

MEDIA STATEMENT

Attention: News Editor / Journalists

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FREE STATE PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS AFRICA TO BOLTER SMME'S BENEFICIATION

Meetings Africa opened its doors to the world to gather the like-minded of the business tourism sub-sector to interact as Africa gear towards hosting the G20 Summit later this year. The event, that is hosted from 24 – 26 February 2025 in Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg has welcomed the global buyers to come and experience what Africa has to offer.

Free States' centrality and its open spaces, which are characterised by small towns, has drawn attention of most buyers as they seek to understand this untapped destination. As the province advocate for being listed amongst the meetings hosting destinations beyond the G20 Summit, there has been also an interest on leisure tourism offerings.

Beneficiation of SMME is central to all advocacy as the province seeks to deliver on inclusive economic growth that will create job opportunities. Mr Kenny Dichabe said, "The province should be biased towards the development of our small business and be bold enough to ask bigger business to work closely with the sub-sector to ensure that they too benefit within business tourism, what was previously known as Meetings, Incentives, Conferencing and Exhibitions (MICE) sub-sector". Three of our black women owned business are exhibiting under Destination Marketing Company to lure buyers to buy Free State business and leisure tourism packages.

Over the next two days more linkages will have been established, and the private sector should commence with preparations to welcome the world within their establishments, experiences, attractions and destinations. Quality assurance is key to any visitor experience and grading of establishments and facilities would further entrench the public sector message and bolster the province's efforts to grow economy and assist in creating job opportunities.

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