

SA tourism showing signs of recovery

The tourism sector, which was brought to a halt due to Covid-19 restrictions, is showing signs of recovery with an indicator being the increase in international arrivals. This is according to Tourism Minister Lindiwe Sisulu who tabled the department's budget vote to a mini-plenary of the National Assembly on Thursday.



Source: [@LindiweSisuluSA](#)

"According to ACSA, air travel to and from South Africa has reached its highest levels of activity since the Covid-19 pandemic – almost 2.3 million through OR Tambo, Cape Town, Durban in March – up 70% from the previous year.

"Recovery is being bolstered by international arrivals," she said.

“ Department of Tourism Budget Vote 2022 <https://t.co/GnDng5dqa8>— Lindiwe Sisulu (@LindiweSisuluSA) [May 19, 2022](#) ”

Sisulu said South Africa was among those African destinations that experienced the biggest declines in arrivals in 2021: 78% down when compared to 2019, while countries in East Africa were not as deeply affected.

"Cape Town International Airport's total passenger activity had increased to 66% of levels last seen in the first quarter of 2019.

"January and February this year saw strong growth in arrivals from the UK, Netherlands, Australia, Germany, Switzerland – 549% up in 2022 versus 2021 from our top 10 source markets (Stats SA)."



#ATMDubai: SA Tourism, Emirates sign MoU to boost visitor arrivals

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Sisulu said, as a result, international airlines can't keep up with the demand for travel to and from South Africa, resulting in stubbornly high airfares made even worse by soaring fuel prices.

MoUs with Emirates, Qatar Airlines to grow SA's tourism market

Sisulu said tourism has always been one of the most lucrative activities, contributing billions to the local economy in job creation and small business development.

However, since the onset of the pandemic, the July unrest in 2021 and the devastating April floods, the sector has suffered losses estimated to be in the billions.

"Last week we announced that during our attendance at the Arabian Travel Market, SA Tourism signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Emirates Airlines to grow the tourism market in South Africa.

"Air travel is a key pillar for South Africa's tourism recovery and we expect this will boost visitor arrivals. It will promote tourism and inbound traffic to South Africa from key markets across the Emirates network," she said.

Sisulu said the Middle East is a critical market for South Africa and that the collaboration would be instrumental in ensuring ease of access to and from South Africa for travellers from this region.

She said this would also help to elevate South Africa's trade efforts.

"A similar effort is underway with Qatar Airways," she said.

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