



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Remarks by the Minister of Tourism, Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane, at G20 Tourism Ministers' virtual meeting convened by Italy

4 May 2021

Thank you very much Chairperson for affording South Africa an opportunity to make interventions during this important meeting of the G20 Tourism Ministers. I would like to extend my greetings to you Chairperson, my colleagues (Ministers responsible for Tourism of the G20 countries), Representatives of the International Organisations and the members of the G20 Tourism Working Group.

I would also like to congratulate Minister Massimo Garavaglia, Minister of Tourism of Italy, on Italy's assumption of the G20 Presidency. I am confident that the G20 will achieve its objectives under the stewardship of Italian Presidency.

South Africa's interventions will focus on four areas, namely G20 Rome Guidelines for the future of tourism, South Africa's recovery from COVID-19 pandemic, South Africa's approach to cultural tourism and reference to the Ministers' Communique (which is the last item on the agenda).

a) G20 Rome Guidelines for the future of tourism

Thank you to the OECD for developing the guidelines on behalf of the G20. As Tourism is one of the sectors severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the guidelines should assist us to accelerate tourism recovery, eliminate barriers and offer better travel experiences for the future.

The 7 policy areas (i.e. safe mobility, crisis management, resilience, inclusiveness, green transformation, digital transformation and investment and infrastructure), including the actions under each policy area should be implemented individually and collectively as we shape tourism for the future. I am glad that the guidelines build on the work done under the previous G20 Presidency for continuity. As policy makers in travel and tourism, our respective countries will benefit from these guidelines which entail policy interventions. As such, South Africa supports the G20 Rome Guidelines for the future of tourism.

b) South Africa's recovery from COVID-19 pandemic

As the international community is doing everything possible to ensure that travel and tourism fully recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, I wish to share with you South Africa's approach in this regard. Government has approved the Tourism Sector Recovery Plan (TSRP).

The TSRP includes interventions to ignite the recovery which is anchored in three strategic themes namely: protecting and rejuvenating supply, re-igniting demand and strengthening enabling capability for long term sustainability.

The TSRP entails the following strategic interventions for implementation:

- Implement norms and standards for safe operations across the value chain to enable safe travel and rebuild traveller confidence;
- Stimulate domestic demand through targeted initiatives and campaigns;
- Strengthen the supply-side through resource mobilisation and investment facilitation;
- Support for the protection of core tourism infrastructure and assets;
- Execute a global marketing programme to reignite international demand;
- Tourism regional integration; and
- Review the tourism policy to provide enhanced support for sector growth and development.

Key enablers have been identified namely, forming targeted, strategic partnerships between government and industry; partnering with relevant departments to ensure improved travel facilitation including roll-out of the vaccine to frontline workers, attainment of population immunity and participating in global efforts to facilitate safe travel.

The implementation of the TSRP will reduce the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on many fronts, including on employment. The TSRP is aligned to the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP), the country's plan for overall economic recovery. I look forward to international cooperation and collaboration, especially the G20 countries and international organisations to ensure that tourism returns to its pre-pandemic levels which include solid contribution to GDP and job creation.

c) South Africa's approach to cultural tourism:

South Africa is pleased that the G20 is lifting the issue of cultural tourism. The convergence between tourism and culture, and the increasing interest of visitors in cultural experiences cannot be over-emphasised.

As part of implementing the Tourism Sector Recovery Plan, our focus in South Africa is on the maintenance of tourism infrastructure in State Owned attractions such as World Heritage Sites, National Parks and Provincial Parks in order to improve the product offerings and ultimately to enhance visitor experience. One of the strategic initiatives of the Tourism Sector Recovery Plan is about support for the protection of core tourism infrastructure and assets. Thus, destination enhancement work is critical to improving the quality of product offerings, through refurbishment and maintenance.

As we steer the travel and tourism sector towards recovery, it would be prudent for the G20 countries to share experiences and information on how to enhance and grow cultural tourism for the benefit of our destinations.

d) Adoption of the G20 Tourism Ministers Rome Communiqué

South Africa supports the adoption of the G20 Tourism Ministers Communiqué. South Africa wishes to emphasize the need for the G20 Tourism Working Group to monitor the implementation of the G20 Rome Guidelines for the future of tourism with the support of the OECD, UNWTO and other relevant international organisations. As the G20 does not have a permanent secretariat, the working group under the leadership of the incumbent G20 Presidency, should track progress in this regard.

In conclusion, I wish the G20 countries success regarding tourism recovery.

Thank You.