



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Minister of tourism, Ms Toko Xasa, delivers a key note address at the Women in Tourism (WiT) Conference in Port Elizabeth – Eastern Cape on Tuesday, 28 November 2017

“themed”

“SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: A TOOL FOR RADICAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR WOMEN”

Programme Director;
Members of Parliament Present;
MECs Present;
MMCs Present;
Councillors Present;
Princess NomaXhosa Jongilanga;
Director-General of the Department of Tourism;
Representatives from Government, Business and Labour
Representatives of various Political & Civic Organisations and including other Mass Democratic Formations;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen;
Members of the Media (Local and International).....;

...On behalf of all the women of South Africa and on behalf of our Government, I would like to just say “well done to all the women who made it here today, and welcome to the warm Province of the Eastern Cape and the home of OR Tambo.

Today, I am Inspired, “and I feel like *ndike ndithi*”

***Igama lamakhosikazi malibongwe
Malibongwe - Malibongwe - Mabolingwe - Malibongwe***

***Wathintabafazi.....Wathintimbokodo,
Wathintimbokodo.....Wathintabafazi***

Makhosikazi, this conference today, takes place just a couple of days after the launch of the 19th year campaign of the 16-days of activism for no violence against women and children, under the theme “**Count Me In: Together Moving a Non-Violent South Africa Forward**”. This tells us that the struggles of women are not only in the workplace, in businesses and in boardrooms, but the struggles of women still follow them to where they live and to where they sleep.

As this gathering, we need to be resolute that we will also dedicate our energies towards ensuring that we defend the gains of women’s struggles. Bafazi, let us rise, be seen and be heard “in the boardrooms, in our homes, in our communities, in our workplaces and everywhere else”. Our efforts to fight this scourge of abuses of our women and children still face a major challenge (with close to 400,000 - four hundred thousand cases of domestic violence having been registered during the financial year 2016/17).

However, it is not all gloom and doom as we continue to witness some positive outcomes through our criminal justice system. “Our courts continue to hand out serious sentences to those who abuse or kill women, including life sentences, to the killers of women and children. The conviction rate in sexual offences matters reported for the 2016/17 financial year was 72% (seventy two percent)”.

“We applaud the criminal justice system for continuing to implement the laws of the land effectively to put perpetrators behind bars and we acknowledge the oversight efforts of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Women, as it continues to monitor the efficacy of the implementation of our laws. We urge women not to keep quiet but to continue to report abusers to the police so that they can be brought to book”. We congratulate the SA Police Service on the adoption of its six point plan, which all police officers must abide by in every police station.

We also acknowledge the contribution of the “***real men***” in our communities, who have joined the chorus against this abuse. Arising from and today, we will witness a group of some 30-real-men partner with this conference in pledging their allegiance to the 16-days of activism for no violence against the abuse of women and children, by signing a pledge to protect women, under the theme “***Not In My Name***”. During this critical period of the active conscientisation of society on the value of women in society, we take this opportunity to congratulate current Miss South Africa – “***Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters***” and now newly crowned Miss Universe 2017, on her achievements and for being a good tourism ambassador for South Africa, at the Miss Universe pageant held in Las Vegas, this past Sunday.

Women in Tourism was formed in 2013 (*followed swiftly by the Women in Tourism Forum launch at Indaba in 2014*) with a vision to drive programmes that support the development and empowerment of women in the tourism sector. It directly links with the 16 Days Campaign in that social factors such as inequality, unemployment, poverty, crime, abuse in all forms need solutions that can empower women and communities.

At the time of the launch, we had placed the forum’s main focus on the fundamental issues of personal development and competitive advantage within the economic sphere. We had identified intervention measures that would assist in realizing the WIT agenda. This was in recognition of the challenges faced by women working in the sector, striving women entrepreneurs, who are still today, right at the bottom end of the tourism value chain.

The UNWTO Global Report on Women in Tourism (2010), highlighted the value of the sector as an engine for economic development through foreign exchange earnings and the creation of direct and indirect employment. This report further elucidates that this value however does not translate into an equitable distribution of economic impacts between men and women in the sector, especially in the developing economies.

The report also indicated that Tourism growth presents both challenges and opportunities for gender equality and women’s empowerment. With regard to opportunities, tourism presents a number of income generating activities for women, with flexible jobs offers, which can be carried out at different locations e.g. homes, community and the workplace. We should focus our efforts on harnessing the potential of the sector, not only to increase its contribution to GDP growth, but also to enhance and develop the skills of those working in the tourism industry.

Globally, tourism has recorded its 7th year of sustained growth despite the economic slowdown. This means that this sector isn’t just a major contributor towards our country’s GDP, but it is also a source of investment and job creation, especially for our rural areas. Tourism is already contributing to our economy by supporting over 1.5 million jobs in total and bringing in about 9% to our Gross Domestic Product.

Following our Country’s foreign and local downgrade to junk status by Fitch and S&P, we believe that part of our strategic response to our economic question lies in the further growth of the tourism sector, because tourism growth means that prospects for growing and transforming our economy will be significantly enhanced, not only for the tourism sector but for the entire value chain that is supported by tourism and therefore economic variables such as the net capita income, the rise in our tax base and ultimately our GDP growth.

During the same period of the release of the UNWTO report, my Department commenced with various engagements with women in the sector, starting in what was then dubbed “*conversations with women in tourism*”. As Deputy Minister then, I led these conversations with women in Gauteng, the Free State and rural Kwa-Hlabisa in KwaZulu-Natal. All efforts culminated in a soft launch hosted as a networking cocktail at the 2014 Tourism Indaba, followed by the establishment of the now distinguished “Women in Tourism Forum”.

Facilitated by the National Department of Tourism in partnership with the Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) and the broader women stakeholders in the sector, the forum is aimed at engaging women on issues such as economic empowerment - addressing funding constraints, establishment of support structure and incentives for women, creating a platform to celebrate women achievers and the status of women in the tourism sector, with a strong agenda towards:

1. commanding **respect**;
2. ascertaining **recognition** of women contribution in the sector;
3. encouraging **representation** in economic activities and leadership;
4. producing **results**, that will enhance the supply and demand for tourism.

This structure is intended to integrate women from the different backgrounds and spectrum within the sector, and to ensure that they converge on a common goal and interest within the industry. It further seeks to drive programmes to support and radicalise the transformation of the tourism sector, by developing and empowering through specific result- and impact-driven programmes, while also allowing women to engage each other and to learn from each other.

The National Department of Tourism has also launched the “**30in5**” campaign with the main focus towards the elevation of the pillar of **Representation** as its focal area for the next 5 years.

This pillar denotes the need for the participation of women at decision making levels such as executive management and board directorships, supported by Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment code, which sets a target of 30% for women participation for ownership, board representation and executive management. Our strategy is to drive this initiative through the pillars of (1) respect, (2) recognition, (3) representation and (4) reward, for and of women in the tourism sector. The forum is facilitated by a coordinating committee comprising of both public and private sectors representatives.

Following the commissioning of the baseline study to establish the current state of transformation in the tourism sector, the department working with its key partners, held the Tourism Transformation Summit in October 2017, under the banner of Sustainable Development, themed "Radically Transform, Sustain and Grow."

The outcomes of the baseline study had shown that whilst there were efforts shown by other entities on transformation, the transformation picture is still far from reaching its optimal stage, towards the promotion and absorption of black players and enterprises in the sector. Despite the promotion of Black ownership of enterprises being set as a priority element within the Amended Tourism B-BBEE Sector Code, still, fewer enterprises achieved the targets set for Black female ownership. However, there is something to be said about the travel related sub-sector, which is performing better than others in promoting more Black women in their ownership structures.

It therefore is a concern to my Department and must certainly be a concern to this Forum, that only 11% of enterprises had shown black women representation at boards, executives and senior management positions.

The majority of large enterprises do not comply with “Enterprise and Supplier Development” as a key factor towards encouraging preferential usage of Black owned suppliers and the upliftment of SMMEs within supply chains, including partnerships and mentorships. So, put simply, there was 0% expenditure on enterprises owned by majority of black people and very little on enterprises owned by black women as well.

We therefore need to take stock of what has taken place, since our previous engagements. Makhosikazi, I am happy to report to this conference that among other things, efforts have been swift towards ensuring the establishment of Women In Tourism (WiT) chapters in provinces. The formation of these structures was and is meant to drive and escalate issues related to the empowerment of women in the sector). The National Department of Tourism has moved to implement the Tourism Incentive Programme, to give support to women to have access to markets.

Significantly and as part of the previous resolutions, the Executive women development programme has been formalised in partnership with UNISA School of Business and Leadership, as part of strengthening mentorship programmes to build capacity, encourage the exchange of skills and networking with other women in business

We have included as part of your conference pack, the progress report on the previous resolutions, including what direct interventions has been implemented by the National Department of Tourism. This is a key part of the National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS), towards the promotion the creation of 'inclusive tourist' destinations, within which community-based tourism experiences and other goods and services which are particularly offered by women, can become part of the wider tourism offering within an inclusive destination.

As we mark 100 years this year since the birth of OR Tambo, the former President of the African National Congress and one of the founding fathers of South Africa's liberation and constitutional democracy, a Champion for Women emancipation, also recall the fact that 2017 has also been declared “by the UNWTO” as the year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.- use this platform to network, empower each other, identify opportunities and working together identify key areas that we can pilot to grow women because in the 5 years we need to have industrialists too in line with the AU Agenda 2063 (towards industrialization and development) I therefore call on all “**Women to unite in Moving South Africa forward**” and I want this message to be driven throughout this conference, as the key enabler, for women emancipation and their broader socio-economic development.

Collectively as women, working with key strategic partners, we need to have a voice to influence the policies and programme of the National Department of Tourism. At the end of this conference, we all need to ensure that South Africa and the industry understand that women constitute the majority in the tourism sector and that as such, women are:

Makhosikazi, as I conclude, I therefore challenge this gathering and I challenge this conference to interrogate the following areas:-

- To create a platform for Women in Tourism to gain a strong realisation that Women play a key role in the economy;
- To take stock of where women are in the sector and how they have fared thus far;
- To mobilise women in tourism to engage on economic empowerment issues and progression in the sector as employees and business people using the provincial Women in Tourism chapters as a vehicle;
- To unpack the opportunities available to Women in the tourism business and the types of support available in government and the sector;
- To create an effective networking platform for "**Women in Tourism**" within the country and the region in order to drive and advance the common purposes of women.

Makhosikazi, I therefore take this opportunity to pledge my Department's support for this conference and to emphasize the importance of the necessity for women to work together and to form cooperatives, so that as women, you benefit from sustainable tourism, as a tool for radical socio-economic development for women and so that as part of the broader transformation of the sector, we are.....

RESPECTED RECOGNIZED REPRESENTED & REWARDED

With these few words, I wish you a successful conference, with fruitful deliberations and I and look forward to engaging with your thoughts and input.

I thank you.