



JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

Eskom, RTE international, AFD and the NTCSA sign cooperation agreement to enhance South Africa's power grid

Wednesday, 17 June 2026

On the sidelines of the Africa Energy Forum in Cape Town, Eskom, RTE international, Agence française de développement (AFD) and the National Transmission Company South Africa (NTCSA) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to establish a two-year peer-to-peer technical cooperation programme between RTE international and the NTCSA. The initiative is supported through a EUR 650,000 (ZAR 12 million) grant from AFD, financed by the French National Treasury.

South Africa's electricity supply industry is undergoing significant reform and it is anticipated that the transmission grid will be facing new challenges due to the integration of higher shares of renewable energy sources (wind, solar, etc.) and new load flow patterns. In this context, strengthening the grid's resilience, flexibility, and capacity has become a key objective to enable the country's energy transition. Within the framework of the Just Energy Transition partnership (JETP), supporting the development of the South African transmission grid is a priority for the French government.

"This partnership marks an important step in strengthening South Africa's transmission capability as the electricity sector evolves. This collaboration affords Eskom and the NTCSA the opportunity to benefit from international technical expertise and shared learning that will help build a more resilient and modern grid. We welcome AFD's support and RTE international's partnership in advancing the skills, systems and innovation needed to support Eskom's and the country's transition path and long-term security of supply," said Eskom's Chief Financial Officer, Calib Cassim.

This cooperation between French and South African electricity transmission operators will promote the transfer of know-how and technical cooperation. RTE international and the NTCSA will mobilise their respective experts to collaborate through a series of workshops, study tours in France and South Africa, and in-depth research projects and pilot initiatives. The research topics include renewable energy integration and system stability, artificial intelligence, machine learning and advanced analytics, high voltage direct current power transmission and telecommunications.

“The security and reliability of the transmission grid is non-negotiable. This agreement enables a focused exchange of expertise between the NTCSA and RTE international, allowing us to share practical experience and strengthen our capabilities as we modernise our systems, expand the grid and integrate renewable energy. It is through partnerships like these that we build more resilient, future-ready power networks and ensure long-term security of supply,” said the NTCSA’s Chief Executive Officer, Monde Bala.

The cooperation will follow a phased implementation approach, tailored to the NTCSA’s specific needs and designed to promote strong ownership by the NTCSA teams throughout the process.

"AFD is proud to support this cooperation between the biggest transmission network operators in Africa and in Europe. Both are facing interesting challenges given the evolution of the electricity mix in their respective countries. This is an opportunity to share best practices and to develop tailored interventions that will enhance the capability of each operator. This cooperation is a key component of the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP), reflecting France’s strong commitment to supporting South Africa’s energy transition," said Nicolas Willemin, AFD’s Deputy Regional Director for Southern Africa.

"The signing of this MoU with Eskom, the NTCSA and AFD represents an important step for RTE international. It builds on a long-standing relationship with AFD and on the expertise we bring as a subsidiary of RTE, one of Europe’s largest transmission system operators.

Drawing on decades of experience in the planning, operation and development of power systems, we are pleased to contribute to a joint research agenda focused on some of the key challenges facing transmission operators today: artificial intelligence, advanced analytics, HVDC technologies and the integration of renewable energy sources.

At a time when South Africa is undertaking significant reforms of its electricity sector, we believe that technical cooperation and the exchange of operational experience between system operators can play a valuable role in supporting the development of a more resilient, efficient and sustainable power system," said Veronika Milewski, CEO of RTE international.

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About:

Eskom: is a strategic 100% state-owned electricity utility and South Africa's primary electricity supplier. Its mandate is to assist in lowering the cost of doing business in South Africa, enabling economic growth and providing stability of electricity supply, through providing electricity in an efficient and sustainable manner.

The company transforms inputs from the natural environment – coal, nuclear fuel, diesel, kerosene, water, and wind – into the energy supplied to a wide range of customers (industrial, mining, commercial, agricultural and residential customers) as well as redistributors, thereby supporting economic growth and improving the quality of life in South Africa and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region.

As a state-owned enterprise, the company drives various nation building and developmental activities such as skills and capability building, developing enterprises and suppliers, electrifying customers, creating jobs and outreach projects. Eskom's current strategy is focused on pursuing financial and operational sustainability, facilitating a competitive future energy industry, modernising our power system and striving for net zero emissions by 2050.

Agence Française de Développement (AFD): helps advance France's policy on sustainable investment and international solidarity. Through its public sector and NGO financing operations, research and publications (Éditions AFD), sustainable development training programs (AFD Group Campus) and awareness-raising activities in France, AFD finances, supports and drives the transition to a fairer, more resilient world. Alongside our partners, we provide sustainable solutions for—and with—communities. Our teams are working on over 2,700 projects in the field, in over 115 countries, including France's overseas departments and territories, to support projects for the climate, biodiversity, peace, gender equality and global health. Together with Proparco and Expertise France, AFD supports the commitment of France and the French people to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Working by your side, toward a world in common.

RTE international: founded in 2006, RTE international is a leading European consulting and engineering firm specialising in power systems and essential infrastructure. As a subsidiary of RTE, the largest electricity transmission system operator in Europe, RTE international offers tailor-made solutions for the development, operation and maintenance of power systems worldwide. In 2025, RTE international joined forces with MAI Group. This partnership combines deep technical expertise with strong strategic and managerial capabilities in essential infrastructure and grid management. Through this integrated approach, RTEi Group is now uniquely positioned to support clients throughout the full lifecycle of their energy and environment projects.

The National Transmission Company South Africa (NTCSA): is the credible and enabling backbone of South Africa's evolving power system. It is modernising and expanding the transmission grid to unlock increased capacity; enabling a fair electricity market; and connecting Southern Africa to its power and potential by driving growth, all the while doing it safely and responsibly. The NTCSA is a wholly owned subsidiary of Eskom Holdings Ltd since 01 July 2024.

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