



14 June 2025

Minister Mpho Parks Tau
Ministry of Trade, Industry and Competition
Private Bag X84, Pretoria, 0001
Cape Town 8000

Subject: Reaffirming Starlink's Commitment to South Africa

Dear Honorable Minister,

I trust that this letter reaches you well. There has been considerable public debate about the potential for Starlink in South Africa given the recent policy directive by Minister Solly Malatsi on Equity Equivalents in the ICT Sector. Unfortunately, there has also been a significant amount of incorrect information published about Starlink in the media. In continuation of our discussions regarding our proposed Equity Equivalent Investment Program (EEIP), I wish to take a moment to reaffirm Starlink's position.

First and foremost, Starlink has been interested in providing high-speed internet to South Africa since we first deployed our constellation and began service. Additionally, while it should go without saying, we are fully committed to providing service as a legally compliant company, as we do all around the world. Contrary to misleading claims in the media, Starlink has never sought an exemption from B-BBEE laws, nor have we asked for any special treatment. It is unfortunate that this narrative is being perpetuated, in our view, because Starlink supports a level playing field for the entire sector, not just specific operators.

To be clear, the only reason Starlink is not in South Africa today is because ICASA's license regulations stipulate that all license holders must be 30% locally owned. As you are aware, Starlink is a global system, and we must retain sole ownership of all our subsidiaries for operational purposes. This is true in each of the nearly 150 countries, territories and other markets where we are licensed and providing service today.

Fortunately, however, South Africa's Electronic Communications Act and the B-BBEE ICT Sector Code already provide multiple pathways for meeting ownership requirements, including through EEIPs. As you recently stated during your visit to the United States, EEIPs are already accepted and successfully implemented across most economic sectors in South Africa. This includes the pharmaceutical, manufacturing, banking and technology sectors. For example, Microsoft, IBM, and Amazon already rely on EEIPs to meet their local ownership obligations without sacrificing their commitment to transformation.

The problem lies in that ICASA's licensing regulations are not appropriately aligned with the B-BBEE ICT Sector Code. Said another way, the law already supports what ICASA's regulations do not. This is why Starlink welcomes the recent policy directive from the Minister of Communications, which calls on ICASA to correct the misalignment between its licensing regulations and the underlying B-BBEE laws. If ICASA were to allow companies to utilize EEIPs, as envisioned by the B-BBEE Act, Starlink would immediately apply for its necessary licenses in South Africa and work as quickly as possible to provide high-speed internet service across the country, especially for those who need it the most.

Today, millions of children are being denied access to education resources because South African broadband networks do not extend to the most rural parts of the country. This is a problem we want to help solve. As per our referent submission to your office, if EEIPs are recognized for individual license holders, Starlink proposes to provide over 5000 rural schools with fully funded Starlink kits and service in addition to facilitating the installation/maintenance support alongside local South African companies. Not only will this help the South African Government achieve its objectives under SA



Connect, but our EEIP will support local businesses and will positively impact the lives of an estimated 2.4 million schoolchildren each year by providing access to world-class digital education.

We sincerely appreciate your continued support of Starlink's mission to connect the unconnected, including underserved and youth. As Honorable Chairperson Kusela Diko recently stated in her Newzroom Afrika interview, satellite internet is needed as part of the mix of technologies to expand access to the hard-to-reach areas of South Africa. And, if the Minister's policy directive were to progress, we would be one step closer to not just providing internet access to the general public but also opening doors for education, opportunity, and a brighter future for millions across South Africa.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ryan D. Goodnight", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ryan D. Goodnight
Sr. Director – Starlink Market Access