

World Trade Centre EMEA meeting set for 2012

More than 1000 business and government representatives from across the world will gather together in Cape Town, South Africa, for the World Trade Center EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) regional meeting to take place from 30 May - 1 June 2012.



The World Trade Centers Association based in New York recently announced at the World Trade Center (WTC) EMEA meeting in Belgium, that Cape Town had won the bid to host the meeting. The event will allow the World Trade Center Africa Initiative (the sub-Saharan African network of World Trade Centers) the opportunity to directly engage with more than 100 international World Trade Centers, and will see more than 1000 significant global players attending.

The World Trade Centre Africa Initiative

The WTC Africa Initiative has already received an interest of close to US\$2 billion worth of business, spread across 12 African countries, including South Africa. Furthermore, in addition to the invaluable exposure South Africa will receive through its hosting of the event, it will also give a welcome boost to local tourism and service industries.

The WTC Africa Initiative has, after months of intense lobbying and negotiation, built up a current portfolio of 275 projects involving key industries across sub-Saharan Africa, including agriculture, chemicals, construction, education, finance, ICT, logistics, medical, mining, oil and gas, packaging, steel, and wholesale/retail. In addition to these significant local achievements, it has also secured a bi-lateral agreement with a European trade partner, which is set to welcome an era of unrivalled trade between that country and Africa.

Julius Steyn, president of WTC Africa Initiative, says they are delighted with the opportunity of hosting the EMEA meeting, and will use it to show the world that Africa is "open for trade".

"This honour came after months of intense work to ensure that we can bring the world to Africa next year," he said.

"We are entering a new era of trade in Africa. While business leaders across the world are sometimes nervous about perceived barriers to trading in Africa, the WTC presence in Africa is steadily working at easing challenges and changing perceptions in order to develop trade on the continent through a secure platform.

"This is achieved by way of trade facilitation, which is about streamlining and simplifying international trade procedures in order to allow for an easier flow of goods and trade at both national and international level. Through trade facilitation, the WTC Africa Initiative reduces trade barriers and increases trade efficiencies."

Future of Trade Expo 2012

During the EMEA meeting, the WTC Africa Initiative will host Africa's the Future of Trade Expo 2012 which will consist of 12 Africa-focused pavilions encompassing the trade, industry and tourism sectors. The expo will effectively put the whole of Africa on show, from Cape Town to Kinshasa. African World Trade Centers, International African Chambers of Commerce, industry specific export councils and large NGOs will also be represented.

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