



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Message of support delivered by the Deputy Minister of Tourism at the launch of the Moruleng Cultural Precinct

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It is a pleasure for me to be here with you today and to pledge our support for this initiative. South Africa has a strong and vibrant cultural diversity and this includes tangible and intangible culture and heritage tourism products in the form of the arts, crafts, festivals, indigenous knowledge systems, oral history, storytelling and folklore, heritage sites, natural heritage, to name but a few. Indeed, we have a rich and vivid history, ideal for cultural tourism.

Our success and transition to democracy was the result of a collective effort from the world and especially our African neighbours. Our democracy is based in human rights and upholding the law. This foundation is inspired by its African values and an appreciation of the power of human solidarity, visibly demonstrated by all our friends across the world and in particular within the continent in our effort to end apartheid. We deeply regret the recent incidents and would like to assure visitors of our consistent welcoming hospitality and warmth.

Rich in Batswana culture, Moruleng could through the existence of this museum provide an opportunity for communities to reflect on their culture. The exhibitions and themes such as the initiation (their true purpose); artefacts (tools, utensils); history of Bakgatla; European influence on Batswana lifestyles; the relationship between Batswana and the Boer and also the relationship between Bakgatla Ba Kgafela in Moruleng and Bakgatla in Mchudi, Botswana will add value to the tourist experience offered by the region. Teemed with offerings such as the Pilanesberg, Sun City and Madikwe in the close Bojanala District this area demonstrate enormous potential for further tourism development and promotion. Pilanesberg is a popular game reserve which consists of the well-known Big Five which are elephant, lion, buffalo, leopard and rhino and a variety of other wildlife resources as well.

Furthermore, the Moruleng Cultural Precinct is a unique attractions or product that has the role and power to change perceptions of rural communities, excite and inform both locals and visitors about the vibrant Bakgatla-ba-Kgafela stories and histories.

What is interesting about this attraction is the preservation and celebration of heritage; the promotion of education; the community development element, the promotion of careers in the heritage sector; Job creation through the empowerment of local entrepreneurs, artists and crafters; tourism, and nation building. Moruleng will provide a unique and diverse experience for tourists visiting the area, who would normally visit Sun City and Pilanesberg by adding a culture and heritage experience.

The National Heritage and Cultural Tourism strategy's aims to create a platform to share knowledge of best practices and to enhance tourism development opportunities in rural areas through meaningful stakeholder engagement and involvement. It is also aimed at creating an enabling environment for heritage and cultural tourism development, to stimulate job creation and to identify and develop viable cultural and tourism projects. The Moruleng Cultural Precinct is a perfect example of one such example of the Heritage and Cultural Tourism Strategy objective of collaboration.

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The Department has been working together with the North West Department of Tourism, North West Parks and Tourism Agency and the District as well as local Municipalities in arranging programs that will benefit tourism role players in the sector. Programmes implemented range from educator's seminars, service excellence workshops, capacity building programmes and product development.

1. Educators seminars

In 2014, two educator seminars sessions were conducted in Pilanesberg which is not far from here in the same District and in Buisfontein Safari Lodge in Woolmaranstaad, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District. Educators were given an opportunity to experience tourism products and services by conducting a guided tour of Pilanesberg Game Reserve National Park.

2. Service excellence

The Department hosted two (2) workshops in the Province in Taung and Zeerust. The purpose of these workshops was to equip employees in the tourism value chain with skills. The Department will be working with the North West Provincial Tourism Department and the Agency to implement a Service Excellence programme aimed at improving service levels in the Manyane Game Reserve. Manyane Game Reserve received funding from the Department for its renovation.

3. Capacity building programme

The Capacity Building was conducted at DR R. S Mompoti District in October 2014. The purpose of this program was to stimulate tourism growth in the area and also promote integration between the three spheres of government, private sector and community representatives and traditional authority. The workshop was well received by the target audience.

4. Social responsibility implementation programs

The Department received six applications for funding of the following projects: Molopo Game Reserve, Bloemhof Dam, Kgaswane Mountain Reserve, Wentzel Dam and Letlamoreng Dam. Funding was approved for Letlamoreng Dam and approval is pending for Wentzel Dam.

In addition, Madikwe in Ngaka Modiri Molema (where this project is located) has been recommended as strategic areas/nodes for tourism development in the North West Province in the Rural Tourism Strategy.

Indeed, we are positioned to be globally competitive and are ready to welcome the world to our shores. We need to restore the great reputation of our great South Africa. Continue to build and grow Africa for a better world. Tourism Builds people to people to people relationships.

I thank you

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