



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**Speech delivered by the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa at the WOVSA  
Inaugural Indaba**

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“A woman with a voice is by definition is a strong women”. And today I am surrounded by a multitude of warriors – who will in turn be the voice for many others.

As we celebrate Women’s Month and the 60th anniversary of the catalytic Women’s march to the Union Building, we pause and reflect. We have come far – thanks to the sheer bravery, courage and determination of these iconic women. And they were ordinary women – in fact they were regarded as less than that as they were the working class – the oppressed. Yet they made their voices heard! Because they had the baton passed to us, and we are now continuing to run the race. We owe a debt of gratitude to our selfless pioneers – and the only way to do that is to pay it forward and to uplift others.

We are surrounded today by women of worth, women of value – these brave warriors.

And that is exactly the point of this gathering – this inaugural Indaba. The WOVSA International Women Cooperatives Annual Indaba is launched today as a means of engagement to unlock the great potential of our member coops and others. Under the Theme:” Transforming cooperatives into sustainable business enterprises” advocates that it is time for a new kind of a Co-operative in South Africa which will be about Growth and Sustainability. This is an international event which is attended by women in leadership from other African countries, a PLATFORM to give hope and an opportunity for smaller and growing co-ops to share their ideas and dreams with others that have endured and thrived in the African and SADC Countries also. The Indaba will therefore be an information sharing, marketing and networking platform on how to grow these coops into sustainable business enterprisses.

So what outcomes do we expect from this Indaba?

- Inauguration of an annual event where cooperatives issues and resolutions will be discussed
- Launch of Vision 2020, three year cooperatives development programme
- Singing of Cooperation Agreements with organisations from other Countries
- Expose women in cooperatives to available opportunities
- Bring the key stakeholders together and encourage partnerships in supporting cooperatives
- Raise awareness of the cooperatives way of doing business
- To ensure that the cooperatives reach the under-represented voices of women and youth, engage their members, customers and investors and help to build the next generation of co-operatives.
- To facilitate networking amongst the cooperatives and the creation of linkages with the relevant sectors
- Engage with the key stakeholders on behalf of the members cooperatives.

After an awe-inspiring leadership session yesterday, we discovered we all want the same thing. That is to share best practice and to advance the women of Africa. Economically and socially.

WOVSA is also in the process of mobilising for a Cooperative Bank and these Co-ops will be getting more information in the about the CFI’s from other Cooperative Bodies in the Continent and the CBDA. The idea is to inculcate also the culture of saving by these Cooperatives as they grow.

The main objective is the Launch of the WOVSA Vision 2020 three year cooperatives development programme. The Indaba is set to bring the relevant key stakeholders who will be part of the development

programme. The roles will differ from profiling of the coops, supplier development, exchange programmes, incubation, funding and enterprise development by the private sector.

We have women in critical levers in government. What can we do? Do we understand the situation the country is in? Can we assist women to diversify? Can we champion this cause? The world economy is projected to go down. Ours is commodity-based and if oil prices crash, Brexit effects and EU banking etc. they all affect us. We need to act!

The concept of co-operatives is a perfect example of how we can utilise the second economy as a springboard for inclusive growth. This is a form of ownership to benefit the whole community which results in decent working opportunities, sustainable livelihoods while increasing agricultural production and productive land use.

As women in leadership – especially in government, we need to continually and actively agitate for the upliftment of women. And that is where our dynamic National Development Plan (NDP) comes into play with the prominent policies and pronouncements on the promotion of cooperatives with the aim of fighting poverty, inequality and unemployment.

We as government adopted the NDP as a blueprint for mapping out our long term vision for our country. Its core priorities are to reduce poverty, unemployment and inequality. And to so this, we need the buy in and collaborate across the broad spectrum of society as we are collectively responsible for advancing the South African economy. On Sunday, I attended an event where we officially branded the NDP where we appeal to the collaboration of all spheres of government, private sector, media, social partners and civil society to implement and give expression this plan. The NDP is everybody's business and we would like it to be embraced as such. We want people to be part of it and be excited about it because, South Africa is everybody's business!

The NDP recognises and notes that co-ops have several benefits for e.g. assisting small producers including rural development projects to achieve economies of scale and establishing links to markets and value chains. In fact the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF 2014 – 2019) highlights co-ops as part of radical transformation.

Key initiatives by government include the National Informal Business Upliftment Strategy by Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in 2014. This placed co-ops alongside SMMEs as targets of policy intervention. It also sees informal business graduating from just surviving to become informal traders, then informal micro entrepreneurs and finally coops or fully fledged companies. A policy is now implemented in the new Department of Small Business Development (DSBD).

So what are we the National department of Tourism doing? Tourism has been recognized as a pillar of economic growth as well as a social unifier. As tourism is a cross-cutting sector, its value chain spans many other departments. Embracing the tourism sector will have a positive impact in areas of other sectors by contributing to inclusive growth and job creation.

Transformation has been a challenge which we aim to address through our programmes. Many tourism enterprises have also not introduced any full black shareholding into their organisations because many are predominantly family-owned and managed businesses. Despite women making up nearly 70% of the workforce in the tourism and hospitality sector, there is still a marked under-representation of women in senior positions within the industry.

Women hold less than 40% of all managerial positions and 5 to 8% of board positions. A study conducted by the National Department of Tourism in 2011 to assess the state of transformation found that the vast majority of enterprises (up to 90%) have no black female shareholding.

According to the South African United Nations representative, women in South Africa contribute about 30% to the Gross Domestic Product and this makes the economic empowerment of women a non-negotiable priority.

This can be achieved by a 50/50 gender representation beyond 2030. As a result of the size and relevance of the hospitality sector within the global economy, there is a wide range of stakeholders that have a strong commercial interest in enabling its continued growth and development, and associated with this, in enhancing the talent pipeline in order to unlock the potential of women in the workplace.

In a 2015 report, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) highlighted the consequences of talent imbalances and shortages in global tourism focusing on serious business and profitability consequences. Of the talent challenges faced by hospitality, perhaps the major issue is that of a failure to utilise talented women to the best effect within the industry, particularly at senior levels.

These are just a few of the realities that make this agenda for women a priority to the department and the sector at large.

The Department is making strides in trying to strengthen and prioritise the issues of women in tourism. A focused programme of action by the Department together with its partners will see a mobilisation of events aimed advancing women to contribute to the future economic wellbeing of the country.

The establishment of the Women in Tourism (WiT) forum is aimed at addressing the economic inequalities and challenges faced by women within the sector. The WIT agenda is centred on 'Commanding Respect, ascertaining Recognition of women contribution in the sector, encouraging Representation in economic activities and leadership, and producing Results which will enhance the supply and demand for domestic tourism.

This programme of action includes the continued mobilisation of women towards the establishment of chapters in all provinces. Women in Tourism Travel Massive events will be hosted in different provinces during August and the South African chapters of Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town hosted events in these three cities simultaneously to celebrate Women in Tourism. The 3rd Women in Tourism Annual Conference is planned for October and all women in the tourism industry are encouraged to attend.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN**

The Department recently appointed the University of South Africa (UNISA) Graduate School of business leadership to develop and run a course on the Executive Development Programme for black women managers in the tourism sector.

The programme is aimed at building strong business skills and leadership capabilities amongst women in the tourism sector to lead key parts of tourism businesses and form a pool of future top leadership, entrepreneurs and industrialists in the sector.

The programme will provide an in-depth training at the core of running a successful tourism business, covering modules such as strategic financial management, global business environment, managing organisational performance, contemporary leadership, advanced destination and strategic marketing, advanced strategic tourism management, the executive tourism project and others.

The pilot for the Executive Development Programme will run for a period of 12 months and has started with an intake of 20 black women in July 2016. It is envisaged that the Executive Development Programme will train close to 100 black women managers over a 5-year period.

Tuition fees and other study materials for the Executive Development Programme will be covered 100% by the Department.

## **FORMAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT STUDIES AVAILABLE**

The Tourism Incentive Programme, which offers support to women in tourism, remains open for women to tap into, while the newly established Enterprise Development Programme by the department shall focus more than 50% of its efforts on the development of women through the incubator process as well as formal business studies.

Some of the departmental skills development programmes offered through the SRI funding provide a platform for women to venture into new areas like being chefs and Food Safety Assurers.

Other funding opportunities available for women in tourism include the National Empowerment Fund's Isivanda Women's Fund by the Department of Trade and Industry while the CATHSSETA offers formal training, development and bursaries focusing on women development up to PHD level.

Government has also invested in other areas to accelerate economic growth and job creation. The Nine-Point Plan was developed in 2015 to create short term intervention and relief.

With the following jobs drivers, this Nine Point Plan cuts across all sectors and beneficiaries. They are at a glance:

1. Operation Phakisa and growing the Oceans economy  
The four coastal provinces were engaged on how to best utilise our pristine coastline. In 2015, Cabinet resolved to include Coastal and Marine Tourism and Small Harbours as the new focus areas of the Oceans Economy Phakisa. The Department of Tourism was tasked to:
  - Lead the Coastal and Marine tourism focus area;
    - Facilitate the development of detailed implementation plan through the Phakisa methodology;
  - Track, monitor and report on progress to government; and
    - Set up the accountability and reporting institutional and governance structures.

Given the urgency to deliver the above-mentioned targets, the Department of Tourism collaborated with the Department of Environmental Affairs who have appointed McKinsey to facilitate a joint Marine and Coastal Tourism and Bio-Diversity Economy “Lab”. A lab is an intensive fast paced planning process leading to detailed implementation plan. This has yielded much success and is a work in progress.

Furthermore, the department approved a Blue Flag Tourism project as a contribution to the 09 point plan and the Oceans Economy. The approved budget is R40 million over three years, 2016/17 – 2018/19, covering 50 beaches and employing 200 unemployed youth.

1. Resolving the energy challenge
2. Revitalising Agriculture;
3. Advancing Beneficiation or adding value to mineral wealth
4. Encouraging private sector investment
5. Unlocking SMMEs, Coops, township and rural enterprises potential
6. Reform and boost role of state-owned companies
7. Moderating workplace conflict
8. A more effective implementation of a higher impact Industrial Action Policy Plan

This dynamic forum serves to bring together women in leadership from different spheres of influence. This forum serves to create a platform of partnerships, championing the cause of women development programmes, lobbying and mobilising. This is about saying how can we help and uplift. This forum is a CALL TO ACTION.

I would like to end with the following well known quotes:

“Behind every successful woman is a tribe of other successful women who have her back.”  
And

“You can do what I cannot do. I can do what you cannot do. Together, we can do great things.” – Mother Theresa

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