



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Speech delivered by the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa, at the Careers at Hilton Live event in Sandton

25 May 2015

Ladies and gentlemen,
Colleagues in hospitality,
And our aspiring young stars in hospitality,

I am delighted to be here with all of you today. For when I come to the Hilton, I feel as if I am coming home. They have been great friends of our Department and truly demonstrate the successful model of private and public sector working together.

We are on the cusp of celebrating youth month - This year marks the 39th anniversary of the Soweto uprisings, and in honour of this, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) has developed a national programme under the theme of "Youth Action for Economic Freedom in Our Lifetime". And what better way than to celebrate it than with this amazing initiative? What better way to remember than to move forward? For what is memory without movement?

As we heed the call of our President to together, move South Africa forward, we are cognizant that there can be no economic development without people development. By empowering our people, we equip them the tools with which to contribute to the economy in a meaningful way and reap the benefits of what South Africa has to offer. Because you, are the future of this country!

We are grateful to the Hilton Hotel World Wide Group, a company that has recognised that investment in training is not an expense but an investment. This belief is mostly cherished by progressive organisations who appreciate that tourism is a labour intensive sector and as such business cannot flourish without a competent human resources team.

This is against a short sighted belief that training is an expense especially in tourism where existence of low level job entry requirements are misconstrued to mean that education (qualifications) and skills are less or not important for employment. The danger about this belief is that some small players in the industry end up employing people from the "street" who are not qualified and not competent. The complex challenges that arise out of this situation are unimaginable.

The Hilton Group has also indicated its enthusiasm to be part of our Women in Tourism initiative. This serves to position women in the workplace. Addressing the long term challenges of women participation requires proactive planning. Focus on young women interested and entering the sector is necessary and critical. The Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill provides government with the legislative authority to fast-track the empowerment of women and address issues of enforcement and compliance towards the attainment of our target of 50/50 gender parity.

We are also grateful that Hilton Hotel World Wide Group is one of the leading companies in the implementation of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) as called upon by government to "open up their workplaces as training spaces". Our young graduates will not have the necessary experience if companies like Hilton Hotel World Wide Group do not open their doors to young graduates.

We further would like to applaud the Hilton Hotel World Wide Group for taking the lead in hosting a corporate career's expo for the first time in 2013 making today's event the 3rd version of the Hilton Career Expo. Training and development can never be successful without partnerships between and amongst key stakeholders. Partnerships are only meaningful if they significant results such as the

commitments made by the Hilton Hotel World Wide Group at the NTCE 2014 in East London. We therefore call upon other companies in the industry to follow such examples and make a contribution in the fight against unemployment, poverty and inequality. As the Department of Tourism, we have a number of other programmes that we are implementing in partnership with other key stakeholders wherein Hilton Hotel World Wide Group can also consider participating. These programmes include the following:

National Tourism Careers Expo (NTCE)

The National Tourism Careers Expo (NTCE), which is an annual exposition to showcase and promote tourism careers and professional opportunities that exist, promoting the industry as an employer of choice and exposing young people to existing business opportunities in the sector, will be hosted by the Free State Province in Bloemfontein on 01 – 03 October 2015 for the next three years i.e. 2015, 2016 and 2017. The target groups are young people from grade 09 – 12 at high school, TVET College and university students and unemployed graduates. Industry players participate as speakers and exhibitors. Hilton Hotel World Wide Group was represented at the NTCE 2014 as a speaker at the opening ceremony. Hilton did not only represent itself but the industry at large. This was not the first time Hilton supported the NTCE and spoke at its platform, it has been happening since 2008 in Durban. We will appreciate your team's further participation at the Free State NTCE.

In November 2014, the Department of Tourism in partnership with Umalusi, Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality, Sports, Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) launched a Curriculum Evaluation Report. The report covers Tourism, Hospitality and Consumer Studies curriculum at grade 10 – 12 wherein recommendations suggest that there should be part review of the Hospitality curriculum and total review for the Tourism one. Big industry players such as Hilton Hotel World Wide Group should play a key role in such processes. The next step will involve advocacy roadshow on the reports content in preparation for implementation of recommendations. We therefore urge Hilton Hotel World Wide Group to participate in these processes as their involvement is critical.

The Educator Exposure Programme

The Educator Exposure Programme is the initiative implemented at the request of high school educators' country wide to conduct seminars and place educators at various facilities for better understanding of the sector. Educators' Seminars are conducted annually by the department in partnership with Federated Hospitality Association of South Africa (FEDHASA). Hilton Hotel World Wide Group is a member of FEDHASA and is expected to make a meaningful contribution into this initiative by supporting them in whichever possible way they can. However the Educators Placement Programme requires serious full support of the Hilton Hotel World Wide Group as a host to tourism and hospitality educators from the surrounding community areas. This should happen as and when requests for placement are made by the Department of Tourism / FEDHASA / Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) team.

The Food Safety Assurers Programme

During the 2010 FIFA world cup, a gap was identified in the hospitality industry when a question was asked if South Africa is a food safe destination and whether we had the necessary legislation in place, and was the industry was conducting compliance checks on a regular basis? There was no programme dedicated to the development of skills to support streamlined implementation. We have undertaken this programme in partnership with the Federated Hospitality Association of South Africa (FEDHASA) and the South African Food Safety Corporation (SAFSC). A large significant part of the tourism value chain is comprised of the hospitality sector, which broadly provides services that include lodging, restaurants, events, etc. It includes major industry segments such as hotels, guest houses, lodges, etc.

For the youth, this is a new career path resulting in the creation of a new occupational category in the hospitality industry. This programme has given the unemployed graduates a chance to explore new opportunities. It has improved their communication and leadership skills as they had to deal with other staff members in the establishment in which they were placed.

All provinces expressed keenness to support this programme. Also, interest has been expressed by other government departments like Correctional services and Health for their kitchen services in jails and hospitals.

We are hard at work trying to lobby for more funds and support through other institutions like the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) and other government funding agencies for this programme and other programmes that the department is implementing. About 60 percent of the trainees have been guaranteed employment through the hosting establishments. The balance will be assisted to take up different opportunities, such as studying further, starting small businesses and participating in rural outreach amongst others.

Chefs Training

Professional Cookery (Chef) qualification was identified as one of the scarce skills in South Africa according to the Department of Labour (Scarce Skills document, 2011/12). Research has also indicated a need for redress in the field as there are few people in this profession from the previously disadvantaged groups. The Department of Tourism implemented the first phase of the training of young people as Chefs to a tune of R25 million.

In 2011, a total of 810 unemployed youth were enrolled into a three year training programme and received a qualification which is accredited by City and Guilds, which is also recognised by the cookery and food related sectors from small restaurants to large scale hotels. The 810 youth were trained in professional cookery at NQF level 3. Of those, trained a total of 300 youth were enrolled in the second phase of the programme in which they were trained in professional cookery NQF level 5 and those that did not make it into the second level secured employment in the industry. Since the 2012/2013 financial year, the programme has enrolled 500 youth at entry level and 300 in the diploma level. In the third phase, 2013/2014 financial year, there were 450 new entrants trained in National Certificate in Professional Cookery and 250 Diploma and 100 Advance Diploma.

Tourism Ambassador / Buddies Programme

The concept of Tourist Buddies was the idea in which young people would be enrolled in the learning programme to be educated about the importance of a tourist visiting a city or destination, whilst rendering much needed guidance and information services to a visiting tourist. The programme was adopted by the Department of Tourism and implemented in all nine provinces to spread the benefits to other young people.

The tourism buddies programme is an experiential hospitality training programme targeting the unemployed youth of South Africa as part of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) of the Department of Tourism. The objective of the training programme/ learnership is to train the unemployed youth to enable them to acquire skills and gain work experience to enhance employability in the hospitality and tourism sector. In the 2013/2014 financial year, a total of 2000 learners enrolled into the programme and the budget was about R70 million. About 1225 learners were employed either permanently or part time by the hospitality industry.

Sommeliers (Wine Servicing)

The Sommelier training was piloted in 2012 with a tune of R11 million to train 200 unemployed youth from the townships in the wine tasting field. There were 54 learners permanently employed by the Wine industry. The duration of the course was one year and they were trained in the following non accredited training courses:

- South African Wine
- Wine of the World
- Wine Service
- Wine Making

In 2014/2015 about 270 learners were enrolled in the programme for two provinces, Gauteng and Western Cape. The budget was R15 million. Learners were trained in Bar Attendant skills programme which is accredited by the CATHSSETA.

The success story of Luvo Ntezo began when he started as a porter 15 years ago. He then moved on to become glass washer. After a series of studies at the Cape Wine Academy and studies in viticulture, he became head sommelier. In 2008, he was awarded the best sommelier in Africa. Subsequent to that, was awarded 4th best in the world). This talks directly to our commitment to the future sustainability of the tourism industry by supporting young people who have chosen a career in tourism. These have succeeded because we are in partnership with the private sector. We urge more

of private sector partners so as to give more young people opportunities that would change their lives forever.

So on that positive note, I say to you my young stars – continue to shine and to brighten up the sky. Embrace these opportunities and make us proud! Let us remember what was fought for. But let there be memory with movement. Let us move South Africa Forward Together!

I thank you.

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