



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Speech delivered by the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa, at the occasion of the Africa Golf Summit

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Honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen ... It is a real privilege to be here with you today as we create together a platform for discussion and debate on the topic of socio-economic beneficiation through Golf.

Our esteemed former president, Nelson Mandela, once said that "sport has the power to change the world" and he was proven right during the 1995 World Cup held on South African soil when the sport of rugby unified our newly formed democratic nation in ways that little else could.

Sport has the power to break down barriers and bring people together. It is one of those elements in human society that creates a common denominator in a world of ever increasing diversity.

Sport is also big business. Not only the lucrative deals made by the world's top players and their managers, but also because of the millions of sport fans who travel across borders to watch their favourite players and teams.

You need to look no further than the hotly contested bids to host global sporting events for proof of this. Many of the major world sports events have not yet found their way onto African soil, but in South Africa we have already proven that we are equipped with the infrastructure and expertise to successfully host the likes of the Football World Cup.

Some of these infrastructure offerings also lend themselves perfectly as an enabling factor for the sport of golf to flourish in the country. Tournaments such as the Nedbank Golf Challenge, the Africa and South Africa Open, Johannesburg and Tshwane Open, Nelson Mandela Trophy, Dunhill Cup and Volvo Golf Championship already put the country on the golfing map.

We have four very distinct golf regions, namely Gauteng, Kwa Zulu Natal, the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape.

These regions also co-incidentally align perfectly with some of the most beautiful natural tourism attractions in the country.

And so, we have a most extraordinary convergence of sport and tourism.

The National Department of Tourism has identified sport, and in particular, golf, as a revenue-rich niche tourism opportunity. By aligning the two activities we are able to package our nature, wildlife, unique cultures and warm people to provide visiting golf enthusiasts with an enriching travel experience that they would not find easily anywhere else in the world.

Our National Tourism Sector Strategy, approved in March 2011 by Cabinet gives life to our vision of improving the competitiveness of South Africa as a global tourist destination, creating a sustainable and inclusive tourism sector and at the same time harnessing travel and hospitality opportunities to create much needed jobs.

A niche tourism framework further guides us in creating a conducive environment for tourism sector businesses to tap into specific areas such as golf.

This framework outlines:

- the process flow for planning of niche tourism development;
- high value niche tourism markets to be researched;
- suggested research methodologies and focus areas;
- roles and responsibilities for different stakeholders;
- strategies for dissemination of information to stakeholders and communities
- identifying initiatives that support industry growth

Ladies and gentlemen – in line with this framework, the National Department of Tourism and the Limpopo Province staged the country's first ever golf tourism seminar in 2013, followed by a workshop that further unpacked the recommendations of the seminar. A key outcome of the workshop was partnership in hosting the Nelson Mandela Golf Championship. A second seminar will take place at the Championship in December 2015.

We welcome this African Golf Summit precisely because it addresses the priorities of government of creating opportunities for development, especially amongst the youth.

On the part of the Tourism Department we are pleased to participate in discussions that will further the cause of our niche tourism drive, exploring ways to bring the tourism and hospitality trade along as we link inbound golf tourism to both destination competitiveness and socio-economic development.

In conclusion, and in aligning to the theme: "Developing the blue print for a sustainable golf industry and community in Africa", I would like to welcome all the invited guests both internationally and nationally. I encourage all of us to participate and to make commitments towards achieving this intended milestone for Africa and its economies, be it sport, tourism, investment, education, enterprise and community development.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you.