



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**MEDIA STATEMENT BY THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF TOURISM,  
MR MARTHINUS VAN SCHALKWYK**

The South African tourism industry today took a ground breaking stride on a new path to reach bold growth objectives over the next five years, the Minister of Tourism, Mr Marthinus van Schalkwyk, said today at the launch of the first ever National Tourism Sector Strategy.

The National Department of Tourism (NDT) initiated and managed an inclusive process to draft a National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS) to accelerate the responsible growth of the tourism industry from 2010 to 2015. The draft NTSS was approved for public comment by Cabinet earlier this week and was launched at an event in Gauteng today. The NTSS will be gazetted in the Government Gazette on Friday 28 May 2010 for a period of 60 days.

“I believe this strategy, which is the result of a collective industry-wide effort, places South African tourism firmly on a new and ambitious growth trajectory for the future. We recognise the vital role tourism must play in growing the economy and creating jobs. The tourism industry as a whole is resolute in its determination to optimise its contribution,” Minister van Schalkwyk said.

“Internationally, tourism has become one of the major trade categories. Figures from the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) show that the number of international arrivals grew from a mere 25 million in 1950 to 880 million in 2009. Growth is projected to speed up even further, with international arrivals projected to double to 1.6 billion in 2020. International arrivals to Africa also more than doubled from 18.6 million in 1995 to 45.9 million in 2009 and it is forecasted to reach 77 million by 2020, with a projected growth rate of 5% per year.

“South Africa will be no exception to this global trend of accelerating growth and an increasing contribution of tourism to national economies and job creation.

“Our foreign arrivals have increased from about 3 million in 1993 to 9.9 million last year. The compound average growth rate of foreign arrivals to South Africa between 2002 and 2009 was 6.4%, which far outpaces the global trend,” Minister van Schalkwyk said.

“Total foreign direct spend in South Africa grew by 7% from R74.2 billion in 2008 to R79.4 billion in 2009, driven by African land markets and the Asian and Australasia regions. In the same period global tourism receipts declined by 5.8%, showing that South Africa managed to defy the worldwide trend in 2009 of declining arrivals and spend. Our South African industry has demonstrated resilience in the face of very difficult circumstances, and I believe we are poised to perform even better in 2010.

“This does not mean, however, that we can rest on our laurels. The potential of South Africa’s tourism resource is much greater than we even dare imagine, and in order to exploit it to our utmost advantage, we need a properly planned, coordinated and executed strategy,” Minister van Schalkwyk said.

“We recognise that a coordinated strategic approach is necessary in order to realise our objectives. I am pleased that we now have a comprehensive strategy on the table which will guide us in terms of medium term goals. It is vital that all role-players take action to implement this strategy if we as a country are to realise our inherent tourism potential and ensure that the investment made into preparations for the World Cup is fully optimised,” Minister van Schalkwyk said.

The Minister also thanked the panel of 32 experts from across all stakeholder groups in the industry, chaired by Mr Robert Gumede, for the pivotal role they played in guiding the development of the NTSS and their commitment to the process

The vision statement for tourism in South Africa, as encapsulated in the NTSS, is to boldly grow responsible tourism together to deliver memorable experiences for all our tourists and sustainable benefits for all South Africans.

The core objectives identified in the NTSS which will steer the industry towards its vision are to: grow the tourism sector’s absolute contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) by more than average GDP growth; achieve transformation within the tourism sector; provide excellent people development and decent work within the tourism sector; entrench a culture of travel amongst South Africans; deliver a world-class visitor experience; and address the issue of geographic, seasonal and rural spread.

In the NTSS the tourism industry identified the following medium term actions and targets to be reached by 2015:

- To grow tourism's direct contribution to GDP from an estimated R64.5 billion or 3.2% of GDP in 2009 to R125 billion or 3.5% of GDP;
- To grow tourism's total (direct and indirect) contribution to GDP from an estimated R173.9 billion or 8.7% of GDP in 2009 to R338.2 billion or 9.4% of GDP;
- To increase the number of foreign arrivals from 9.9 million in 2009 to 13.5 million;
- To increase the number of direct jobs supported by the sector from an estimated 575 000 in 2009 to 800 000; and
- To increase the number of total (direct and indirect) jobs supported by the sector from an estimated 1.4 million in 2009 to 1.9 million.

The strategy is a sector-wide plan, and includes deliverables for all role players across the wider spectrum of the sector. The Minister said the NDT would lead and monitor the implementation of the strategy and a Sector Delivery Forum would be established to coordinate the implementation of the strategy.

"I am very pleased that the NTSS also includes action plans for each of the strategic thrusts. It is very important that all of us in the industry work together to implement these steps so that we can track our progress and measure our performance," Minister van Schalkwyk said.

One of the highlights in the action plan is the envisaged establishment of a national convention and events bureau responsible for business tourism and events marketing and development.

The NDT would like to invite comments on the NTSS and the full strategy is available for downloading on our website at <http://www.tourism.gov.za/Pages/tourism-Indaba.aspx>. Comments should be submitted to [strategy@tourism.gov.za](mailto:strategy@tourism.gov.za) by 31 July 2010.

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