

Cape Town takes top spot in ICCA rankings

CAPE Town and the Western Cape is still proudly the number one destination for conferences in Africa according to the International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA) 2013 stats.

South Africa maintained its number one spot in the African meetings category, followed by Kenya and Morocco with triple the amount of meetings held. In the African city rankings, Cape Town was the ultimate winner, with Durban second and Nairobi third.

Stellenbosch placed 10th, which was an incredible feat for this picturesque town in the Cape Winelands region.

In relation to its partners in the BestCities Global Alliance (Berlin, Chicago, Copenhagen, Dubai, Edinburgh, Houston, Melbourne, Singapore, Vancouver) Cape Town fared very well at 52nd, behind Melbourne at 44th and Vancouver at 38th.

Cape Town and the Western Cape's impressive results are attributed to its award-winning international airport, world-class infrastructure, award-winning international convention centre and its vibrant destination appeal, making it a first choice destination to meet in.

Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) general manager for commercial and business development, **Megan Arendse**, said the recent ICCA rankings bear further testament to Cape Town's appeal as one of the world's leading convention destinations and the leading destination in Africa.

South Africa has improved its ICCA ranking from 37 to 34 the world. Cape Town remains the top business events city in South Africa at 52, followed by Durban at an improved ranking of 97, followed by Johannesburg at 136, then Pretoria at 219 and finally, Stellenbosch at 242.

"The Centre's imminent expansion is set to further enhance Cape Town's value proposition, as it will attract a greater number of international association conferences to the city, thereby further enhancing economic growth and job creation," she added.

The Cape Town & Western Cape Convention Bureau, a division of Wesgro – the official tourism, trade and investment promotion agency for the province, has been working closely with its BestCities Global Alliance partners to source leads and bid intelligence.

They have also strengthened relationships with local professional conference organisers by providing stronger marketing support for building attendance and on-site event services.

Nils Flaatten, chief executive officer of Wesgro, said: "The latest rankings serves as testament to our world-class facilities, dynamic product and service offerings and unwavering professionalism.

"Without our stakeholders and partners, this would not have been achieved, and it is because of them that we celebrate our global ranking as a top destination to meet in."

ICCA is a prominent international meetings organisation and the only association that comprises a membership representing the main specialists in handling, transporting and accommodating international events. ICCA boasts more than 850 members in more than 80 countries worldwide. ■