

CTICC expansion will make Cape Town more competitive

In Finance Minister **Pravin Gordhans'** budget speech delivered in Parliament recently, he outlined the crucial need for large-scale infrastructure investments as essential to growing the South African economy, and none are more essential to the Western Cape's provincial economy than the R832 million expansion of the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC).

The CTICC East, a jointly funded project by the CTICC, City of Cape Town and Western Cape Government, aims to increase the global competitiveness of Cape Town as a premier world-class meetings and events destination.

"At the CTICC, we recognise that economic sustainability is only possible through a willingness to continually invest back into our product offering and infrastructure.

"Over the past few years, the CTICC has turned away hundreds of potential business opportunities," says **Julie-May Ellingson**, chief executive officer CTICC. "This expansion will allow us to accommodate these events."

Ms Ellingson made these remarks while speaking to high-profile international industry journalists who were in Cape Town as part of a South African Tourism initiative.



At the briefing breakfast, Ms Ellingson emphasised the significant contribution CTICC has already made to the local economy with more than 91 000 direct and indirect jobs which have been created to date.

Since inception, the CTICC has made a cumulative contribution of R28.8 billion to South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and R25.6 billion to the Gross Geographic Product (GGP) of the Western Cape.

Joining Ms Ellingson on a personal tour of the bustling construction site, a first for international journalists since the principle





building contractor was appointed in December 2014, journalists were awed by the vast framework that will eventually transform the Foreshore precinct.

Demonstrating as they moved from one cavernous hall to the next how the expansion doubles the existing exhibition capacity by adding 10 000 m² of multipurpose conference and exhibition space and 3 000 m² of formal and informal meeting space to the group.



The journalists also got a sneak peek of the underground tunnel, which will be mirrored by the sky-bridge overhead on Heerengracht Street, a design feature which connects the CTICC West and East allowing for delegates and guests to move seamlessly between the two buildings.

With 60 per cent of the construction already completed, the CTICC is confidently moving towards the practical completion at the end of 2016, with

commissioning of the building taking place between November 2016 and February 2017. The CTICC expansion will officially open in March 2017.

The expansion enables the CTICC to host concurrent events simultaneously, increasing the enviable ability of already hosting the highest number of international association events in Africa.

This move enables CTICC to also expand with existing clients, like Africa Travel Week and African Utility Week as well as large, knowledge-based events such as Investing in African Mining, thus enhancing its contribution to the city, province and country's expertise, knowledge and skills.

As a result of the expansion, the CTICC was able to secure the World Ophthalmology Congress, which will see the CTICC West and East simultaneously occupied by 15 000 delegates in 2020.

"Our strategy is to increase capacity in order to meet CTICC's growing list of clients who want to expand their events into both buildings and other clients who we will now be able to accommodate," Ms Ellingson concludes. ■



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