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KZN Investment Conference joins SA Autoweek 2026 to accelerate industrial investment

Driving Investment, Industrialisation and Localisation for a Globally Competitive

naamsa | The Automotive Business Council and Trade & Investment KwaZulu-Natal (TIKZN) today announced that the KwaZulu-Natal Investment Conference (KZNIC) will form part of South African Automotive Week (SA Autoweek) 2026. The conference will be held at the Durban International Convention Centre (Durban ICC) on Thursday, 15 October 2026, placing investment and project implementation at the centre of the national automotive programme.

Hosted by TIKZN on behalf of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government, KZNIC brings together business, domestic and international investors, development finance institutions and policymakers to advance sustainable investment and strengthen public-private partnerships. Its integration into SA Autoweek will connect the province's wider investment pipeline with South Africa's automotive manufacturing, logistics, energy and infrastructure priorities.

SA Autoweek, convened by naamsa, is South Africa's leading platform for the automotive manufacturing value chain. It brings together vehicle manufacturers, component suppliers, logistics and infrastructure companies, policymakers, investors and international partners to support the implementation of the South African Automotive Masterplan 2035.

Under the theme 'Driving Investment, Industrialisation and Localisation for a Globally Competitive KwaZulu-Natal', the combined programme will broaden investor participation, strengthen KwaZulu-Natal's industrial proposition and create a direct pathway from investment commitments to implementable projects. Shared infrastructure and coordinated delivery will also provide a more integrated experience for investors and delegates.

"KwaZulu-Natal is focused on converting investment opportunities into productive capacity and employment. By bringing the KZN Investment Conference into SA Autoweek, we are connecting investors with real projects across manufacturing, logistics, infrastructure and the wider provincial economy," said The KwaZulu-Natal Premier, Honourable Thami Ntuli.

"As a proud co-host of SA Autoweek 2026, the eThekweni Municipality stands firmly behind this premier industry platform. Durban is not only a premier tourism destination but a critical gateway for automotive logistics and manufacturing in Africa. Through this strategic partnership, we are committed to driving localised economic growth, pioneering the transition toward New Energy Vehicles (NEVs), and showcasing our city's industrial excellence on the global stage," said His Worship the Mayor of eThekweni Municipality , Councillor Cyril Xaba.

According to the province's investment portfolio, KwaZulu-Natal secured R100.1 billion in investment pledges across 34 projects in 2025. The programme on 15 October will provide an implementation update on this portfolio, highlighting progress, delivery milestones and opportunities requiring further investor participation.

Approximately 5,000 delegates are expected to participate across the combined week. This is anticipated to generate additional activity for Durban's accommodation, hospitality and restaurant sectors, as well as for participating township and small enterprises.

"KZNIC is designed to move beyond investment announcements by tracking delivery and facilitating the relationships needed to bring projects to implementation. It is about bringing public and private sector role players together, identifying the challenges that may stand in the way of investment and finding practical, implementable solutions. By bringing KZNIC into SA Autoweek, we are connecting investors to an established industrial platform and giving them a stronger view of KwaZulu-Natal's project pipeline. Our destination is clear: we want KwaZulu-Natal to be recognised as a globally competitive destination for trade and

investment. KZN has it all, and our role is to bring the right people together to unlock that potential," said TIKZN CEO Sihle Ngcamu.

KwaZulu-Natal occupies a strategic position in South Africa's automotive trade and logistics network. The Port of Durban, Dube TradePort Special Economic Zone and the N3 logistics corridor connect the province to Gauteng's industrial base and international markets. Together with planned automotive supplier infrastructure, these assets support the province's ambition to expand its role in conventional and new-energy vehicle value chains.

"This partnership gives investors a clearer line of sight from policy and capital to localisation and production. Positioning the KZN Investment Conference within SA Autoweek strengthens the Durban-Gauteng corridor's role in South Africa's automotive competitiveness and creates a platform for practical investment partnerships," said Shinny Gobiyeza, COO of naamsa.

The programme on 15 October will feature an investment pledge tracker, executive deal rooms and focused discussions on localisation, new-energy vehicle infrastructure and export logistics. TIKZN has invited qualifying investment pledges of R100 million or more to be submitted to bongekile@tikzn.co.za or senamile@tikzn.co.za by 28 September 2026.

"KwaZulu-Natal is positioning itself as a province where investment can translate into real economic opportunity, industrial growth and sustainable employment. The partnership between the KZN Investment Conference and SA Autoweek strengthens this proposition by placing our investment pipeline within a platform that brings together key players across the automotive and broader industrial value chain," said MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs Rev Musa Zondi.

"Our focus is not only on attracting investment, but on ensuring that investment commitments translate into projects that are implemented, create opportunities for local businesses and contribute meaningfully to the growth of our economy. Through

this partnership, we are strengthening KwaZulu-Natal's position as a competitive destination for investment, trade and industrial development," concluded Zondi.

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Notes to editors:

South African Automotive Week 2026 will take place from 13 to 16 October 2026 at the Durban ICC. The KZN Investment Conference will serve as the headline investment programme on 15 October 2026.