tourism
Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

SOUTH AFRICA AND SEYCHELLES LAUNCH JOINT TOURISM TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

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South Africa and Seychelles launched the Joint Tourism Technical Committee (JTTC) at the Capetonian Hotel in Cape Town on Thursday evening, 19 November 2026, to advance cooperation on tourism skills, destination development and marketing. This initiative further cements the longstanding bilateral relations between South Africa and Seychelles, strengthening bonds of friendship, cooperation, and a shared commitment to advancing tourism development for the mutual benefit of both nations.

The Committee will oversee implementation of the bilateral Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Tourism, signed in Seychelles on 5 August 2013. Ms Mmaditonki Setwaba, Deputy Director-General in the Department of Tourism responsible for Tourism Sector Support Services, delivered remarks as head of the South African delegation. The heads of delegation signed the JTTC report at the official launch after receiving the report from senior officials.

“The launch of this Committee and the signing that follows will further strengthen those ties by giving our two countries a way to agree on priorities, assign responsibility and track progress together,” said Ms Mmaditonki Setwaba.

In the days leading up to the launch, officials from both countries discussed the committee’s terms of reference and worked on a new implementation plan covering priority projects, the institutions responsible for them and timelines. The programme also included discussions with Wesgro, the Cape Wine Academy and the Cape Peninsula University of Technology on areas of cooperation.

The launch builds on more than three decades of bilateral relations. The two countries signed a General Cooperation Agreement in January 2007 and have since deepened ties through the Joint Commission for Cooperation and their shared membership of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The 2013 tourism agreement established a framework for cooperation on skills development, product development, research, destination marketing and investment promotion.

That cooperation has already opened career opportunities. In 2017, Seychelles hosted 20 South African graduate chefs for year-long internships at hotels, giving them international hospitality experience. Two graduates secured permanent employment in Seychelles after completing their placements. The draft Implementation Plan proposes a two-way exchange that would also give Seychellois culinary trainees experience in South African hotels, subject to a separate agreement with the Seychelles Tourism Academy.

The draft Plan also proposes training for accommodation grading assessors, exchanges on tourism service standards, and joint work on cultural and heritage tourism, coastal and marine experiences, and gastronomy. The two countries will explore digital marketing collaboration and opportunities for joint promotion through platforms such as Africa’s Travel Indaba. Proposed exchanges on air access, tourism safety and visitor research will help both countries share evidence and approaches to common challenges.

Bilateral agreements give tourism authorities, training institutions and businesses a framework for working together. Through the committee, South Africa and Seychelles can agree on which projects to prioritise, identify the institutions that will lead them and track progress. For tourism workers and businesses, that cooperation can translate into practical training, stronger service standards and new opportunities to develop and market visitor experiences.

The launch of the Joint Tourism Technical Committee marks an important milestone in the longstanding relationship between South Africa and Seychelles, signalling a renewed commitment to translating bilateral cooperation into meaningful and measurable outcomes.

“By the time we meet again, I would like us to be able to point to a training opportunity that has opened, a partnership that has begun or a practice that one country has learned from the other and put to use. Those are the results that will give this partnership meaning for the people who work in tourism in both our countries,” said Ms Setwaba.

This partnership presents an opportunity to unlock the full potential of tourism as a catalyst for economic growth, investment, job creation and sustainable development. By combining their respective strengths, sharing expertise and pursuing common priorities, South Africa and Seychelles can contribute to a more competitive, connected and resilient tourism sector across the African continent.

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