



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**Address by the Minister of Tourism, Patricia de Lille, at the BARSA Vulindlela  
Aviation Summit in Cape Town**

**10 March 2023**

Good morning, molweni, goeie more, as-salaam alaikum, shalom,

It is my great pleasure to address you all here today as important stakeholders in the tourism sector and in my first week as the Minister of Tourism.

Tourism is a major sector for our country and we have much more to offer the world. We can do a lot more to reach our full potential and create many more jobs for our people.

Tourism has always been a passion of mine because I am blessed to be born in this beautiful country.

We are blessed with a good climate, beautiful scenery, beautiful beaches, ranges and mountains and diverse cultures and people and some of the best food and restaurants in the world.

I have always said that our best asset is our people and I have heard this from people all over the world, that South Africans are some of the friendliest people.

I have just started in this new portfolio so I am grateful for the opportunity to introduce myself to industry representatives here today.

I understand the importance of this sector that must bring more people into our country.

Ladies and gentlemen we are making a great recovery after the devastating blow that was COVID 19, we now have to work and push even harder to get our numbers to higher heights.

We are seeing great growth in our tourist arrival numbers between January and December 2022 where it reached 5.7million.

This represents an increase of 152.6% from January to December 2021.

It is encouraging to see that the biggest number of arrivals was from Africa with an increase of 126.6% between January and December 2022 compared to 2021.

With the growth we have seen, I am committed to working with BARSA and to find new ways and means to increase air access in and out of our country even more.

I look forward to engaging with you more in detail at a later stage.

South Africa is open for business, it is one of the world's most picturesque playgrounds, it is a melting pot of cultures and people and it is the place to be.

With that, I thank you for having me here today and I wish you all the best with your gathering and your respective areas of work and let's do tourism.

Let's leave here ready to action what we need to and make tourism the crown jewel in our economy that it is meant to be.

Thank you and God bless.

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