

# Film project set to benefit from treaty between SA and Ireland

IX Hours, a film project already in development, reportedly stands to be one of the first to benefit from a co-production treaty signed between South Africa and Ireland last weekend.

Irish producer David Collins and DV8 Films' Jeremy Nathan, of South Africa, are set to tap into the financial benefits of the new agreement. The movie will be shot in SA and post-production done in Ireland.

"The international marketplace is very crowded, and in order to stand out you need to make a powerful, interesting film, which we believe we have got the foundation of. But you also need the financial and political support to be noticed in this crowded market place," said Nathan.

The treaty was signed at this year's Cannes Film Festival, which South Africa used to strengthen its ties within the global film industry. The agreement came hot on the heels of SA's largest Bollywood cinema operator sealing a three-film deal with India's Yash Raj Studios.

## In the pipeline for nine years

Arts and Culture minister Paul Mashatile was on hand to sign the co-production treaty with his Irish counterpart Jimmy Deenihan.

The deal has been in the pipeline for the past nine years, and builds on past co-productions between the countries, such as John Boorman's *Country of My Skull*, featuring Juliette Binoche and Samuel L Jackson. In terms of the agreement, productions from both territories can qualify for the incentives available in each country for homegrown content producers, thereby enhancing cost sharing and encouraging a transfer of skills. SA has seven other co-production treaties - with Canada, Germany, Italy, the UK, France, Australia and New Zealand - which have yielded valuable collaborations.

Mashatile expressed excitement at the possibilities created by the latest treaty, saying it would help grow the economies of both countries.

The deal between the Avalon Group, SA's oldest independent cinema exhibition and entertainment company, and Yash Raj, the largest independent Bollywood studio, would deliver a larger Bollywood audience. The three films will feature top Bollywood stars Salman Khan, Shahrukh Khan and Aamir Khan.

Source: *Business Day* via I-Net Bridge

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