



Private Bag X424, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa. Tel. (+27 12) 444 6780, Fax (+27 12) 444 7027
Private Bag X9154, Cape Town, 8000, South Africa. Tel. (+27 21) 469 5800, Fax: (+27 21) 465 3216

SPEECH

19 NOVEMBER 2024

SOUTH AFRICA GEARS UP TO MAKE ITS PRESENCE FELT AT IBTM WORLD 2024

Recently named the top business events destination in Africa and the Middle East, South Africa is gearing up to solidify this position with a strong showing at the world's top business events trade show, the IBTM (Incentives, Business Travel, and Meetings) World in Spain.

A diverse South African delegation, led by Tourism Minister Patricia De Lille and comprising business events professionals showcasing a wide range of products and services, will use IBTM World to further cement South Africa as a capable and attractive business events host.

IBTM World, the world's largest tradeshow for the business events industry, takes place in Barcelona from the 19th to the 21st of this month. Attracting thousands of exhibitors and buyers from over 150 countries and showcasing the latest industry trends and insights, IBTM World is an ideal platform to connect with industry leaders and potential buyers.

South Africa is determined to maximise this opportunity to grow our standing as a leading business events destination and attract more business events to our country. This is in line with our mission to fulfil the objectives of growing tourism's contribution to inclusive economic growth and job creation in line with the Tourism Sector Master Plan, South Africa's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan and the priorities of the Government of National Unity.

South Africa will also use the event to further entrench awareness of South Africa Chair and host of the G20 Summit in 2025. With over 40 global heads of state expected to attend, the G20 Summit presents a tremendous opportunity to showcase South Africa's expertise in hosting high-profile international gatherings catalysing further growth in the sector.

"The year 2025 is a very special one for us. Not only are we looking forward to hosting the G20 Summit, we are also excited about bringing about new ideas and initiatives that will further showcase our country's attractiveness as both a leisure and business events destination. We look forward to welcoming government delegations, business leaders and visitors from all over the world to enjoy our beautiful country," said Minister De Lille.

De Lille pointed out the strategic importance of hosting events, stating that these also benefit leisure tourism as business travellers often extend their stays to explore the destination or return to the country with their family and friends.

Additionally, business events stimulate demand for a wide range of services, such as transportation, dining, and entertainment, thus benefit local companies and communities.

Representing a wide range of products and services within the South African tourism industry, the South African contingent to IBTM World includes 18 exhibitors featuring established products as well as six business events Small Micro Medium Enterprises (SMMEs), namely Karibu Leisure Resort & Conference, Syavaya Corporate Travel, Get The Picture, Afri-Centric Luxury Experiences, Afrikan Native Travel, and Offshore Adventures. This group will showcase the country's unique attractions, top infrastructure and world-class facilities while connecting with some of the 12,000 attendees and over 2,600 hosted buyers from around the world.

"Showcasing South Africa at strategic platforms reinforces the country's position as a leading destination for business events. According to Allied Market Research, the South African MICE industry, valued at \$6.6 billion (R121.8 billion) in 2023, is projected to grow to \$25.9 billion (R477.9 billion) by 2032. This upward trajectory is further reinforced by the country's recent recognition top meeting and conference destination in Africa and the Middle East by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA)," Minister De Lille said.

Globally, the MICE industry was valued at approximately \$523.3 billion (R9.7 trillion) in 2023, with projections indicating growth to \$1,384.9 billion (R25.5 trillion) by 2032. This represents a remarkable compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.4% over the same period.

On the African continent, the business events industry is also experiencing significant growth. Valued at around \$16.6 billion (R295 billion) in 2023, it is projected to soar to approximately \$65.6 billion (R1.2 trillion) by 2032, achieving a CAGR of 16.8%.

South Africa will once again host Meetings Africa at the Sandton Convention Centre in partnership with Gauteng Tourism as well as Johannesburg Tourism Company in February next year. This is a premier trade show for MICE in Africa and it will be tailored to provide immersive experiences and provide excellent value for exhibitors, buyers and media alike.

Meetings Africa will take place from 24 to 26 February 2025, at the Sandton Convention Centre, building on the success of previous editions. The 2024 event was particularly noteworthy, bringing together around 380 exhibiting companies from 21 African countries and attracting buyers from 61 nations.

"We look forward to showcasing the best South Africa has to offer in the business events space at IBTM World in Barcelona and Meetings Africa in Johannesburg next year. Our mission is to maintain our status as the leading business events destination in Africa and the Middle East and work with all partners to achieve exponential growth as we aim to elevate the profile of the tourism sector and its contribution to inclusive economic growth and job creation," Minister de Lille concluded.

ENDS

Media Enquiries:

Zara Nicholson Media Liaison Officer to Minister Patricia de Lille, MP

Cell: +27 (0) 79 416 5996

Email: znicholson@tourism.gov.za

OR

Thandiwe Mathibela: GM: Global PR, Communications & Stakeholder Relations

Email: thandiwe@southafrica.net OR mediaq@southafrica.net

Website www.southafrica.net