

Media Release



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08 May 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Minister Patricia de Lille to open Africa's Travel Indaba, focusing on tourism recovery

Durban, South Africa - All roads lead to Durban for the 2023 edition of Africa's Travel Indaba (ATI), the continent's premier tourism trade show to be hosted at the iconic Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre from 8 to 11 May.

The highly anticipated Africa's Travel Indaba 2023 is finally here, and this time, it's aiming to reach pre-COVID-19 participation levels. With over 20 African countries participating, showcasing over 350 tourism products, this year's event promises to be a vibrant and diverse representation of Africa's tourism industry offering a vast array of unique and exciting offerings that the continent has to offer!

The 2023 edition of Africa's Travel Indaba will bring together stakeholders from across the tourism industry ecosystem, from no less than 1000 buyers, just under 1000 exhibitors, destination marketing bodies, hotel groups, airlines, tour operators, and 10 African tourism boards. There are already 18 625 confirmed meetings on the online diary system.

Africa's Travel Indaba aims to facilitate networking and business opportunities within the African tourism industry, all with the shared goal of aiding the much-needed recovery of our sector. With a focus on collaboration, the event serves as a crucial platform for industry professionals to come together, share insights, and forge partnerships that will drive growth.

Minister of Tourism, Patricia de Lille, will officially open the trade show, which will set the tone for the 3 day-event and will highlight the importance of the tourism sector for the continent's economy.

"We are determined to drive the recovery of the tourism industry and to ensure that we continue to contribute to creating jobs and grow the continent's economy. It is vital that we work together



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to promote Africa as a preferred tourist destination for both leisure tourism and business events. The public and private sectors must unite to showcase the continent's diverse offerings and leverage technology, spur innovation, and create memorable experiences for visitors," added Minister de Lille.

The trade show provides an opportunity for face-to-face interactions, networking, sharing ideas, and forging partnerships that will enhance the industry's recovery, particularly after the COVID-19 lockdowns and disruptions to the greater global tourism industry.

Minister de Lille has also announced that the Department of Tourism is supporting 123 local small inbound tourism enterprises through its Market Access Support Programme (MASP) to showcase their products and services at the Hidden Gems pavilion during Africa's Travel Indaba. This programme aims to address the cost barriers associated with exhibition and roadshow participation for small businesses by offering partial financial support to qualifying enterprises to participate at selected international and local tourism trade shows.

This initiative, de Lille said, is based on the rationale that improved market access drives higher revenue and export earnings and leads to increased tourist numbers, enterprise growth and expansion, and greater job creation.

aAccording to the Minister, of the 123 approved and contracted enterprises participating in the 2023 ATI MASP, the vast majority (114) are black-owned, while more than half (71) are woman-owned. The group also includes 16 enterprises owned by young people. The total value of support approved for the 123 enterprises amounts to R11.7million. The support, she said, will enable these small businesses to display their unique products and services, expand their networks, and foster partnerships that will drive the growth and sustainability of the tourism industry in South Africa. In addition, about 50 more SMMEs will be supported by the various provincial tourism authorities expanding market access opportunities for more products to showcase at this year's trade show.

"Africa's Travel Indaba is a welcome boost for KwaZulu-Natal. It is an appropriate opportunity for our country and province to re-enter the world stage and through tourism, to rekindle and



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enhance the prospects of our economic growth and employment creation. Tourism is a key pillar in our Provincial Economic Recovery and Transformation Plan and prior to Covid-19 it contributed at least 9.5% to the GDP of the province. Efforts to re-ignite the tourism sector include intensive marketing of KwaZulu-Natal, providing support for rural and township tourism organisations and improving infrastructure and connectivity. We are ready to welcome the world to the Zulu Kingdom and let our story shine through our rich history, meandering mountains, authentic Zulu culture, our renowned World Heritage sites and vibrant city nightlife,” said KwaZulu-Natal Premier Nomusa Dube-Ncube.

“As the province of KwaZulu-Natal, we are ready to show the world that the province is still their most loved destination and will showcase many of the great products and developments that have come into the market since we last met. Our magnificent province is indeed a safe destination in which to enjoy a well-needed getaway, either along the beautiful coastal shores or in one of many game reserves surrounded by magnificent wildlife and tranquil nature. I would like to encourage delegates attending Africa’s Travel Indaba, to plan to take some time after the event to visit areas of the province and experience our tourism products, restaurants, cuisine, nightlife, great weather, hospitable people and rich history and culture,” Siboniso Duma, the KZN MEC for Economic Development, Tourism & Environmental Affairs.

EThekweni Municipality Mayor, Caouncillor Mxolisi Kaunda, expressed his excitement at hosting Africa’s Travel Indaba once again: “The impact of Africa’s Travel Indaba on Durban’s tourism industry means real cash in the pockets of the city’s tourism value chain, from transport operators to hotels and even car guards. We expect Africa’s Travel Indaba 2023 to contribute over R130 million to Durban City’s GDP and create over 250 job opportunities. The estimated hotel occupancy rate of 90% will be a major boost for the hospitality sector.”

Chief Executive Officer of the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre, Ms. Lindiwe Rakharebe, said: “It’s all system go. We are ready to welcome Africa and the world to the Inkosi Albert Luthuli ICC. We look forward to showcasing our world-class facilities. We are also excited to play a key role in the revitalization of the industry and work with all stakeholders to create a brighter future for tourism in Africa.”



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“We know that Africa’s Travel Indaba has an immense impact on the South African economy and its people, and we look forward to the positive outcomes that the 2023 edition brings,” concludes Minister de Lille.

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Issued by South African Tourism

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Note to editors:

Africa’s Travel Indaba is hosted in collaboration with the Province of KwaZulu- Natal, the City of Durban as well as the Inkosi Albert Luthuli Convention Centre.