



tourism

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Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Minister Hanekom says increasing jobs and ease of access in the tourism sector is possible

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“Whatever we do in tourism, regarding increased arrivals, translates into a large number of jobs as it is an employment intensive industry. It is not difficult. If we do the right things, it is achievable,” said the Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom during the Power Lunch interview with CNBC Africa on 9 March 2018.

Minister Hanekom was responding to a question on the State of the Nation Address (SoNA), in which President Cyril Ramaphosa alluded to doubling jobs in tourism from 700 000 to more than half a million.

Minister Hanekom also referred to the call by the President during his SoNA to grow the economy by removing regulation barriers. He stated that if South Africa could make it simpler for international tourists to visit South Africa, the country will increase tourist arrivals.

“Our challenges are: intensified marketing and making it easier for tourists to get to South Africa. This will translate into a large number of jobs which will make a huge difference in (tackling) our unemployment,” said Minister Hanekom.

He emphasised the importance of discussions between the Departments of Tourism and Transport on good airlinks and direct routes between South Africa and other African countries as part of making it easier and more affordable for people to visit South Africa.

As part of reducing barriers for travellers, the Minister also stated that engagements with the Department of Home Affairs are critical to focus on three areas: the regulations impacting on minors visiting South Africa; ease to obtain a South African travel visa; and reviewing the countries which need visas for travel to South Africa.

“When the visa requirement for Russia was waived, we saw an increase of over 50% of travels from Russia to South Africa. By contrast, when a visa was introduced to New Zealand, we saw a 17% decline. The only reason for the decline in the numbers from New Zealand, was the visa requirement. So therefore the engagement with Home Affairs Department is critically important,” stated Minister Hanekom.

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