

SA MICE industry at the forefront of business events in Africa

During his opening address at the Southern African Association for the Conference Industry (SAACI) 2018, held in Misty Hills, Muldersdrift this week, Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom said: "It's been a busy past few days as South Africa has just concluded the 10th BRICS Summit, which was held at the Sandton Convention Centre. This, of course, bodes well for our business events industry, and it is an additional feather in our international cap because South Africa hosted yet another successful summit."



©Jozef Polc via [123RF](#)

The SAACI 2018 Congress offers members a world-class industry event under one roof for two days to learn, share information and network. The platform has the potential to give birth to strategic alliances and collaborations for huge projects with the central theme of *It takes a Village*.

Storytelling was the order of the two days where attendees heard villagers, *izinduna* (captains of the industry) and *izimboni* (motivational speakers) imparting their wisdom, learnings and experience through inspiring *legotlas* and ignite sessions.

"South Africa is a vast and beautiful country with a diversity of tourism experiences and infrastructure on offer. In a year in which we celebrate what would have been Nelson Mandela's 100th birthday, let us be reminded of Ubuntu. As government and in partnership with you, it is key that we make sure that our sector contributes to transforming the lives of more South Africans through the economic benefits that a thriving business events sector can bring," continued Hanekom.

Number one convention destination

"Ranked number 34 in the International Congress and Convention Associations' global ranking, South Africa is the number one convention destination in Africa and the Middle East. Cape Town is ranked among the top 50 cities in the world for conventions, with 53 renowned events held in 2017. This indicates that we already have good equity, and we plan to continue building on this," added Hanekom.

Two years ago, a Bidding Support Programme, managed by the South Africa National Convention Bureau (SANCB) was established to accelerate the development of the business event industry and this commitment has already started to reap the rewards. In the 2017/18 fiscal (1 April 2017 to 30 March 2018), a total of 94 bids were submitted, with a combined economic value of R1.9bn, a significant contribution to the South African economy and to job creation.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>