

Solly Moeng shares his passion and vision for Africa

 By [Juanita Pienaar](#)

18 Sep 2020

WATCH: The Africa Brand Summit was established in late 2016 and launched in 2018. Its awards ceremony has become popular for many aspiring brands who do great development work that uplifts communities and deserving individuals around Africa.

Here, my chat with the Summit convenor himself, Solly Moeng about the summit, Moeng's passion for Africa and his vision for the event going forward...

Moeng says that perceptions of Africa do matter. Perceptions of any brand matter, whether it's a retail brand, a corporate brand, an NGO brand. He said the Summit is there to discuss how we change these perceptions over time about Africa and how we progressively get rid of the negative perceptions and encourage or enhance the positive ones? He says this starts by changing the way we do certain things.

Moeng also talked us through how the summit was established and told us that he's part of the World Communication Forum Association (WCFA), where he's on the global executive committee.

The idea first came to mind when he discussed it with one of his associates, who runs the Association of Business

Communicators of India (ABC), based in Mumbai.

“ *South Africa was hurting during State Capture, we all know that, and what this country used to be like in the early 90s, people used to love to come here. They used to love our president. They wanted to come out here and be photographed with President Mandela and all that. But all this stuff was gone. There was a need to say, what's happening to brand South Africa? How do we face the things that are hurting us and how do we acknowledge them and change them?* ”



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Moeng said that as part of the WCFA, they had discussions about country branding, and at the end of 2016, they decided to first launch the South African Brand Summit. But, he says, the aim has always been that it would be incubated with a focus on South Africa for the first three years, and then after that, they planned to broaden it to become a Pan-African platform, which it is now.

Moeng said that he's passionate about Africa because he thinks there's a potential that isn't being utilised and given the space it needs to shine. He said that as a brand person, he also looks at this from a brand perspective. Moeng says every brand needs four things. It must have a vision, it must have a set of values, it must have good leadership and it must have a 360-degree view (of the brand itself).

He admitted that they're not adequately positioned to attract the best of the best and so the Summit is really about what they do about that and to work on their weak spots.

In conclusion, Moeng said that it's not right that Africa is a net importer of food crops. He believes Africa should be a net exporter of food crops. "We should also be self-reliant. We should be producing so much food in Africa that we are selling more to the outside world. So something is wrong in the way we do things. What do we need, what kind of skills do we need, what kind of investments do we need, what kind of technologists do we need, and what kind of policies do we need to turn things around?"

These are the type of conversations they'll be discussing at this year's Africa Brand Summit.

Click [here](#) to watch my full interview with Moeng. The Summit is hosted from 5-8 October 2020 as a virtual and an in-person hybrid event. The core event will happen on Wednesday the 7th and Thursday the 8th. Check the Bizcommunity

website and the Summit's [press office](#) for more details.

ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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