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Tourism KwaZulu-Natal



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## Media Release

For immediate release

**To:** All media

**Attention:** News Editors and Journalists

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### **KWAZULU-NATAL CONVENTION BUREAU GOES ALL OUT TO ATTRACT BUSINESS EVENTS TO KWAZULU-NATAL AT MEETINGS AFRICA 2023**

**[Durban, South Africa]-** The KwaZulu-Natal Convention Bureau (KZNCB) and Tourism KwaZulu-Natal (TKZN) are going all out to promote and position KwaZulu-Natal as a leading meeting and conferences destination at Meetings Africa 2023 which runs from today, Monday 27 February 2023 to 1 March 2023 at the Sandton Convention Centre.

Meetings Africa 2023 has 352 exhibitors from 23 African countries lined up and 340 international buyers from 57 countries confirmed. There are also seven new African countries exhibiting - Angola, Gabon, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Senegal, South Sudan, and Togo – which is testament to the growing importance of the African market in the global events and tourism industry.

“By attracting mega business events and many smaller conferences across the geographic spread of the province, the KZNCB plays an important role in the recovery of the KwaZulu-

Natal tourism sector,” said Mr Nhlanhla Khumalo Acting Chief Executive Tourism KwaZulu Natal.

“Meetings Africa is a platform to forge partnerships by meeting face-to-face with the most influential buyers in the world, and as TKZN and the KZN Convention Bureau we plan to make the most of this opportunity to promote KwaZulu-Natal as the preferred business events destination.

In 2022 the KZN Convention Bureau staged over 26 business events which generated an economic impact estimated at R2,2 billion and for the 2023 year it has already bagged over 30 business events to be hosted across the province, which will contribute enormously to the economic recovery of the province.

“Meetings and conferences are the main contributors to growing business tourism in our province, and we want to attract a lot more of this business to KwaZulu-Natal, which offers top-class convention and meetings facilities and pre- and post- conference travel,” said Khumalo

In 2022, the KZN Convention Bureau was again voted Africa’s leading meetings and conference destination by the prestigious annual World Travel Awards, a title it has held for eight consecutive years.

Global business tourism was worth approximately 890 billion U.S. dollars in 2020. By 2028, this value could grow to more than two trillion U.S. dollars, according to a Statista forecast published in early 2022. On the African continent, Africa is said to make up only 2% of the global market. South Africa is rated as the leading destination for conferences by the International Convention and Congress Association (ICCA), and Durban is ranked third in the country according to the number of conferences hosted that meet very specific ICCA criteria.

More generally, in South Africa, in 2019 business tourism contributed more than R115-billion to the country’s GDP, creating almost 252 000 direct and indirect jobs.

On the domestic front, in 2019 KZN hosted over 100 000 conference delegates, and in 2021 over 70 000 local delegates, despite the effects of Covid-19 and the recent floods experienced by the province.

Post Meetings Africa 2023, we are delighted to again host familiarization tours for key international buyers to experience KZN’s business events facilities and establishments. Hosting international buyers in KZN will assist the KZN Convention Bureau to generate

business leads for possible bidding and to lobby the buyers to consider KZN as a destination for hosting future business events.

At Meetings Africa the province's business tourism offerings will be showcased in partnership with following key tourism partners:

- KZN Sharks Board
- Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife
- uGu South Coast Tourism
- iLembe Enterprise
- City of uMhlathuze
- Olive Convention Centre
- Okhahlamba Tourism Office
- Ray Nkonyeni Local Municipality
- uMfolozi Casino and Hotel
- Logikal Events (SMMEs)

Ends

#### **Note to editors**

Tourism KwaZulu-Natal is responsible for the development, promotion and marketing of tourism into and within the province, both domestically and internationally. The organisation is an entity that reports to the provincial Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs.

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