

Press Release

Minor Hotel Group to Rebrand African Sun Portfolio to AVANI

25 June 2015: Minor Hotel Group (MHG), a hotel owner, operator and investor, currently with a portfolio of 133 hotels and resorts in 22 countries across Asia Pacific, the Middle East, Europe, South America, Africa and the Indian Ocean, will rebrand five hotels in southern Africa to its upscale AVANI brand from July 1st this year.

The five properties form part of the portfolio in which MHG invested a total of R679.5 million in their strategic partnership with Sun International, announced in August last year. MHG's investment resulted in the group owning a stake in two properties in both Zambia and Lesotho and one property in Botswana and Namibia.

The 212-key Zambezi Sun in Zambia will be rebranded to **AVANI Victoria Falls Resort**; the 196-key Gaborone Sun in Botswana will become **AVANI Gaborone Resort & Casino**; the 158-key Lesotho Sun and 105-key Maseru Sun, both in Lesotho, are to be rebranded to **AVANI Lesotho Hotel & Casino** and **AVANI Maseru Hotel** respectively, and the 173-key Kalahari Sands in Namibia will reflag to become **AVANI Windhoek Hotel & Casino**. The sixth property in the portfolio, the well known Royal Livingstone Resort, will not be rebranded and is being marketed through the Sun International's SunLux Collection, supported by Anantara distribution channels.

Since the partnership was formed last year, both companies' core strengths have been leveraged, with MHG assuming the hotel management, marketing and distribution of the properties, while Sun International has continued to manage the on-property casino operations.

AVANI Hotels & Resorts is the vibrant upscale brand which MHG launched in 2011. Offering relaxed comfort and contemporary style in city and resort destinations to guests who value the details that matter, AVANI was launched in response to an increasingly influential group of discerning travellers who appreciate good design and excellent service, but also demand great value.

In addition to the five hotels to be rebranded in southern Africa, AVANI currently has a portfolio of eight hotels and resorts across six countries in Asia and Africa, including AVANI Pemba Beach Hotel in Mozambique and the most recent addition to the portfolio – AVANI Seychelles Barbarons Resort & Spa. AVANI will continue to be developed across the Asia Pacific region and in the Middle East and Africa, with the first new-build AVANI opening later this year in Bangkok.

Dillip Rajakarier, CEO of Minor Hotel Group, commented, *“We are happy to reflag these five properties to our upscale AVANI brand and in doing so expand the brand significantly into the African market, adding to AVANI Pemba which joined the portfolio last year. Africa is a key market for Minor Hotel Group and our partnership with Sun International allows both companies to focus on their strengths, and these properties rebranding to AVANI will allow them to realise their full potential.”*

Graeme Stephens, CEO of Sun International said: *“This partnership with MINT in Africa provides an opportunity for us to create a strategic alliance with a leading international hospitality and leisure operator that brings not only hotel management and marketing expertise but also an ability and desire to invest.*

The partnership with MINT in Africa is in line with Sun International's strategy to optimise its capital allocation and resources. It enables Sun International to remain invested in Africa, but with responsibility for the casino component only, as well as to partner with MINT in other African opportunities that have a casino element. The partnership with MINT will also allow Sun International to give greater focus to opportunities identified in Latin America and Asia, where MINT has a strong presence, as further key growth markets for its core casino business.”

Sir Richard Hawkins, Regional Director Hotel Operations, Africa, commented, *“These properties being rebranded to AVANI is an important step in the evolution of the portfolio. We are excited to be part of the Minor Hotel Group team here in Africa and look forward to maximising the opportunities for these hotels as they become part of a growing international hotel brand.”*

MHG currently has a portfolio of 26 properties in seven countries in Africa operating under three of the group's six brands. In addition to the six properties the group operates in southern Africa through its partnership with Sun International, MHG also has existing partnerships for the ownership of Elewana Collection, 14 luxury safari lodges and resorts in Kenya and Tanzania, five hotels in Mozambique which include both Anantara and AVANI flags, plus Essque Zalu Zanzibar which MHG took over the management of at the end of 2014 and is to be reflagged to a PER AQUUM resort in early 2016.

Earlier this year MHG added six camps in Kenya, the result of two of East Africa's most prestigious property portfolios merging, following the acquisition of Cheli & Peacock Group of Companies by the Elewana Collection. Most recently MHG announced its first properties in North Africa, with Anantara resorts to be developed in Tozeur, Tunisia and Tangier in northern Morocco, both in partnership with Qatari Diar and scheduled to open in 2017.

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Editor's Note:



Minor Hotel Group (MHG) is a hotel owner, operator and investor, currently with a portfolio of 133 hotels and serviced suites in operation under the Anantara, AVANI, Per AQUUM, Oaks, Tivoli, Elewana, Marriott, Four Seasons, St. Regis and Minor International brands. Today MHG operates in 22 countries across Asia Pacific, the Middle East, Africa, the Indian Ocean, Europe and South America. With ambitious plans to grow the hotel group to 190 properties, MHG continues to expand the home grown brands of Anantara and AVANI, plus continues to announce strategic acquisitions. For more information, please visit www.minorinternational.com.

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The Sun International Group has a diverse portfolio of assets including world class five star hotels, modern and well located casinos, and some of the world's premier resorts. Our destinations offer experiential luxury, enduring quality and incredible adventure, supported by an authentic dedication to personal service. Today, Sun International is Africa's largest tourism, leisure and gaming group and operates or has an interest in a total of 27 resorts, luxury hotels and casinos across ten countries. This includes 15 operations in South Africa, two in Zambia, two in Lesotho, one in Botswana, one in Nigeria, one in Swaziland and one in Namibia. Our entry into Latin America began in Chile in 2008 and has been a success story for the Group, giving us the track record and confidence to look for more opportunities that offer gaming opportunities in the region. Sun International currently has one property near Santiago in Chile, one in Panama and one in Cartagena, Colombia. For more information, please visit www.suninternational.com.

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