



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Minister Hanekom leads tourism delegation to London

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Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom will lead a delegation of South African tourism marketers and product owners to the annual World Travel Market (WTM) tourism trade expo in London this week.

The WTM houses 5 000 exhibitors from 186 countries and is one of the largest tourism trade platforms in the world. WTM annually facilitates some R38 billion in industry deals. About 50 000 product owners, tour operators and travel agencies, airlines, technology providers, government ministers, global industry leaders and international travel media are expected to attend the event between Monday and Thursday this week.

WTM creates opportunities for the international travel and tourism trade to negotiate business deals, discuss issues that affect the sector and expand networks.

The South African delegation includes representatives of government, South African Tourism (SAT), provincial and local government tourism marketing authorities, and a range of tourism and travel product owners and travel service providers.

“The WTM is one of the premier events where South Africa engages with the global travel trade. Besides maintaining excitement about our destination, and all that we have to offer, this platform is about doing business and growing international tourist arrivals to our country,” said Minister Hanekom.

“We will be promoting the variety of experiences we offer in South Africa, and build on our reputation as a unique, diverse, friendly and accessible destination.

“Our tourism sector has a strong base from which we can grow further. Since the advent of democracy 20 years ago, South Africa has recorded truly impressive growth in international tourist arrivals. Our challenge is to do even better. We want to grow the tourism industry in a way that creates more opportunities for all our people and is sustainable well into the future.”

Besides interacting with the trade and media, Minister Hanekom will participate in a Ministerial Summit that brings together Tourism Ministers and global industry leaders to explore international best practice. The summit will be moderated by CNN International's Max Foster. This year's theme is 'Tourism and Mega-Events: Building a lasting legacy'. Minister Hanekom will discuss lessons that South Africa has learnt from hosting mega-events such as the FIFA World Cup, and reflect on ways of further leveraging the opportunities presented by business tourism and event-based tourism.

On Monday evening, Minister Hanekom will present the Ubuntu awards to South Africa's travel and trade partners who have excelled in selling the destination to UK travelers.

“The UK is more than just an important market for South Africa. With just under 500 000 arrivals from the UK in 2013, this market remains our largest overseas source market. Our

UK trade partners must know that we are in this market to stay and that we will be working even harder and smarter to grow our market share.”

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