



MEETINGS AFRICA

DAILY NEWS

Issue 1 | 25 FEBRUARY 2025



Welcome to Meetings Africa 2025!

It is with immense joy and pride that I welcome you all to Meetings Africa 2025 - a proudly Pan-African gathering that embodies the very best of Africa's business events industry. This event is not just a trade show; it is a powerful platform where ideas meet opportunity, where connections spark innovation, and where Africa stands together to showcase its limitless potential.

This year, we reaffirm our commitment to positioning Africa as a global powerhouse in the MICE sector. Our trade floor proudly represents 27 African nations, each

eager to engage with top global buyers from across the world.

We are honoured to once again host this prestigious event in the City of Johannesburg and the greater Gauteng province—a destination renowned for its energy, vibrancy and world-class hospitality. South Africa welcomes you with open arms.

Africa is not waiting for the world to recognise its potential — we are stepping forward, boldly and confidently, to take our rightful place on the global stage. This year's event carries even greater significance as South Africa assumes the presidency of the G20—a historic milestone that elevates our continent's voice in shaping global economic priorities. The MICE industry plays a pivotal role in driving economic growth, fostering cross-border trade, and strengthening Africa's influence on the world stage. Let us use this opportunity to advance Africa together, ensuring that our business events industry continues to be a force for progress and prosperity.

Yesterday, we kicked off with the Business Opportunity Networking Day (BONDay)—a day dedicated to learning, collaboration, and industry development. My heartfelt gratitude goes to the Board Chairperson of South African Tourism, Dr. Gregory Davids, for his inspiring opening address.

Today, as we officially open the trade floor, I look forward to engaging with all the delegates across and welcoming new participants. Your presence here

reaffirms that Africa's business events industry is expanding, diversifying, and reaching new horizons.

I wish you all a productive, inspiring, and rewarding Meetings Africa 2025. May the connections you make and the partnerships you build here propel Africa's MICE industry to even greater heights.

To all our visitors from outside of South Africa - While your time here may be brief, I encourage you to explore beyond the corridors of the Sandton Convention Centre. I invite you to embrace the warmth of our people, the richness of our cultures, and the spirit of Ubuntu that makes Africa truly special.

I invite you to explore South Africa's breathtaking landscapes, vibrant cities, and charming small towns, villages, townships, and dorps. Experience the warm hospitality that stretches across all nine provinces, where every corner offers a story, a smile, and an unforgettable adventure. There's so much more to discover—come and truly meet South Africa!

Minister of Tourism, South Africa
Honourable Patricia De Lille



Patricia De Lille, Minister of Tourism

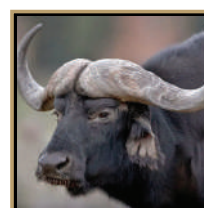
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TUESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2025

TIME	EVENT	VENUE
08:00 - 10:00	TRADE FLOOR OPENING The Official opening ceremony of Meetings Africa 2025. Guests are requested to be seated at 8.30am for 9am.	Exhibition Level -2 - Restaurant Area Open to all attendees
09:00 - 14:00	TOURISM COMMUNICATORS MEETING Event hosted by the Department of Tourism.	Sandton Convention Centre Committee Room 4 By Invitation Only
10:00 - 12:00	MINISTER OF TOURISM - WALK-ABOUT The Minister of Tourism does the official walk-about of the Meetings Africa exhibition floor. Exhibitors have the opportunity to engage the stakeholder in an intimate way.	Sandton Convention Centre - Hall 1 & -2 Pre-selected exhibitors & Ministerial, Board and EXCO Entourage
10:00 - 17:00	EXHIBITION TIMES Vendors featuring local products for sale.	Sandton Convention Centre - Exhibition 1 Open to all attendees
10:00 - 17:00	TRUSTED TOUR OPERATOR SCHEME (TTOS) Trusted Tour Operator Scheme (TTOS) selling South Africa to Chinese and Indian Tour Operators.	Floor -2 , Main Stage Open to all attendees
11:00 - 11:30	BOMA TALKS - SESSION 1: Building Strategic Partnerships: How Collaboration Can Drive Growth in the Business Events Industry Business Opportunity Meetings Aspirations - intimate conversations between delegates.	BOMA 1: Collaboration for Success (Exhibition Level 1, Escalators) Open to all attendees
11:00 - 14:00	SUSTAINABILITY VILLAGE The Sustainability Village is an iconic feature of Meetings Africa where delegates can support local arts and crafters to purchase authentic South African products. Operates during show times.	Sandton Convention Centre - Level- 2 Open to all attendees
12:00 - 13:00	GLOBAL EDITORIAL BRIEFING: How Trusted Tour Operators Scheme (TTOS) will contribute to the growth of South Africa's business events sector in collaboration with Department of Home Affairs - A media focused panel discussion.	Media Centre - Café Nala Open to Media and other attendees
15:00 - 15:30	BOMA TALKS - SESSION 2: AI-Powered Collaboration Tools for MICE Professionals: Streamlining Processes and Enhancing Productivity Business Opportunity Meetings Aspirations - intimate conversations between delegates.	BOMA 1: Collaboration for Success (Exhibition Level 1, Escalators) Open to all attendees
18:00 - 22:00	MEETINGS AFRICA WELCOME NETWORKING EVENT The Meetings Africa Welcome Networking Event seeks to immerse delegates in an authentic Johannesburg experience.	Sandton Convention Centre - Exhibition 2 Open to all invited

Scan For the Meetings Africa 2025 App!



In recent years, the global meetings industry has begun to recognise Africa as a sought after destination. Meetings Africa showcases Africa’s diverse offering of services and products where African associations and African meetings industry professionals can partner to help transform our continent.

Scan the following QR code to download and install the Meetings Africa 2025 App and follow the installation instructions. If you experience any difficulties please go to the information desk

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Record-Breaking Meetings Africa 2025: A Platform for Africa to Own Its Narrative

BONDay saw industry leaders reinforce the importance of unity in positioning Africa as a continent ready for investment and innovation.



The 19th edition of Meetings Africa, the premier Pan-African event for the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) industry, officially kicked off on Monday, setting new records in participation and engagement.

This year's event boasts 410 exhibitors - including 113 SMMEs - and more than 8 000 confirmed meetings. With more than 320 buyers in attendance, a notable increase from last year, Meetings Africa continues to grow as a powerful platform for advancing Pan African collaboration and economic impact.

The event opened with BONDay (Business Opportunities Networking Day), where industry leaders reinforced the importance of unity in positioning Africa as a continent ready for investment and innovation.

Showcase our Collective Strength

Delivering a welcome address, Professor Gregory Davids, Chair of the SA Tourism Board, welcomed delegates from over sixty countries, including first-time exhibitors from Morocco, Madagascar, Guinea, and Chad. Highlighting the increasing significance of Africa's MICE sector, he emphasized its vital role in job creation and economic growth.

"Every event we host is an opportunity to showcase our collective strength. For too long, others have

controlled our story - today, we take ownership of our narrative. This is a story of strength and resilience," Davids declared.

He also underscored the significance of BONDay as a cornerstone for industry collaboration, knowledge exchange, strategic partnerships, and business networking.

Vast Opportunities

Following his address, His Excellency Albertus Aochamub, Namibian Ambassador to France, reinforced the global impact of Africa's success:

"A thriving Africa strengthens the global economy. From maritime development to renewable energy and digital marketing, our continent offers vast investment opportunities. We are a young, skilled population looking for trade, not aid."

The morning plenary session, focusing on the upcoming G20 Summit to be hosted for the first time in Africa, featured a dynamic discussion with key partners including Sthembiso Dlamini, CEO of the Gauteng Tourism Authority, Mpumi Mabuza, General Manager of Stakeholder Relations at Brand SA, Glenton de Kock, CEO of the South African Association for the Conference Industry (SAACI), and Nombulelo Guliwe, CEO of South African Tourism.

"Meetings Africa is deeply rooted in fostering connections and promoting business events across the



Professor Gregory Davids

continent. Our commitment extends to ensuring an inclusive industry that benefits all players, from small businesses to large enterprises," said Guliwe.

Reshape Narratives

The panellists echoed this sentiment agreeing that Meetings Africa not only highlights South Africa's quality assured business events and facilities, but also elevates the continent's global profile through its growing media presence. They emphasised that a thriving MICE industry drives economic benefits for local communities, creating opportunities throughout the value chain.

Looking ahead, Guliwe expressed optimism that South Africa's hosting of the G20 Summit in November would further enhance global perceptions of the country.

"We believe the G20 Summit will reshape narratives about Africa, inspiring more people to visit, invest, and do business here," she concluded.

With excitement building for the G20 and its lead-up events, Meetings Africa 2025 is poised to play a pivotal role in shaping Africa's global economic footprint.

"Every event we host is an opportunity to showcase our collective strength. For too long, others have controlled our story - today, we take ownership of our narrative. This is a story of strength and resilience."

- Professor Gregory Davids.

A photograph of three business professionals in a meeting. A woman with curly hair, wearing a beige blazer, is seated at a table and smiling. To her left, a man with glasses and a beard is also smiling. To her right, another man is partially visible, smiling. They are all looking at a tablet or document on the table. A yellow circular graphic is in the upper right corner.

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Welcome to Jozi 

Fulufhelo Emre Tharaga Wins Future Leaders Forum Challenge

The elated Vaal University of Technology student was crowned the winner of the 2025 Future Leaders Forum – International University Challenge at Meetings Africa.

The 2025 Future Leaders Forum – International University Challenge at this year's Meetings Africa.

An elated Fulufhelo Emre Tharaga from Vaal University of Technology was crowned the winner of the 2025 Future Leaders Forum – International University Challenge at this year's Meetings Africa.

Tharaga was announced as the winner during a session on BONDay at Meetings Africa 2025, held at the Sandton Convention Centre on Monday. The first runner-up title went to Sidney Atieno from the Technical University of Kenya, while Prince Matlakala from Cape Peninsula University of Technology secured second runner-up.

An initiative by the South African National Convention Bureau (SANCb), the competition is open to young people under the age of 35 currently studying Tourism and Hospitality. It offers students an opportunity to showcase their creativity in conceptualising, planning, and coordinating business events.

As the 2025 winner, Tharaga has earned a sponsored trip to attend the global Future Leaders Forum at IMEX Frankfurt in May this year, where she will engage with industry leaders and gain international exposure.

Congratulations to Fulufhelo Emre Tharaga and all the finalists for their outstanding achievements!



Balancing Profit and Purpose for a Sustainable Future

Implementing a robust Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy allows MICE organisations to make a meaningful impact.

Businesses in the MICE sector must actively contribute to the wellbeing of local communities. Implementing a robust Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy allows MICE organisations to make a meaningful impact by engaging in philanthropy, volunteer work, and sustainability initiatives.

Reducing carbon footprints, conserving resources, and upholding ethical business practices are key to ensuring that business success goes hand in hand with social and environmental progress.

Investing in Skills Development

To make a difference, CSR efforts must go beyond

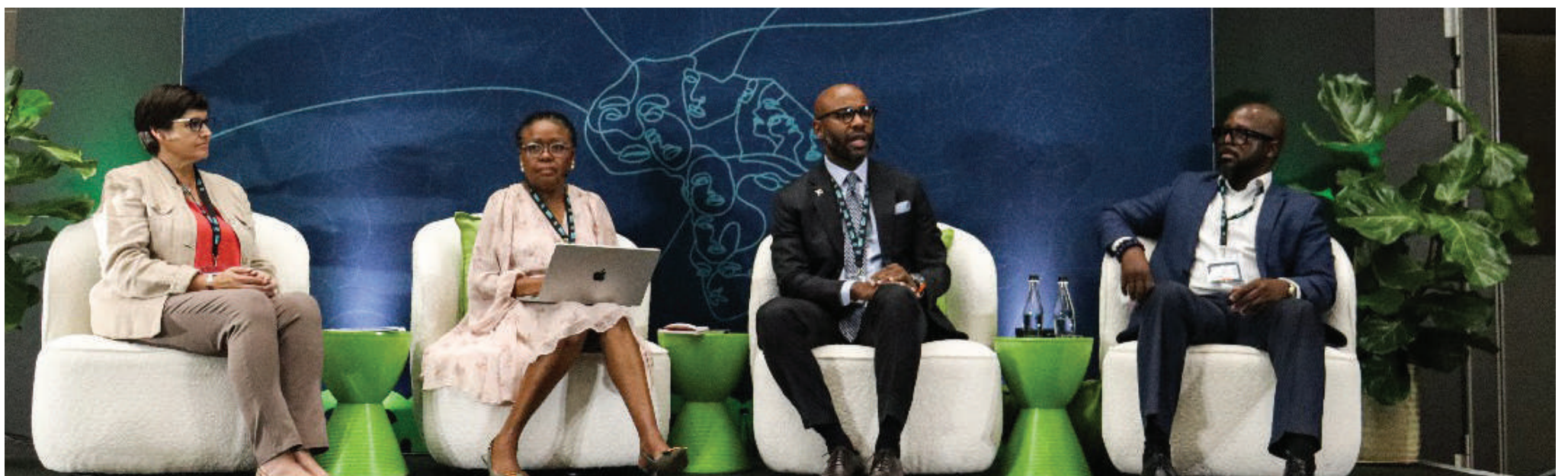
once-off initiatives and be embedded in long-term business strategies. Investing in skills development, promoting job creation, and ensuring equitable access to opportunities are essential in building resilient local economies. By fostering meaningful engagement with communities, MICE businesses can bridge gaps in education, infrastructure, and social support systems.

Embracing CSR in the MICE industry also means addressing the critical issue of accessibility and inclusion. Ensuring that business events provide equal opportunities for participation, regardless of socio-economic background, fosters a more diverse and dynamic industry.

Supporting Small Businesses

This can be achieved by creating mentorship programmes, offering scholarships for skills development, and supporting small businesses in the event supply chain.

Additionally, investing in infrastructure that accommodates people with disabilities and ensuring fair labour practices within event operations further strengthens the industry's social impact. When MICE businesses prioritise inclusivity, they not only expand their reach but also contribute to a more equitable and empowered society.





A SPACE TO SHAPE IDEAS

Sandton Convention Centre - located in the heart of Sandton within easy walking distance of the Gautrain Sandton station - has direct access via skywalks to two prestigious shopping centres. A variety of surrounding Southern Sun Hotels from luxury, full service and select service categories offer a choice of over 1,000 rooms.

With 22,000m² of flexible event space, Sandton Convention Centre has the capacity to host large-scale events for up to 4,500 guests. For gala dinners the triple-volume Ballroom can host up to 1,500 guests and the Pavillion 2,000 guests.

The two exhibition venues, Exhibition 1 (5,430m²) and Exhibition 2 (5,050m²) provide ample space supported by a full range of services and facilities to ensure world-class consumer or B2B expos and confexes for both local and international clients.

Sandton Convention Centre's offering also includes a range of smaller meeting rooms and venues for more intimate events catering for anything over 10 people.

In total, 19 venues are housed over multiple levels with capacity to accommodate a total of up to 10,000 visitors at any one time.

Let Sandton Convention Centre be your next venue of choice!

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Rwanda aiming for record revenue growth from MICE sector

All the work being done in the next five years is to work towards this goal, says Janet Karemera, CEO of Rwanda Convention Bureau.

This year at Meetings Africa, Rwanda will continue to showcase the country's state-of-the-art facilities, growing hospitality sector and key factors that make it an ideal destination for global MICE events, says Janet Karemera, CEO of Rwanda Convention Bureau.

This aligns with Rwanda's National Strategy for Transformation (NST2) for 2024-2029 and anticipates that Rwanda will attract events aligned with national priorities, including high-level meetings, strategic partnerships, and sports and entertainment events. The government program also projects a revenue growth in MICE from \$95M recorded in 2023 to \$224M in 5 years. "So all the work being done is to work towards this goal."

"The country is represented at Meetings Africa 2025 by Rwanda's top venues including Radisson Blu & Convention Centre, Serena Hotel as well as Private Conference Organizers who will come with a professional perspective and first-hand experience on our destination's capacity to host meetings and events as well as plenty of success stories. We will also have representatives from our national carrier and strategic partner, RwandAir who will provide details on all our air connectivity services, business support, conference package options and much more," Karemera said



Some of the Unique Selling Points Rwanda will focus on includes:

- **Visa Policy:** Rwanda offers visas on arrival for all visitors, with free visas for African Union, Commonwealth, and La Francophonie citizens.
- **Accessibility:** RwandAir, the national carrier, in partnership with Qatar Airways connects Rwanda to over 160 destinations, ensuring smooth travel for delegates. The upcoming Bugesera International Airport designed to handle up to 14 million passengers will further enhance connectivity making travel to Rwanda even more convenient.
- **Conference venues:** Rwanda's world-class venues include the iconic Kigali Convention Centre, the versatile Intare Arena, Africa's largest indoor Arena; BK Arena, Kigali Conference and Exhibition Village, and the newly upgraded Amahoro Stadium, which now accommodates up to 45 000 persons.
- **Hospitality Sector:** Rwanda continues to attract renowned hotel brands such as Marriott, Radisson Blu, and Four Points by Sheraton, and the upcoming Mövenpick set to open in 2025. Additionally, luxury

lodges like One & Only Gorilla's Nest and Bisate Lodge offer premium experiences for incentive travelers.

- **ICCA Ranking:** Kigali and Rwanda ranked 2nd in Africa for association meetings in 2023, with Kigali maintaining this standing for the fourth year in a row, reinforcing the destination's reputation as a premier hub for association conferences.
- **Sustainability Efforts:** Rwanda aims to achieve a carbon-neutral and climate-resilient economy by 2050 with initiatives such as advancing e-mobility, eliminating single-use plastics, and increasing investments in renewable energy to strengthen its environmental sustainability.

Karemera also said they were focused on working on the Rwanda MICE Audit, which aims to evaluate and benchmark Rwanda's meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) capabilities, and identify areas for strategic growth and investment.

"This will inform the decisions by the government and private sector as we continue to build a sustainable MICE industry in Rwanda."

Major events confirmed to be hosted in Rwanda this year include:

- Tour du Rwanda
- Move Afrika
- The Global AI Summit on Africa
- The 6th World Congress on Agroforestry
- The BAL season 5 Nile Conference
- The 13th IAS Conference on HIV Science
- Giants of Africa
- Transform Africa Summit
- The UCI Road World Championships
- The 46th Ministerial Conference of La Francophonie

Expanding the array of innovative options for conferences and events

AAVEA's member attractions provide unique and imaginative spaces that inspire creativity and foster effective collaboration.

The African Association of Visitor Experiences and Attractions (AAVEA) stands at the forefront of transforming Africa's visitor attractions industry. As the premier association dedicated to this sector, AAVEA champions excellence through education, advocacy, research, and collaboration.

"Our mission is to empower professionals to enhance the quality, competitiveness, and sustainability of

visitor experiences across the continent," says Mpume Mabuza, President and Board Chairperson: AAVEA.

At Meetings Africa 2025, AAVEA invites event organisers, attractions, resorts, destination management companies (DMCs), industry suppliers, and other key stakeholders to engage with them. "Together, we can explore potential partnerships and memberships as we prepare for the 2025 AAVEA-IAAPA Africa Summit," says Mabuza. "This international

event is set to take place on 11 – 12 June 2025, in the Western Cape. Preceding the summit, we proudly present the globally recognised IAAPA Institute of Attractions Professionals (IAP) certification programme on 9 – 10 June."

Expanding Possibilities in Business Events with Unique and Inspiring Attractions

AAVEA is committed to enriching the business events sector by expanding the array of innovative and diverse options available for conferences and events.

"Our member attractions provide unique and imaginative spaces that inspire creativity and foster effective collaboration," concludes Mabuza, "We extend our gratitude to South African Tourism for their support, allowing AAVEA to participate as a hosted buyer. Join us in our journey to elevate Africa's visitor experiences and create unforgettable moments for all."

Lessons from the KICC's Innovative MICE Sector Model

James Mwaura, CEO of Kenyatta International Convention Centre, explains how their inclusive growth model is benefiting historically disadvantaged groups.

The Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) has implemented an inclusive growth model that prioritises community empowerment and economic opportunity. CEO James Mwaura believes this approach offers



valuable lessons for the broader MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) sector.

Procurement Policy

Mwaura explained that the KICC operates on a framework based on law, policy, and corporate social responsibility. A key element of this model is a reservation policy that mandates approximately 30% of all procurement for events be exclusively reserved for women and youth-owned businesses.

“On every procurement for a particular event, there is a reserved extent of supply which should be approximately 30% of the total supply that is purely reserved for that group,” Mwaura stated. He emphasized that this

policy ensures that historically disadvantaged groups have access to opportunities and benefit from the economic activity generated by the MICE sector.

Open Free Guide

In addition to the reservation policy, the KICC also offers an “open free guide” program, allowing reserved groups to exhibit their products and services at no cost during major conferences. Mwaura also highlighted the KICC’s commitment to environmental conservation, citing the presence of an indigenous forest within the convention center and partnerships with local groups to cultivate seedlings for reforestation.

He emphasised that the KICC prioritises working with community-organised groups to ensure that the benefits of these initiatives are distributed effectively. By integrating principles of law, policy, and corporate social responsibility, the KICC is striving to create a more inclusive and sustainable MICE sector.



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The Sustainability Village: Showcasing Local Artisans

The Sustainability Village is an iconic feature of Meetings Africa, providing delegates with an immersive experience that fosters support for local artisans.

The Sustainability Village at Meetings Africa offers delegates an opportunity to purchase unique and sustainable South African products from local artists and crafters. Here are 10 of the 20 vendors who are showcasing their products at the 2025 edition of the trade show.

Find The Sustainability Village on Floor -2.



We create handmade, one-of-a-kind accessories inspired by African heritage, using vibrant African print and Shweshwe fabrics. Our collection includes statement shoe clips, bold earrings, elegant neckpieces, and stylish accessories, each crafted with care and creativity. Designed for those who love to express their individuality, our pieces add a touch of culture, color, and uniqueness to any outfit, making every look effortlessly stylish and distinctive.

Contact: Palesa Denise Mtonga **Mobile:** 0617230143



We specialize in designing handmade, statement bold earrings that celebrate individuality and self-expression. Each piece is meticulously crafted with a fusion of vibrant colors, unique textures, and intricate detailing, making them the perfect accessory for those who love to stand out. Our earrings are more than just jewelry—they are wearable art, designed to add confidence, elegance, and personality to every look.

Contact: Lebo Visage **Mobile:** 0727506627



We blend rich African heritage with modern design, creating bold, stylish fashion and jewelry. Our pieces celebrate vibrant colors, patterns, and craftsmanship, offering a contemporary twist on tradition for a timeless, confident look.

Contact: Precious Nonyane **Mobile:** 0696613470

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Contact: Melani Bonolo Rakumakoe

Mobile: 0614397105



We specialize in crafting modern, hand-threaded jewelry using vibrant African print fabrics. Each piece is thoughtfully designed to celebrate African heritage while adding a contemporary touch to everyday and statement accessories. Our jewelry is a fusion of culture, artistry, and individuality, making every creation unique, bold, and timeless.

Contact: Onkgopotse Faith Letsholo

Mobile: 0678876011



We are an organic beauty and cosmetics brand that manufactures products made from botanical plants, oils and other natural ingredients that are good for all skin types and work well for the whole family

Contact: Tebogo Moche **Mobile:** 0794886742



We specialize in bespoke, handmade leather goods crafted with precision, quality, and timeless elegance. Each piece is carefully designed using premium materials, ensuring durability, sophistication, and a personalized touch. From stylish accessories to functional everyday essentials, our leather creations blend artisanal craftsmanship with modern aesthetics, offering unique, one-of-a-kind pieces that stand the test of time.

Contact: Lebogang Tohlang **Mobile:** 0840261393



We design fashionable streetwear for individuals who embrace their unique personal style and aren't afraid to stand out. Our collections blend bold designs with modern trends, offering versatile pieces that reflect a sense of individuality, confidence, and self-expression. Whether you're hitting the streets or just relaxing with friends, our streetwear is crafted to make a statement and keep you comfortable. We believe that fashion is a reflection of who you are, and with every piece we create, we empower you to showcase your personal flair, challenge the norm, and define your own look."

Contact: Morapedi Manotoana **Mobile:** 0768824098



We create unique, handcrafted beaded accessories designed to enhance your look and express your personal style. Each piece is meticulously crafted, blending traditional techniques with contemporary flair, resulting in bold, vibrant designs that elevate any outfit. Our accessories are not just about fashion, but about making a statement—whether you're dressing up for a special occasion or adding a touch of elegance to your everyday attire. With attention to detail and an eye for quality, we ensure that every accessory we create is a reflection of craftsmanship and individuality."

Contact: Saki Kana **Mobile:** 0783246254



We design and produce exclusive seasonal clothing and accessories that blend sophistication, comfort, and trend-forward style. Our collections are thoughtfully curated to reflect the essence of each season, offering premium-quality fabrics, unique designs, and timeless elegance. Whether it's cozy winter essentials, breezy summer staples, or statement accessories, we ensure that every piece is crafted with attention to detail, allowing our customers to express their individuality with confidence and flair.

Contact: Bongani Dlamini **Mobile:** 0817757784

African countries are rising. African countries are leading.

Here is an edited version of the speech delivered at the BONDay Opening Plenary by His Excellency Albertus Aochamub, Ambassador of Namibia to the French Republic.

Distinguished friends from various African countries and beyond, African countries are no longer a distant promise. African countries are no longer a story waiting to be told. African countries are here now - bold, ambitious, and unstoppable.

For too long, the world has spoken of Africa as a continent in waiting - waiting for growth, waiting for investment, waiting for opportunity. But let me tell you: African countries are not waiting. African countries are creating. African countries are building. African countries are leading.

AFRICA'S MOMENT IS THE WORLD'S MOMENT

By 2050, Africa's population will reach 2.5 billion - one in four people on this planet will be African. That is not a statistic. That is a force of nature.

A young, skilled, tech-savvy workforce is emerging, one that is already reshaping industries.

From fintech hubs in Lagos and Nairobi to renewable energy breakthroughs in Namibia and Morocco, African Countries are producing solutions not just for themselves, but for the world.

- The mobile money revolution that started in African Countries now influences global banking.
- African creative industries - music, film, fashion - are no longer regional; they are global powerhouses.
- And the African digital economy is expected to grow to \$180 billion by 2025 - a future that is already unfolding.
- This is not a moment of transition. This is a moment of transformation.

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

To our European partners, to our global investors - African countries do not ask for aid. African countries seek trade. African countries do not seek charity. African countries seek collaborators.

The world is changing, and so must its partnerships. The old models no longer serve us.

The future belongs to those who build together, who innovate together, who grow together.

- African countries hold 60% of the world's solar energy potential - yet much of it remains untapped.
- African countries have 60% of the world's uncultivated arable land - yet we still import food.

- The African Free Trade Area, AfCFTA, is the largest in the world, bringing together 1.4 billion consumers.

So I ask you - why look elsewhere when the world's greatest opportunities are here?

TOURISM: AFRICA'S GATEWAY TO THE WORLD

African countries are more than just economic powerhouses. Africa is a continent of breathtaking beauty, of majestic landscapes, ancient cultures, and thriving cities. Tourism is not just an industry - it is a bridge between economies, between peoples, and between continents. Yet, Africa still accounts for less than 10% of global tourism revenue - a gap that presents an untapped billion-dollar opportunity. The future of global tourism is experiential, sustainable, and authentic. African countries offer all three.

From the dunes of Namibia to the pyramids of Egypt, from the Serengeti to the Cape of Good Hope, from Zanzibar's spice-scented shores to the bustling streets of Marrakech -

African countries are an invitation to the world.

We must invest in tourism infrastructure, digital marketing, and aviation links to unlock the full potential of African countries as global travel destinations. To investors and partners in this room - the time to build the tourism economy of the African countries is now.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF INVESTMENT

African Countries do not seek quick wins or fleeting transactions. We seek long-term, meaningful investments. We seek partners who understand that the rise of African countries is not a threat but an opportunity.

We seek businesses ready to innovate, to grow, to be part of something bigger than profits - something transformative. African countries are not the world's suppliers of raw materials. African countries are the world's partners in finished products, in innovation, and progress. These are the African countries of today. These are the African countries we invite you to join.

THE VALUE OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES SUCCESS

In closing, let me submit that African success is not just an African success story. It is the world's success. Strong African countries mean a stronger global economy. Thriving African countries mean a more sustainable planet. Prosperous African countries mean a better future for all of us.

So today, I ask you - Will you be part of the greatest economic transformation of our time?

African countries are rising. African countries are leading. And those who walk with African countries today, will shape the world tomorrow.





Prime
Central
Locations



Innovative
Cutting-edge
Technology



User
Friendly
Hotel App



Opulent
Afro-Chic
Design



Versatile &
Adaptable
Venue Spaces



Exceptional
Dining & Culinary
Options

HOST EXCEPTIONAL CONFERENCES AT HOTEL SKY - WHERE BUSINESS MEETS INNOVATION

At Hotel Sky Sandton, we provide the ultimate venue to host your conference, seminar, or corporate event in a stylish yet professional setting.

Whether you're planning an intimate boardroom session or a large-scale executive meeting for up to 200 delegates, our versatile spaces cater to every need. Plus, with our ultra chic accommodation available, you can turn your event into an unforgettable corporate resort.



UNPARALLELED CONFERENCE FACILITIES

Infinity Auditorium – A state-of-the-art 190-seater venue with tiered seating, high-tech AV equipment, and uninterrupted stage views—ideal for product launches, training sessions, and team-building events. Located just upstairs from our Eclipse Restaurant, your guests can transition seamlessly from business to afterparty.

Boardrooms & Meeting Spaces – Equipped with uncapped high-speed Wi-Fi, modern conference tech, and premium service, our flexible venues set the stage for seamless collaboration and productivity.

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Kuganha Tented Camp & Spa (Reopening Soon)



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The purpose built main lodge area and boma will be an ideal venue for exclusive high end group events.

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Toby Shapshak’s Tips with a Twist

Toby Shapshak, renowned journalist and tech expert, shares his conference tips.

- It’s essential for a conference to have a good app that links to a good website. Because that’s the way anyone navigates a conference. I’ve been to South by Southwest and I think theirs is probably the gold standard, especially when you’ve got multiple tracks and multiple things you could be interested in. And when you have lots going on, that’s probably the most important hook.
- The other is good Wi-Fi. It doesn’t matter what events people organise, the Wi-Fi is always a disaster. So, because of that, when I travel, I always buy an eSIM. I use a great company called NoRoaming.com.
- Make sure you always have comfortable shoes. It’s a low-tech solution, but if you’re going to walk around and stand around all day, get a really comfortable pair of shoes. And thank God we live in the age where wearing trainers is considered cool and funky.



Voice from the Floor

Mnqobi Mthethwa
Founder, Magaga Media & Communications
Durban, South Africa



“This is a joyous milestone for us, to be a part of such an event that will help position us in the global market. Our business offerings include Events Management (PCO), Public Relations, Communications and Marketing – and a platform such as Meetings Africa is best fitting for us to network and generate leads for potential business.”

Exhibitor Profile



Zuri Events is a sustainable event management firm based in Nairobi, Kenya with over 17 years in event management. We have specialized in offering end to end event solutions in Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions focusing on positive impact in People, Planet and Profit. With a focus on technology, innovation and sustainability, Zuri Events delivers professional high quality management for diverse African and Global brands.

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BONDay in Pictures



The Power of Trade Shows

For tourism and business event professionals, attending events like Meetings Africa is not just beneficial; it is essential.

In the vibrant world of business events, trade shows stand out as pivotal gatherings that foster innovation, connection, and opportunity. For industry professionals, attending these events is not just beneficial; it is essential. **Enver Duminy, CEO of Cape Town Tourism**, encapsulates the essence of trade shows succinctly: "Trade shows are more than just events; they are the heartbeat of innovation, connection, and opportunity. In a world where relationships drive business, showing up isn't just important - it's essential. If you're not present, you're not part of the conversation shaping the future."

Echoing this **John Arvanitakis, Chairperson of the Event Greening Forum**, says: "Attending trade shows is vitally important for the industry. As a contributor to the industry and a person involved in it, it is important for me to be at events like this, as you get to network, meet new people, and learn."

Africa, with its vast potential for the development of MICE travel, is witnessing a surge in strategic tourism development plans focused on business travel. **Tes Proos, President of the Society for Incentive Travel Excellence Africa**, notes, "Africa offers vast opportunities for the development of MICE travel. It is heartwarming to see destinations like Uganda stepping up to the plate by focusing their strategic tourism development plans on business travel. Business events have a direct impact on positive economic growth

across all sectors, including job creation."

There is a strong push for visa-free travel across Africa, which would enhance the flow of currencies between countries and promote better and more affordable air connectivity between destinations. Proos further highlights, "Meetings Africa is where the African MICE industry comes together to explore these topics and showcase destinations and services to new markets."

For **Event Synthesis International owner Angelique Smith**, trade shows are highly beneficial, primarily for networking purposes. Smith explains, "Trade shows bring together key industry players in one place at

the same time, creating an ideal environment for meaningful interactions."

Kevan Jones, Executive Director of the Southern African Communications Industries Association, highlights the collaborative potential of Meetings Africa. He notes, "For me, the real strength of Meetings Africa lies in the opportunity to connect and engage with events industry professionals from across the continent. It provides a platform to exchange ideas that are relevant to all of us and to foster cooperation and collaboration, both within South Africa and across Africa as a whole."



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Event Organisers and Local Governance, Unsung Heroes of Sustainability

Who are the real drivers of sustainability in the events sector? A panel discussion at Meetings Africa 2025 shared some interesting insights.

While conferences and panels echo with discussions of SDG goals and eco-friendly initiatives, the actual implementation on the ground often falls short. This raises a critical question: who are the real drivers of sustainability in the events sector and what levers can be pulled to speed up meaningful change?

A panel discussion at Meetings Africa 2025, featuring experts from across the continent, shed light with some surprising answers. While large international organisations are often perceived as champions of sustainability, the reality - according to Yoadan Tilahun, a PCO from Ethiopia - is quite different. It highlights the uphill battle faced by PCOs striving to minimise waste and promote eco-conscious alternatives.



Joost de Meyer, Hloholohelo Zwane, Winner Fulufhelo Tharaga, Mulemwa Moongwa

PCO Role Pivotal

The PCO's role is pivotal. They are the ones who can propose sustainable options, negotiate with venues, and engage with local communities. However, as Yoadan pointed out, their leverage is limited: "As a PCO, we barely have any [leverage]. We can only propose because we can't really impose." This lack of authority underscores the need for a more robust framework that empowers PCOs to drive sustainable choices. Here is where local governance steps in. Yoadan continued, "I wish we had a convention bureau that's strong as the point of entry, where they can actually demand and say, 'Look, in our country, we abide by these rules. So, if you want to host an event, you have to abide by these rules.'"

Integrating Communities

South Africa offers another interesting model, with its Grading Council playing a key role in integrating sustainability into the standards for venues and events. According to Bronwen Auret, Chief Quality Assurance Officer for South African Tourism, the Grading Council has "put in place the

norms and standards for the grading of properties... where we've put in specific areas of sustainability that everyone has to adhere to."

It is also about empowering local communities and ensuring that they benefit from the events industry. South Africa's Basic Policy Verification Programme, which recognises homestays with basic standards, is a promising example of how to integrate communities into the tourism ecosystem. "When people come to South Africa, they not only want to enjoy our business eventing spaces, but they also want to engage with the community in which they are being brought into," explained Auret.

Long-term Investment

Lee-Ann Bac, Director of Strategic Development and Advisory at BDO South Africa, emphasised the financial realities of transitioning to sustainable practices. "As business owners, we need to rethink the financial motives and the profit motives... But we have to balance that with people and the planet, and from an environmental perspective. And in reality, if you don't, there will be no profit in the future." Bac's pragmatic perspective highlights the need for businesses to view sustainability not as a cost centre but as a long-term investment.

Ensuring Sustainability Commitments Translate Into Action

Event Greening Forum's AGM looked at how to make the MICE industry more sustainable.

The Event Greening Forum (EGF) hosted its Annual General Meeting (AGM) at Meetings Africa 2025 on Monday. As sustainability remains a key priority for the sector, the EGF used this opportunity to outline its objectives for 2025.

Notably, Vice Chairperson Neo Mohlatlole, Marketing Committee Chair Gavin Burgess, Members Committee Chair JP van Schalkwyk, Treasurer Justin Hawes, and Secretary Lynn McLeod concluded the required terms for their roles this year.

The newly elected committee members include:

- Aabida Davis, Sustainability Coordinator, Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC)
- Gary van der Watt, Sustainable Design and Implementation Consultant, Xanita
- Herkie du Preez, Founder and Director, Strong PR
- Lynn McLeod, Managing Director, Scan Display
- Morwesi Ramonyai, Managing Director, Borena Energy
- Neo Mohlatlole, Director of Business Development, Seven Colors
- Patrick Cronning, Business Development Head, Expo Guys

They will join existing Management Committee members; John Arvanitakis (Chat'r Xperience),



Angelique Smith (Event Synthesis), Grace Stead (Steadfast Greening), Gavin Burgess (Technology Partners), Joey Swart (Take Note Events), and Sonja van Rooyen (Specialised Exhibitions).

Enhancing Event Greening Accessibility

One of the primary objectives for this year is the review and enhancement of the Green Database, which supports youth development. Recognising that young professionals are the future leaders of the MICE industry, EGF is committed to providing mentorship and opportunities for growth. The next generation has the potential to drive innovation and challenge existing frameworks to align with the sustainability principles of the future.

Establishing Green Event Standards

During the AGM, John and Justin both highlighted how

the EGF aims to develop a standardised green event certification to help eradicate greenwashing in the industry and ensure that sustainability commitments translate into action. They teased the launch of an independent EGF Certification, which will be incorporated into its code of conduct. To uphold the integrity of their credentials, members will be required to provide a portfolio of evidence demonstrating their commitment and adherence to the EGF Code of Conduct.

The EGF also recognises the importance of industry-wide collaboration and alignment to create a unified approach to sustainable events in South Africa. As such the organisation will work closely with partners such as AAXO, EXSA, SA Tourism, SANCB, SATSA, SAACI, TBCSA, and more to standardise green award criteria and sustainability benchmarks.



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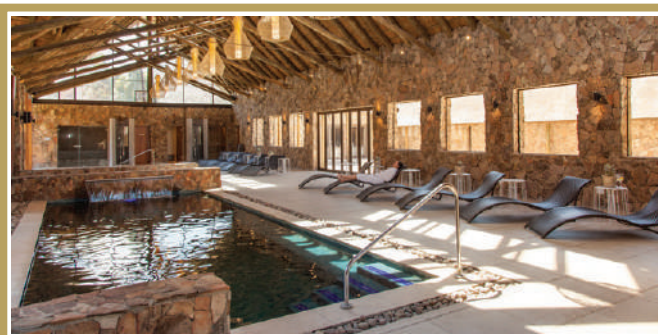


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