

# Why is the SA Deputy President signing deals with M\$?

By *srlinuxx*

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Steve Ballmer is in town. For those of you who don't know, he is the CEO of Microsoft.

Ballmer is apparently here to sign a memorandum of understanding with the Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka and the Universal Services Agency(USA). It is a deal in which Microsoft is committing to give software to telecentres and community centres in poor areas, and assist them with training (the specifics of the deal are not that clear and Tectonic didn't get invited to the signing so we have to rely on what we've gleaned from a few reliable sources.)

So why is this important?

For a start it is important because Steve Ballmer is not only the second-in-command at the world's largest proprietary software company but he is also a man who has been widely quoted as labelling Linux as a "cancer".

It is important because South Africa's second-in-command (our deputy president) is signing deals with Microsoft's number two and yet the South African government has a Cabinet-level strategy to use free and open source software.

[Full Story](#) [2].

Elsewhere on Tectonic: Open source software is locally relevant, globally competitive and can make good business sense. That was the message from some of South Africa's top open source pioneers at the African Computing & Telecommunications Summit in Johannesburg yesterday.

[Open source high on agenda at ACT Summit](#) [3].

[Microsoft](#)

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