

2011 Tourism Indaba looms as Zuma rallies support for tourism at WEF on Africa



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The 2011 Tourism Indaba, which will unpack the new goals set for the tourism industry, will kick off on Saturday, 7 May 2011, at the Albert Luthuli Convention Centre in Durban. South Africa, ranked 32nd globally in business tourism, will host the 21st World Economic Forum (WEF) on Africa during which President Jacob Zuma will promote tourism on the sidelines by signing the United Nations world tourism organisations' 'Golden Book' in Cape Town.



"We have always maintained that Indaba is far more than just a four-day event," SA Tourism CEO Thandiwe January-McLean said last week.

"It's the result of a year's hard work from the entire tourism industry, as we look to consistently build on innovation, visitor numbers and the stature of Indaba year on year," she pointed out.

"When it comes to the actual physical creation of the Indaba showcase, it's the combination of the efforts of over 100 000 hours put in to deliver the show between our production partners, agencies, rigging crew and SA Tourism personnel."

Thousands of delegates, exhibitors

Close to 13 000 delegates from about 90 countries are set to attend this year's conference, with approximately 18% (or 2294) pre-registration visitor applications coming from international markets, the organisers said, adding that close to 2000 exhibitors will showcase their products.

Furthermore, they said 744 delegates are buyers who will bring with them tens of millions of rands in buying power. Media attendance at this year is estimated to be between 400 and 500.

SA Tourism, which is the national tourism agency in charge of marketing SA as a preferred tourist destination, is hosting the event with the support of the national department of tourism.

Tourism minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk, alongside the country's tourism MECs, will accompany President Zuma

tomorrow, 4 May 2010, at the signing of the tourism's 'Golden Book' in Cape Town on the sidelines of WEF on Africa, due to be held on 4-6 May in Cape Town and attended by 900 delegates from 60 countries.

Zuma's spokesperson Zizi Kodwa said the Global Leaders for Tourism (also known as 'The Golden Book'), is a joint UN World Tourism Organisation, (UNWTO) and the World Travel and Tourism Council, (WTTC) initiative to position travel and tourism higher in the global agenda.

The aim

The aim of the campaign, Kodwa added, is to mobilise recognition and support for the tourism sector from world leaders, by demonstrating travel and tourism's crucial role in economic growth, job creation and development.

SA has identified tourism as one of the six job drivers of the New Growth Path.

Tourism in SA has grown massively over the past six years, with a total of 63 million tourists said to have visited Mandela's country between 2003 and 2009, while about 31 million of South Africans undertook domestic trips in 2009.

SA Tourism spokesperson Jermaine Craig said: "If you are one of the unfortunate few not joining the more than 8000 people expected at this year's Indaba Beach party and the thousands more at the show, be sure to tune into all the action on Indaba TV.

"More than 45 hours of live and recorded coverage will be broadcast across the four days, free to air on the exclusive Indaba TV channel. The broadcasts will be played on various screens in and around the exhibition halls, as well as in selected hotel rooms around Durban."

For more information, including media and visitor registration, go to www.indaba-southafrica.co.za.

ABOUT ISSA SIKITI DA SILVA

Issa Sikiti da Silva is a winner of the 2010 SADC Media Awards (print category). He freelances for various media outlets, local and foreign, and has travelled extensively across Africa. His work has been published both in French and English. He used to contribute to Bizcommunity.com as a senior news writer.

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