

READ IN FULL | Ramaphosa's address to the nation

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President Ramaphosa addressed the nation on Sunday night, reflecting on the country's hosting of the G20 Summit in Johannesburg

Image: GCIS

My Fellow South Africans,

I wish to address you this evening about the way South Africa led and managed the G20 process, culminating with the G20 Leaders' Summit that concluded its work exactly a week ago.

Allow me to express my profound gratitude to you all, as my fellow compatriots, for ensuring and enabling our beloved country to host a series of successful G20 meetings throughout the year, ending with the G20 Leaders' Summit.

When we launched our G20 Presidency a year ago, I said that this must be the People's G20.

It cannot belong just to the leaders, but to the millions of people who have a stake in the discussions and decisions of the G20.

This was the first time the G20 Summit was held on African soil.

We are humbled to have been that one country on the African continent to host the summit and represent the

1.4 billion people who live on our continent.

Participants of the G20 who attended from other countries experienced the friendship, hospitality and generosity that defines our nation and our continent.

Many visitors commented on the vibrancy, warmth and hospitality of our people.

Some had this to say, as related by a Dr Nick Eberl, who wrote: “Your people are extraordinary.”

A German delegate is said to have commented: “I’ve attended summits on six continents. I’ve never experienced warmth like this.”

A Japanese delegate had this to say: “Your security guards smile while being vigilant. Your drivers share stories while navigating. Everyone — from the protocol officers to the coffee vendors — treats us like welcomed family, not foreign dignitaries.”

Commenting about our Ubuntu philosophy one trade representative said: “In other countries, hospitality is a transaction. Here, it feels like a tradition.”

A French delegate shared something profound: “We came to discuss economic frameworks. But what we'll remember is how your people made us feel. That's not soft power — that's real power.”

Dr Eberl concludes by saying: “This weekend, the world's most powerful people aren't talking about our GDP or our credit ratings. They're talking about our people. And that's a currency no economy can print.”

World leaders, diplomats, delegates and observers have been sharing their impressions online as well.

The Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi said: “Thanks to the wonderful people of South Africa and the government of South Africa for organising the summit.”

The Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Kristalina Georgieva praised South Africa's

“incredible hospitality”.

Germany’s Chancellor Friedrich Merz posted: “In a difficult international environment, it is important to preserve the G20 as a forum for global coordination – and to firmly integrate Africa. Thank you for your hospitality and ambitious presidency in these turbulent times.”

The UN Development Programme’s South Africa Representative wrote: “South Africa delivered a G20 that showed the world what African leadership looks like – dignified, strategic and people centred.”

A young global leader from Kenya wrote: “No matter the language, ubuntu is understood. South Africa brought that spirit to the G20 and the world felt it.”