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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of uMhlathuze Announced as Host City for Tourism Investment Forum Africa 2025
Johannesburg, South Africa – 26 February 2025 –

The City of uMhlathuze has been officially announced as the host city for the highly anticipated Tourism Investment Forum Africa (TIFA) 2025 – a marquee event bringing together investors scouring for deals.

The media launch, held today, marks a significant milestone in the lead-up to the third annual TIFA, which brings together business people and investors across the country and continent, looking for investment opportunities.

The selection of uMhlathuze, a key port city in KwaZulu-Natal, underscores its growing reputation as a dynamic hub for tourism, trade, and investment.

The Mayor of uMhlathuze Municipality, Cllr Xolani Ngwezi emphasized the city's commitment to leveraging TIFA 2025 as a catalyst for local economic development.

"We intend to drive economic growth while positioning our port city and region as a competitive hub for export trade and investment. For this reason, the city has various investment projects in the pipeline aimed at unlocking the region's global competitiveness, not only for trade but also for tourism," Ngwezi said.

"Our strategic location as a gateway to the natural attractions of Zululand and Maputaland, along with our growing popularity as a cruise ship destination, makes us an ideal host for this prestigious event."

Highlighting the strategic importance of hosting TIFA 2025 in KwaZulu-Natal, the CEO of the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism and Film Authority, Sibusiso Gumbi, reaffirmed their support for the conference.

"This initiative aligns with our strategic mandate to position and promote the province as a desirable tourism destination and film location. Hosting the event will not only create opportunities for access to capital but also elevate lesser-known regions and cities as attractive investment locations and business events destinations."

Commenting on this milestone, Miller Matola, CEO of Millvest, said the City of Umhlathuze has a lot to offer investors.

"In line with the ethos of TIFA as a global platform for local economic development action, the city of uMhlathuze and the Port of Richards Bay's infrastructure and tourism potential

present immense opportunities for driving inclusive economic growth while creating good returns for discerning investors and partners," he said.

"This was a key factor in our choice of the city of uMhlathuze as the host for the third edition of the TIFA."

To be held under the theme: ***Tourism and Infrastructure Investment: Driving Economic Transformation and Enhancing Community Well-Being***, from 26th to 27th August 2025 at the Thembela Events Venue, Richards Bay, the TIFA 2025 is expected to attract key industry stakeholders, investors, policymakers, and tourism leaders from across Africa and beyond.

The event will provide a platform for impactful discussions, partnerships, and investment opportunities that will drive sustainable growth and development within the continent's tourism sector.

The City of uMhlathuze is the perfect choice to host the TIFA as it is strategically placed as one of our fastest growing economic hub cities in KZN. The conference will raise awareness, promote the destination and showcase priority programmes and projects.

With direct flights from Johannesburg to Richards Bay and several accommodation establishments, delegates are sure to have a pleasant stay in the region during the conference.

The city's own investment projects and initiatives – including catalytic ones - will come under the spotlight and site visits to the various locations will be organised for delegates, which also showcases the tourism potential of the Zulu Kingdom.

There are certainly a lot of opportunities to interest the TIFA delegates in the region. Hopefully, it will lead to future investment and development in this exciting area.

About KwaZulu-Natal Tourism and Film Authority

It is a new entity merging KZN Film and Tourism KZN. Its main goals are to promote and market the tourist and audio-visual sectors, facilitate sector development, provide sustainable growth and job opportunities, and address historical infrastructural, skills, and resource inequalities.

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