

# Protea Hotels opens new hotel in Ndola

Protea Hotel by Marriott has expanded its presence in Zambia to eight hotels with the opening of Protea Hotel by Marriott Ndola, highlighting Protea Hotels by Marriott's focus on growing its footprint in strategic growth areas in Africa.



The new hotel is located in the city of Ndola, 320km north of the capital city, Lusaka. Described as the Commercial Capital City of Zambia, Ndola is the third largest city in the country, and is the gateway to the mineral producing region in Zambia. It also serves as the end-point for the oil pipeline from Dar-es-Salaam, providing a refinery for the processing of oil for the country.

## A business focus

The recent announcement of Protea Hotels being endorsed by Marriott International is certainly positive for Zambia since there is now the added benefit of a truly global brand in Zambia. According to Mark Satterfield, chief operating officer for Marriott International, Middle East and Africa and Marriott International's business leader for Protea Hotels, "With our positioning in the moderate and upper moderate tier categories and with properties situated in major primary and secondary business centers and sought-after leisure destinations, Protea Hotels by Marriott offers accommodation ideal for both business and leisure travellers. The approach we take is to offer modern design and consistent amenities, along with proactive and personal service at a global standard."

As for Zambia specifically, Satterfield explains, "Research showed that Ndola was previously under-served for the business travel market, yet business people visit the region in large numbers because of the business activity there." This business focus is evidenced in the extensive conference facilities available at the hotel: up to 200 conference delegates can be hosted in the three conference rooms, and the hotel also offers additional breakaway rooms.

The two-storey building provides a total of 80 bedrooms, and with its restaurant offering three meals a day, a bar, a swimming pool and free Wi-Fi, the hotel provides for all the needs of the business traveller.

## Job creation

The hotel has created over 50 new employment opportunities for the local population and is headed up by GM, Sitembile Kayumba, a Protea Hotels by Marriott employee for the past ten years. Sitembile has risen to her current senior management role from having started out as a hotel receptionist. The experience she gained as part of the team responsible

for opening the Protea Hotel by Marriott Livingstone a few years ago will no doubt serve her well as the rollout of the new Ndola hotel takes place.

Satterfield comments that, “Sitembile’s career history reflects the Protea Hotels by Marriott human resources philosophy: employees progress up the career ladder because of attitude and the willingness to learn, rather than purely on the basis of their academic qualifications.

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