

City Lodge Hotel Maputo gets underway

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- **148-room City Lodge Hotel Maputo will add to City Lodge Hotel Group's African expansion progress in Kenya, Tanzania and Namibia**
- **Group will have seven hotels outside of South Africa by mid-2018**



The City Lodge Hotel Group has begun the development of a 148-room City Lodge Hotel in Maputo as part of its targeted African expansion programme.

Initial site works for the hotel began in late January and it is expected to open in the second quarter of 2018, taking the group's number of hotels to 61, which will include three in Kenya, one in Tanzania, one in Botswana and one in Namibia, complementing 54 hotels in South Africa across the Courtyard Hotel, City Lodge Hotel, Town Lodge and Road Lodge brands.

City Lodge Hotel Maputo will feature seven storeys and a basement and will have four meeting rooms as well as a balcony, a mini-gym and a swimming pool.

This latest addition to the City Lodge Hotel group's portfolio of hotels will take its overall room numbers to 7,686 by early 2018 in South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Namibia, Botswana and Mozambique from the current level of 7,072 in South Africa, Botswana and Kenya.

The group is currently developing three other new hotels in Africa: the 172-room City Lodge Hotel Two Rivers in Nairobi, Kenya; the 147-room City Lodge Hotel Dar es Salaam in Tanzania; and the 147-room Town Lodge Windhoek in Namibia.



Each of the new African hotels has its own interior design theme which has been carefully selected by architects and interior designers to identify with the specific environments in which the hotels operate. The group reported an average occupancy rate of 66% for the first half of its 2017 financial year, down from 69% in the previous corresponding period. This was mainly due to low business and consumer confidence in South Africa where the group has 54 hotels. Occupancies in Botswana were on a par with the previous year and Kenyan operations achieved slightly higher occupancies.

Meanwhile, the City Lodge Hotel Group on Thursday, 16 February 2017, released its interim results for the six months to 31 December 2016 – these are summarised below:

Total group revenue rose by 5% to R791.3 million, benefitting from an inflationary increase in room rates and first-time contributions from the 90-room Road Lodge Pietermaritzburg and the 148-room City Lodge Hotel Newtown. Operating costs were again well contained with normalised operating costs increasing by 7%.

Normalised profit before tax increased by 3.7% to R275.2 million while normalised headline earnings grew by 1.5% to R197.1 million as a result of a slightly higher effective tax rate. Fully diluted normalised headline earnings per share increased by 1.6% to 454 cents. A gross interim dividend of 272 cents was declared, in line with the policy of paying out 60% of normalised earnings.

Chief executive Clifford Ross said trading in the first six weeks of calendar 2017 has been “mixed”, making it difficult to ascertain an outlook for the second half of the financial year.

“Stronger economic growth and improved business and consumer confidence would be catalysts for a stronger performance by the group,” said Ross.

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