



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Speech by the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa, on the occasion of the Hilton Africa and Indian Ocean Women in Leadership Conference – "Thrive and Lead@hilton"

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Distinguished guests,

Introduction

It is an incredible honour for me to be here to address you today. I look across the room and see a room of game changers, warriors of light and agents of change. That alone inspires me and I am deeply humbled.

Let me start by sharing that President Zuma just returned from a State visit to Indonesia which was preceded by the 20th anniversary of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) at the IORA Leaders' Summit. I am very proud to share that South Africa has accepted chairmanship for the next two years when the current term ends in August this year. And gender empowerment is a key priority of the Association. This in itself sets the scene for this conference as we recognise the socio-economic value of this grouping - bound together by a strategic resource – the Indian Ocean.

As we speak, things are happening on a global level. And that is great news because it means advocacy on an international scale. The UN is presently hosting The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) – 61st Session. This is a global policy-making body dedicated exclusively to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. The session provides an opportunity to review progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women, identify challenges, set global standards and norms and formulate policies to promote gender equality and women's empowerment worldwide. It is also a key opportunity for policy makers, advocates, researchers and activists to network and strategize, mobilize and plan new initiatives and actions to further the cause of gender equality and women's empowerment. I look forward to the outcomes of this commission.

How would you define leadership? I read the Manfred Kets de Vries book entitled "The Leadership Mystique" from which I gleaned much nuggets of wisdom. He goes on to say that "We can better define who we are if we distinguish ourselves from others." He further says that 'Leadership now requires very different behavior from the leadership tradition we are used to. It requires leaders who speak to the collective imagination of their people, coopting them to join their business journey; leaders who are able to motivate people to full commitment and have them make that extra effort."

He further adds that leadership 'never happens in isolation.' There can be no leaders without followers, and all leadership activities take place within a context. It becomes imperative that we understand this complexity for us to succeed in what we set out to achieve and set ourselves a common goal. And the reason why some programmes fail is because of the "silo effect." Let us celebrate our differences and supplement each other's strengths – this is called cooptation.

I salute the Hilton Group for this initiative - The Hilton Africa and Indian Ocean Women in Leadership Conference's aim is to focus on educating, empowering and mobilising women to seek and take on opportunities in order to actively obtain careers in the company. Objectives of the Conference are to

educate, empower and create a sharing platform for African and Indian Women to take ownership of their success.

This is in line with the AU African Agenda 2063 mandate. Regional integration is critical and this conference gives expression to the AU African Agenda 2063 – the industrialisation and development plan for the AU - which aims to ensure that women are fully empowered with equal access and opportunity in all spheres of life. This means that the African woman would have equal economic rights, including the rights to own and inherit property, sign a contract, register and manage a business. Over 90% of rural women would have access to productive assets, including land, credit, inputs and financial services. The Africa of 2063 would see the attainment of full gender parity. It would see women occupy 50% of elected offices at state, regional and local bodies, and 50% of managerial positions in government and private sector would be women. The AU has also declared 2015 – 2025 as the Decade of African Seas and Oceans and the Blue Economy is an essential part of Agenda 2063.

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 SMMEs and 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 do this, we need the buy in and collaborate across the broad spectrum of society and with the private sector as we are collectively responsible for advancing the South African economy.

In South Africa, we continue our resolute march towards the realisation of the aims and objectives of the vision for Africa as expressed in the Agenda 2063. The full and total emancipation of women in all spheres of life is slowly becoming a reality, however, South Africa realises that there is a need to accelerate this process.

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 government we strive to create the necessary environment for our roleplayers, the Private Sector to drive forward while ensuring Community participation. 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.

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.

- South Africa is confident that the Africa of 2063 would see fully empowered women with equal access and opportunity in all spheres of life. This means that the African woman would have equal economic rights, including the rights to own and inherit property, sign a contract, register and manage a business. Over 90% of rural women would have access to productive assets, including land, credit, inputs and financial services. The Africa of 2063 would see the attainment of full gender parity. It would see women occupy 50% of elected offices at state, regional and local bodies, and 50% of managerial positions in government and private sector would be women.
- South Africa aims to achieve equal and fair representation of women in the various spheres of government and private sector decision-making levels, and also in the ownership and management landscape in the hospitality industry.
- In South Africa, it must be noted that the captains of the industry are trailblazers trying their best to pave the way for other women to advance through an enabling environment mentorship and upliftment. In South Africa, the hospitality sector is made up of nearly 70% women workforce. However, at the top senior positions more has to be done to advance women in senior executive positions – women hold less than 40% of all managerial positions,

less than 20% of general management roles and between 5-8% of board positions in the industry.

- The Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063 is committed to achieve full gender equality and significantly empower African women by 2023 at the national, regional and continental levels. This is in tandem with the global objective of Sustainable Development Goal Number 5, that is, to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Moving forward on implementation it will be important to ensure that a gender perspective is mainstreamed across both agendas.
- The participation of women in the value chain of activities of the tourism industry is just as important as their advancement in the industry. Tourism cuts across most economic sectors. Subsequent to the launch of our Tourism Incentive Programme (TIP) in March 2015 – with the overarching policy rationale rooted in the National Development Plan (NDP) and the New Growth Path (NGP) - that recognises tourism as a labour intensive and tradable service sector and a catalyst to support 'faster and more inclusive economic growth', the Department of Tourism has established an Enterprise Development Project. The Department also hosts a regular Indaba where the Department's SMME programme was launched.
- Indaba is the Pan African Tradeshow welcoming the participation of all countries located in the Indian Ocean Pacific Rim. It is a platform for thought leaders in the industry and especially women leaders.
- In 2015, the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) met on the fringes of Indaba and recognised that substantial benefits could be accrued by member states through the enhancement of tourist linkages and marketing within the region. IORA recommends that member states should strive towards regional cooperation in tourism, especially to achieve sustainable tourism growth in the region. The previous year – 2014 – Indaba hosted the inaugural AU Tourism Ministers meeting. Seychelles hosted the African Ministers Working Group. One of the outcomes was the development of the Blue Economy. Africa shares a vast coastline – thus economic opportunities can be unlocked across borders through these fora. Increasingly, it is important to ensure that women's interests and participation on these platforms is established in the future.

According to recent research (2015), the tourism and hospitality sector has become an economic and social phenomenon, demonstrating above average growth for the fifth consecutive year in 2015 since the 2009 economic crisis and is set to create 70 million new jobs over the next 10 years.

Within the industry, women make up nearly 70% of the workforce; however there is a marked under-representation of women in senior positions, with women holding less than 40% of all managerial positions, less than 20% of general management roles and between 5-8% of board positions.

A study conducted by the Department of Tourism (NDT) in 2011 to assess the state of transformation found that the vast majority of enterprises (85-90%) have no black female share-holding. Many tourism enterprises, especially the Exempt Micro Enterprises (EMEs) and Qualifying Small Enterprise (QSEs), have not introduced any full black shareholding into their organisations since they are predominantly family owned and managed businesses.

The Department together with its partners are mobilising programmes / projects aimed at progressing and advancing women to contribute to the future economic wellbeing of the economy. The following is done by the department in this regard:

Women Executive Development Programme

The Department has established a Women Executive Development Programme in collaboration with the University of South Africa (UNISA) -SBL wherein it is currently putting through 19 women through an executive programme to ensure that they are ready for higher positions in their companies. After recruitment, 20 women who were successful were selected from different hotel groups, travel agencies, car hire services and airlines across the country. The training continues over a 12 months

period since July 2016. It is a distance learning programme with two study blocks. By now 19 women are actively and committedly going through the programme till the end June 2017.

Women In Tourism Forum

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 Department established Women in Tourism Association in 2013 and it was launched in 2014 at Indaba. Its agenda centres on commanding Respect, ascertaining Recognition of women contribution in the sector, encourage Representation in economic activities and leadership, and producing results that will enhance the supply and demand for domestic tourism. Its programme of action includes the continued mobilisation of women towards the establishment of chapters in all provinces. The 3rd Women in Tourism Annual Conference in October 2016 was a resounding success. This included an insightful high-level talk followed by various panel discussions in the main conference with the goal to bring women together to find solutions to the economic challenges that hinder their entrepreneurial progress in the sector.

The Department also participated in the Women of Value South Africa (WOVSA) inaugural co-operatives indaba. WOVSA is a non-profit organisation formed in 2011 whose mission is to impact on the lives of women and youth to be part of the mainstream socio and economic development in South Africa. Their role is to mobilise, advocate, lobby, facilitate, monitor and evaluate as well as do research and develop programmes that respond to the mission of the organisation.

Let us use our positions in our various spaces as levers to unlock and create further opportunities. May this conference provide the platform for just that. I wish you a most fruitful conference.

I thank you.

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