

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

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naamsa | THE AUTOMOTIVE BUSINESS COUNCIL ANNOUNCES SA AUTO WEEK 2026 TO BE HOSTED IN KWAZULU-NATAL IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE KZN PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT and eTHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY
13 - 16 OCTOBER 2026

Thursday, June 04, 2026: naamsa | The Automotive Business Council is proud to officially announce that the 5th edition of **SA Auto Week 2026** will be hosted in eThekweni, KwaZulu-Natal, from **13 to 16 October 2026**, in strategic partnership with the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government and eThekweni Municipality.

As South Africa's premier automotive thought leadership and industry platform celebrates **five years** since its inception in 2022, **SA Auto Week 2026** marks a significant milestone in the continued evolution of the continent's most influential automotive gathering. This event continues to drive strategic dialogue on industrialisation, localisation, export competitiveness, energy transition, mobility innovation, transformation, and regional market development under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The 2026 edition comes at a critical moment for the industry as South Africa navigates the transition toward New Energy Vehicles (NEVs), evolving global trade dynamics, increasing localisation demands, and the future competitiveness of automotive manufacturing within emerging markets.

Durban, home to one of Africa's busiest ports and a growing automotive and logistics ecosystem, provides an ideal host city for the next chapter of SA Auto Week. The province of KwaZulu-Natal remains a strategic hub for automotive manufacturing, component production, freight logistics, tourism, and industrial development within the Southern African region.

A key feature of SA Auto Week 2026 will be the incorporation of the KwaZulu-Natal Investment Conference (KZNIC), hosted by Trade & Investment KwaZulu-Natal. As the province's flagship investment promotion platform, KZNIC has become a catalyst for investment attraction, destination marketing and economic growth by connecting investors with investment-ready opportunities and strategic projects across KwaZulu-Natal. Its inclusion within SA Auto Week will create a unique platform that combines automotive industry leadership with broader investment promotion objectives, further positioning KwaZulu-Natal as a leading destination for trade, investment and industrial development in Africa.

KZN Premier, Honourable Thamsanqa NTULI, welcomed the announcement and noted:

"The hosting of SA Auto Week 2026 aligns strongly with KwaZulu-Natal's economic development priorities, particularly in enhancing manufacturing competitiveness, strengthening the automotive value chain, advancing localisation, and creating sustainable employment opportunities. The province remains committed to supporting industrial growth and fostering strategic partnerships that position the automotive sector as a catalyst for inclusive economic growth, innovation, and technological advancement. This commitment is central to KwaZulu-Natal's vision of building a capable, ethical, and developmental state while inspiring new hope through increased investment, economic transformation, and expanded opportunities for the people."

Honourable NTULI further confirmed that the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government will integrate its Provincial Investment and Economic Development Conference into the broader SA Auto Week 2026 programme, creating a powerful platform to showcase the province's industrial capabilities, investment opportunities, infrastructure pipeline, and sectoral growth priorities to both local and international delegates.

The integration of the Provincial Conference into SA Auto Week 2026 reflects a shared commitment between government and industry to accelerate investment mobilisation, deepen industrialisation, strengthen export competitiveness, and position KwaZulu-Natal as a leading destination for automotive manufacturing, logistics, trade, tourism, and future mobility investment.

The MEC for KZN Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Honourable Rev. Musa ZONDI, added:

"The hosting of **SA Auto Week 2026** aligns strongly with KwaZulu-Natal's economic development priorities, particularly around manufacturing competitiveness, automotive value chain development, localisation and job creation. The province is committed to supporting industrial growth and enabling strategic partnerships that position the automotive sector as a catalyst for inclusive economic expansion and technological advancement. Through the integration of the KwaZulu-Natal Investment Conference, the province will also showcase investment opportunities across key sectors of the economy while creating meaningful engagements between investors, industry leaders and government."

Speaking on the announcement, Shinnny GOBIYEZA, Interim CEO of naamsa, said:

"As SA Auto Week celebrates its fifth anniversary, we are proud to see the platform evolve into one of Africa's leading automotive and mobility gatherings, bringing together industry leaders, governments, investors, labour, innovators, and global partners to shape the future of the sector."

"KwaZulu-Natal is a fitting host for this milestone edition. With its strong automotive manufacturing base, world-class logistics infrastructure, and strategic position as a gateway to regional and global markets, the province provides the ideal platform to advance conversations on investment, competitiveness, industrialisation, and the future of mobility in Africa."

"We also welcome the decision by the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government to host its Provincial Investment and Economic Development Conference alongside SA Auto Week 2026, further strengthening the event's role as a catalyst for investment, economic growth, and industrial development."

The Mayor of eThekweni, Cllr. Cyril XABA, said:

"The City of Durban is proud to welcome delegates, investors and automotive leaders from across South Africa and the global automotive community to **SA Auto Week 2026**. As a city with world-class port infrastructure, growing industrial capacity and a dynamic tourism offering, Durban is uniquely positioned to host an event of this magnitude while showcasing the city's economic opportunities, innovation potential and hospitality."

SA Auto Week 2026 will be hosted at the **Durban International Convention Centre**, recognised as one of Africa's leading conference and exhibition venues, is expected to host thousands of delegates, exhibitors, international guests, policymakers, and industry leaders during the four-day gathering.



The 2026 edition of the event, under the theme “**Transforming Tomorrow Today: Resetting Policy, Advancing the Energy Transition, Driving Investment & Inclusive Growth**”, will convene policymakers, manufacturers, suppliers, and strategic investors to chart a path for a sustainable and competitive African automotive ecosystem. With about 5,000 local and international delegates expected to attend, activities before and during the week will include CEO Thought Leadership Roundtables; an NEV Road Trip; Public Policy Masterclass Discussions; SMME and Skills Development Showcases [Transformation Day]; the African Auto Indaba and Conference; the KwaZulu-Natal Investment Conference (KZNIC), which serves as the province’s flagship investment promotion platform and showcases investment-ready opportunities across strategic sectors; the Captain of Industry Gala Dinner; the naamsa Accelerator Awards; Plant Tours; Exclusive by Invitation only Golf Day; and a dynamic exhibition pavilion showcasing the cutting edge of mobility in South Africa and around the globe.

STATEMENT ENDS

ABOUT THE SA AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY

- **naamsa** is a pre-eminent industry representative that actively and responsibly represents, promote, advance, and protect the interests of local manufacturers and assemblers of passenger, light, and heavy commercial vehicles as well as major importers and distributors of new vehicles in South Africa. We represent 42 companies. Our vision is to be the most credible and respected thought leader and partner of a globally competitive and transformed automotive industry that actively contribute to the sustainable development of South Africa;
- the automotive industry contributes 5.2% to GDP [3.2% manufacturing and 2.01% retail]. In 2024, the export of vehicles and automotive components reached a record amount of R268.8 billion, equating to 14.7% of South Africa's total exports. The industry accounts for 22.6% of the country's manufacturing output. Vehicles and components are exported to 155 international markets; and
- the manufacturing segment of the industry presently employs in the order of 115,000 people across its various tiers of activity [from component manufacturing to vehicle assembly]. Combined with the industry's strong multiplier effect, the industry is responsible for approximately 498,000 jobs across the South African economy's formal sector.

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