

SA minister collaborates with Lesotho on digital migration

South African minister of Communications, Dina Pule yesterday, 4 December 2012, hosted her Lesotho counterpart, minister Tšeliso Mokhosi, who is visiting South Africa to benchmark the progress made on Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT).

The meeting was part of the three-day visit by the Lesotho delegation to the key South African institutions that are expected to play a key role in the rollout of the digital migration process. Over the three days, the delegations will visit Sentech, SA Post Office, Universal Service and Access Agency of SA, Icasa and the SABC.

"We welcome the delegation from Lesotho and are happy to share our experiences with them and learn from our dear neighbour, Lesotho," says Pule.

"We are proud of the progress we, as South Africa, have made towards digital broadcasting. South Africa regards cooperation with other African countries on ICT matters as key partnerships that will propel the continent to the centre of the information and knowledge economy," says Minister Pule.

Minister Pule indicated that South Africa had established a Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission (PICC) in 2011. This year the Department of Communications formed part of the PICC, through the establishment of Strategic Integrated Project 15 (SIP- 15). The rollout of DTT forms part of SIP-15. Digital migration is a key area of delivery in SIP-

The Lesotho delegation also visited the DTT Programme Management Office for a demonstration of digital broadcasting in the country.

"I must also thank the Honourable Minister Pule for hosting us. We came here to benchmark on digital migration. South Africa has moved several steps ahead of us and we wished to learn from your experiences, challenges and critical issues is critical that we understand these processes as the deadline for the switchover to digital migration approaches," said Mokhosi.

Joint Commission of Cooperation

The Republic of South Africa and the Kingdom of Lesotho enjoys cordial bilateral relations that were cemented formally through the signing of the South Africa-Lesotho Agreement on the Establishment of a Joint Commission of Cooperation.

The two countries also have a Joint Statement for collaboration on Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs). The Joint Statement on ICTs calls for the two countries to strengthen ties and the formalisation of bilateral relations through Memorandum of Understanding on Information and Communications Technologies.

Minister Pule places a premium on constructive partnerships South Africa develops with other African countries. Earlier this year, the Department of Communication hosted delegations from Kenya and Malawi to share experiences on the journey towards digital migration. Delegations from Nigeria, Mozambique and Angola are expected to visit the country to learn about DTT.

The Department of Communications presented its policy and regulatory approaches to the Digital Broadcasting industry. The performance period for Broadcasting Digital Migration, set-top box distribution and the subsidy model were discussed.