



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**2025/2026 Budget Vote 38 speech by Deputy Minister of Tourism, Hon. Ms.  
Makhotso Maggie Soty (MP) at Marks Building (M46) at 2pm  
8<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

House Chairperson,

Minister of Tourism, Ms. Patricia de Lille,

Ministers and Deputy Ministers,

Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Tourism, Ms. Ronalda Nalumango,

Honourable Members of Parliament,

DG, SAT CEO, and all Officials Present,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we still grieve our late Portfolio Committee Chairperson, Ms. Lungi Mnganga-Gcabashe; and, our former Deputy President, the late Mr. David Mabuza, affectionately known as the “Cat”, we also continue to celebrate our other great icon, our former President Rolihlahla Mandela in this July month, under the theme: “it’s still in our hands to combat poverty and inequity”, which is the 2025 theme for the Nelson Mandela International Day on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

Yes, House Chairperson, it is indeed still in our hands to do Tourism that is a vehicle for creating jobs and for destroying poverty for an inclusive economic growth and sustainability.

House Chair,

The nation had given this Government of National Unity a clear mandate to turn South Africa into a successful tourism nation, and to unite all of us, citizens, visitors and tourists alike, in the joy of discovering our country, discovering each other, and in the shared hope of equality for all.

In his SONA, the President mentioned the recovery of the tourism sector and its potential for further growth.

This included the tourism-impact areas such as the Master Plan for job creation, and expanding support for small and medium enterprises (SMMEs) within the Tourism Sector.

House Chairperson,

Sustainable SMMEs are key drivers of inclusive growth and poverty eradication.

Therefore, an economic growth without transformation entrenches exclusion, and transformation without growth is unsustainable

As a Department together with the entity, the South African Tourism, we thrive to champion the conditions for a possible sustainability.

In this instance, to lower many barriers that inhibit SMMEs' entry into hotel industry for example, the Department has a programme called the Tourism Grading Support Programme (TGSP), which is continuing to subsidize grading costs.

In FY24/25, the TGSP supported 2,970 establishments, encouraging active participation in the TGCSA's grading system.

These efforts contribute to the standardisation of service excellence, helping South Africa to remain competitive in global tourism markets.

Honourable Members,

To sustain profits and benefit local economy, our Department will continue to support the tourism industry to reach for a threshold of local development.

Some big hotels do not appear in the list of graded establishments on the website of the Tourism Grading Council but, still sell themselves as 5-star hotels.

To ensure that the grading system remains world-class and relevant to our local environment in South Africa, we have initiated the Grading Criteria Review which will be finalised this financial year.

Grading of touristic establishments that host international events is a crucial factor in sustainability of economic growth and job creation.

It is with this reason that the South African National Conventions Bureau (SANCB), through the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) sub-sector, will focus on capitalizing on previous successes to accelerate growth through the consolidation of multiple national efforts when bidding for international meetings.

The secured conferences will also contribute to the regional spread of business events.

Given that tourism is a highly labour-intensive industry, people will rightfully expect to see significant local employment within these successfully bided International Conferences.

Let us think about all the possible jobs that are connected to this tourism sub-sector, whether it is drivers, messengers, cleaners, waitresses, chefs, tour guides, tour operators, event planners and owners of establishments like hotels and resorts, there is no doubt that this sector has big potential to create many jobs.

Honourable Members,

For the tourism sector to promote pro-poor growth, the employment level of local South African citizens in each of the 9 Provinces must rise as much as their representation in managerial positions.

The people-centred District Model Development will thus be another vehicle to transform the tourism industry for the better.

Honourable Members,

The biggest International Conference/Summit yet to be held in South Africa later this year, the G20, will definitely be a catalyst for this yearned job creation.

South Africa hosts the G20 Presidency, which presents an opportunity to showcase the nation's unparalleled hospitality, world-class infrastructure, quality-assured accommodations, and experiences, as well as its ability to host global events.

House Chair,

As the Department, we are very committed to ensure that no one is left behind on the knowledge, importance and benefit of this G20.

Our first G20 Community and Stakeholder Outreach Programme held in Northern Cape last week indeed proved this inclusivity, by engaging stakeholders and communities in a meaningful dialogue.

During this G20 Outreach we had built trust, established transparency, and encouraged active participation in the National Agenda of G20.

House Chairperson,

Without community involvement, tourism projects may fail to gain the necessary support and could lead to adverse outcomes.

Therefore, fostering strong community and stakeholder engagement is essential for the long-term success of tourism core purposes, initiatives, and ultimate outcomes.

The people of the Northern Cape who participated in the G20 Community Outreach Programme felt that it was an exciting time for South Africa, as the first African nation, to preside over and host the G20 Presidency and Summit.

Tourism is about the people of South Africa. It is about a guest house owner in Bizana sharing the great cultures and heritage of the Eastern Cape.

It is about a tour guide in Mbombela sharing a hidden gem in Mpumalanga. It is about learners visiting for free of charge, the Kgodumodumo Dinosaur Interpretation Centre in the Free State, and the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) and MeerKAT telescopes in Northern Cape to learn more about great important scientific discoveries in our country.

House Chairperson,

Our success as a Department of Tourism, is closely tied to the improvement of infrastructure and safety at these structures.

This includes roads, telecommunication systems, water supply and sanitation, and safety and security to enhance the appeal to all touristic destinations in South Africa.

We will continue and build on the successful joint Tourism Safety Campaign that our Department led with the Department of Transport in April 2025 in Gqeberha.

Tourism safety campaigns are a critical intervention to reduce criminal activities targeted at tourists, while visiting attractions in different provinces. Safety and security are vital to providing quality in Tourism.

House Chair,

We have looked in the mirror and seen some challenges in the Tourism Industry.

But, there are also real strength, deep resilience and huge potential in our country's Tourism sector.

We must expand the benefits from tourism activity to ensure that the growth we are seeking is inclusive.

In Conclusion, House Chairperson,

To Minister De Lille, I appreciate the leadership you have provided throughout this past year, and looking forward to continue working together to see through our given mandate to transform and thrive the Tourism sector, for job creation and inclusive economic growth for all South Africans

We also appreciate the positive diligence and support role of the Portfolio Committee, chaired by the Honourable Ms. Ronalda Nalumango.

To DG Victor Vele and all Team Tourism, I extend my gratitude for the good work done over the past year, and our partners in the tourism industry for their dedicated work in support of tourism.

I thank you all.