

**REMARKS BY THE KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM MR  
MICHAEL MABUYAKHULU ON THE OCCASION OF THE SPECIAL INVESTMENT DINNER FOR THE  
HOTEL INVESTMENT CONFERENCE AFRICA (HICA), HELD AT HILTON, DURBAN**

**08 MAY 2013**

**Programme Director;**

**Dignitaries Present;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen;**

**All protocol observed.**

On behalf of the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal and the people of this province, we wish to extend a warm word of welcome to all the delegates who are here tonight to attend the seventh Hotel Investment Conference Africa – HICA 2013.

We, here in KwaZulu-Natal, are proud and privileged that our region has for the third consecutive year been selected to host the prestigious HICA Conference. HICA has, in its relatively short history, rapidly emerged as Africa's foremost conference of its type, becoming increasingly important to hoteliers, hotel developers, investors and all other stakeholders associated with the hospitality industry.

Not only has HICA become one of the important events in the calendar of stakeholders in this sector, but is on-track to grow from strength to strength in the years ahead. The fruits of its investment and development will have the effect of continuously improving the appeal of Southern Africa as a leading tourist destination in the eyes of the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this is an event which clearly adds business value to prospective investors; an event which paves the way for easier decision-making processes and an event which offers the business community a shop window for available and economically viable hospitality and related investment opportunities here, in Southern Africa, in the face of stiff global competition.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we meet this week after Ernst and Young released a report on investment in Africa which showed that South Africa had invested in more projects in the rest of Africa than any other country last year. While China and the European Union are still the biggest investors in Africa in value terms, South Africa is playing a strategic role as its multinational corporations expand into the region.

Interestingly, Ladies and Gentlemen, most of the new projects attracting foreign direct investment in Africa were in service sectors such as banking, telecommunications, and retail trade — which are bigger job creators than the mining industry, according to the report.

The report further stated that investment flows into Africa fell last year, in line with the global trend, but have risen by a compound rate of 12.8% since 2007. During that period, the continent's share of global investment rose from 3.2% to 5.6%.

The report found that last year Africa was seen as a more attractive investment destination than five other regions — the former Soviet states, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, the Middle East and Central America.

This, Programme Director, shows that the shift in the global economic landscape is, indeed, resulting in Africa becoming one of the economic frontiers in the world. There is no doubt that with the growth in the economic sector of the continent there will be a corresponding upswing effect in the fortunes of the hospitality industry on the continent. In this regard, the importance of this conference cannot be overemphasised.

In light of this, the overriding purpose behind tonight's dinner is to provide an appropriate and informal meet-and-greet platform for the establishment, development and strengthening of relations amongst our gathered private and public sector role-players, hoteliers and financiers, developers and transactional advisors. In view of this, we have put in place structures to assist in facilitating business support.

We are ,therefore, pleased to introduce tonight some of the captains of our top Provincial Government business entities. These are individuals whose areas of expertise can provide you with invaluable insight with regard to business support arrangements, sustainable employment and economic growth.

They are well placed to facilitate and/or participate in bilateral discussions, should you wish to pursue further discourse with regard to KwaZulu-Natal investment and development issues and opportunities. Present tonight are: Mr Desmond Golding, our Head of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism; Ms Saxen van Coller, CEO of the Dube TradePort Corporation; Ms Yvonne Zwane, CEO of the Ithala Development Finance Corporation; Mr Ndabo Khoza, CEO of Tourism KwaZulu-Natal; and Mr

Zamo Gwala, CEO of Trade & Investment KwaZulu-Natal. Please feel free to engage with them during the course of the two-day conference and of course beyond.

Ladies and Gentlemen, tonight is a social get-together; a time to get to know one another and to re-acquaint ourselves with those with whom we have interacted in the past. It is also an opportunity for us to provide you with detailed information to help you better understand where and how to invest in KwaZulu-Natal.

The Trade and Investment CEO, Zamo Gwala, will give a detailed presentation after which we can have an interactive discussion to further unpack these opportunities and for you to seek any further clarity you may need.

Tomorrow we will of course settle down to the task of deliberations and constructive discussions in the quest to advance Southern Africa's cause as a highly attractive tourist destination. Among these discussions is how we must tackle the challenge of stimulating and attracting foreign direct investment in the region's broad tourism sector in the face of the inescapable reality of the prevailing difficult global economic conditions.

For our part and in conclusion, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my pleasant task to again welcome you all to KwaZulu-Natal, to thank you for your attendance tonight and to invite you to enjoy your evening with us. Lastly, we wish you every success with your discussions during the next two days. It is our sincere hope that this, the seventh HICA conference, is as - if not more - successful as its predecessors and that the work you accomplish will provide the springboard to take investment in Southern Africa's critically important hospitality and tourism sector to a new level.

I thank you.

Michael Mabuyakhulu, MPP

KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Economic Development and Tourism