



# Sandton Convention Centre to host Miss World 2008

The 2008 edition of the longest running beauty contest in history, the Miss World pageant, will be hosted by the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg on Saturday, 13 December 2008.

The Sandton Convention Centre has secured the rights to stage this prestigious event after political unrest on Russia's border with Georgia forced organisers to move the pageant, which was to have been held in Kiev on 4 October 2008.

Johannesburg was amongst several alternate host venues identified. The Sandton Convention Centre was nominated by the Johannesburg Tourism Company (JTC) as its host venue of choice. The Johannesburg Tourism Company in conjunction with Sandton Convention Centre submitted a joint bid with the JTC as the main sponsor.

"This is fantastic news for the Sandton Convention Centre and the city of Johannesburg," says Mati Nyazema, executive director of the Sandton Convention Centre.

"Not only are we able to offer a world class venue that can compete with similar facilities anywhere in the world, we have the tourism infrastructure to support the staging of this large and significant event.

Announcing the selection of Johannesburg as the host city, Julia Morley, chairman of Miss World Limited, said she had been impressed by the city's bid.

"The speed with which they implemented their proposal and their professionalism demonstrates that we can stage a successful Miss World [in Johannesburg]," Morley told reporters.

The 58th annual Miss World contest will mark the sixth time that this gala event has been held in South Africa. The pageant took place at Sun City from 1992 to 1995 as well as in 2001.

The world's beauties will descend on Johannesburg for four weeks and visit many South African landmarks before China's Zhang Zhi Lin hands over her crown to her successor.

"South Africa is a popular destination for entertainment and business functions and it will continue to be in demand as the 2010 FIFA World Cup draws closer and beyond 2010," said Nyazema

"The Miss World pageant will be broadcast to a global TV audience in over 200 countries which will provide a major opportunity to showcase what the SCC, the city of Johannesburg and indeed South Africa has to offer business and leisure tourists," she said.

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