

July 2009

Window to the World

Namibia - beloved conference destination

Namibia, and especially the city of Windhoek, is fast becoming one of the most popular destinations for meetings, conferences, summits, seminars and conventions. This may be surprising to some as the city of Windhoek rely on centres like the Safari Conference Centre, Nampower Convention Centre and Windhoek Country Club to host such events and these venues are a far cry from what is offered internationally in this regard.

What is it then that differentiates Namibia from other African destinations? There must be something special that puts the city of Windhoek on the world map - that special something that we can all be proud of as **ambassadors** of the country...

In a recent article in the Namibia Economist newspaper, the cleanliness of Windhoek was described as a major attraction to the city and country. "Windhoek is one of the most dynamic cities on the African continent. Its strategic location, sophisticated financial and communication sector, medical services and conference facilities make the city the ideal place in Africa for conferencing," stated the article.

Windhoek is indeed an attractive, modern, clean, safe and politically stable conference location. And, despite its modern amenities, the African tourism experience is never far away.

The article further stated: "The City of Windhoek is geared to assist potential conference organisers in preparing their bid to secure Windhoek as the preferred conference destination. The city has database of every conceivable service that could be required by conference hosts including, prime venues and state of the art conference facilities, professional conference organisers, the latest high tech audio visual equipment, interpretation and translation services, transport operators, pre and post tours and specialised themed evenings."

"We all have the responsibility to be ambassadors of our brand, our event, our company, and ultimately our country." - Marelise Serfontein, Conference Link MD.

Conference Link was the event organiser at the Ministry of Education Directorate of Namibia Library and Archive Services's 20th Biannual Conference of the Eastern and Southern African Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) from 1 - 3 July 2009 in Windhoek. The organisation of this event provided a number of ambassadors from the Conference Link Ambassadors and Visitor's Training Programme to get practical, hands-on experience at an international event.

Conference Link is a pioneer in establishing Namibia's meeting industry through innovative conference, project and event management solutions, specialising in:

- * Business Tourism consultancy and specialised marketing
- * Conferences facilitation and administration
- * Participant registration and RSVPs
- * Simultaneous translation and interpretation
- * Corporate functions and launches
- * Banquettes, fundraisers and festivals
- * Sponsorship sourcing
- * Branding, PR and marketing
- * Graphic design, decor, lighting and sound
- * Photography, audio, video and multimedia productions
- * Certified Event Management Training Programme
- * Ambassadors Training Programme.



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Conference Link facilitated and organised another high profile HIV/Aids initiative when two former presidents from Mozambique and Botswana recently visited Namibia in the capacity of HIV/Aids Champions.

Their ultimate goal was to promote a HIV-free generation through talks on prevention. During their visit they were in close contact with the Ministry of Health and Social Services and visited several HIV/Aids related projects and initiatives.



HIV/Aids in Namibia

HIV prevalence in Namibia is among the highest in the world. Routine antenatal surveillance estimated that 1 in 5 pregnant women were infected with HIV in 2006. The epidemic has cut across all sectors of society and is severely affecting the population. Life expectancy has declined in the past decade, from 61 years in 1991 to 49 years in 2001 (National Planning Commission 2003), and as many as 17 percent of children under the age of 18 are orphaned by at least one parent (NDHS 2006). While there are indications that the epidemic is stabilizing (MOHSS 2006), thousands more will become infected over the next few years—barring major impact of HIV prevention efforts (MOHSS 2008). Considerable increases in funding for HIV/AIDS programs and a strong commitment by the Government of Namibia present an important opportunity for curtailing the epidemic.



- Ministry of Health and Social Services Report 2009 (HIV/AIDS in Namibia: Behavioral and Contextual Factors Driving the Epidemic)

Conference Link ambassadors assisted with registrations at the international HIV/Aids Implementers Conference where more than 1 500 implementers of HIV and Aids programmes in more than 55 countries gathered in Namibia to pave the way for the fight against the disease worldwide.



Become an Ambassador!

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AMBASSADORS & VISITORS TRAINING PROGRAMME

In association with the University of Namibia's University Central Consultancy Bureau, Conference Link is hosting an unique Ambassadors & Visitors Training Programme to train people to become true ambassadors of their country or company by creating a sense of pride in what they do. This pro-gramme has been specifically designed to instill a sense of pride amongst people working with customers to enable them to sell a brand, product, service or idea.

The course is designed to benefit frontline staff from various industries or anyone who deals with customers directly.

It is presented over 6 days of which 3 days are classes and 3 days are practical. Contact us to discuss your specific needs.

Conference Link's database of trained ambassadors is also available to turn your events into great occasions. If you wish to make that lasting impression with your customers, contact us to find out more about the Ambassadors & Visitors Training Programme.



Road safety takes a turn

Road safety in Namibia took a fresh new turn with the launch of a 30-year plan on 28 May 2009 at the Oshakati Country Lodge in Oshakati. This memorable occasion is historic in the sense that it brought together various stakeholders in the national effort to improve road safety in Namibia.

These are indeed historic and memorable moments for the NRSC and the entire nation, since real action is finally being taken against one of the biggest national crises.

We can all look forward to safer people, safer roads and safer vehicles in the years to come!

Conference Link is the Project Manager for the Namibia Road Safety Council and assisted in organising the long-term strategy launch in Oshakati, together with the launch of a school patrol in Ongwediva. Honourable Paul Smit, Deputy Minister of Works and Transport officiated at these events.



Marelise Serfontein, MD of Conference Link with a few Ambassadors at the recent Tourism Expo where they were walking and talking proof of the success of the Ambassadors & Visitors Training Programme. They lured people to the Conference Link exhibition stand.