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Bokone Bophirima Province promoted with great success in Serbia and Switzerland

Between 25 and 31 October 2017, the North West Development Corporation participated in two concurrent missions, one to Belgrade, Serbia and the other to Lugano and Aargau, Switzerland.

Serbia: Annual Serbia-Africa Trade and Investment Forum

Finance Economy and Enterprise Development MEC, Wendy Nelson led a provincial delegation on the international mission to attend and present at the Annual Serbia-Africa Trade and Investment Forum. The summit took place from 25 to 27 October 2017 in the capital city of Belgrade.

NWDC CEO Tshepo Phetla accompanied the provincial delegation and on Thursday, 26 October 2017 addressed the summit in presenting on economic and investment opportunities available in the North West Province. Strategic investment opportunities that were highlighted in Phetla's presentation included the Platinum Valley SEZ, Mahikeng International Airport and VTSD Industrial hubs.

A key role player in bringing this mission to fruition was the NGO, African Business Leaders Forum (ABLF). ABLF is a forum that engages both the private and public sector including investors worldwide, to take active roles in accelerating economic growth.

"ABLF in its strategic partnership with the Serbian Chamber of commerce, Black Sea Caspian Sea international Fund and Minatar is pleased to announce the launch of the Serbia Africa Investment Forum (SAIF) in Belgrade Serbia", the ABLF announced on their social media pages on 25 October 2017.



The mission to Serbia congregated business leaders across Eastern Europe and Africa to collaborate on areas of investment and other matters of mutual interest.

“The mission to Serbia was marked by fruitful and valuable discussions in establishing partnerships and cooperation in investment prospects. We are confident that fertile seeds were planted during our engagements in Serbia, which will grow into fully-fledged projects, bringing renewal and economic growth to the VTSD areas of Bokone Bophirima. The NWDC thanks the Department of Finance Economy and Enterprise Development and the Office of the Premier for the opportunity to promote our provincial projects internationally”, said NWDC CEO Tshepo Phetla.

Switzerland: Swiss International Holiday Expo in Lugano & Investment meetings

Two delegates from the NWDC participated in the *Swiss International Holiday Expo* specifically representing the NWDC’s tourism arm of Dirapeng as an exhibitor and award nominee. The show ran from 27 to 29 October 2017 in the Swiss city of Lugano in the Centro Esposizioni di Lugano Casarate.



The Acting CEO of Dirapeng, Sam Mudramuthoo and Investment Specialist Rego Ramong marketed and promoted the tourism products of Dirapeng Holdings, owned by the NWDC, which include the Christiana All Seasons Resort, Manyane and Bakgatla in Pilanesberg and the Madikwe River Lodge. Through exhibiting and networking at the Swiss Holiday Expo, these resorts were showcased to the affluent Swiss travel market, so that they may remain top of mind as preferred travel destinations when considering Africa and South Africa. Being one of only two exhibitors from the African continent, alongside Namibia, the exposure is expected to generate significant future reservations from Swiss travellers and travel agencies.



On top of participating in the exhibition, the Golden Leopard Resorts won a *Swiss Tourism Award* at the Expo. Only four products were awarded this year of which Golden Leopard Resorts won the coveted award. Upon presenting the award, Managing Director

of the show, Mr Marco Pion stated that it is a massive achievement.

“Swiss travellers are a perfect market to invest in. The Swiss Franc is quite strong and for this reason, the Swiss people are great travellers. This show has assisted us to promote and showcase our resorts to this market, whose first-time travellers consider Africa, and South Africa, as an undiscovered destination,” said Acting CEO of Dirapeng, Sam Mudramuthoo.



Ms Mudramuthoo further explained that it is of paramount importance for the tourism products of the North West Province to showcase themselves at the origin of this foreign market, so as to remain top of mind. It would be unwise to market to foreign travellers once they have already arrived in the country, as most European travellers prefer fully-packaged holidays prior to their departure.

After the show, before returning to South Africa, the delegates also briefed two high-level meetings on available investment opportunities. These meetings took place in the Swiss province of Aargau, outside of Zürich on Tuesday, 31 October 2017, arranged with the kind assistance of the South African embassy.

The first meeting took place at the Förderstiftung Technopark in Aargau with the purpose of gaining insights and observing how the industrial park SEZ model is implemented in Europe. As a secondary purpose, the engagement also set out to match-make technology manufacturers of the North West Province with their European counterparts, with the aim of exploring investment opportunities for them outside of the European Union. The second meeting was with representatives from the Aargau Canton (province) economic development agency to ascertain their investment interests in Africa and to present to them the North West Province’s key investment opportunities in the sectors of tourism, agriculture, manufacturing and mining.

The missions to Serbia and Switzerland assisted the North West Development Corporation to tangibly fulfil its mandate of economic growth and transformation through, among other initiatives, positioning the Province as a worthy competitor in the SADC Region, Africa and the globe.

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