

Telkom sponsors International Media Forum

As one of the African continent's major telecommunications providers, "it is fitting for Telkom to sponsor what, in effect, is a communications forum that brings together the world's media, as well as business, government and other key South African stakeholders who shape Africa's image abroad," says Lulu Letlape, Telkom's group executive for corporate communication. The International Media Forum takes place in Johannesburg at the Sandton Convention Centre, 20 - 21 September 2006.

Editors from some of the world's most influential publications and broadcasters will be coming to South Africa for the first time.

Among the international media representatives will be Daniel Dodd, global business and economics editor of BBC News; Nigel Parsons, managing editor of al-Jazeera International; Bill Spindle, Africa editor of the *Wall Street Journal*, Zaffar Siddiqi, chairman of CNBC Africa; and Nick Wrenn, managing editor of CNN International.

South African speakers at the Forum will include Dr Essop Pahad, the Minister in the Presidency, Themba Maseko, the Head of Government Communications, Wendy Luhabe, the chairperson of the International Marketing Council, and Papi Molotsane, CEO of Telkom.

Decision to sponsor

Letlape explains the decision to sponsor the media event: "The country has enjoyed consistent economic growth over 12 years of democracy, investor confidence in South Africa continues to grow and we've also seen tourism to South Africa grow to seven million in the past year."

"However, not all the success stories that can be told about the country are being highlighted by the international press, with negative stereotypes about South Africa - and the African continent - continue to enjoy unnecessary attention." According to organiser Fergal Parkinson, "South African communicators need to adopt smarter tactics to get their message across in the media. That's what we will discuss at the Forum."

Workshops

The Forum is aimed at senior executives in business, government and parastatals, as well as communications and marketing professionals. The programme also includes four workshops that will provide practical advice on news writing, crisis communication and effective media relations campaigns.

During their visit to South Africa, the editors will also meet with senior leaders in business and government, while a meeting with former President Nelson Mandela has also been scheduled.

"I'm confident that in making possible a forum that will empower critical sectors in the country to better communicate the wonderful developments within our country, foreign direct investment, growth, tourism and the country's on-going success will be further enhanced," says Letlape.

Prospective participants can get more details and register online at www.internationalmediaforum.com.