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**ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF TOURISM OF SOUTH AFRICA,
PATRICIA DE LILLE, TO THE SINGAPORE TOURISM BOARD IN
SINGAPORE ON 2 FEBRUARY 2026**

Thank you so much for honouring our invitation, as we embark on the South-East Asia journey.

We found it prudent to make our first stop here in Singapore before we go off to Malaysia and Indonesia.

This year marks 32 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between our country and Singapore.

Our visit, to your beautiful country also comes on the back of our President Cyril Ramaphosa visit in October last year where he met with Prime Minister Lawrence Wong.

On the back of that engagement, our purpose here is to increase the number of Singaporeans who choose South Africa as a holiday destination of choice.

In 2025, we welcome 9 827 Singaporeans to our country, which is a 4,7% increase.

So thank you for contributing to South Africa's record-breaking 10.48 million international arrivals that we recorded between January and December 2025.

This morning, I met with Minister of National Development of Singapore Alvin Tan and organisations in the tourism sector here in Singapore to exchange knowledge on how we can further increase arrivals from Singapore and present our bankable tourism investment projects.

Last year we had our first Tourism Infrastructure Investment Summit and we are now building up to the second instalment this year in September.

Our message is, Tourism Policy is Economic Policy and South Africa's tourism sector is open for business.

Investment in the sector will further diversify our offerings.

While Singaporeans who travel to South Africa enjoy our hospitality and wildlife, we want to share that we have more to offer.

Last year we launched the Kgodumodumo Dinosaur Interpretive Centre, where the oldest dinosaur embryo in the world was discovered.

Since the launch we have had over 80 000 visitors.

Later this year, French luxury resort brand ClubMED will open its doors on the warm coastline of KwaZulu-Natal.

To improve ease of access, South Africa's Home Affairs Department is rolling out the Electronic Visa Authorisation system. This is game changer.

Applicants can apply for a visa on their phones or computers without visiting an office.

The application is processed within 24 hours. There is no human adjudication.

While Singaporeans do not require a visa to travel to South Africa, passport holders from Indonesia, India, China, and Mexico will benefit from the efficiency of the system.

We are also looking at how we can increase the frequency of flights to South Africa.

Singapore, as a central connectivity hub in South-East Asia, is key for us to increase travellers to South Africa.

Currently, Singapore Airlines SQ, has 12 flights per week to South Africa, and we would like to see more flights from the region.

Amongst our priorities as well is ensuring the safety of our visitors.

And here we have made great progress, in collaboration with the private sector and law enforcement.

The private sector has invested in the SECURA app, with panic buttons that gives visitors access to emergency services.

While safety is not our mandate, we regret all attacks on our visitors, and it is for this reason that we introduced an after-care programme for victims.

The Department of Tourism invested R174.5 million to deploy over 2 300 Tourism Monitors at key tourist attractions across the country.

Following the successful hosting of the G20 Summit in South Africa, next year we will host the Special Davos World Economic Forum meeting.

Our world-class MICE infrastructure is being lauded globally, and that is what we'll continue to promote.

Our Sport Tourism is also on the rise.

Next month we will host the LIVGolf, another first on the African continent. Next year, we have the Cricket World Cup.

Before I conclude, I want to send a heartfelt congratulations to South African musician Tyla, who has just won her second Grammy.

Her song, *Push to Start* has won the Best African Music Performance.

I know she performed here just two months ago as part of her "We Wanna Party Asia" tour.

Thank you for the love you have shown her and the love you continue to extend to South Africa.

South Africa awaits. Come find your joy.

THE END

For streaming links, images, videos and further information please scan the QR Code and join the Tourism Department's National Multimedia WhatsApp Group.



Media Queries:

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