

## MINISTRY OF TOURISM

### MEDIA RELEASE

#### SOUTH AFRICAN HEADS WORLD'S GUIDES



The World Federation of Tourist Guides Associations has appointed a South African tourist guide as its new President.

Alushca Ritchie, a registered tourist guide for the Western Cape, was appointed to head the internationally recognised body at the 17<sup>th</sup> biennial World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations Convention which took place in Tehran, Iran, recently.

Ms Ritchie has been a Wine Specialist for the last 6 years. She owns and manages a tourism business and has served as the Chairperson of the Cape Tourist Guides Association, a director on the Cape Town Tourism Board and as the Western Cape Representative of the South African Travel Services Association.

Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom, congratulated Ms Ritchie on her appointment.

“We are very proud of this global leadership achievement,” said Minister Hanekom. “This presents another opportunity for us to elevate the status of the guiding profession and to acknowledge the important role that our tourist guides play in providing superb visitor experiences.”

The WFTGA is a not-for-profit, non-political organisation comprising tourist guide associations, individual tourist guides, educational institutions and other members who have a direct or indirect association with tourist guides. It is an Affiliate Member of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation.

The President of WFTGA serves for a two-year term and is supported by an Executive Board made up of delegates from Australia, Iran, USA, Canada and UK.

The convention was attended by about 350 participants and delegates from over 40 countries. The President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hassan Rouhani, officiated at the opening ceremony. The Vice-President and Head of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and

Tourism Organisation, Ms Zahra Ahmadi Pour, and the Secretary-General of the UNWTO, Mr Taleb Rifai, also attended.

Ms Ritchie said: "I look forward to representing all tourist guides on an international platform. This will be a great opportunity to learn and to promote a sector which is very rarely recognised as a profession, although it is an integral component of the tourism value chain."

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For more information on the WFTGA and the Convention visit:

[www.wftga.org](http://www.wftga.org)

[www.wftga2017.com](http://www.wftga2017.com)