

TO: Media Houses, The Portfolio Committee on Communications and Digital Technologies)

FROM: DearSouthAfrica.co.za

DATE: 11 January 2026

SUBJECT: **VICTORY FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: MINISTER GAZETTES
STARLINK-FRIENDLY POLICY**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DearSouthAfrica.co.za welcomes the publication of **Government Gazette No. 53855**, in which the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies, Mr. Solly Malatsi, has officially issued the **Policy Direction on Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment**.

This final directive serves as a decisive confirmation that the voice of the public has been heard.

The Public Mandate in Action

The Gazette explicitly notes that the Minister's decision was made “**following the consideration of the public submissions**”. This references the thousands of South Africans—including over 32,500 participants via DearSouthAfrica.co.za—who overwhelmingly called for the removal of regulatory barriers to satellite internet access.

What the Gazette Confirms:

1. **Equity Equivalence is Now Policy:** The directive acknowledges that strict ownership requirements have been an impediment to investment. It specifically enables investment by companies using the “**Equity Equivalent Investment Programme**” (EEIP) rather than forcing a sale of equity. This is the exact mechanism required for global operators like Starlink to enter the market legally.
 2. **Alignment with the ICT Code:** The Minister has directed ICASA to align its regulations with the B-BBEE ICT Sector Code, prioritizing “substance over legal form”. This ensures that contribution to the economy (skills, enterprise development) counts as empowerment.
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Response to the Portfolio Committee

We note the recent call by the Portfolio Committee Chairperson for this directive to be withdrawn. However, **Gazette 53855** is now a published instrument of government policy, backed by a massive public mandate.

The Minister has acted on the clear instruction from the electorate:

- **81% of Business Owners** supported this direction.
- **77% of all participants** voted directly in favour of this policy change.
- **Rural communities** have demanded this access for safety and economic survival.

To withdraw this directive now would not only be a regression in policy but a rejection of the democratic will of the South African people.

Conclusion

DearSouthAfrica.co.za commends Minister Malatsi for prioritizing the needs of the economy and the public over bureaucratic gatekeeping. We now look to ICASA to urgently implement this direction and process the necessary licenses to get South Africa connected.

The full report along with all public comments delivered to the minister is available [here](#)

****ENDS****

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