



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
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‘Africa must work together to grow tourism’ – Minister Hanekom

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The tourism industry in Africa must take advantage of what the continent has to offer as a whole. African countries also need to work together to improve ease of travel and to combat the international misconceptions on the spread of Ebola. These are some of the sentiments Minister of Tourism, **Derek Hanekom**, shared while speaking as part of a ministerial session at the recent 2014 Hotel Investment Conference Africa (HICA). Hanekom said African countries had the benefit of being able to provide unique and diverse experiences that were not on offer anywhere else in the world.

“If we look at the South African economy, for example, we probably have two sectors where we genuinely have comparative advantage. It’s the mining sector, because we’re endowed with greater mineral wealth than any other country in the world, and the tourism sector. We’ve got quite a vibrant agricultural sector but it is not a natural advantage. The one area where we have a serious competitive advantage is tourism and it continues to grow.”

Hanekom said tourists were increasingly becoming concerned with social and environmental issues and wanted to see countries making a commitment to reducing the effects of climate change. He said it was up to the tourism sector to take care of natural resources and to conduct tourism responsibly. The Minister also highlighted the fact that the continent was on a growth path, and that negative reports must be countered collectively, as a continent, to avoid hurting the tourism industry.