



**tourism**

Department:  
Tourism  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## MEDIA STATEMENT

### PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM THROUGH GUIDING

13 March 2020

**#ITGCELEBRATIONS2020** – More than 200 tourist guides from across the country gathered at the Constitutional Hill monument in Johannesburg for the annual International Tourist Guide Day (ITG) Celebrations that took place from 12 to 13 March 2020.

Themed “Tourist Guides – Contributors to Sustainable Tourism and Jobs,” the two day event explored the contribution of the guiding profession in creating sustainable economies at the face of an evolving tourism landscape.

As the front-line professionals, information-givers and interpreters in the industry, tourist guides are a key component of the tourism value chain. With growing global environmental and health scares, tourist guides will also serve as important mediums for conveying vital messages that promote the goals of responsible tourism.

Speaking at the event, the South African National Registrar of Tourist Guides, Morongoe Ramphele, highlighted some of the global challenges impact on the sector and encouraged guides to be prepared to work twice as hard once the challenges are overcome.

“We have set an ambitious growth target for the sector of attaining 21 million international tourist arrivals, and 4.3 million domestic holiday trips by 2030.”

“Currently we are faced with challenges that impact negatively on tourism such as lack of reliable electricity supply, water shortages, safety and security issues, high unemployment figures, and more recently the Covid -19 pandemic. These challenges will affect the choices travellers make, and ultimately our tourist numbers.”

“Despite this, tourism remains a sector in which people can simultaneously participate to create their economic growth and development. I believe we will overcome the imminent challenges, but we need to prepare as to not be found waiting when the tourism markets improve,” said Ramphele.

The tourist guiding profession in South Africa has grown steadily over the years with more than 13 000 registered guides. With the growing demand for multilingual tourist guides, the Department of Tourism initiated a language training programme to empower guides to be proficient languages of countries that have been identified as focus markets, such as China.

**ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM**

Twenty (20) tourist guides recently participated in a Departmental Language Training programme that comprised of modules for reading, writing and speaking in Mandarin. China is the world's largest outbound market for tourism, and the training will enable guides to confidently communicate to Chinese tourists that often visit our country."

"In a bid to make the guiding profession multifaceted and sustainable, we have invested in upskilling tourist guides to the proficient in other languages."

"Today, we congratulate the 20 guides from Western Cape, Eastern Cape and Gauteng who successfully completed the language training programme in Mandarin. We are confident that their acquired knowledge will go a long way in enhancing the tourist experience of our Mandarin-speaking visitors," concluded the National Registrar.

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