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Minister Collins Chabane Dies in Car Crash

On 15 March, President Jacob Zuma announced, with great sadness, the untimely death of the Minister of Public Service and Administration, Mr Collins Chabane in a car crash in the early hours of 15 March 2015.

"We are deeply shocked and saddened by this untimely death of an outstanding cadre of our liberation struggle and a competent, accomplished and dependable member of my Cabinet. This is a huge loss to government and the country as a whole," said President Zuma.

Mr Chabane served as Minister in the Presidency responsible for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation during the fourth administration. He was able to develop and build the new Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation within a short space of time, and was able to

make the monitoring and evaluation function a crucial part of government work and a distinct feature of President Zuma's fourth administration.

As Minister in the Presidency whose responsibility was also to chair government's funeral planning Inter-Ministerial Committee, Mr Chabane led the planning of the international funeral of former President Nelson Mandela, with great dignity and efficiency.

A veteran of the liberation struggle, Mr Chabane was also a long serving member of the ANC National Executive Committee.



General Cele Leads the DAFF Delegation's

A delegation from the South African Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, (DAFF) led by General Beki Cele, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, visited the Islamic Republic of Iran on February 22-26, 2015. General Cele had meetings with the Iranian Deputy Agriculture Minister for Livestock Production, Agriculture Research, Training and Extension as well as the Head of the Iranian Fisheries Organization. Deputy Minister Cele also paid a courtesy call to Mr. Amir Abdollahian, Deputy Foreign Minister in Arab and African Countries of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In the meeting, both deputy ministers underscored their countries' geographical significance as gateways to regional markets.

General Cele also called for expansion of South Africa-Iran cooperation in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.



From Ambassador's Pen

The month of March was to be the occurrence of the 12th South Africa-Islamic Republic of Iran's Joint Commission. This has however been postponed which should not stimulate energies of detractors and rumormongers that there may be a dip in relations between our two countries. These remain as solid as the rock of Gibraltar and continues to steam forward twenty years after the establishment of bilateral relations in 1994.

The postponement is due to the critical stage of the nuclear negotiations are now entering in Geneva commencing on the 15th March 2015. South Africa welcomes this engagement between the P5+1 and Iran hoping that it will result in a comprehensive resolution and the emergence of Iran into the world community. Sanctions we believe are counterproductive. They not only hurt Iranian but also those of us who have historical relations with the Persian county. The fluid and characteristic instability of the Middle East (ME) needs a cohesive and coherent compass to act as an indicator for the quelling of the turbulence that is currently enveloping the ME region. We as South Africans call upon those involved in these negotiations to do so in good faith and in a manner of give and take. Our history tells us that negotiations involving parties should not involve one or other hiding the proverbial dagger under a clock. It might just clatter to the floor and then what?

February also marked the thirty sixth anniversary of the Revolution as led by the late Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979. Iranians celebrated in their millions and demonstrated their support for the destiny they have chosen. We were all impressed by the expression of nationalism and consistent support for the struggle of the Palestinian people. We also welcome the intervention Iran has

undertaken to support the people of Iraq against the tyranny of ISIL at a time when we in Africa battle the scourge of BOKO HARAM.

February also saw the visit of our Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. It was

indeed productive and offered opportunity to exchange views and experiences with his counterparts. It has laid the foundation for future cooperation.

Finally March 2015 marks the end of the Iranian calendar year and the beginning of Nowrouz, the New Year. Nowrouz marks the first day of spring or Equinox in the Persian calendar. It is a period of exchange of gifts, food, new clothing, cleaning of houses to usher in the splendor of spring and remove the desolation of winter. In the selected words of the Iranian poet HAFEZ:

Arrayed in youthful splendor, the orchard smiles again
 News of the rose enraptures the nightingale of sweet strain.
 Breeze, o'er the meadow's children when they fresh fragrance blows,
 Salute for me the cypress, the basil, and the rose.
 It the young Magian daily with grace so coy and fine,
 My eyes shall bend their fringes to sweep the house of wine.
 O thou whose bat of amber hangs o'er a moon below,
 Deal not to me so giddy, the anguish of a blow.

Once again we wish all Iranians a happy Nowrouz and good prospects for the coming year.



Ambassador Whitehead
 Photo: AVA Diplomatic

Ambassador Whitehead Attends the 36th Anniversary of the Victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran

The Islamic Republic of Iran celebrated the 36th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution on February 10, 2015. The ceremony was attended by high-ranking diplomats and Heads of Missions accredited to the Islamic Republic of Iran. President of



www.president.ir



Photo: Isna

MASHREGH NEWS

the Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr. Rouhani, was the keynote

speaker at the ceremony, which was held in Sa'd Abad Palace in Tehran. In his speech, President Rouhani stated that Iran's foreign policy is based on constructive interaction. He also highlighted that the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that all countries should help fight terrorism, instability, extremism, drug trafficking, organized crime and insecurity in the sea; and Iran spares no effort to help regional countries in this fight.

DAFF Delegation's Meetings with Iranian Officials

General Cele, the accompanying delegation as well as Ambassador Whitehead attended meetings with the Deputy Minister for Livestock Production, Dr. Rokni, Dr. Salehi, Deputy Minister and Head of Iran Fisheries Organization and Dr. Zand, Deputy Minister and the Head of the Agriculture Research, Education and Extension.

In the meeting with Dr. Rokni, the Iranian Deputy Minister for Livestock Production, the DAFF delegation briefed Iranian public and private sector representatives who were attending the meeting on South African livestock production including poultry value chain, dairy production and other projects carried out by the department such as food safety and job creation.



Meeting with the Head of Iranian Fisheries Organization



Meeting with Livestock Production Deputy Minister

General Cele mentioned that South Africa is a young democracy that is keen to learn. The Iranian side also briefed the South African delegates on its capabilities in livestock production and

explained the areas where it needs to import machinery and expertise.

The second meeting was hosted by the Iranian Fisheries Organization. Dr. Salehi and other officials from the Iranian Organization welcomed the South African delegation and briefed them on Iran's fisheries activities. The South African delegation also offered an insight into its activities, especially Operation Phakisa, which has been introduced by President Jacob Zuma and which aims at moving the current South African economy of this sector from 5.7 to 17.7 million dollars. General Cele mentioned that South Africa currently is seeking to pass legislation for its fisheries sector. This is something Iran did twenty years ago and is willing to share its experience with South Africa.

The meeting with Dr. Zand, the Deputy Minister and the Head of the Agriculture Research, Education and Extension prepared a good opportunity for South African delegates and Iranian officials to become familiar with the collaboration between academia and the sector's role-players.



General Cele

State of the Nation Address 2015

President Jacob Zuma presented the State of the Nation Address (SoNA) to a joint sitting of Parliament on Thursday, 12 February 2015.

During his speech, the President talked about government's achievements of the past year and looked to the future by presenting a programme for the coming year. This programme set out government's plans to address various key government priorities.

President Zuma dedicated much of his SoNA to explain plans that are in motion to deal with the country's electricity challenges. The President unveiled a battle plan aimed at resolving short- and long-term energy challenges. He

was speaking as Eskom's power grid remained constrained, with the power utility being forced to implement load shedding.

"We have developed a plan which involves short-, medium- and long-term responses. The short- and medium-term plan involves improved maintenance of Eskom power stations, enhancing the electricity generation capacity and managing the electricity demand," said Zuma. "The long-term plan involves finalising our long-term energy security master plan. As a priority we are going to stabilise Eskom's finances to enable the utility to manage the current period. In this regard, [the] government will honour its commitment to give Eskom around R23-billion in the next fiscal year."

"Given the high cost of diesel, Eskom has been directed to switch from diesel to gas as a source of energy for the utility's generators. Households are also being encouraged to switch from electricity to gas for cooking, heating and other uses."

He said the construction of three power stations – Kusile, Medupi and Ingula – would add 10 000MW of power to the national grid. The government was also pursuing alternative energy sources.



The president said the government would pursue gas, petroleum, nuclear, hydropower and other sources as part of the energy mix. South Africa was surrounded by gas-rich countries, while shale gas deposits had been discovered in the Karoo.

"The Operation Phakisa Ocean Economy initiative, launched last year, also promises to unveil more oil and gas resources, which will be a game-changer for our country and region. [The] government is also exploring the procurement of the 9 600MW nuclear build programme as approved in the Integrated Resource Plan 2010-2030."

President Zuma added that the government had signed inter-governmental agreements and carried out vendor parade workshops in which the US, South Korea, Russia, France and China came to present their proposals on nuclear power.

"All these countries will be engaged in a fair, transparent and competitive procurement process to select a strategic partner or partners to undertake the nuclear build programme. Our target is to connect the first unit to the grid by 2023, just in time for Eskom to retire part of its ageing power plants.

"With regards to hydro power, the Grand Inga Hydro-electrical Project partnership with the Democratic Republic of Congo will generate over 48 000MW of clean hydro- electricity. South Africa will have access to over 15 000MW," he said.

On the economic front, the President revealed a nine-point plan to create job opportunities and promote growth in accordance with the targets set out in South Africa's long term National Development Plan. In addition to resolving the energy challenge, the nine-point plan also included promoting agriculture, encouraging private sector investment and favouring small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs).

President Zuma also addressed land redistribution as "one of the most critical factors in achieving redress for the wrongs of the past."

Source: SA news.gov

Conclusion of the DAFF Delegation Visit



Dr. Rokni, General Cele and Ambassador Whitehead

Dr. Rokni, General Cele and Ambassador Whitehead



General Cele and Dr. Rokni co-chair the concluding session

Areas for Cooperation between Republic of South Africa and Islamic Republic of Iran:

1. Research and Development
2. Technical skills and knowledge transfer
3. Education, training and staff exchange programmes
4. Enhancing production capacity and value chain efficiency in Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
5. Regulatory services
6. Promotion of market access in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

DAFF delegation concluded its visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran on Thursday, February 26, 2015.

In Thursday's meeting General Cele offered a brief report of the delegation's field visit to a dairy farm near the city of Abyek in the Qazvin province, an olive production farm in Gilan province, a poultry farm and poultry abattoir in Gilan Province, and also visited aquaculture facilities: sturgeon and trout breeding centres.

The Iranian Deputy Minister also expressed hope that friendly visits would take place again in the future and the relations between the two countries would grow farther.



Agriculture Working Group



Fisheries Working Group

The Deputy Ministers then left the session to provide the South African experts and their Iranian counterparts with the opportunity to further discuss the areas for cooperation. Two working groups were established; one focusing on agriculture and the other on fisheries.

Areas for collaboration were identified as below:

1. Research and Development
2. Technical skills and knowledge transfer

3. Education, training and staff exchange programmes
4. Enhancing production capacity and value chain efficiency in Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
5. Regulatory services
6. Promotion of market access in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

Once the areas of collaboration were identified and agreed upon by the representatives from the agriculture, fisheries and forestry of the Republic of South Africa and Islamic Republic of Iran, General Cele and Dr. Rokni signed the Agreed Minutes which is considered as the building blocks for a Memorandum of

Understanding which is expected to be signed during the 12th Joint Commission.





SOUTH AFRICA UNDER NO THREAT FROM EBOLA

South African Government reiterates through a Media Statement issued by the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) in August 2014 that South Africa remains the destination of choice for tourism, despite a report in the media which stated that the industry had become the first victim of Ebola.

No cases of the Ebola virus have been reported in the country, and the South African Government is confident of the systems and protocols that are in place to address any incidence of the virus.

South Africa has even dispatched a specialist team in response to the virus in Sierra Leone.

2014 Ebola Outbreak

Knowledge of travellers coming in and out of South Africa

South Africa's National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) say the chance of infection in South Africa is low

There are measures in place to detect it early

- National Department of Health is monitoring all ports of entry (water, land and air)
- Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) port health officials are on high alert and monitoring current revised protocols, processes and procedures
- At OR Tambo (Johannesburg) passengers have to walk underneath an Infrared Fever Screening System measuring body temperature. In the event that a passenger does trip the alert there are processes in place to deal with potentially infected passengers.



How does Ebola spread



Symptoms:

Fever, weakness, muscle pains, headaches and sore throats. This is followed by vomiting, diarrhoea, rash and in some cases bleeding



Facts

- Incubation period of EVD varies from 2 – 21 days
- No risk of transmission during incubation period and only low risk of transmission in early phase of symptomatic patients
- People with Ebola, are only infectious after becoming sick. This makes it easier for health authorities to limit transmission
- Historically several cases of haemorrhagic fever diseases were diagnosed after long distance travel but none developed the symptoms during international travel
- Ebola cannot be transmitted via the air, water or food

Remember



Practice careful hygiene



There is no licenced vaccine



Taking South Africa's Garden Route

If you can bear to tear yourself away from Cape Town, there's another local jewel worth of your attention, especially in the summer months. Jump into a car and head east – and you'll discover one of the world's most remarkable coastal stretches: South Africa's Garden Route.

Leaving Cape Town

The N2 highway carves and meanders for 800km between Cape Town in the Western Cape province and Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape. The Garden Route – the name given to the stretch of forested, coastal area between Mossel Bay and Port Elizabeth – is the bright red cherry

on this southern slice of Africa.

Swellendam

About halfway between Cape Town and Mossel Bay, Swellendam is a good stopping point. More than 250 years old, Swellendam is preserved in small town charm with wide streets, neatly preserved Cape Dutch and Victorian buildings, and excellent places to enjoy some South African food.

Mossel Bay

Considered by many as the official westernmost point of the Garden Route, Mossel Bay has a mild year-round climate, good beaches and friendly locals. Golf has become a big attraction here, thanks to the course at Pinnacle Point Golf Estate and Golf Resort. The course is perched atop a cliff and offers spectacular views of the Indian Ocean.

Yet it's not all leisurely walks and casual golf in Mossel Bay. The town is one of the only two

places in South Africa from which visitors can go cage diving with great white sharks – something to think about when you slice your ball off the cliff at Pinnacle Point!

Detour to Oudtshoorn

Slightly north-east of Mossel Bay is George, an important link in South Africa's road network, and a crossroads for both coastal explorers and those traveling inland.

For a uniquely South African experience, be sure to head north of George for a quick visit to Oudtshoorn, South Africa's ostrich capital.

Although it's located just a few miles inland, the Oudtshoorn landscape is a dusty contrast to the thickly forested coastline of the Garden Route. Visit one of the Ostrich farms in Oudtshoorn and experience the frenetic, somewhat crazed madness that ensues from getting mixed up with these bald, chubby birds.

It's not all ostriches in Oudtshoorn, though; the area is also famous for Cango Caves. Believed to have been formed more than 65-million years ago, the caves are regarded as one of Africa's most important natural wonders. It's a good idea to phone ahead and book in advance.

And if the caves don't impress, the nearby Cango Wildlife Ranch surely will. The centre is one of the world's foremost cheetah breeding projects and also boasts rare white lions, Bengal tigers and crocodiles.

Source: SAinfo reporter

To be continued...



Tsitsikamma National Park on South Africa's Garden Route (Photo: SA National Parks)



Mossel Bay, halfway between Cape Town and Port Elizabeth on South Africa's famous Garden Route (Photo: Mossel Bay Tourism)

Cape Town has world's second best beaches

Cape Town has been ranked by National Geographic as the world's second-best beach city in their latest Top 10 list.

The international magazine places Cape Town's beaches behind Barcelona's "eight white-sand beaches that rim its Mediterranean coastline". But the South African "capital of cool" pips Hawaii's Honolulu, Nice in France, Miami in the US, Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, Santa Monica in California, Sydney in Australia, and Israel's Tel Aviv.

Here is what National Geographic had to say:

The African capital of cool sprawls on a peninsula that divides the icy Atlantic from the warmer Indian Ocean, putting some 20 beaches within striking distance. The Clifton beaches, known for the posh homes that overlook them and stellar sunset-viewing, are sheltered from the region's strong trade winds by a mountainous ridge. Further north, the breeze is unleashed at surfing sweet spots Milnerton and Blouberg. Families favor the eastern False Bay coast for warmer water and tot-friendly tidal pools.

Source: SAinfo reporter



Clifton beach, Cape Town (Image: SA Tourism)

South Africa's economy grows by 4.1%

South Africa's gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 4.1% in the fourth quarter of 2014, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) announced on Tuesday.

"Real gross domestic product at market prices increased by 4.1% quarter-on-quarter, seasonally adjusted and annualised," Stats SA said. This growth was more than what markets had expected.

"GDP growth accelerated by much more than the markets expected in the final quarter of 2014, growing by a seasonally adjusted and annualised 4.1% quarter-on-quarter, up from 2.1% and 0.5% in the third and second quarters respectively and better than the consensus market forecast of 3.7%," said Nedbank economists.

The largest contribution to the quarter-on-quarter growth of 4.1% was manufacturing that contributed 1.2% based on growth of 9.5%. The mining and quarrying industry contributed 1.1% based on growth of 15.2%. The finance, real estate and business services contributed 0.7% based on growth of 3.5%.

Economic activity in the manufacturing industry reflected positive growth of 9.5% due to higher production in petroleum, chemical products, rubber and plastic products division, among others.



The Lethabo coal-fired base-load power station located between Vereeniging and Sasolburg in the Free State province (Photo: Eskom)

Mining and quarrying

Meanwhile, economic activity in mining and quarrying reflected positive growth of 15.2% due to higher production in the mining of "other" metal ores, including platinum; and "other" mining and quarrying, including diamonds.

The growth in finance, real estate and business services was due to increases in activities in the financial markets and banking.

Over 2014 as a whole, real GDP grew by only 1.5%, down from an already tame 2.2% in 2013.



Nampak's glass manufacturing plant at Roodekop outside Johannesburg (Photo: Nampak Wiegand Glass)

Market prices

According to Stats SA, the nominal GDP at market prices during the fourth quarter of 2014 was R979-billion, which is R16-billion more than in the third quarter of 2014.

Real GDP at market prices increased by 1.5% in 2014 following an increase of 2.2% in 2013, with the largest contribution to the increase in 2014 being general government services, which contributed 0.5% based on growth of 3%. Finance, real estate and business services contributed 0.4% based on growth of 2.2%.

Nominal GDP was estimated at R3.8-trillion for the year of 2014.

According to the Nedbank analysts, the economy should fare better in 2015 off the low base of 2014. Consumer spending is forecast to accelerate as lower fuel prices and easing inflation support disposable income and interest rates remain steady for much of the year.

This, along with the low base of 2014, is expected to outweigh the negative impact of load shedding, lower international commodity prices and subdued global demand on exports. On balance, Nedbank expects GDP growth of about 2.5% in 2015.

The Reserve Bank's Monetary Policy Committee is unlikely to read too much into the stronger-than-expected GDP figures. The risks to the economic outlook still remain on the downside given limited power and other economic capacity locally and an uncertain economic environment globally.

In contrast, the inflation outlook remains benign, which should persuade the MPC to keep interest rates unchanged at its upcoming meeting in March. Our forecast is for rates to remain on hold throughout most of 2015, with the first rate hike expected in November. Much however depends on the trajectories of the rand and oil prices," said Nedbank.

Source: SAnews.gov.za

Ambassador's Provincial Visit

His Excellency WMP Whitehead, South African Ambassador in Tehran, visited Fars Province in March 2015 accompanied by the commercial Section of the Embassy as the Mission's 4th quarter provincial visit objective. The main aim of the visit was to identify the economic strength of Fars province, identify business opportunities for South African companies and to promote South Africa trade & investment in Fars province.



Iran and South Africa stressed enhancing trade relations between the two countries through private sectors

In this visit, the South African Ambassador paid courtesy visit to the Mayor of Shiraz. In this meeting enhancing the trade relationship between South Africa and Iran through the private sections of the two countries was raised.

The Mayor of Shiraz expressed the Municipality's readiness to receive South African delegations in different industries such as agriculture, medical equipment, carpet, and handicrafts.

Renovating water and waste water infrastructure such as piping by transfer of technology from Fars province to South Africa, and also city manage-

ment such as electricity/energy generation from waste were also discussed in the meeting.

The Ambassador also met with the board members of Shiraz Chamber of Commerce, and visited few industrial sites such as dairy products factory and Cement companies.

Strong points of the province including agricultural products, petrochemical, minerals, etc. was discussed to be the potential areas of co-operation between Fars province and South Africa. The Chamber stated that Fars province is interested in using South Africa's experience in Mining as well as agricultural machineries technology.

Shiraz Chamber also welcomed the South African Fact-finding delegations to find more areas of co-operation between the two countries.

The South African Ambassador expressed that the cultural affinity between the two nations makes it easier for private sectors to interact with each other and do expand trade between the two countries. He also mentioned that the seasonal difference the two countries can make the countries cover each other for agricultural products, such as wheat, animal feed, fruits, etc.

DAFF Delegation's Provincial Visit



A delegation from the South African Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries (DAFF) visited Iran on 23 - 26 February 2015. The delegation was headed by the Deputy Minister of DAFF.

Iran's Ministry of Jihad – Agriculture hosted the South African official delegation and

arranged number of meetings as well as agricultural site visits in their programme.

The delegates also paid a two-day visit to Gilan province as arranged in the programme. In this visit the delegation visited a livestock breeding farm, olive production site, two warm & cold water fish breeding farms, and a paid a visit to a poultry breeding & abattoir.

The visit was successful and the two parties signed a minute agreement that the document would be further implemented in the 12th session of South Africa – Iran Joint Bilateral Commission.

Durban Has a Bumper Year for Visitors

Durban witnessed what is arguably its most successful tourism year in 2014, with an increase in visitor numbers of 12.8% over 2013, according to the eThekweni municipality. In total, 7.4 million people visited the warm East Coast city, with a total direct spend of R19.2-billion and 95 396 jobs created and sustained over the year, the municipality reported on 4 February. With indirect spend added, the tally was R32.4-billion.

Durban proved to be a big draw card for domestic and international visitors over the festive period, which showed an average growth of more than 20% in visitor numbers, with 400 000 more tourists than the previous year. Over the six weeks of December to mid-January 2015, Durban had 1.45 million visitors with a total direct spend of R3.1-billion and 15 492 jobs created; some were sustained.

The hospitality industry employs 95 396 people. In terms of market segmentation, Durban recorded a 15% increase in foreign visitors from the United States, 12% from Australia, 13% from Zimbabwe and 10% from Zambia. Gauteng was again a key source market, constituting 49% of all visitor arrivals.

Durban Tourism head Philip Sithole said: "2014 has proved to be one of our most successful years. This is after we launched a number of campaigns aimed at marketing the Durban destination to both local and international markets. Most notable was our 'Taking Durban to the World' strategy, which aimed at boosting both international and domestic tourism. "We have already started seeing return in investment in terms of achieving the objectives of our campaigns and if you look at the number of accolades that we have received in the past year alone, most recently the *New York Times* listing Durban in the top 10 places to visit for 2015, it is evident that we are on the right track."

This is while Durban was number seven in the January list.

Durban was named one of the New7Wonder cities of the world in December 2014, out of more than 1,200 nominees from 220 different countries. In addition, in 2012, the municipality entered into a two-year partnership with National Geographic to position Durban as a "must visit" world-class tourist destination. The partnership ended in June 2014.

Under it, National Geographic implemented a global campaign that included print, digital and television. The TV campaign included the production of three 60-second vignettes and two documentaries on Durban.

In early December, Durban Tourism, the city's official tourism arm, said it would spend almost R22-million (USD 1,800,750) in a second partnership, over three years, with the National Geographic Society to market the city worldwide. As part of it, National Geographic's *Traveller* magazine would commission an in-depth feature article on Durban and potentially, KwaZulu-Natal. There would also be an editorial supplement on "The Best of Durban", and a 12-page feature for the *USA Traveler* magazine and tablet editions about Durban and KwaZulu-Natal.

Sainfo reporter



R600m Plan to Help SA Grow its Tourism

A series of new incentives to help tourism establishments grow their businesses and to improve South Africa's tourism attractions were announced by Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom in Johannesburg on Tuesday.

The investment of around R600-million will help establishments to become graded and seek new markets for their products, and will later include retrofitting key tourist attractions with renewable energy sources.

South Africa's tourism sector had performed very well in the past two decades, Hanekom said. "The pace of growth in the tourism sector has outstripped the growth in the overall economy significantly. We are now well positioned to do more, to continue growing, and to transform the sector by making it more inclusive and sustainable."

It is estimated that tourism supports 1.4-million direct and indirect jobs and contributes 9.5% of South Africa's total Gross

Domestic Product. "Tourism has enormous transformative power," Hanekom said. "Tourism has a very strong multiplier effect on host communities and has a supply chain that extends deep into the economy."

The Tourism Incentive Programme represents an investment of R557-million over the medium term to support tourism enterprises to reach their full potential, Hanekom said.

The Tourism Incentive Programme supports the objectives of South Africa's overall industrial policy, which includes creating jobs, building the local industrial base and transforming to a green economy.

Source: Department of Tourism



Animals have right of way on the roads of the Kruger National Park (Photo: Mary Alexander, MediaClubSouthAfrica.com)