



## **CABINET STATEMENT**

**TO : ALL MEDIA**  
**EMBARGO : IMMEDIATE**

### **KZN READY TO EMBRACE THE WORLD**

**Pietermaritzburg, 29 August 2012:** KwaZulu-Natal is bracing itself for an influx of high level international delegates ahead of the BRICS Summit early in the year and the closing ceremony of the South African leg of the France-South Africa Seasons 2012 and 2013 which takes place in Durban on November 17 this year.

Durban will host the Fifth Brazil Russia India China South Africa Summit on 25-27 March at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre. World renowned cultural activists and artists are also expected for the France-South African Seasons' closing ceremony as the patrons are President Jacob Zuma and French President Francois Hollande.

Today the KwaZulu-Natal Cabinet received detailed briefings about preparations for both events from teams led by Ambassador A Sooklal, Deputy Director-General: Asia and Middle East and Mr Bongani Tembe, Commissioner-General for France Africa Seasons 2012 and 2013. Mr Tembe is also a member of the National Arts and Cultural Task Team that has been assigned to organize this multi-faceted bilateral collaboration between South Africa and France.

Next week the Province hosts, on behalf of the African Union and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Ministerial Conference in Durban.

Said Premier Dr Zweli Mkhize: "We want to maximize on the opportunities presented by hosting these major events. We expect about 2 000 delegates for BRICS alone and they will be accompanied by the global media. We will be leveraging opportunities on all fronts specifically in business, tourism, trade, the arts, culture and other sectors. We will showcase the best that our Province can offer by creating platforms, exhibitions and networking opportunities when we host these important visitors. Our hosting programme for the 2010 FIFA World Cup was a spectacular success and we intend to do even better."

Ambassador Sooklal highlighted that BRICS member states were doing a feasibility study to set up a new Development Bank for mobilizing resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging economies and developing countries.

BRICS represents 43% of the world's population, 18 % of global trade while attracting 53% of foreign capital. Intra-BRICS trade has expanded by 28% in 2011 to reach \$230 billion and \$500 is targeted by 2015.



The collaboration between South Africa and France is aimed at improving mutual understanding between the people of South Africa and France by emphasizing shared values. The French Season in South Africa is between June and November this year and the South African Season in France is scheduled for between May and December 2013.

Activities take place in various locations in these countries, ranging from exhibitions, visual art, cinema, dance, music, theatre, street dance, sports, economy, trade and industry, among others. The closing ceremony for the South African leg takes place in Durban.

Dr Mkhize said an extensive hosting programme would be put together to showcase KwaZulu-Natal to the visitors and expose visiting business people to investment opportunities in the region.

**Issued by the Office of the Premier on behalf of Cabinet**

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