriculture.

In September 2024, we received a donation of the Sand Table System Greenhouse equipment of the Agri-Internet of Things (IoT) working with the Chief Directors: Business Support Services and Agricultural Research, Technology Development and Agricultural Institutes in the Department.

I am told that already the GoDigital SA Foundation has already started training our research and college teams in preparation for the skills challenges in the areas of Agri-IoT. It's a great pleasure hosting you as the investors, members, and leaders of the BRICS today. Having the representatives of Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, and four new entrants bring us joy, and touching base with us means that these emerging economies are really serious about developing their people, starting from the bottom up.

Your being here has proven that the annual summits hosted by the member countries are not a platform to pay a lip service but an arena where economic cooperation is enhanced through trade, investment, and strong economic ties. Thanks to the Brics, we are seeing development that has been cascaded down to our grassroots level.

Today's investment into our agricultural activities would certainly go a long way in unlocking challenges in the sector. We have long been seeking solutions that would make agriculture efficient, productive, and sustainable. Agriculture is a science. Therefore, agricultural-related activities and decisions require a scientific basis and continuous technological advancements.

I was impressed by your presentation during our Annual Research Progress Report Summit held in early September this year.

I look forward to engaging with you. Such innovations would go a long way in improving the material conditions of our communities and our farmers.

I thank you.