

# Gauteng Tourism becomes UNWTO newest affiliate member

Tourism in Gauteng received a massive boost with news coming from the recently concluded 20th General Assembly of United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) held jointly in Zambia and Zimbabwe that Gauteng Tourism Authority has officially been accepted by the global tourism body one of its newest affiliate members.

The General Assembly is the main statutory meeting of UNWTO and the most important gathering of senior tourism officials and high-level representatives from around the world. Held every two years, the assembly is attended by delegations representing full and associate UNWTO Members, Affiliate Members, and representatives of other international organisations.

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"For us to be accepted as an affiliate member of this prestigious body is indeed great news for Gauteng City Region. We believe that we will benefit immensely from connecting with this global alliance of non-governmental organizations in world tourism through various network opportunities and platforms in which tourism knowledge, innovation and expertise are exchanged.

Coupled with our membership of Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) the global trade association for official destination marketing organisations (DMOs), which protects and advances the success of destination marketing worldwide, this development bodes well for our efforts to build the DMO of the future", explained Dawn Robertson, CEO of Gauteng Tourism.

## Contributing to economic growth

"We are excited and ready to be in the thick of things as part of the current discussions and focus by the world body member affiliates is around city tourism, sports and adventure tourism, mega events tourism, seasonality, youth travel and mobile Apps. These are the issues that characterise the Gauteng tourism economy and we hope to make a meaningful contribution to the on-going discussions and learn from the global best practices.

Gauteng is South Africa's leading global competitive city region with strong urban tourism, undisputed history and heritage sites, better sports and mega events infrastructure and strong technological know-how thus enabling the tourism authority to turn this positioning into a viable visitor economy that creates decent and sustainable jobs that contributes to stronger economic growth and development.

"Our participation as an affiliate member in global non-governmental tourism forums will indeed provide us with a much bigger regional and global perspective in tourism development and management issues that can help us to be a more

competitive and sustainable tourism destination.

We will use this opportunity to learn from our counterparts and empower our various districts and cities in the province to cement our standing as the business tourism hub of Africa and South Africa with countless leisure offerings of note", concluded Robertson.

Gauteng Tourism Authority together with the Department of Tourism Port Alegre in Brasil, the Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (DESTA) in Thailand and the Zagreb Tourism Board & Convention Bureau in Croatia are UNWTO newest associate members. In South Africa, Gauteng Tourism joins KZN Tourism, Cape Town Tourism and the Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa (RETOSA) which is based in the country as affiliate members of UNTWO.

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