

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **THREE CITIES ALLIANCE FORMALISED AT INDABA**

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It was announced that the cities of Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg have formally joined forces to simultaneously address the substantive global shift toward urban tourism and the pressures being felt by their respective visitor industries.

The three year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the cities will result in joint marketing and development programs, aimed at establishing the urban dimension of South Africa's visitor brand and generating demand specifically for each city.

The MOU covers the broad spectrum of tourism marketing and development and comprehends joint initiatives in both domestic and international markets.

"Resources are finite and in order to compete effectively, the three cities have agreed to pool assets and resources to meaningfully address the demand challenges in a post GFC world and altered visitor conditions," said Phillip Sithole, CEO of Durban Tourism.

CEO of Cape Town Tourism, Mariette Du Toit- Helmbold added: "We intend to keep our brand and city distinctive propositions in all of our marketing efforts, but will co-operate to ensure maximum results are achieved through aggregated activity."

"This has been most evident in the recent multi-media global media deal with National Geographic, where individually the cities would not have been able to secure such a vast program, but collectively have been able to attract significant investment and cooperation from this global media company," said Sithole. The National Geographic initiative realizes an investment of some R 28 to R30 million over three years by the city alliance and has generated a significant contribution of some R60 million by the media channel itself. The integrated campaign will reach over 70 million people via, print, internet and programming initiatives.

The third leg of the alliance is provided by Johannesburg with its well established business and investment brand and their expanding visitor industry. Acting CEO of Johannesburg Tourism Company, Phelisa Mangcu concluded: "The only way to entice leisure and student visitors is to expand the knowledge of the experience palette offered by South Africa's most populous urban centre. This can only be achieved in co-operation with the major brands of Durban and Cape Town.'

It is conservatively calculated that these three cities attract some 50% of all visitors to the country and over 35% of total spend. Furthermore, they have more than 54% of total visitor assets within their precincts and directly employ over 55% of the entire visitor industry workforce.

‘This MOU and the resulting collective initiatives will ensure a strong urban presence in South Africa’s brand proposition; resulting in increased visitation, jobs and economic contribution to the industry as a whole,“ reiterated Sithole.

Whilst there a number of developmental programs within the destination marketing companies, the key focus has been in developing an international demand generation plan. This has been achieved and execution has commenced with the on-line component of the integrated strategy.

The three cities are currently planning their co-operative domestic campaign, which will be launched within the next few months. **/ends**

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