

**For Immediate Release
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Cape Town retains position in ICCA global ranking despite fiercely competitive market conditions

Cape Town is still the top destination for conferences in Africa and the Middle East after retaining the 35th position in the 2009 ICCA (International Congress and Convention Association) global ranking; this despite unfavourable market conditions as a result of the global economic recession.

In relation to its partners in the BestCities Global Alliance, Cape Town fared very well, jumping two places to be ranked third behind Copenhagen (6) and Singapore (5). The destination was placed ahead of partner cities Edinburgh, 36th previously ranked 28th, and Vancouver, 37th previously ranked 31st. The grading follows from the submission of comprehensive data by the Cape Town & Western Cape Convention Bureau and industry partners in support of the 49, up from 42 in 2008, conferences held here in 2009. Interestingly had the four meetings held in Stellenbosch been added to Cape Town's total, the destination's ranking would have jumped two places to 33.

"Cape Town has again held its own in an increasingly competitive international market. The current ranking serves as an endorsement of our industry's expertise and professionalism. I want to thank our stakeholders and business tourism partners for their contribution in ensuring that we retain our position in the global ranking, and as a top conference destination in Africa and the Middle East," states Calvyn Gilfellan, CEO of Cape Town Routes Unlimited (CTRU).

"In reaction to the global economic recession delegate travel to long-haul destinations like Cape Town would have been dramatically curtailed, but this doesn't seem to have prevented an increase in the number of meetings taking place here," adds David Frandsen, Executive Manager International Marketing and Convention Bureau.

According to Rashid Toefy, CEO of the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), the recent ICCA rankings proves once again that Cape Town is indeed a popular global meetings destination.

"With 70% of the centre's business being driven by the international associations market, CTICC has played a pivotal role in positioning Cape Town as a leading international meetings destination.

Cape Town Routes *Unlimited*



Since inception the centre has focused its efforts on targeting the international associations market," he says. Toefy concluded by saying that while this is a great achievement for Cape Town, the centre will continue to channel its efforts to achieving its vision of being the best long-haul international convention centre and meetings destination by 2020.

Last year Cape Town & Western Cape Convention Bureau , as a member of the BestCities Global Alliance of Convention Bureaux, once again obtained certification after the annual audit by Lloyd's Registered Quality Assurance. For the period after the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ the Bureau has secured a total of 31 association conferences. Together these conferences will contribute an estimated R640 million to the economy of the Western Cape.

South Africa has held its position and is currently ranked 34th after hosting 90 conferences in 2009.

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 over 80 countries worldwide.

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For more information on the Cape Town and Western Cape business tourism experience, visit www.tourismcapetown.co.za or write to convention@tourismcapetown.co.za

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Editor's Note:

- + Johannesburg is the first South African city behind Cape Town and comes in at 133rd
- + Durban's ranking has dropped to 244
- + The Cape Town & Western Cape Convention Bureau is a strategic unit of CTRU and leads the city and province in soliciting bids to host international conferences in the destination.
- + The Cape Town and Western Cape Convention Bureau is a certified member of the BestCities Global Alliance of Convention Bureaux, together with Copenhagen, Edinburgh, Dubai, Singapore, Melbourne, San Juan (Puerto Rico) and Vancouver. Certification requires strict adherence to the world's best convention bureau practices.