

Trip Report from the 41st World Tourism Conference held in Kigali, Rwanda from 28 – 30 August 2017 and the Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Malawi and participation at Takulandirani Malawi International Tourism EXPO from 30 August to 1 September 2017

Kigali, Rwanda: 28 – 30 August 2017	41 st World Tourism Conference
Name and Rank	Minister Tokozile Xasa Ms Shamilla Chettiar, Deputy Director-General: Destination Development Mr Shavhani Mukwevho, Director: Africa and Middle East
Agenda	The agenda for the 41 st World Tourism Conference is attached as Annexure A
Outcomes of the event	<p><u>Day 1 – 28 August 2017</u></p> <p>1.1 <u>Background</u> The Africa Travel Association (ATA) is a division of Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) and the host of the 41st Annual World Tourism Conference in Kigali, Rwanda in collaboration with the Rwanda Development Board. The conference was designed to set the tone for how tourism can be utilized as an engine for economic growth and job creation through innovative business models, new technologies and strategic partnerships.</p> <p>1.2 <u>Capacity Building Workshop</u> The capacity building workshop was facilitated by Facebook and targeted both policy makers and private sector representatives. The presentation was aimed at introducing the technological developments in the sector and Facebook’s specific role in promotion and networking.</p> <p>1.3 <u>Council of Ministers Meeting</u> The introductory remarks were made by the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) and indicated that the aim of CCA is to do business in Africa and focus on capacity building whilst ATA focusses on investment opportunities.</p> <p>ATA and CCA have just signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the African Union Ambassador to USA. The objectives of the signed MoU is for the USA to partner with the African Union to advocate for the tourism sector in Africa and source investment for tourism specific projects.</p> <p>Minister Xasa attended the 41st World Tourism Conference in Kigali, Rwanda. Minister Xasa participated in the Council of Ministers Meeting on 28 August 2017 together with the Tourism Ministers from Zimbabwe, Sierra Leone, Cape Verde and the Deputy Minister from Namibia. The Council of Ministers was also attended by Senior Government Officials and CEOs of various tourism companies.</p> <p>The Council of Ministers discussed amongst other issues the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● opportunities for investment in Africa ● need for facilitating ease of access for travellers through improved Visa facilitation ● improving tourism infrastructure and development ● increasing the participation of women and youth in tourism developments ● the value of public private sector partnerships in the tourism sector ● building Brand Africa ● joint efforts to address and unblock challenges outside the tourism sector which impact negatively on tourism growth

- Supporting local communities who are ambassadors, beneficiaries and in some instances owners of tourism enterprises
- Dealing entrenched interests and resistance to change initiatives through training and capacity building awareness campaigns
- Policy decisions on incentives to drive tourism growth

Outcomes of the Council of Ministers

- This broad forum suggested that a task team should be established to develop a practical implementation plan from various discussions at the Conference
- Volunteers from the public and private sector (Representatives from the Nigerian Tourism Department and Mastercard) will work with the Secretariat to develop an Implementation Matrix within three months.
- It was further agreed to request President Kagame in his capacity as the current Chair of the African Union Reform Committee to urge his counterparts to prioritise tourism in the AU Agenda.



Minister Xasa participating in the Council of Ministers

Day 2: 29 August 2017

1.4 Official Opening of the 41st World Tourism Conference

President Kagame officially opened the 41st World Tourism Conference on the 29 August. In his remarks President Kagame welcomed all guests to Rwanda and appreciated the initiatives by ATA especially in hosting the 41st World Tourism Conference emphasising that tourism should be a priority on the continent as it is a sector that has demonstrated resilience in the recession and continued growth in the current economic climate. The tourism services sector provides much needed jobs and careers for the youth while encouraging both domestic and the foreign investments.

The President emphasised that we should practice good governance as that will be a vehicle to enable proper management of the tourist attractions and the funds generated by tourism activities. The responsibilities of the government are also to provide education and training and infrastructure development.

The President further urged governments to partner with the private sector and use available technology to improve the services provided to customers. The lessons that could be learnt from Rwanda is the ease of the issuance of a Visitor Visa on arrival for Africans at all ports of entry, this online process takes less than ten minutes per visitor.

1.5 Roundtable panel discussion

The roundtable discussion was facilitated by Ms Judi Nwokedi, the COO of TourVest and a South African Tourism Board member. **The theme of the panel discussion was “Unlocking, Africa’s tourism potential”** The panel comprised selected Tourism Ministers and the Permanent Secretary as follows:

- Minister from South Africa
- Minister from Cape Verde
- Minister from Zimbabwe
- Minister from Sierra Leone
- Deputy Minister from Namibia
- Permanent Secretary from Zambia

The panellists shared with the audience highlights and challenges faced by the tourism sector in their respective countries. Minister Xasa highlighted the following aspects in her inputs:

- The critical role of government in supporting growth in the tourism sector through infrastructure investment that has leveraged further private sector investment as well as the creation of an enabling policy environment;
- A strong focus on skills development and enterprise development specifically directed at the empowerment of women and youth
- A strong sector strategy that drives tourism development in the form of the National Tourism Sector Strategy;
- Very good infrastructure development although uneven development in rural areas remains a challenge.

Highlights from other panellists are outlined below.

Sierra Leone

- Country has been working systematically on rebranding and building tourism;
- Policy and security measures are currently in place and the country is open for investments into the tourism sector.

Cape Verde

- Has been working on creating regional connectivity and building tourism infrastructure and the brand;
- There are currently No Visa requirements for all ECOWAS countries;
- Economic value of tourism is well understood and there are several investment opportunities in the tourism sector.

Zimbabwe

- enforcing regional integration Zimbabwe and Zambia successfully hosted the UNWTO General Assembly;
- Zimbabwe and Zambia introduced the UNIVISA;
- Social media is a focus of the marketing strategy especially targeting youth.

Namibia

- Transformation is what the tourism sector needs,
- State has mandate to conserve tourism assets;
- Educate law makers on tourism;
- Develop tourism that is indigenous people centred; benefits should be targeted to indigenous people.

Zambia

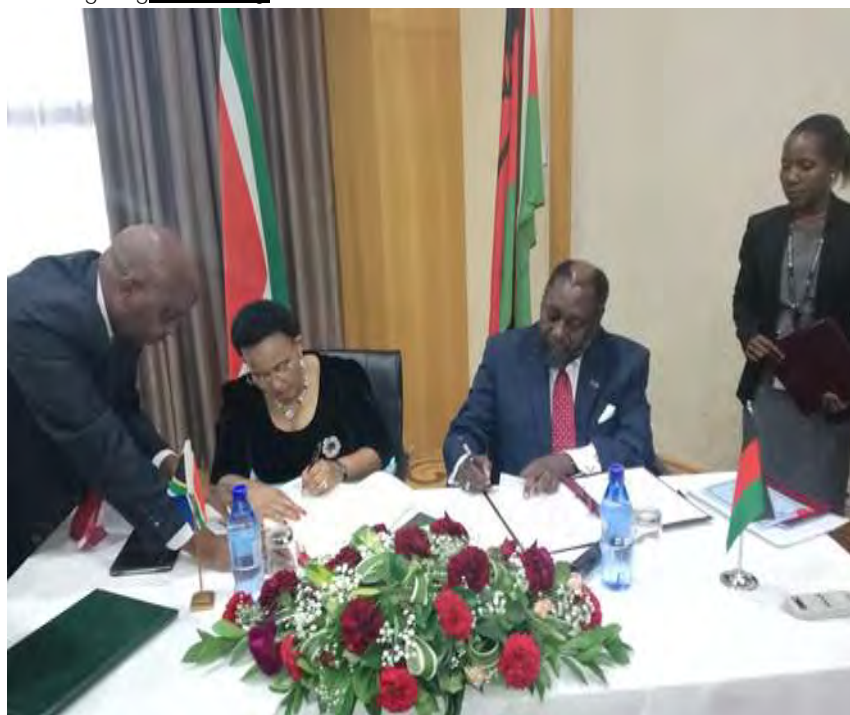
- Zambia is collaborating with academic institution through social media to promote tourism;
- Addressing issues of affordability such as on transport costs;

As this was a panel discussion there were no decisions made or outcomes agreed to.

Malawi 30 August to 1 September 2017	Signing of MoU with and participation at Takulandirani Malawi International Tourism EXPO
Name and Rank	Minister Tokozile Xasa Mr Shavhani Mukwevho, Director: Africa and Middle East Mr Bongane Ngcongwane, Assistant Director: Africa and Middle East
Outcomes of the visit	<p><u>Day 30 August 2017</u></p> <p>On arrival to Malawi, Minister Tokozile Xasa was received by the Minister of Trade, Industry and Tourism, Mr Henry Mussa for a Walk about at the Exhibition Centre of the Takulandirani Malawi World International Tourism Expo.</p> <p>The Malawi government has organised the tourism Expo for the first time and attracted exhibitions from about 13 countries.</p> <p><u>2.1 Walk about at the Exhibition Centre</u></p> <p>Minister Tokozile Xasa was welcomed by her counterpart Honourable Henry Mussa. Minister Mussa expressed his appreciation to Minister Xasa on honouring his invitation to attend the very first tourism fair to be hosted in Malawi. The two ministers then went on a walk about to visit exhibitions stands. They later proceeded to the official opening of the event.</p> <p>South Africa did not have an exhibition stand, however three (3) SMMEs that were supported by the Department of Tourism participated in the event together with seven (7) buyers from Western Cape Province. The Minister interacted with each of the South African participants at the exhibition appreciating their commitment to growing tourism and also assured them of government support in initiatives benefitting South Africans and contributing to job creation. The Minister took a decision that the next Malawi Expo should have a South African stand as this will show reciprocity for Malawi's long standing commitment in attending the Tourism Indaba.</p> <p><u>2.2 Official opening of the Takulandirani Malawi International Tourism Expo</u></p> <p>During his opening speech, Minister Mussa mentioned that the presence of Minister Xasa is special to him as South Africa will form part of the Malawi tourism history making moment.</p> <p><u>Day 31 August 2017</u></p> <p><u>2.3 Ministers' Bilateral Meeting</u></p> <p>Ministers were briefed about the content of the MoU to be signed and advised that that it took about seven years to conclude the MoU for signing. One of the reasons why it took so long is the changes at political level. The following issues were raised by Ministers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urged that the two countries should work together at multilateral forums such as SADC and AU level to ensure the presence of tourism unity is established; • Encourage working together and include the value chain businesses; • Malawi is looking at South African investors to develop tourism in Lake Malawi • That the Joint Technical Committee should be established as soon as the MoU has been signed; • Ministers also raised concerns about the foreign deals that excludes locals; • Malawi has been participating at various tourism events hosted by South Africa, including the Tourism Indaba. South Africa is therefore focusing on improving their tourism bilateral relations with Malawi through high level visits, including participation at each other's fairs;

- The signing of this agreement will not only strengthen the relationship between the two countries but also offer opportunities to develop tourism in both countries;
- The two countries are separated by two hours of flying, it can be possible to share same visitors by developing joint packages for this purpose, to be implemented under the agreement
- Malawi is expanding its international airport, this will create sufficient capacity for increasing tourist flow between Johannesburg and Lilongwe, as Johannesburg is a port of entry to most SADC countries.

2.4 Signing ceremony



The two Ministers signed the MoU in the presence of the South African and Malawian delegation at 9h00.

During her media interview after the signing of the agreement, Minister Xasa mentioned that in 2009 the President of South Africa made tourism a standalone department because of its potential for economic development. She further stated that because tourism is led by government and driven by the public sector, it is therefore **critical that there's a formal** relationship between the ministries as this will create an environment that makes it easier for the private sector participation, to increase investment opportunities in both countries. Moreover, the newly concluded agreement will also ensure that both countries work together in branding the African continent

2.5 Minister's visit to Salima - Malawi Lake



Minister Xasa is taken to lake Malawi, courtesy of the Malawi Department of Industry trade and tourism

2.6 Welcoming Dinner at Sunbird

During her speech at the welcoming dinner, Minister Xasa emphasised that South Africa's attendance of the Takulandirani Fair was not only to sign the MoU, but to also support its SADC partner as it launches a new venture.

2.7 Ministers Visit to the South African High Commission in Malawi

Minister thanked the officials at the High Commission for their continued support in coordinating and facilitating activities between South Africa and their Malawian partners. She added that Tourism sector is a service sector built on developing relationships. Therefore, the mission should continue promoting South Africa.

Way forward

- Officials from both ministries to establish a joint technical committee to oversee the implementation of the agreement
- Officials from both ministries to identify two major projects to be implemented under the agreement
- Minister Xasa to extend an invitation for the women in tourism event
- South Africa to have a full exhibition stand during the next Takulandirani Expo in 2018
- South Africa to extend an invitation for the Sharing of best practices workshop