

VOYAGES **AFRIQ**

ISSUE 012 | March 2020 Edition

Travel and Tourism Magazine

Limpopo turns to tourism as economic growth pole **pg. 13**

Personality Profile: Dr Betty Radier, CEO , Kenya Tourism Board **pg. 24**

Africa , A Globally Competitive Business Events Destination – SA Tourism Minister **pg. 7**



• Taken from 80m above the 11th tee box, the iconic Euphoria golf and lifestyle estate can be seen in the distance against the mountain and finishing hole just short of it. Picture Credit: Shannon Naidoo

ISSN 2550-3405



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The Seychelles Islands, Another World.

The 115 islands of the Seychelles Archipelago lie scattered across their secret corner of the western Indian Ocean like precious gemstones set in a universe of azure water – stepping stones to the east coast of Africa, some thousand miles away, and natural gateway to the many treasures of the continent.

On offer is an amazing degree of diversity which takes in the contrast between 41 towering granite isles and the 74 shimmering sand cays, reef islands and atolls of the Outer Islands while the multi-ethnic roots of its relatively young society lend themselves to a varied and vibrant culture with all its people and major religions living beside one another in perfect harmony.

Overall, all the islands have been blessed with many natural assets and attributes including possessing a near-perfect and disease-free climate; an endless list of world-beating beaches; a sanctuary for some of the world's rarest species of flora & fauna and an enviable conservation record whereby almost half of the 455 sq.km landmass has been set aside as natural parks and reserves.

Creation has blessed Seychelles with all of this and more. Against the backdrop of its unique island beauty, it is a place where harmony, tranquility and Nature at its very best will conspire to leave you with the memories of a lifetime.



Most major airlines flies to Seychelles, from Europe, Middle East, the Americas and Africa, including Kenya Airways

For information about the Seychelles Islands, please visit: www.seychelles.travel

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COVID-19: TOURISM MUST BE PART OF RECOVERY PLANS



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 Travel and Tourism Magazine
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Africa's leading Travel and Tourism Magazine

Editorial

COVID 19: TIME TO DEEPEN INTRA AFRICAN TRAVEL AND TOURISM

The menace of Corona Virus (COVID 19) is still taking the world for a ride. The near devastating effect of the spread of the infectious pandemic is causing fear and panic globally.

Viral diseases of such magnitude have occurred before with such mortifying effect. Flu, yellow fever, SARS, Ebola and others have all had their turns on mankind. The death tolls they left in their trails were unimaginable.

The world has moved on since but suddenly COVID 19 has stepped into the fold, a situation that has left the world without cover.

VoyageAfriq's concern is with the African context.

As the disease is yet to make any real impact on the continent, we submit that this is the time for Africans to perhaps look inward within themselves and deepen intra-travel.

This is the time to strengthen intra Africa relations through tourism and travel. While we don't advocate that people do not go outside of the continent, it just makes sense that as a sign of precaution, one wouldn't go to where one is much more likely to get in contact with the virus.

The strategy is to be smart and observe basic hygiene while moving around. Destinations in Africa should step up their marketing campaigns to attract more tourists from the continents.

Tourism and Travel trade shows in Africa should target more hosted buyers and media from within. It's likely most African countries might never record any case of the disease but vigilance should be critical in ensuring that it remains so.

In this regard, we applaud the initiative of the Rwandan government proactive measure of providing hand washing stations for citizens who are required to wash their hands before boarding public transport. We urge other African countries to follow this example to ensure that their citizens are safe.

So far the figures recorded of cases on the continent are insignificant compared to Asia, Europe and the Americas; this however does not mean we should throw caution to the wind.

As has been echoed by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) World Health Organization, WHO and WTTC, Governments need not to issue blanket travel bans but rather take measures based on what we know (facts and not fiction).

There is already panic in the market with the impact on aviation, travel and tourism sectors. Information flow should be seamless and we must ensure that it is not distorted to further compound the situation.

Again, Africa as a continent has recorded minimal cases; yet, the

devastating effect is already being felt by hotels, tour operators, airlines and a lot of businesses within the tourism and travel value chain.

It is however heart-warming to note that, key players are encouraging governments to make tourism part of their recovery plans.

As the world waits for vaccinations to be developed to inoculate people against the disease, we must continue to demonstrate the resilience of tourism in times like these.

Coronavirus should not deter us from travelling. We dare say.

Connecting Africa to the world!



Domestic routes



Accra (Hub)



Kumasi

With over 300 weekly flights; making traveling more convenient.



Tamale



Takoradi



Wa

Regional routes



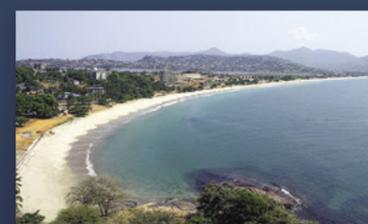
Lagos



Abuja



Monrovia



Freetown



Abidjan

📍 5 Domestic destinations

📍 5 Regional destinations



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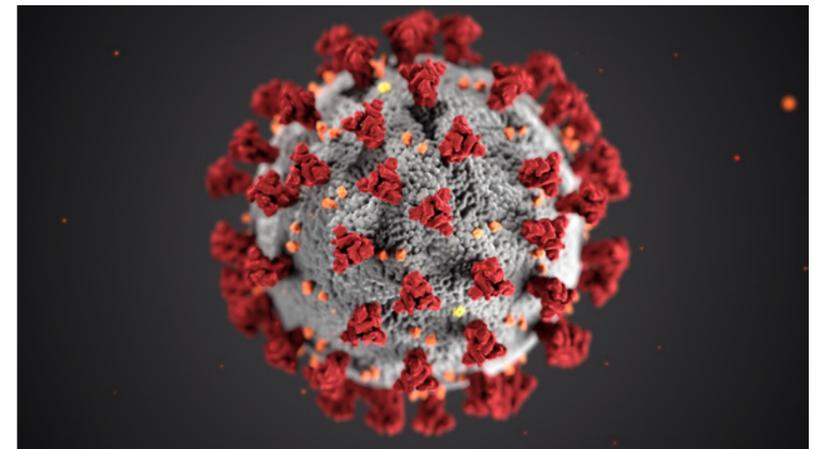
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TOURISM'S ROLE IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACROSS AFRICA HIGHLIGHTED AT 11TH INVESTOUR

The role of tourism and investment in African development took centre stage at the FITUR trade fair in Madrid as sector leaders joined the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) for the 11th edition of INVESTOUR (Tourism Investment and Business Forum for Africa) which saw the participation of over 20 African Ministers and Heads of delegations.

Supported by Casa Africa (Representing the Spanish Government), the International Tourism Fair of Madrid (FITUR) as UNWTO's official partners and in collaboration with Côte D'Ivoire, this latest meeting of Investour focused on the continent's potential on creative industries as well as on the potential benefits of diversifying the tourism sector, in particular as a means of driving rural development.

Against the backdrop of FITUR, the round table discussion explored the untapped potential of gastronomy tourism and the growing African



• Panellists pose for a photo with the Secretary General of UNWTO after the session

fashion industry, particularly with regards to attracting international tourists. In addition, a session was also dedicated to the presentation of 10 projects aiming at the development of tourism in various countries in Africa, such as South Africa, Zambia, Comoros, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Côte d'Ivoire.

The forum came on the back of the UNWTO General Assembly

unanimous approval of its Agenda for Africa 2030, a roadmap and strategic framework for tourism for sustainable development and inclusive growth. At the same time, the 11th edition of INVESTOUR was held during UNWTO's Year of Tourism and Rural Development, with this theme as the main focus for discussion between tourism leaders from both the public and private sectors.

• Family Photo of Investour 2020



• Begona Gómez, Director, IE Business School, Africa Centre & UNWTO SG, Zurab Pololikashvili



Seychelles to host 63rd CAF Meeting

The beautiful Island of the Republic of Seychelles is set to welcome African Tourism Ministers, delegates, media and tourism stakeholders to the 63rd Regional Commission for Africa (CAF). The annual commission meeting for the Africa region will be held in Mahe, in a yet to be confirmed date.

UNWTO's Regional Commissions are institutional meetings held annually which brings together Ministers of Tourism and the relevant tourism stakeholders to discuss the latest trends of the sector at the continental and global levels to implement programs of work.

The agenda items for the 63rd CAF meeting will include discussions on the UNWTO Agenda for Africa 2030-Tourism for Inclusive Growth, UNWTO's Global Tourism plastics initiative, World Tourism Day 2020 "Tourism and Rural Development", review of 2019 and the implementation of the current programme of work amongst other key matters pertaining to the development of the tourism industry on the continent.

African Youth for Sustainable Tourism Solutions

Within the framework of the 63rd CAF meeting, UNWTO will once again partner with the Africa Union Development Agency (AUDA)-NEPAD and the I.E Africa Centre on a Design Thinking workshop and the Forum on African Youth for Sustainable Tourism Solutions. The design-thinking workshop will be dedicated to develop thought-provoking approaches, whilst providing the opportunity for participants from across the tourism value chain to learn from the latest ideas, and approaches at a local level, and share their inputs to support the incubation of novel approaches and

solutions. The young entrepreneurs at the forum will have the opportunity to present the solutions as well as initiatives from the host country to the Members states and other stakeholders at the event.

About Seychelles Islands

Seychelles' 115 islands fall under two distinct groups. The tall granite, Inner Islands cluster mainly within the relatively shallow Seychelles' plateau, 4° south of the equator and roughly 1800 km. distant from the east coast of Africa while the low-lying coralline cays, atolls and reef islands of the Outer Islands lie mainly beyond the plateau up to 10° south of the equator.

These Outer Islands are divided into five groups: the Amirantes group lying 230km from Mahé, the Southern Coral Group, Alphonse Group, Farquhar Group and finally the Aldabra Group, some 1150km from Mahé.

There are 43 Inner Islands in all -- 41 granitic and 2 coralline and a total of 72 coralline Outer Islands.

Culture

The cosmopolitan Seychellois are a colourful blend of peoples of different races, cultures and religions. At different times in its history, people of African, European and Asian origin have come to Seychelles, bringing with them their distinct traditions and customs and contributing to the way of life and to the vibrant Seychellois culture. One can see these influences at work throughout the domains of local art, cuisine, music, dance and architecture.

Flora & Fauna

Seychelles is a living museum of natural history and a sanctuary for some of the rarest species of flora &



• Zurab Pololikashvili
UNWTO Secretary-General



• Hon. Didier Dogley,
Seychelles Minister of Tourism,
Ports, Marine and Aviation

fauna on earth. With almost 50% of its limited landmass set aside as national parks and reserves, Seychelles prides itself on its record for far sighted conservation policies that have resulted in an enviable degree of protection for the environment and the varied ecosystems it supports.

• Petite Anse Beach in La Digue
-Seychelles



COVID-19: UNWTO implores Governments and International Organisations to make Tourism part of recovery plans

Tourism faces up to the COVID-19 challenge and public health is paramount due to the fundamental people-to-people nature of the sector.

A cross-cutting economic activity unlike any other, and an integral part of the Sustainable Development agenda, tourism will play a key role in future recovery efforts.

UNWTO calls on governments, international organizations and donor agencies to include tourism as a priority in recovery plans and actions.

The World Health Organization continues to advise against the application of travel or trade restrictions to countries experiencing COVID-19 outbreaks.

In an update on the sector's response to the coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) offers a first assessment pointing to a decrease in international arrivals and receipts in 2020. Public health measures need to be implemented in ways that minimize any unnecessary disruption to travel and trade. Since the start of the outbreak, UNWTO has been working closely with the World Health Organization (WHO) to ensure this is the case.

UNWTO has revised its 2020 prospects for international tourist arrivals to a negative growth of 1% to 3%, translating into an estimated loss of US\$ 30 to 50 billion in international tourism receipts. Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, UNWTO predicted a positive growth of 3% to 4% for this year.

This first assessment expects that Asia and the Pacific will be the worst affected region, with an anticipated fall in arrivals of 9% to 12%. Estimates for other world regions are currently premature in view of the rapidly evolving situation. UNWTO underscores that any estimate must be treated with caution and is likely to be updated.

Preparing for recovery

UNWTO calls for financial and political support for recovery measures aimed at tourism, and to include support for the sector in the wider recovery plans and actions of affected economies.

The impact of the COVID-19 outbreak will be felt across the whole tourism value chain. UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili furthermore stresses that "small and medium sized enterprises make up around 80% of the tourism sector and are particularly exposed with millions of livelihoods across the world, including within vulnerable communities, relying on tourism".

Political and financial commitments are key to ensure that tourism can lead wider economic and social recovery, as proven in past disruptions on the back of the highly resilient nature of the sector and its ability to bounce back strongly.

In recent decades, tourism has come of age, and is now firmly established as an important contributor to sustainable development, economic growth, employment and international understanding. As the UN agency responsible for tourism and sustainable development, UNWTO stands ready to provide guidance and support for recovery measures of its members, the private and public tourism sector, including organizers of tourism events and fairs.



The Secretary General of UNWTO and his delegation in a meeting with the head of WHO Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus and his team in Geneva, Switzerland.

UNWTO AND WHO AGREE TO FURTHER COOPERATION IN COVID-19 RESPONSE

The Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Zurab Pololikashvili led a high-level delegation to the World Health Organization (WHO) headquarters in Geneva to further advance the two agencies' coordinated response to the worldwide Coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak.

WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus welcomed the delegation to Geneva and thanked UNWTO for its close collaboration since the very start of the ongoing public health emergency. On the back of the productive meetings, the heads of both United Nations agencies stressed the need to include the following guiding principles:

- The importance of international cooperation and responsible leadership at this critical time,
- The solidarity of the tourism sector and of individual tourists, as well as the responsibility both have for helping minimize the spread and impact of COVID-19
- The key role tourism can play in both containing the COVID-19 outbreak and in leading future response efforts



Côte d'Ivoire host maiden Global Tourism Investment Forum in Africa

Côte d'Ivoire's capital Abidjan for two days hosted African Tourism Ministers, government officials, leading hotels brands, experts and investors to discuss and explore ways to attract finance into Africa's tourism sector.

The objective of the forum was to promote investments for the development and enhancement of tourism in Africa.

With investment a key part of the ambitious UNWTO Agenda for Africa, Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili opened the forum (20-22 February, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire), which saw the participation of representatives of more than 40 countries, including Vice President of Côte d'Ivoire H.E. Daniel Kablan Duncan who sat throughout the event. Joining them were key representatives from the African Development Bank, International Finance Corporation (IFC), World Bank Group and from across the private sector, including from Marriott International, Accor, Hyatt Hotels Corporation and Uber.

Organized by the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire through the Ministry of Tourism and Leisure, the event assembled experts and investors to network

and look at ways of taking advantage of the opportunities in the tourism sector in Africa.

Speaking as the guest of honour for the official opening, the Vice President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire H.E. Daniel Kablan Duncan said, he would like to thank the UNWTO for choosing Côte d'Ivoire to host this historical and yet important forum towards the development of tourism in Africa.

"I am hopeful the over 800 assembled delegates here will use the opportunity to create business linkages and help tourism which is a strong sector for not only Côte d'Ivoire but Africa as a whole." He underscored the importance of implementing and working to achieve the resolutions of the

conference which he hoped will not be another event talk shop.

Secretary General of UNWTO Zurab Pololikashvili in his address expressed appreciation to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire for hosting the maiden forum as it seeks to help drive investment in Africa's tourism sector. He paid glowing tribute to host Minister Siandou Fofana for his leadership and commitment towards the development of the country's tourism sector.

On the power of tourism, the UN Tourism Boss reiterated the sector's economic force and said "Tourism can create opportunities and make families happy with meaningful and decent jobs.



Zurab Pololikashvili speaking at the opening Ceremony



Hon Daniel Kablan Duncan Vice President of Cote d'Ivoire speaking at the official opening

He said: “The UNWTO Agenda for Africa is an ambitious roadmap aimed at guiding African tourism towards sustainable growth between now and 2030. At the heart of this plan is unlocking growth through the promotion of investments and through the power of public-private partnerships. This Forum shows the high level of interest among our African Member States, and I am confident this will be the first of many high-level events aimed at driving investment in a sector whose potential to develop communities and transform lives is almost limitless.”

The Minister of Tourism and Leisure, Siandou Fofana in his speech said, Côte d’Ivoire under the Government of President Ouattara is committed to using tourism to grow the economy. He said the donor roundtable event in Dubai and Hamburg saw investors expressing interest in Côte d’Ivoire as a country. He said “Sublime Côte d’Ivoire” is an ambitious project which will create employment opportunities for many young men and women.

The Forum issued a set of recommendations which will be submitted to the 63rd UNWTO Commission for Africa which will take place in the Republic of Seychelles from March 25-27, 2020. The Ivorian Tourism and Leisure Minister Siandou Fofana chaired the forum.

Presidential Visit



Zurab Pololikashvili and President Alassane Ouattara during a meeting at the Presidential Palace in Abidjan.

The Minister later led the UNWTO Secretary General and his delegation to pay a courtesy call on the President of the country H.E Alassane Ouattara at the Presidential Palace.

Receiving UNWTO team, the Ivorian Head of State said, his Government is committed to making tourism a sector that creates a number of opportunities for the masses especially the youth and women. The “Sublime Côte d’Ivoire” gives credence to their commitment.

President Ouattara thanked the Secretary General and UNWTO for putting also Cote d’Ivoire on the

tourism map, giving the country key visibility and supporting the sector.



Siandou Fofana- Minister of Tourism and Leisure of Cote d'Ivoire



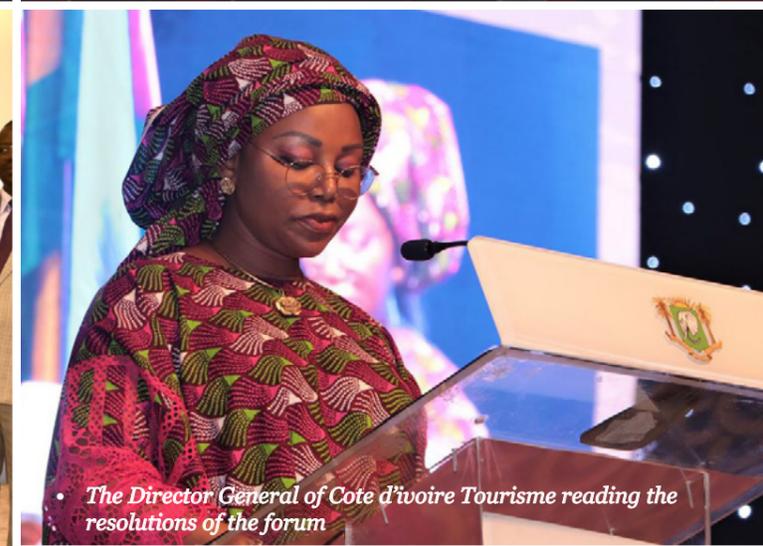
Group of panellists after a session



UNWTO Secretary General addressing the gathering



Senegalese Delegation after a meeting with the UNWTO Secretary General



The Director General of Cote d'Ivoire Tourisme reading the resolutions of the forum



The UNWTO Ministerial Closed Door Meeting on the margins of the Forum



President Ouattara welcomes the UNWTO Secretary General to the Presidential Palace while the Minister of Tourism Siandou Fofana looked on



The Secretary General of UNWTO Zurab Pololikashvili addresses the media after a closed door meeting with President Alassane Ouattara.



Cultural display by a Cultural Troupe



Siandou Fofana and Zurab Pololikashvili addressed the Media after the official opening of the forum

IFEMA closes FITUR with an increase in trade registration and a record number of visits

The International Tourism Trade Fair FITUR 2020, celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, closed its doors with an excellent set of results.

This year's event surpassed all expectations with respect to participation by companies, countries and regions, as well as tourism industry professionals from all over the world.

Trade participation saw a growth of 5.16%, reaching a figure of 150,011 participants. In the international arena, there was a significant increase of 6.4% in international visitors, who came from 140 countries. And within just a few hours of the trade fair's closure, visits from the public over the weekend exceeded 100,000 people, putting this year's attendance figures at over 255,000 participants.

The flow of this number of people through FITUR is estimated to have generated an economic impact of approximately 333 million euros for the city of Madrid.

The robust health of the tourism sector both in Spain and abroad - as shown by the record-breaking performance indicators for 2019 - has contributed to the strength of FITUR 2020, again positioning Madrid firmly within the sightlines

of the international tourism community and offering one of the most comprehensive showcases for the industry. Proof of this was evident in the opportunities on show during the event, which recorded its best ever figures: 255,000 visitors, 918 main exhibitors, 11,040 companies, 165 countries and regions, and international attendance of 56%. All of this took place within a 69,697.5 m2 net exhibition space - a 3.3% increase in exhibition area - filling 10 halls at Feria de Madrid.

Overall, national participants accounted for 44% of FITUR's attendance figures, while international visitors accounted for 56%. This last figure represents a significant boost to the trade fair's internationalisation, driven mainly by increased participation from the Asia-Pacific region (up 21.5%) and Africa (up 19.5%). Both regions had

their own dedicated halls this year. The halls for Europe and North America also showed growth (up 5.3% and 3.3% respectively).

FITUR brings together hundreds of exhibitors every year, but this year was marked out by the loyalty of Adif, Hotusa Hotels, Melia Hotels, Paradores, Renfe, Turespaña and the magazine Viajar, who also celebrated 40 years of uninterrupted involvement in the trade fair.

Substantial support from the royal family and institutions

The Royal Family's continued support for FITUR over the course of the event's history was also very much in evidence this year, with a 40th Anniversary celebration dinner at the Cibeles Palace, presided over by the King of Spain. The dinner was also attended by tourism ministers from all over the world, as well as leading figures from the regional government of Madrid and the rest of the country. The Queen's participation in the opening of FITUR added the finishing touches to the event this year which was considered special in comparative terms.

FITUR also welcomed visits from Pedro Sanchez, the President of the



• The Secretary General of UNWTO Zurab Pololikashvili presenting a souvenir to the King Felipe XI of Spain at the welcome dinner



• Group Photo of Tourism Ministers and Other Dignitaries with the King of Spain, Felipe VI



• The Prime Minister of Spain Pedro Sanchez with UNWTO Secretary General Zurab Pololikashvili and other Spanish Government officials at FITUR



• The Queen of Spain Letizia is being accompanied by the UNWTO Secretary General and Spain's Minister of Tourism and Industry to inspect some of the exhibition stands at FITUR

Spanish Government, as well as over 700 authorities, including Ministers, Governors and Ambassadors from across the world. Presidents and regional Ministers of tourism from all over Spain and Mayors of various towns and cities also attended FITUR.

Press and social media

Equally noteworthy was the media interest again garnered by FITUR all around the world. This year, during the trade-only days, the trade fair welcomed 7,625 registered journalists from 61 countries. On social media, FITUR was trending well during the trade fair, reaching a total of 217,000 followers across all its platforms. The hashtag #FITUR2020 was a global trending topic on the opening day, reaching 105 million users, with more than 17,000 accounts tweeting about the event.

New at FITUR 2020

Among the new features this year

was South Korea's historic impression as a Fitur Partner Country, under the banner 'Imagine your Korea', coinciding with the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and Spain. Some 25 organisations, including the Korean government, the principal local governments and the main travel agencies and airlines, were involved in activities at the Korean stand, boosting the promotion of Korean tourism under the motto "The meeting point of tradition and modernity."

FITUR 2020 unveiled its FITUR TALENT section, as well as the business meetings platform "MEET AFRICA," geared towards fostering awareness of the African continent's opportunities for tourism and trade alliances. Africa has great potential for implementing projects with the involvement of Spanish companies, which are increasingly active in this field. It also played a leading role in the 11th INVESTOUR forum, held as part of FITUR, which was

again jointly organised by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Casa Africa and FITUR.

This was a comprehensive event where sustainability was the underlying constant, both with respect to the development of tourism itself and the cultural and social values associated with the industry. The FITURNEXT Observatory, sponsored by Bankia, also offered an interesting schedule, giving voice to the winning initiatives of its 2020 challenge. It focused on how tourism can contribute to local economic development. It also presented the 2020 FITURNEXT Report, analysing more than 250 initiatives with positive social and environmental impacts, based on the idea of sustainability and with high potential for replicability.

As part of this commitment, FITUR, in partnership with the Responsible Tourism Institute (RTI), also initiated the first Award for a 'SUSTAINABLE STAND'.



• A drone shot of dignitaries assembled at IFEMA for the opening of FITUR

CORONAVIRUS PUTS UP TO 50 MILLION TRAVEL AND TOURISM JOBS AT RISK SAYS WTTC



• Gloria Guevara, WTTC President & CEO

The World Travel & Tourism Council says up to 50 million jobs in the Travel & Tourism sector are at risk due to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Gloria Guevara, WTTC President & CEO, said: "WTTC figures show the stark impact on the Travel & Tourism sector of the present COVID-19 outbreak with analysis now suggesting that up to 50 million jobs are at risk in the sector globally". "When the time is right, WTTC and the global private sector will be ready to help and support the government and countries to recover" Latest figures from WTTC, which represents the global Travel & Tourism private sector, show that global travel could be adversely impacted by up to 25 per cent in 2020. This is the equivalent to a loss of three months of global travel. This could lead to a corresponding reduction in jobs of between 12 and 14 per cent. "The COVID-19 outbreak clearly presents a significant threat to the industry as a whole, to those employed within it, and those wishing to continue travelling.

"Travel & Tourism has the strength to overcome this challenge and will emerge stronger and more robust by taking all necessary

measures to tackle COVID-19 and the understandable concern which surrounds it."

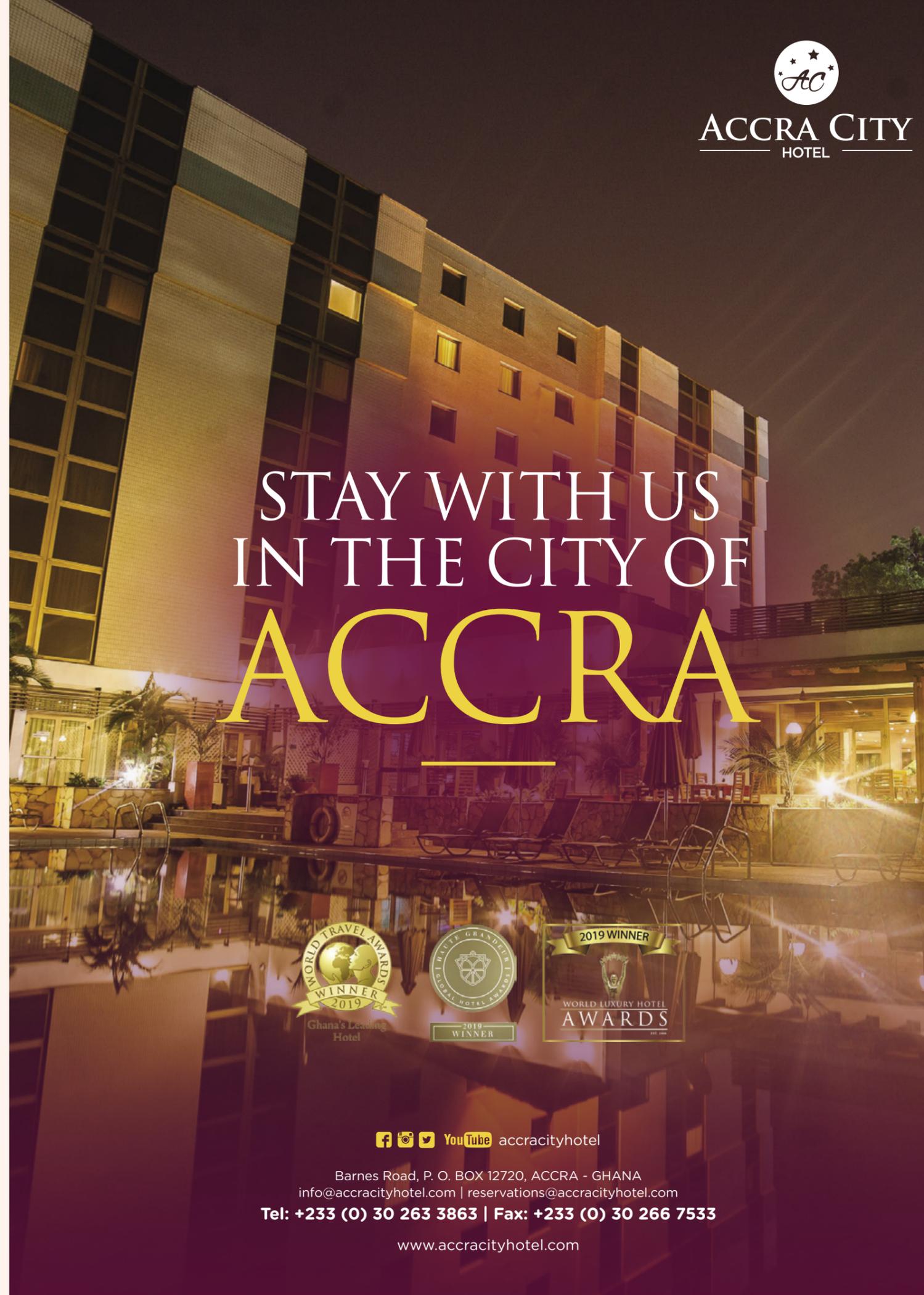
Following extensive consultation with other Travel & Tourism organisations, WTTC is also calling for a series of measures to be taken, to enable the swift recovery of the sector once COVID-19 is under control.

WTTC will offer its support to all governments, particularly those which are implementing strong policies for a prompt recovery such as:

1. Improve travel facilitation – remove or simplify visas wherever possible, reduce the cost and improve processing times where practical, accept other visas when appropriate and introduce more efficient technologies for seamless and secure travel
2. Remove barriers – ensure that unnecessary barriers are removed or relaxed to alleviate pressure at ports and airports, including temporarily lifting of the 80-20 slot policy rule, ports assignments and implement flexible working visa for the industry in some countries with existing limitations, especially in

hospitality and tour operation.

3. Ease fiscal policies – reduce and remove travellers' taxes which increases the cost of travel, e.g. Air Passenger Duty and similar airport, port and hospitality taxes around the world
4. Introduce incentives – introduce relief and incentives to support business continuity for companies which have been most negatively impacted by the virus. SMEs in particular will take longer to recover.
5. Support destinations – increase budgets and assign resources for promotion, marketing and product development purposes in destinations when they are ready to welcome visitors again At this time, WTTC reinforces the importance of strong public-private partnerships and greater international cooperation in order to respond and overcome the challenges faced by the sector during the management and recovery from COVID-19. The Travel & Tourism sector has a proven track record of resilience in the face of crises and this ability to bounce back has improved significantly in recent years.



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DESTINATION FEATURE

LIMPOPO TURNS TO TOURISM AS ECONOMIC GROWTH POLE



• Hon. Thabo Andrew Mokone

South Africa's Northernmost Province of Limpopo, with its endowed tourism offering and products have resolved to make tourism the driving force of the region's economy. The province which host over 70% of the famous Kruger National Park and other diverse tourism assets is deploying strategies to ensure that the region benefits from the enormous natural and historical offerings.

Profile of Province

The name "Limpopo" has its etymological origin in the Ndebele language, the original inhabitants of the area, meaning "strong gushing waterfalls". The capital is Polokwane.

The province was formed from the northern region of Transvaal Province in 1994, and was initially named Northern Transvaal. The following year, it was renamed Northern Province, which remained the name until 2003, when it was

formally changed to Limpopo after deliberations by the provincial government and amendment of the South African Constitution.

It is considered the bread basket of the rainbow nation due to.... It has five districts which spans an area size of 48,554 square miles with an estimated population of nearly six million people. The five districts under the province are, Capricorn District, Mopani District, Sekhukhune District, Vhembe District and Waterberg District.

The Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism has targeted the province as a preferred eco-tourism destination. Its Environment and Tourism Programme encompasses tourism, protected areas and community environment development to achieve sustainable economic growth.

With its endowed resources in tourism, it hardly pops up as the top of mind when it comes to planning travels to South Africa. A Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Limpopo's Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET) department Thabo Andrew Mokone is optimistic the region is poised to use the power of tourism to propel the province. In an interview with VoyagesAfriq, he identified Tourism as one of the pillars to drive the economy of Limpopo. In his view,

• Taken from 80m above the 11th tee box, the iconic Euphoria golf and lifestyle estate can be seen in the distance against the mountain and finishing hole just short of it. Picture Credit: Shannon Naidoo

Limpopo has all that any destination can offer to draw the tourist dollar.

In a conversation with VoyagesAfriq, the MEC opined that, all the 5 districts in the Limpopo Province have unique and alluring tourism offerings which can help alleviate the plight of the people and create opportunities for the teeming youth and people of the area.

The administration in admitting the power of the sector also outlined plans and strategies to help in attaining the goals. Mr Mokone is determined to see Limpopo be the number one province for domestic and international tourists to the region.

" Since we have taken a decision that tourism is a catalyst for economic growth, we need to put in the necessary infrastructure to help us maximise the full potential of the region. We have also started engaging tertiary and vocational institutions to begin offering courses in the area of tourism and hospitality. This will definitely create employment opportunities for the people."

We have put in plans to retool and equip the already existing hospitality institutions to aid capacity building.

Religion or Faith tourism is also one area the province is endowed with. The province is home to the Zion Christian Church which attracts thousands of worshippers from

South Africa and beyond. The local government structure sees it as an avenue to encourage and drive visitor spend.

"We have one of the biggest churches in Southern Africa, every year there is a pilgrimage to this area and efforts are being made to expand facilities and grow the tourism component of their activities" he concluded. .

Limpopo Tourism Agency

The Limpopo Tourism Agency (LTA) which is entrusted with the responsibilities of marketing the tourism offering of the province has deployed multifaced approach in ensuring that the region maximises the full potential of the sector. The Chief Executive Officer of LTA Nomasonto Ndlovu wants Limpopo to be the most sought- after destination. In an interview with VoyagesAfric, the CEO said

"We are very fortunate because the Limpopo government has understood the importance of tourism as a catalyst for economic growth and development. To this end, Limpopo



• The CEO of LTA Nomasonto Ndlovu and the Managing Director of Fusion Boutique Hotel Maria Du Plessis,

Tourism Agency's mandate has been refocussed and is now single mindedly dedicated to destination marketing. We have been given a task to ensure Limpopo is top-of-mind in terms of brand awareness and that the destination is in the consideration set of potential holiday makers whether in and around South Africa, within the African region or also internationally".

The LTA Boss wants the brand proposition of the destination to move beyond its eco and wildlife tourism assets to encompass a more diverse offering for visitors.

"We are committed to defending our market share but also work hard to increase the tourist spend which is critical for contribution to the GDP and job creation. This is also why we reworked our destination brand



• View from the Kruger National Park

• Cyclists participating in the Tour de Limpopo Competition



proposition from just eco-tourism destination" to a more diverse destination that has so much "more to enjoy".

Our visitors will testify that there is a wide variety of amazing experiences to enjoy in Limpopo. These include our awe-inspiring and unspoilt natural scenery, rich culture, abundant wildlife including world-famous Kruger National Park, a variety of sporting and lifestyle events (e.g. Marula festival, Limpopo Golf Championship, Mapungubwe fetival, Tour de Limpopo cycle tour, to name but a few). Our proximity to Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique gives us a competitive advantage to leverage for cross-border promotions and to stimulate intra-Africa travel opportunities.

Accommodation

The Province as opposed to how it is perceived, has some of the leading properties in South Africa. Hotels, Lodges and guesthouses that can cater for the luxury marketHigh end tourists, middle class and the ordinary visitor. Properties such as lLuxurious AM Safari Lodge, Fusion Botique Hotel, Sefapane Lodge, Park Inn by Radisson, Sun International's Mersopa Sun Hotels is just a few to mention.

Stakeholders and operators in the tourism sector believe tourism offers the unique opportunity not only to create employment but to showcase the diverse cultural offering of the people. They think the province of Limpopo offers something special and

different and one needs to experience it.

General Manager of Fusion Boutique Hotel Maria Du Plessis, said "Limpopo is ready for the Meetings Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions (MICE)

Since we have taken a decision that tourism is a catalyst for economic growth, we need to put in the necessary infrastructure to help us maximise the full potential of the region. We have also started engaging tertiary and vocational institutions to begin offering courses in the area of tourism and hospitality. This will definitely create employment opportunities for the people.



• Nomasonto Ndlovu

Tourist Attractions

The Province ranks second as the most favoured domestic tourist destination. From outdoor adventure, culture, wildlife, agro tourism, sports and leisure, the destination is spoilt for choices. Its latest addition of lifestyle events has even made Limpopo more popular for domestic and international guests. The mighty Kruger National Park is located in the province and other captivating attractions such as the Magoebaskloof Adventure, Mapungubwe National Park (UNESCO World Heritage site), Hotsprings, and a variety of nature reserves.

Product, we have variety of products on offer with bigger, smaller, exclusive and niche venues. Limpopo offers unique experience, everyone has done Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg, but Limpopo is unique, and offers a fresh and typically South African MICE Experience"

More diverse tourism products is growing and can be found in the mining town of Phalaborwa. "This is growth area with proximity to the Kruger and ease of access to Mozambique" says Aldecia Seapane Lodgdde, the Marketing Manager.



• A traditional dinaka dance performed at the foot of a hill at the Bakone Malapa Museum



• The iconic UNESCO World Heritage Site, Mapungubwe National Park



• The Park Inn by Radisson in Polokwane



• A room of the luxurious AM Lodge in Hoedspruit



Ghana Delegation at the FITUR Expo in Madrid, Spain

GHANA TOURISM AUTHORITY'S INTERNATIONAL MARKETING OUTREACH-FIRST QUARTER

Ghana's Tourism sector enjoyed by far its biggest tourism season in recent years during the year 2019 with the 'Year of Return' campaign.

Launched in 2018 by the President of the Republic of Ghana in United States of America on the occasion of the 400th year of the abolishment of the slave trade, the Year of Return resonated with not just people of African American heritage but Africans in the diaspora in general.

The numbers, celebrities, high ranking international personalities such as Nancy Pelosi of the US Congress, Steve Harvey and the Barbados Prime Minister among others made their way to Ghana.

The CEO of the Ghana Tourism Authority, Akwasi Agyeman, who doubled as the coordinator of the campaign received thunderous applause by industry experts and colleagues. In his interview with VoyagesAfric at the 40th FITUR International Fair in Madrid, he said the Authority was very happy with the campaign and has already moved to consolidate the gains it made during the year 2019.

He among a tall list of things said, the campaign resurrected interest in

Ghana as a destination and moved beyond just tourism. He added that, it by and large formed a fulcrum in which the tourism sector is projected to grow and go beyond the traditional markets.

Vakantiebeurs Travel Fair-Utrecht, Netherlands

The year started with the Vakantiebeurs Travel Fair, a consumer show in Netherlands. The Authority sees the Dutch market as a good leisure and diaspora market as well. With a direct flight to Accra and a very high volume of Ghanaians living in the Netherlands and Belgium, Akwasi Agyeman thought it was a market worthy of engaging. At the exhibition, it entered into partnerships with other institutions, tourism boards as well as engagements with the Ghanaian community.



Delegation of the Public and Private sector players at the New York Times Travel Show

Exploring Scandinavia Market

Having made a debut appearance at the Nordic and Scandinavia market, MATKA in 2019, it returned again this time with the hope of growing that market. The Nordic market's interest in ecotourism makes Ghana a great destination for them.

FITUR

Feria de International de Turismo (FITUR) is considered the first business travel market which kick-starts the tourism year /season. The market does not only service the Spanish market but a global market space with strength in the Spanish speaking counties in Europe and the Americas.

The Tourism Authority CEO points to Madrid as the Tourism Capital of the world considering the fact that it serves as the headquarters of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). It also hosts annual ministerial meetings and countries get the opportunity to engage investors in tourism during the Tourism Investment and business forum (INVESTOUR).

"FITUR is also in Madrid which is home to the UNWTO and so in terms of tourism networking, it is a place we get to meet the movers and shakers in the industry. The added advantage of FITUR for us is that

it serves as the event store of where tourism investment products are showcased and discussed and we've picked up a few new tricks of the trade coming to this fair," he said.

He added that the event has facilitated fruitful conversations between Ghana and other West African countries on ways they can work together towards an integrated tourism marketing strategy for the sub-region.

The Americas- New York Times Travel Show

The New York Times Travel show offered Ghana the opportunity to interact with the American market considered to be Ghana's biggest source market. With the 'Beyond the Return' initiative in full swing, the American market presents the avenue to engage, understand and also network to attract events to the Ghana.

In 2020, North America is being focused on as a key target market as Ghana builds on the momentum of the 'Year of Return' into the new project " Beyond the Return". The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) reports that Americans spent 144 billion (U.S. dollars) on tourism expenditure in 2018. The buying power of the African-American population is expected to

increase to 1.4 trillion U.S. dollars by 2020 as reported by Statista.

One of its successes was the ability to attract and bring to Ghana the hosting of Africa Travel Association (ATA) Congress slated for October this year.

Private Sector and Other Institutional Participation

The Private sector plays a crucial role and serve as the gateway for growth of destinations. The GTA's cordial and engaging role with the private sector has seen enormous benefits and to some extent helped in developing new potential source markets for Ghana. Leading Tour Operators such as Land Tours, Sunseekers Tours, Apstar Tours have all featured prominently at the Exhibitions.

Kwame Ansong CEO of Sunseekers Tours

"Ghana Tourism Authority has over the years cooperated with the private sector including Sunseekers Tours. 2020 has seen successful collaboration at Vakantiebeurs, Matka and the New York Times Travel show with the various tour companies in agreement that these Fairs especially the NYT brought excellent resultsto all participating companies"



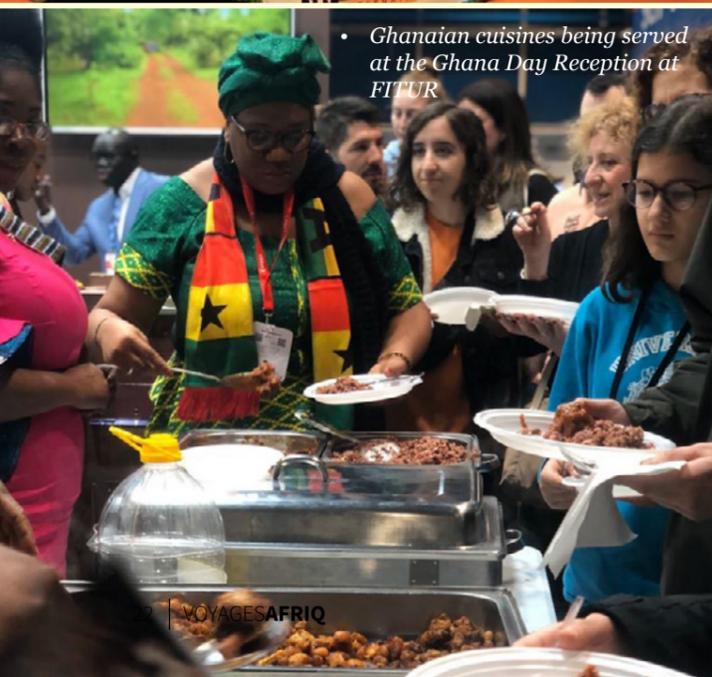
• Ghana's Minister of Tourism Arts and Culture Barbara Oteng-Gyasi with other dignitaries at Investour in Madrid, Spain.



• The Deputy CEO of the Ghana Tourism Authority Ekow Sampson making a presentation at the MATKA Travel Fair in Helsinki, Finland.



• A busy Ghana stand at FITUR



• Ghanaian cuisines being served at the Ghana Day Reception at FITUR



AFRICA, A GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE BUSINESS EVENTS DESTINATION – SA TOURISM MINISTER



• Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane

South Africa's Tourism Minister has insisted that Africa is a capable and globally competitive MICE destination. Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane said with warm people coupled with authentic and unique experiences, any event one hosts on the continent is set to be a memorable one.

In an her address to officially open the 15th Meetings Africa event at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa, the Minister averred that with continuous investments in key tourism infrastructure, Africa presents a fertile ground for business events to thrive.

"Fifteen years ago when we hosted the first Meetings Africa, the continent was a different one. Although, Africa showed great promise, it still faced challenges ranging from democratization, violent conflicts to huge infrastructural and investment gap," she said.

More than a decade later, Kubayi-Ngubane says the narrative has flipped.

She maintains that, "Africa has changed and continues to change for the better. Today, Africa brims with promise. Africa is a wonderful continent of diverse people and

vibrant cultures. With many African countries making remarkable economic strides in the past few years, the global meetings industry has come to regard the continent as a dynamic, sought-after destination. Hence, Africa is the second fastest growing tourism region in the world."

Citing the World Economic Forum's 'The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019,' the Minister added that the continent has also made great strides in infrastructure development in areas "where it traditionally has trailed, including ICT readiness, international openness and price competitiveness."

Meetings Africa is the continent's biggest event dedicated to the MICE industry, attracting thousands of participants each year.

"It stands to reason that, this year, we are hosting the largest Meetings

Africa, to date. In this regard, we have sold 100% floor space, with 321 exhibitors from 20 Africa countries," the Minister disclosed.

There were 313 buyers from across the globe, who came to explore and buy what Africa had to offer.

The Chief Executive Officer of South African Tourism, Sisa Ntshona said, "Meetings Africa" has always provided the conducive platform to put on display Africa's capabilities.

"This is the place where we showcase the continent's competencies and capabilities of holding events and conferences. It is important that the continent of Africa gets together and make sure to up our game in our market share on the business events side"

"By nature, conferences rotate and we would rather let it rotate within the continent especially on topics that we are the thought leaders on or far ahead of others." He concluded.

Prior to the official opening, a Business Opportunities Networking Day (BONDay) was held which preceded a special MICE Masterclass session presented by Africa Tourism Partners.

MEETINGS AFRICA

Advancing Africa Together

Pictures from Meetings Africa



• Winners of the Green Awards pose for a group photo



• Cultural Performance at the official opening



• Officials of Malawi Tourism presenting souvenir to the South African Tourism Minister



• Interim Board Chair of South African Tourism, Ravi Nadasen



• South African Chief Conventions Bureau Officer Amanda Kotze-Nhlapo



• SA Tourism Minister Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane with the Interim Board Chair of South African Tourism and CEO of South African Tourism



• SA Tourism Minister Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane in a tete-a-tete with Eswatini Minister of Tourism and Environment, Moses Vilakati



• CEO of African Tourism Partners, Kwakyie Donkor speaking at the BONA Day



• Participant at the BONA Day Session



• The Tourism Minister will ring the bell to signify the official opening of Meetings Africa



• Dignitaries seated at the official opening of Meetings Africa



• Officials of the Cape Town International Convention Centre in a photo pose with SA Tourism Minister and CEO of South African Tourism, Sisa Nsthona



• The Minister of Tourism Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane and the CEO of South African Tourism Sisa Nsthona in a roundtable interaction with the International Media



• The Director General of the Department of Tourism Victor Tharage engaging with a participant at the official opening

Personality Profile

DR BETTY ADERO RADIER is the Chief Executive Officer of the Kenya Tourism Board (KTB). She has been the boss of one of Africa's leading Tourism Board for the last three years and below is a conversation about her work at KTB.

How does it feel to be the CEO of the Kenya Tourism Board?

I must start by saying that I am very grateful and humbled by the opportunity I have to serve my country in the role of CEO of the Kenya Tourism Board. I see this as a chance to work together with Kenyans to promote Kenya as a destination whose diversity of amazing experiences and beauty offers all our visitors an individual, 'magical moment' every time they visit Kenya.

Take us through your highs and lows during your three years in charge of Kenya Tourism Board.

My highs have been whenever I see the impact that the tourism sector is having on the local communities in Kenya. I am also happy when I see the value of our tourism contribution to the GDP of Kenya go up as was revealed in the 2019 report by the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife.

This shows that we are on the right track but also reminds me that a lot of untapped opportunities exist to create a paradigm shift for the tourism sector.

My lows have been the implication and impact of terrorism on the sector, this really hurts us as a nation and also has a negative effect on our tourism.

Visitors always want to be assured that they are visiting a safe destination.

What's informed the launch of Signature experiences?

The journey of the Magical Kenya Signature Experiences started in 2016 when KTB reset the lens with which we looked at the destination offering in partnership with our stakeholder in the tourism industry. Kenya as a destination has a lot to offer but together with our private sector partners who are indeed the

investors who make the diversity of offering a reality. We set out to explore, identify, evaluate and recognise the gems within our destination. This in turn provides a huge competitive advantage both for the tourism sector as well as the country as we embark on the marketing of these signature experiences. Kenya is blessed with authentic and exceptional travel experiences and products; our role is to identify them and ensure that the world knows about them so that everyone knows they have a chance or purpose to make a trip to 'Magical Kenya' to experience them

How is the security situation in Lamu affecting tourism in the coast and do you have any strategy to assuage that?

It goes without saying that security is paramount for tourism to thrive. I would like to thank the Kenyan government for making sure that whenever we have a threat to our security as a country all measures are taken to ensure normalcy is restored and / or retained. In the case of Lamu where we have had challenges, Government agencies are working closely always making a concerted effort to ensure that our visitors and Kenyans always remain safe.

Do you think Kenya Airways' current precarious problems have the propensity to derail the efforts of the board in marketing the Magical Kenya brand?

Kenya Airways is very important to Kenya being our flag carrier and an important partner to KTB. I believe the efforts that the Kenya Airways board is undertaking with the support of the Government of Kenya will be fruitful and our hope is that it gets restored to the place it belongs which is the Pride of Africa and beyond.

Magical Kenya Travel Expo will be celebrating its 10 years anniversary, do you think the show has fulfilled its purpose?

The Magical Kenya Travel Expo (MKTE) has steadily worked through its intended objective of being the premier travel show in Africa. We have seen an increase in all the key performance indicators for the show over the years.

Both hosted buyers and exhibitors have steadily increased year on year. Today MKTE is recognised as one of Africa's leading travel shows and has helped propel Kenya's stature as a meetings, incentives, conference and exhibition (MICE) destination.

The expo has experienced remarkable growth in business to business meetings which have helped to profile the destination globally. It has also helped to highlight established products and experiences. It has showcased new investment opportunities and developments in the sector especially in the areas of technology, access to the destination as well as the need to embrace sustainable tourism practices

Finally, what do you want to be remembered for during your time as Head of KTB / Legacy

I would like to be remembered for helping to transform Kenya to become one of the most sought-after destinations in the world. I want to feel the satisfaction that I did my best at this job, working with my team and our partners in all sectors to deliver to our strategies and objectives towards tourism revenue growth and contribution to our economy and communities. I want to one day look back and say that 'I served my country well.'



Betty Radier
CEO of Kenya Tourism Board

Uganda sets eyes on African market to boost tourist numbers

Uganda is hoping to drive up tourism figures taking advantage of the huge prospect Africa presents as a market. The East African country receives about 1.8 million tourists, and with over 1.3 billion people, Africa is seen as the next frontier in tourism globally and Uganda is already making moves to annex its share of this market.

The country's 5th Pearl of Africa Tourism Expo (POATE2020) focused on promoting intra-Africa travel. In an interview with VoyagesAfric on the fringes of the event, the CEO of Uganda Tourism Board, Lilly Ajarova said after careful studies they are convinced that Africa is their most bankable tourism market.

"Very key to us is the African market because to date when you look at our statistics most of our arrivals are from the continent. And also carrying out a market research to know what is happening across the globe and within Africa, we think that the low hanging fruits are actually with Africa," she said.

She said they have also looked at the interest of the different African source markets and their economies and what is very interesting and provides great opportunity for Uganda is that "we have economies like Kenya who are just next door. Kenya's economy is one of the big ones within the continent and they give biggest numbers in terms of arrivals to Uganda and we need to

just promote ourselves better in Kenya in order to increase on the numbers."

Uganda also hopes to tap in the West African market with focus on Nigeria in particular. Ajarova stated: "Looking at a source market like Nigeria, we have things we can offer to that market. And we haven't really been marketing ourselves in Nigeria or in West Africa for that matter but there are real products that meet the need of the West African market. We have the faith-based tourism products like Uganda Martyrs, as a unique opportunity for the Nigerian market."



• First Deputy Prime Minister of Uganda, General Moses Ali cut ribbon for the opening of the exhibitions for POATE 2020. He is flanked by the Minister, and State Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities and the CEO of the Uganda Tourism Board



• A group of Hosted Buyers and International Media at the Murchison Falls



Exhibitors at the Exhibition



• Lilly Ajarova CEO of Uganda Tourism Board

The UTB CEO believes Uganda as a destination offers a wide mix of tourism products that the different markets need and they are positioning themselves to package and sell these products. "We believe these are the kind of products that the market requires and we have them. We just haven't positioned ourselves well enough like South Africa. In the same line, Egypt, we haven't been marketing to Egypt. The source of River Nile which is the livelihood for all Egyptians is in

Uganda. So the opportunities are there and I think it's just the right time for us now to position ourselves adequately"

Ajarova is hopeful the revival of the country's national carrier should make accessibility to Uganda, seamless. In addition, she averred, "We really would like to grow the numbers as much as possible, but we also have to be realistic that we want to develop the country as an ecotourism destination. We do not want mass tourism. So at this point

that we have 1.8 million arrivals, we hope in another five years, we should be seeing more than double that figure"

The fifth Pearl of Africa Tourism Expo (POATE 2020) was held from February 4-6 at the Speke Resort, Munyonyo in Kampala. The event attracted over 100 Hosted Buyers and International Media and more than 130 exhibitors and also featured a six day pre-event familiarisation tour to various tourists attractions all over the country.

Kenya National Convention Bureau joins ICCA



• Jacinta Nzioka,
National Coordinator of KNCB

The Kenya National Convention Bureau (KNCB) has officially been inducted into the membership of the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) – the largest global meetings industry network.

This automatically grants KNCB access to ICCA's large database of clients from the conventions sector all over the world.

Kenya with the establishment of KNCB, seeks to promote the country as a competitive MICE destination.

Kenya which now belongs to the Africa Chapter and the Destination Marketing Sector of ICCA is expected

to take advantage of its membership and court more MICE related events into the country to boost tourism.

Esmare Steinhofel, ICCA Regional Director (Africa) commenting on the country's membership said this is an indication of the Kenya government's focus on growing the Business Events Industry.

"The Association market as a sector will contribute greatly to the economic development and knowledge economy of Kenya. The ICCA Africa Regional Office is looking forward to working closely with the newly established Kenya National Convention Bureau to grow the association's market," she added.

KNCB's National Coordinator Jacinta Nzioka was delighted to receive the news of the membership approval by ICCA International and expressed appreciation for the support received so far from the Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Tourism, its Board and various stakeholders.

The bureau will now be in a position to roll out its programmes at a planned forum in March 2020. While releasing the end of year performance report of tourism in Kenya, the Cabinet Secretary Najib Balala highlighted Business and Conference Tourism as one of the sub sectors that had sustained growth and commended all players while challenging them to offer more experiential and aspirational products for further growth.

Kenya through this new association will get the opportunity to analyse its market position based on 55 years of international association meetings data with the ICCA's Destination Comparison Tool. Through ICCA's free and simple PR Tools, KNCB will also get to increase Kenya's profile in the meetings industry. Also with a huge data search, Kenya through ICCA can discover local ambassadors to be involved in their next winning bid.

Advertising Week Africa a platform for Africans to tell their own story

Advertising Week, one of the world's biggest advertising events, is coming to Africa for the first time. Advertising Week Africa, being held in Johannesburg from 11th to 14th May 2020, touts itself as a global platform on which Africans can tell their stories.

Meetings Africa 2020 played host to the Advertising Week Africa panel discussion at the Sandton Convention Centre on 26th February 2020. This year's Meetings Africa, held on 25th and 26th February, celebrates 15 years of Advancing Africa Together and continues to grow as the continent's premier business events conference. The event theme, "Shared economies", looks at collaborative African growth with speakers delving into the continent's value proposition within the global economy.



• Panellists speaking at the session

Speaking on the panel, South African Tourism's Chief Marketing Officer, Themba Khumalo, believes the platform will give Africa an opportunity to be part of the global conversation. "We have to be part of global platforms that have an annual circuit of events. So for me a platform like this allows us to get on the global agenda and the global conversation. It is a grace and a blessing to be

part of this platform. Let's use it to amplify our story." he advised.

Khumalo said a clear message is needed for Africa's stories to be compelling to the world. "We need to begin to engage on what the actual message is for this continent. Why should people visit or invest in this continent? Why should they care of the creative power of this continent?" he asked.



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2020 JULY SCHEDULE

Day 1 - Monday, 13 July 2020

08h30 - 16h30 AFRICA YOUTH IN TOURISM INNOVATION SUMMIT

Day 2 - Tuesday, 14 July 2020

08h30 - 11h00 SESSION I - AFRICA TRAVEL AND TOURISM CEOs AND EXECUTIVE FORUM

11h15 - 17h00 SESSION II - AFRICA BUSINESS AND MICE TOURISM MASTER CLASS

16h30 - 19h00 INDUSTRY NETWORKING SESSION & COCKTAIL

Day 3 - Wednesday, 15 July 2020

08h30 - 17h00 MAIN CONFERENCE - AFRICA TOURISM LEADERSHIP FORUM

08h30 - 17h00 GALA DINNER - AFRICA TOURISM LEADERSHIP AWARDS

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REGISTRATION FOR 10TH MAGICAL KENYA TRAVEL EXPO OPENS



Registration for Magical Kenya Travel Expo(MKTE) has officially opened with both local and international travel trade gearing up for what promises to be another great event.

Taking place at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre(KICC) from 7-9 October 2020 MKTE is set to once again showcase the best of African tourism offering to international buyers and trade.

The show is designed to help trade do business, network, and access the latest information on trends and markets visiting Kenya and East Africa. It will also equip the media, with the latest information from the Kenya Tourism Board on its activities.

This year marks a landmark in the organization of the show as it celebrates a decade of magical experiences and more.

The show will also offer opportunities for the travel trade, countries and businesses to close deals.

Register now at <https://register.mkte.co.ke/hosted-buyer/register/>



Rwanda Convention Bureau's Participation in Meetings Africa

The 15th Meetings Africa was held in February this year. Over the years, this tradeshow has successfully become the continent's premier business events trade show bringing together industry professionals from across the world to experience business tourism events and transact business in a targeted manner.

For the fifth year in a row, Rwanda Convention Bureau (RCB) has participated in Meetings Africa and have found that their tenacity to attend this ever growing event has favorably yielded results that have seen Rwanda breed a number of events, grow and empower their private sector as well as the

opportunity afforded them to network and learn from the other 328 exhibitors that growingly had representation from an astonishing 20 African countries.

The continuous goal for Rwanda Convention Bureau is to promote Rwanda as a world class conference and incentive destination and to secure legacy projects. Since RCB first participated in 2016, the Bureau has generated various leads that included African Women Leadership Organization (AWLO), Occupation Therapy, SESTECH Africa 2020 among others as well as other leads that are yet to be confirmed like Material Research in 2021. During RCB's 2020 Meetings

Africa participation, a remarkable 180 meetings were conducted at the Rwanda stand and among these, RCB expects to materialize strong leads in the near future, hoping that Rwanda will continue to find more opportunities to grow as a destination.

RCB's Deputy CEO RCB Ms. Janet Karemera who led the Rwanda delegation during Meetings Africa 2020 stressed that Meetings Africa continues to be an excellent platform for Rwanda to source MICE business but also an opportunity to learn, network and collaborate with other destinations. Ms. Karemera further expressed that this year's calendar of event's outlook appears impressive with some of the major events like the annual Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings slated to be hosted in Kigali in June 2020, Intra Africa Trade Fair in September 2020, Africa Green Revolution Summit in September 2020, Meditech Africa in November 2020, Global Food Innovation Summit for Africa in November 2020. In addition, Kigali is privileged to host Africa Tourism Leadership Forum from July 2020 and the Africa Association Summit in October 2020.



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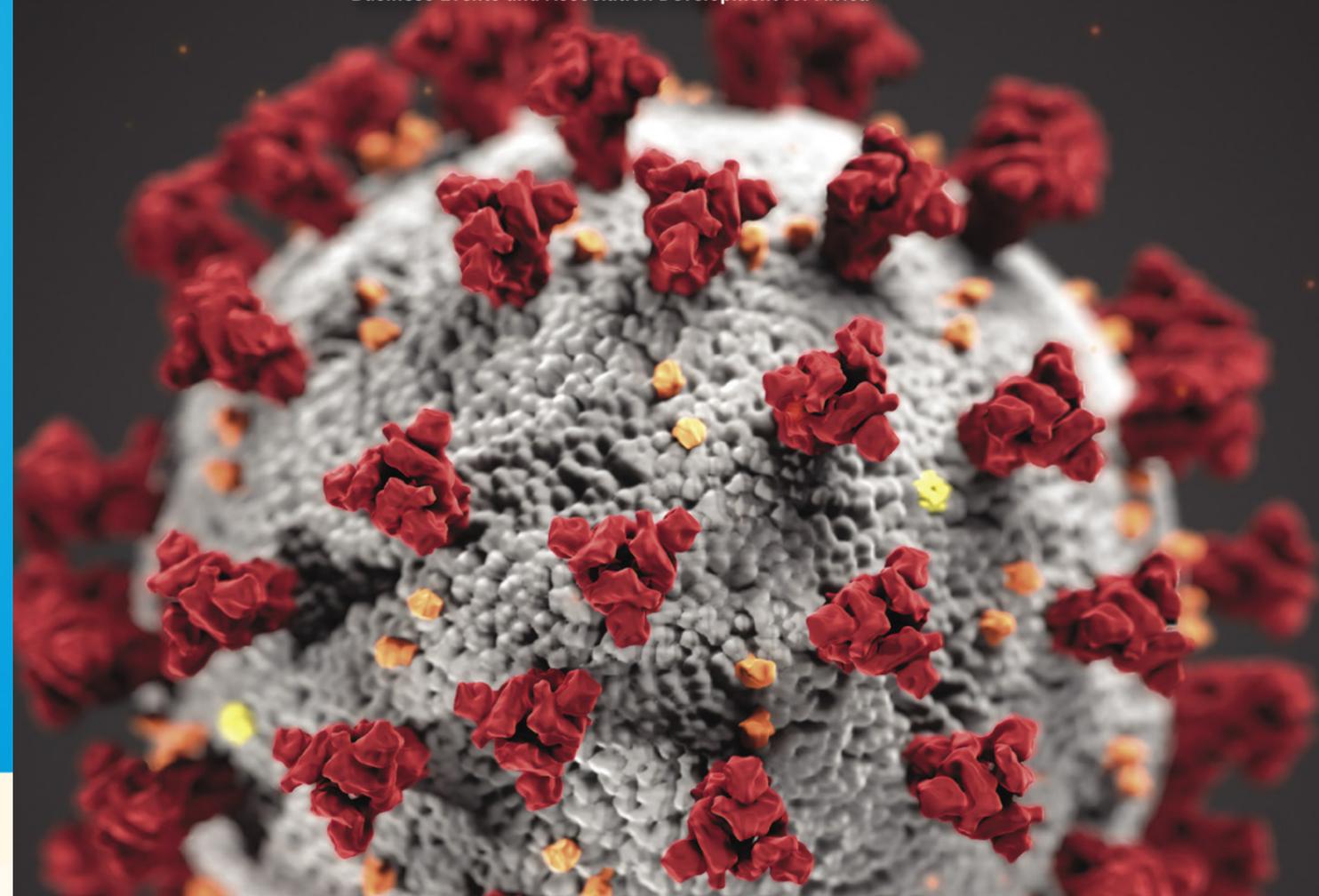
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Event

Business Events and Association Development for Africa



+ CORONAVIRUS IN AFRICA

What It Means for Africa's MICE Sector

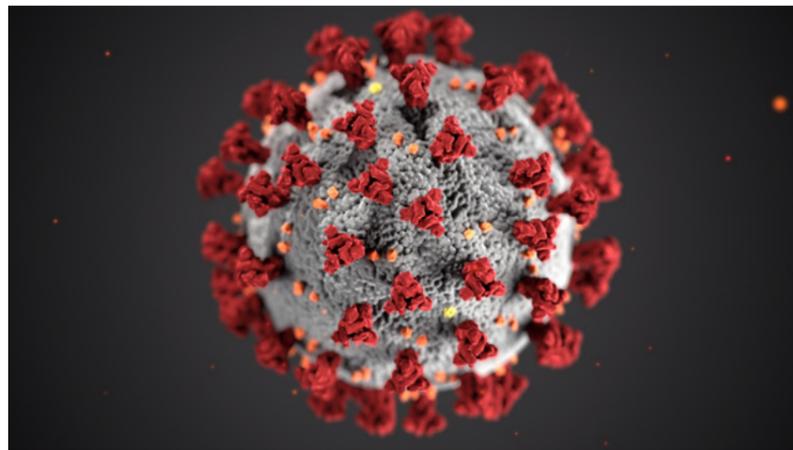
+ AAS2 SET FOR SEPTEMBER

AfSAE Announces Venue and Dates for Annual Congress



FIST-BUMPING WILL HAVE ITS MOMENT THANKS TO CORONAVIRUS

Introduction: As the world struggles to come to grips with COVID-19, business events have become one of the industries hit the hardest. Not only have major conferences and exhibitions in Europe and America been cancelled as a result of the outbreak, but Africa has begun to feel its effects, too. In February, an international conference to Cape Town was cancelled, and although events like WTM Africa and Africa's Travel Indaba plan to proceed – albeit with caution – the continent waits with bated breath to see the devastating outcomes. *Event Africa's Kim Crowie and Musawenkosi Gebuza report.*



Before we delve into the industry, let's give you a quick history lesson. Coronaviruses were identified in the mid-1960s and are known to affect humans and animals, including birds and mammals. The latest iteration is caused by a novel coronavirus that causes severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2, formally renamed 2019-nCoV). Now known as COVID-19, it was identified amid an outbreak of cases in Wuhan City, China in December last year. On 30

January 2020, the World Health Organisation declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global emergency.

Meetings Affected Indefinitely

Perhaps the most worrying part of the coronavirus scare is that we are encouraged to remain isolated. This affects all of the business events industry because face-to-face meetings are, in essence, our bread and butter. Initially, as Africa watched the rest of the world scramble, we thought the continent

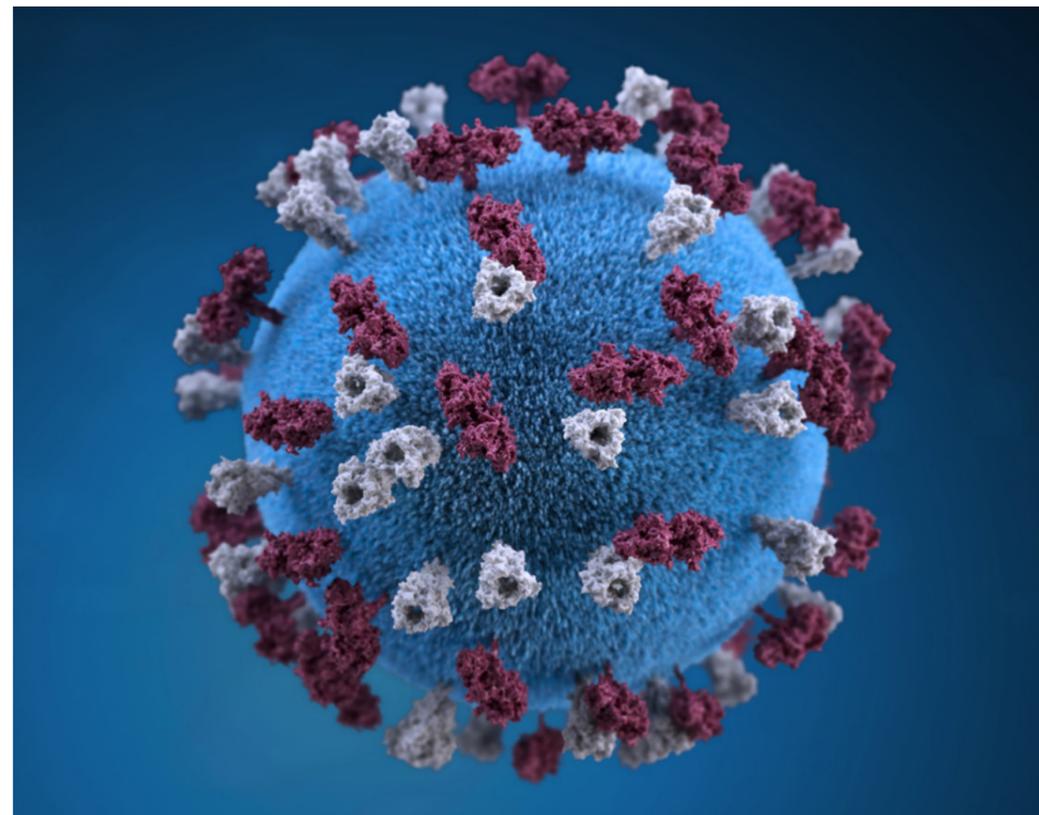
could even use this as a way to attract more meetings – until the first cases were found in Nigeria, Algeria, and finally, South Africa.

INSOL International Conference, set to take place at the CTICC this year, was confirmed cancelled on 3 March 2020. "As you can imagine, much deliberation has gone into making this difficult decision. However, the health and safety of our delegates around the world and staff is our priority," CEO Jason Baxter and President Julie Hertzberg said in a statement.

Since then, several other conferences and events have either been postponed or cancelled – including ITB Berlin and GSMA's Mobile World Congress. According to GSMA CEO John Hoffman, "The coronavirus outbreak has made it 'impossible' to hold the event."

The Cape Town International Airport team have put a number of measures in place such as an increase in sterilisation. Protective gear for front line and passenger facing staff including the department of home affairs will be made available.

"I think the meetings industry as a whole is challenged by this," says Gregg Talley, President and CEO of Talley Management Group, Inc. "If the only way to deal with this is to not have large-scale events, we in the live events industry have a challenge on our hands. That's something we haven't quite come to grips with, and, as an industry, it's something we'd better grapple with and figure out what it really means for us. If this



becomes part of our new normal, which scientists are telling us it is, we're in trouble. We need to come together, and strategise how we're going to defend and protect our industry in the face of this threat."

How It Affects Africa

South African business events, in particular, have begun to feel the pinch as internationals from affected countries have been put on 'house arrest'. SA Tourism on 6 March released a statement saying that, "It is having a growing impact on global and national economies, financial markets, business cycles and individual firms. This is no different for the tourism sector – with travel restrictions and the cancellation of many planned visits, flights and business events."

WTM Africa has announced that it will continue in April with caution. "If you have any concerns that you may get caught up in an inbound or outbound quarantine, or are feeling unwell, you may want to reconsider your attendance at the event," Reed Exhibitions states in their COVID-19 guidelines.

Nomakhaya Fekema, an Academic Programme Officer at African Institute for Mathematical Sciences SA has confided that their science forum has been cancelled, too. "We're now in the process of cancelling our major science forum that was meant to be held on 9 March – 13 March 2020 which was expected to host about 2 500 delegates. This conference was meant to place Africa on a scientific pedestal and boost the economic state of the organisation."

Although there is some promising research that potentially shows why Africa has remained largely unaffected from a health standpoint, it still has the potential to cripple the continent's economy, production and even innovation in the near and far future.

"My thoughts are with the countries currently dealing with confirmed cases of COVID-19. What happens

in one part of the world, ultimately affects us all. Already we are seeing a substantial drop in tourism and travel globally, with an expected 1.5% drop in international travel," says Alderman James Vos, Cape Town's Mayoral Committee Member for Economic Opportunities and Asset Management. "The tourism and hospitality sectors are vital to the economy of Cape Town. We work hard to attract visitors, both business and leisure tourists, so they spend time and money in our beautiful city, enabling job creation. I am comforted by the fact that this sector has proven to be resilient and that it can and will bounce back from the impact of this global pandemic."

What We Should Be Doing

There are prevention protocols that have been put in place to ensure that South Africa in particular retains minimal to zero COVID-19 cases. Airports have activated their emergency control protocol to respond to the severity of the situation. This means focussing on detection, prevention, and protection. Currently, Port Health Officers, supported by the military, screen all international arriving passengers. Airports have also increased sterilisation, and protective gear for front line and passenger-facing staff will be made available.

Other African countries are following suit, with nations like Nigeria setting up committees that meet daily to monitor and assess how to deal with outbreak movements.

City Lodge Hotel Group has launched their own COVID-19 protocol across its 62 hotels, educating staff and guests, and introducing measures to ensure all remain safe in the face of this global health emergency.

Linda Pereira, CEO at L&I Communication Group, offered some poignant advice at Meetings Africa 2020: "COVID-19 is an enormous global crisis. We need visible initiatives, visible signs to



say that we are fighting and we're doing something. It is about being prepared, it is about working on prevention and a list of tactics that can be implemented in dealing with coronavirus. It's not about reality but about perception." She added that some of the practical things business events professionals can be doing right now include having doctors on site (and within sight), changing the way we greet one another (think fist bumps instead of hugs), and meet in bigger rooms with more space and air circulation.

SIDEBAR: Preventative Steps to Take

There's nothing like being prepared to keep you safe – be sure to practice the steps below to avoid the spread of germs while you're at a conference or exhibition. More information on www.who.int.

1. Wash your hands frequently

Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub as it will eliminate the virus if it's on your hand.

2. Practice respiratory hygiene

When coughing and sneezing, cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue – discard tissue immediately into a closed bin and clean your

hands. This will prevent the spread of germs and viruses.

3. Maintain social distance

Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and other people. When someone who is infected with a respiratory disease, like COVID-19, coughs or sneezes they project small droplets containing the virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the virus.



4. Avoid touching the eyes, nose and mouth

Hands touch many surfaces which can be contaminated with the virus. If you touch your eyes, nose or mouth with your contaminated hands, you can transfer the virus to yourself.

5. Seek medical care early

If you have fever, cough and or difficulty breathing, seek medical care early. Tell your health care provider if you have travelled in an area in China where COVID-19 has been reported, or if you have been in close contact with someone with who has travelled.

6. Practice general hygiene measures with animal-related activities

Ensure regular hand washing with soap and potable water after touching animals and animal products; avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth with hands; and avoid contact with sick animals or spoiled animal products. Avoid the consumption of raw or undercooked animal products, too.

AfSAE: POTENTIAL IN THE ASSOCIATION LANDSCAPE

Jeffers Miruka, President of the African Society of Association Executives, shares his thoughts on where the African association industry is at in 2020.

What movements, both positive and negative have impacted the meetings industry in the last year, particularly from an association's standpoint?

Technology is making major inroads into the associations and meetings industry. Artificial intelligence (AI) and its endeavour of simulating human intelligence in machines will have a big impact on the meetings industry and associations. Another one is the Internet of Things (IoT) – connecting any device with an on and off switch to internet and to each other without human interventions is impacting us and the meetings industry. Mobile – the global mobile penetration has impacted relationships between people everywhere. Marketing automation – associations are now using this form of automation platforms to automate repetitive tasks and market to members selectively in email, social media and others. Data is also impacting on how we track and measure behaviour. Data is helping associations to communicate to the right people at the right time with the right information. Crypto-currency is also one to watch. The use of digital currency is gaining attraction especially with millennials. This trend will have a big impact on meetings and our associations. Lastly, AfCFTA, the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement and possibility of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM), will help Africa to improve intra Africa connectivity, facilitate business and trade, increase tourism, connect friends, families, cultures, and promotes the exchange of knowledge

and ideas, shorter travel time, lower fares, new routes and frequencies and many more.

We hear things like sustainability, catering to Millennials and Gen Z, health and wellness, sustainability, etc. are thrown around quite often. What do these buzz words mean for association meetings, and why should association execs be sitting up and taking notice?

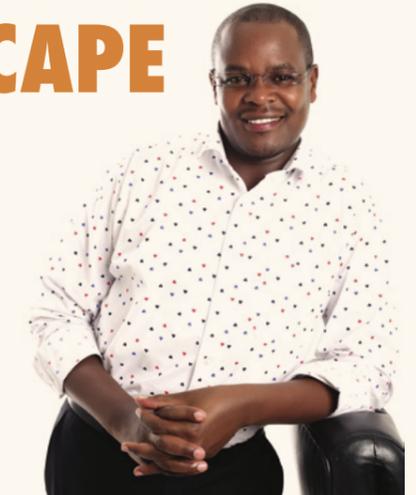
In a fast-paced world today where everything seem to change so quickly and abruptly, catering for Millennials and Gen-Z should be on top of our minds if we have to strategically tap into these groups who are invariably changing with time. Sustainability is akin to a positive impact from a donor or ROI from an investor. Associations that aren't focusing on sustainability will dry up.

Where on the African continent have you noticed that there is great potential for the growth of the association meetings industry?

New conventions bureaus to market the destination. Rwanda already has a well-established and oiled Rwanda Convention Bureau (RCB), Kenya has a newly minted Kenya National Convention Bureau that is getting fully operationalized, while Ethiopia has also started the Ethiopia National Convention Bureau (TNCB).

New international associations are expanding to these regions, thankfully due to these countries' ease to do business.

Air connectivity to these countries is well served due to local and international airlines. Ethiopia just reported recently that they are building a new US \$5billion



modern airport, while Rwanda's new \$140million is funded by the government of Qatar, which is a key stakeholder, while Qatar Airways is also planning a 49% stake at Rwanda Air.

We've seen Africa face serious challenges in the past. How does this bode for the image of the continent particularly when considering a country as a host for a world congress? And how can we better market our destinations?

It starts with us before them. We must work hard enough to own the narrative before them. Nowhere in the world is absolute safety guaranteed, only that the affected regions have standby image consultants available immediately to own the narrative. Inasmuch as the above is key, as Africa, we should set our sights-and-sound on our weak areas and collaboration among every stakeholder to tame all unknown unknowns.

Any last words or relevant info our readers should know?

I am happy to announce the second Africa Association Summit (AAS2) in Kigali, Rwanda that will take place from 17-18 September 2020 at the Kigali Convention Centre (KCC). For more details visit www.afsae.org/events.

Upcoming Travel Shows

International Tourism Exhibition of Abidjan (SITA) – Ivory Coast

Date: 27 – 30 April
Venue: Radisson Blu, Abidjan
 Arguably West Africa's biggest tourism trade show, SITA provides participants the unique opportunity to meet and network with top industry professionals from the region and across the continent and beyond. The event features round table debates, exhibitions, training course for travel agencies, conferences and offer a distinctive chance to get acquainted with West Africa's tourism offerings and products.

Sustainable Tourism Africa Summit - Kenya

Date: 6-8 May
Venue: PrideInn Paradise, Mombasa
 The Sustainable Tourism Africa Summit features sustainable tourism masterclasses, presentation, workshops, side events, exhibitions and sustainable tourism awards. For three days, the businesses, leaders and professionals present their solutions, business models and innovative products. The Sustainable tourism Africa summit also supports creation of networks that drive sustainability of business and destinations.

Africa's Travel Indaba – South Africa

Date: 12 -14 May
Venue: International Convention Centre, Durban
 Africa's Travel Indaba is one of the largests tourism marketing events on the African calendar and one of the top three 'must visit' events of its kind on the global calendar. It showcases the widest variety of Africa;s best tourism products and attracts international buyers and media from across the world.

KARIBU/KILIFAIR – Tanzania

Date: 5-7 June
Venue: Friedkin Recreation Center, TGT – Arusha
 KARIBU/KILIFAIR is the leading international Outdoor Tourism & Industry Fair in Tanzania, promoting and presenting companies based in the Kilimanjaro-Region, Tanzania and East Africa as a destination. It presents the right platform for one to get new business ideas by meeting business people from different countries such as Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda while networking and doing business.

Sanganai Hlanganani World Tourism Expo – Zimbabwe

Date: 17 -19 September
Venue: Zimbabwe International Trade Fair Grounds
 Sanganai/ Hlanganani World Tourism Expo highlight the widest variety of Africa's best tourism products and attract international visitors and media from across the world. The Fair provides a unique opportunity for tourism stakeholders to meet, network, negotiate and conduct business with tourism professionals from both local and various tourism source markets under one roof.

Akwaaba African Travel Market – Nigeria

Date: 20 -22 September
Venue: Eko Atlantic Convention Centre, Victoria Island, Lagos
 Akwaaba African Travel Market (AFTM) is an international travel, tourism and hospitality event organized annually which is aimed at businesses, investors, government's decision - makers and buyers in the industry, providing business opportunities, industry news and showcasing products in Africa and around the world. It serves as a platform to trade and network. Akwaaba African Travel Market is the first travel market in West Africa.

Magical Kenya Travel Expo (MKTE)

Date: 7-9 October
Venue: Kenyatta International Conference Centre, Nairobi
 MKTE is an opportunity to access a gathering of East Africa's tourism leaders, policy makers, leading tourism products, global buyers and media. MKTE is on a strong growth trajectory. 2019 welcomed over 200 exhibitors from Africa to meet with over 150 global buyers from 25 of Kenya's key source markets. 6000 pre-scheduled meetings take place at the expo through an effective business matchmaking system, which drives business potential at the expo.

Swahili International Tourism Expo (SITE) – Tanzania

Date: 02-04 October 2020
Venue: Mlimani City Conference Centre
 Swahili International Tourism Expo focuses on inbound and outbound travel business to and within Africa. The event showcases the travel possibilities in Tanzania within & beyond the well-known attractions in National Parks, around Mount Kilimanjaro and on the beautiful beach Island of Zanzibar.

Africa Tourism Leadership Forum & Awards – Rwanda

Date: 13 -15 July
Venue: Kigali International Convention Centre
 Africa Tourism Leadership Forum (ATLF) is a Pan-African dialogue platform. It brings together key stakeholders of Africa's travel, tourism, hospitality and aviation sectors to network, share insights, and devise strategies for intra-Africa travel and tourism growth across the continent, whilst enhancing the brand equity of "Destination Africa".

Aviadev Africa Conference - Madagascar

Date: 28 - 30 September
Venue: Antananarivo-Atsimondrano
 AviaDev Africa is the premier forum dedicated to growing connectivity to, from and within the African continent. Bringing together airports, airlines, tourism authorities, governments and industry suppliers, AviaDev offers attendees the ability to pre-arrange meetings in professional surroundings, offering the best chance to make a real connection.

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Newly created embryo nourishes hope for survival of the northern white rhino

In August 2019 a team of scientists and conservationists broke new grounds in saving the northern white rhinoceros from extinction when they harvested eggs from the two remaining females, artificially inseminating them using frozen sperm from deceased males and creating two viable northern white rhino embryos.

With great support from the Kenyan Government and in the presence of Hon Najib Balala, – Kenya’s Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife – the team repeated the procedure on December 17, 2019, and was able to create a new embryo over Christmas. This significantly increased the chances of successfully producing offsprings. The procedure has proven to be safe and reliable, and can be performed on a regular basis before the animals become too old. Preparations for the next edition of the northern white rhino rescue mission are underway.

Four months after the groundbreaking first “ovum pickup” in August 2019, the team repeated the procedure with northern white rhinos Najin and Fatu on December 17, 2019, at Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya. The animals were placed under general anaesthetic and nine immature egg cells (oocytes) – three from Najin and six from Fatu – were harvested from the animals’ ovaries using a probe guided by ultrasound. The anaesthesia and the ovum pickup went smoothly and without any complications. The oocytes

were transported immediately to the Avantea Laboratory in Italy.

After incubating and maturing nine eggs, four from Fatu and one from Najin, they were fertilised with sperm using a procedure called ICSI (Intra Cytoplasm Sperm Injection). One out of five fertilized eggs from Fatu developed into a viable embryo with the help of Geri, an innovative benchtop incubator with integrated continuous embryo monitoring capabilities. It was designed to provide an individualized and undisturbed incubation environment. It was donated by Merck. The embryo is now stored in liquid nitrogen along with the two embryos from the first procedures.

Hon. Najib Balala, Cabinet Secretary for Kenya’s Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife said “As a government, we are glad that the northern white rhino in-vitro fertilisation project by a consortium of scientists and conservationists from Kenya, Czech Republic, Germany and Italy’s collaborative partnership has been able to successfully produce three pure northern white rhino embryos ready for implantation into southern white rhino as surrogate mothers in the coming months.

To achieve the best possible results for work with pure northern white rhino embryos, the team relies on experience from similar embryo transfer procedures in southern white rhinos that have been performed in order to address reproduction challenges in European

zoos. Despite the fact that more research is still needed, the team expects that a first attempt for this crucial, never before achieved step, may be undertaken in 2020.

In December 2019, the team also transported the semen of Sudan, the last northern white rhino male that died in March 2018, from Kenya to Germany. The aim was to use it in future for production of more embryos. However, as the semen was collected in 2014 when Sudan was already over 40 years old, it is necessary to test it first and then see whether it could be used for such purposes.

The egg collection, embryo creation and preparation for the embryo transfer is a joint effort by the Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research (Leibniz-IZW), Avantea, Dvůr Králové Zoo, Ol Pejeta Conservancy and the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS). The entire process is part of the “BioRescue” research. Its goal is to significantly advance assisted reproduction techniques (ART) and stem cell associated techniques (SCAT) complemented with a comprehensive ethical assessment carried out by the University of Padova for the benefit of the northern white rhinoceros.

The consortium is partially funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and comprises of internationally renowned institutions from Germany, Italy, Czech Republic, Kenya, Japan and the USA.



WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN AFRICA

– Why aren’t there more of them and what do they mean for tourism?

By Fergus Maclaren

Director of International Relations and Knowledge Management
Global Economic Institute for Africa

Ashrita Furman is not someone people would immediately recognize, but he is the champion Guinness World Record-holder. He has set over 700 records since 1979. Many of these seem like dreamt-up oddities. Ashrita often travels to World Heritage sites to use them as backdrop for his stunts, which include completing the fastest mile on a kangaroo ball atop the Great Wall of China and climbing to the highest elevation on stilts at Macchu Pichu (Peru).



• Ashrita Furman

Beyond the longest balancing of a pool cue on one finger by the Pyramids of Giza, Ashrita has not set many records in Africa. That’s because there are so few World Heritage sites on the continent compared to others, due in part to the stringent nomination criteria.

World Heritage’s origins began with the UNESCO convention in 1972 determining to preserve and celebrate the best of the best monuments and protected areas. Applying the term ‘Outstanding Universal Value,’ candidate sites must have “cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all of humanity.”

The first twelve World Heritage sites were nominated in 1978, including three from Africa: Ethiopia’s Simien National Park and the Rock-Hewn Churches in Lalibela, and Senegal’s Island of Gorée. Despite this seemingly strong start, of the 1121

total World Heritage Sites, there are currently only 129 in Africa. This 12% representation is considered disproportionate because of the unique histories, cultures and biodiversity across the continent.

The key questions here are: what are the causes for this underrepresentation and why is World Heritage important for Africa’s tourism?

For many countries, staging a World Heritage nomination is a lengthy, complicated, and expensive process. Technical and professional skills, reliable historical records, and architectural renderings are not often readily available nor up to date. On the rare occasions that a site has been nominated, national governments find themselves in a tight situation to ensure that necessary measures are used to protect these venues.

That being said, sites capable of meeting the strenuous requirements receive the mantle of a globally

recognized brand. For African countries trying to establish and nurture their emerging tourism industries, World Heritage is a significant endorsement to latch onto and heavily market as a national symbol. Think of India’s Taj Mahal, Britain’s Big Ben, and Tanzania’s Mount Kilimanjaro.

Thankfully, headway to increase Africa’s List presence is now receiving support from the UNESCO-affiliated African World Heritage Fund. There is even an annual African World Heritage Day (May 5) to celebrate the growing recognition of continental, natural and cultural attributes.

If African countries are up to the nomination and maintenance challenges, World Heritage status could prove beneficial to their tourism profile and growth in the long term. With any luck, Ashrita will be jumping, bouncing or balancing past your new African destinations in the near future.

If African countries are up to the nomination and maintenance challenges, World Heritage status could prove beneficial to their tourism profile and growth in the long term.



• Fergus Maclaren

MINISTER'S CORNER

MMAMOLOKO KUBAYI-NGUBANE Minister of Tourism, Republic of South Africa

VA: Can you tell us about yourself?

MKN: Driven by my keen interest in social development, I started my career by working in non-governmental organisations in South Africa before I went into the private sector. In the private, I worked in the banking sector for two different South African banks.

Subsequent to that I joined the public sector as a Development specialist at the National Health Laboratory Services (NHLS). It was when I was at the NHLS I was recruited to the office of the then Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa, Ms Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. And later Deputy President of South Africa, Mr Kgalema Motlanthe.

In 2009, I became a Member of Parliament of South Africa in which I assumed several roles and responsibilities including Acting Deputy Chief Whip of African National Congress and Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Telecommunications and Postal Services. It was not my first time that I was a public representative, in 2006, I was elected as a councillor in the City of Johannesburg and I served as a Chairperson Portfolio Committee on Transport.

I was appointed as Cabinet Minister in 2017 and had the pleasure to serve in three different portfolios prior to assuming my current role as Minister of Tourism of the Republic of South Africa. Previously, I served as Minister of Science and Technology, Communications, and Energy respectively. This has allowed me to be dynamic in the execution of my duties as a public representative and a patriotic South African. I'm a member of the Global Artificial Intelligence Council established in 2018 by the World

Economic Forum's Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

In my different roles between being a mother and wife to my national service I still am set on completing my PhD studies in record time, which I started this year with the University of Johannesburg. My qualifications includes a Bachelor of Arts Degree, a postgraduate Diploma in Project Management, a Masters Degree in Public and Development Management and I have also completed a Programme for Leadership Development at Harvard Business School.

VA: What has been the experience both success and challenges in working in the tourism sector?

MKN: It has been quite an exciting and enjoyable journey working for an industry that contributes immensely to the economies of many countries globally including our own, and I think it's because I'm very passionate about the industry. Since I joined the portfolio, I have engaged the business sector at different levels, from SMMEs to big business. In all these engagements, I realised the importance of understanding the sector, collaboration amongst sector players.

However, the one thing that we all must work towards is the transformation of the sector. The travel industry, like many other industries in South Africa, are male dominated. Admittedly, because of the history of our country the sector is white male dominated.

The participation of women in the sector is still not, where it should be and that is a battle I am committed to wage. This includes the development of our youngsters to play a more meaningful role in the sector. African women are

newcomers into this industry and as such they are faced with a number of challenges. Amongst those are lack of appropriate training and education within the tourism industry pertaining to the travel industry that might adequately support their business ventures, lack of access to finance for their businesses and lack of access to the market. However, as we work towards transformation of the sector, I'm encouraged to see women breaking the ceiling to become engaged in the business of tourism. A recent study by the World Travel and Tourism Council found that although such women are making significant contributions to the growth of any given economy through their business initiatives, they still face a number of challenges that limit their effectiveness in the small business context and I want to make it my mission to effect change and growth in our sector.

VA: What legacy would you like to leave as a Minister?

MKN: As I have already mentioned, I am not happy with the level of participation of women in the tourism sector and about lack of inclusivity of the sector in general. I would like to tackle these challenges and bring about changes that will leave a lasting legacy. I think that will be good both for the sector and South Africa's economic growth.

The second thing I would to tackle is the improvement of Brand South Africa and the overall improvement of South Africa's tourism competitiveness. I believe if we work together with the sector stakeholders we grow the sector and improve its contribution to the country's gross domestic product but more importantly, contribute to building a better Africa and world.



• Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane

VA: What do you do for leisure?

MKN: Apart from being an avid reader, I take keen interest in golfing, but generally exploring and discovering new things all the time, and of course what better way to do that than with your loved ones at many of our attractions in our country. I can never explore enough of our unspoiled wilderness and safaris and enjoy a relaxed time at some of our local township establishments on a weekend or on many of our beaches. For a peace of mind, a visit to iconic landscapes such as the Table Mountain and Drakensberg Mountains or the Cradle of Humankind – one of our ten World Heritage Sites renowned as the place where humankind originated. I'm hoping to tick off my bucket list soon and go deep-cage shark diving and paragliding.

- Dignitaries join officials of AWA to cut a cake upon the arrival of the flight in Abidjan



AFRICA WORLD AIRLINES CONTINUES ITS REGIONAL EXPANSION WITH MAIDEN ACCRA-ABIDJAN FLIGHT

Ghanaian Carrier, Africa World Airlines (AWA) has launched its inaugural flight to Abidjan, the capital of Côte d'Ivoire.

The six weekly flights each way between Accra and Abidjan, links the major cities of the world's two largest cocoa producing countries.

Operating the Embraer 145 aircraft on flight AW428 from Kotoka International Airport to Félix Houphouët Boigny International Airport in Abidjan, management of the airline in a short ceremony cut a cake to signify the official launch to their first francophone African country.

"Abidjan is an important market for business travelers from Accra", said Togbe Afede XIV, Founder and Co-Chairman of Africa World Airlines. "AWA has developed a reputation for providing safe, reliable, and affordable air transportation. This new route will permit us to introduce our award-winning services to travelers in Cote d'Ivoire as well."

He recalled in brief the beginning of the airline in Ghana some eight years ago and its success now. The



• L-R: COO of AWA Sean Mendis, Board Chair Tobge Afede and Captain Kwasi Oteng cut the cake before flight take off from Accra

King of the Agbogbomefia State in the Volta Region of Ghana revealed plans by the Ghanaian Carrier to acquire four additional aircrafts by end of year brings its fleet to 12 in total. He assured the authorities in Côte d'Ivoire that AWA is in Abidjan to stay.

The Chief Operating Officer of the Airline, Sean Mendis in his address said, Africa World Airline was pleased to launch the first flight

between Accra and Abidjan. "This marks the 10th destination for the airline, five domestic and five international destinations. Abidjan is the first foray into the francophone market by important Ghanaian airline since Ghana is boarded by French speaking countries".

"AWA is developing Accra as a hub. A hub to connect regional traffic within to and from the region. As a result, connections to and

from Abidjan via Accra to Nigeria market, Freetown and Monrovia to our partner airline network such as South African Airways are very important to Africa World Airlines overall strategy and growth vision" Mr Mendis concluded.

Ghana's Ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire Frederick Daniel Laryea lauded the airline for linking the two countries together.

"With the coming on board of Africa world airlines, travelers between Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire now have more options. This I believe will boost business travels and increase the flow of possible investments between the two countries" the Ghanaian diplomat said.

The flight schedules will be as below (all times Local).

AW428 ACC dep 1450 arr 1545 ABJ Friday only

AW432 ACC dep 1825 arr 1920 ABJ Mon/Wed/Thu/Sat/Sun



• Dignitaries join officials of AWA to cut a cake upon the arrival of the flight in Abidjan

AW421 ABJ dep 0725 arr 0820 ACC Mon/Tue/Thu/Fri/Sun

AW429 ABJ dep 1615 arr 1710 ACC Friday only

Africa World Airlines is a private sector Ghanaian airline based in Accra. AWA started operations in 2012 and now operates a fleet of eight jet aircrafts across 10 destinations throughout Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia,

Sierra Leone and now Cote d'Ivoire.

AWA maintains IOSA certification, the global gold standard for aviation safety, and is the only IATA member airline presently headquartered in Ghana. AWA was recently inducted into the CIMG Hall of Fame after being voted as "Domestic Airline of the Year" in Ghana for 5 consecutive years, and was also recognised for "Best Connectivity in West Africa"

Ethiopian celebrates women with 6th Consecutive All-women Operated Flight

Ethiopian Airlines made yet another history on 7 March, 2020 operating an all-women functioned flight to Washington DC. Africa's Largest Aviation Group and SKYTRAX Certified Four Star Global Airline has scored the all-female flight crew feat highlighting the airline's progress in empowering African women, and the contribution of women to the socio-economic development of the continent.

Regarding the all-women functioned flight, Ethiopian Group CEO Mr. Tewolde GebreMariam, remarked, "Ethiopian firmly believes that such remarkable flights inspire African women and young girls to dream big and realize their dreams not only in aviation, but also in science, technology, engineering, art and other fields. While we celebrate the economic, social and political achievements of women in Africa, we take a bold move towards further championing gender equality in Ethiopia and Africa at large."

Ethiopian all-women flight crew flew the B777 from Addis Ababa to the US capital while other female professionals handled all the ground

operations including flight dispatch, load control, ramp operation, on-board logistics, safety and security, catering as well as air traffic control.

As an equal opportunity employer, Ethiopian creates an enabling environment for women to become the next generation aviation experts.

The airline has seen a remarkable rise in the number of women in different leadership positions. Ethiopian has been operating all-female flights since 2015. The airline has so far flown to Bangkok, Kigali, Lagos, Buenos Aires and Oslo with all female crew.



• Four of the Crew who operated the flight to Washington DC

Yemesrach Alemayehu is new Ethiopian Airlines Accra Area Manager

Ethiopian Airlines Group has appointed Yemesrach Alemayehu as new area manager for Accra, Ghana. She takes over from Genet Michaelaels whose seven years in Ghana will officially come to an end in the last week of March 2020. She returns to the Airline's headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Accra will be Alemayehu's first area post and is expected to continue the good relationship her predecessor had with the media and travel trade.

She is married and has two children. She holds a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in Economics and has been working for the past 12 years with rich experience in airline pricing. Alemayehu has spent the last seven years working in management position.

The new Area Manager said Ethiopian will continue to serve the Ghanaian travelling public to further strengthen the ties between the two countries.

"Ethiopia and Ghana have long standing historical ties due to their forefathers as they were the founding fathers of OAU and famous champions of Pan Africanism. (Kwame Nkrumah and Haile Sellasie). Ethiopian, the Pan



• L-R: Deputy Minister of Aviation-Yaw Afful, Minister of Aviation Kofi Adda, Yemesrach Alemayehu the incoming Area Manager and Genet W Michaelaels, Outgoing Manager of Ethiopian Airlines

African carrier has been operating in Ghana for more than 40 years now. Ghanaian business and tourist passengers are loyal customers for Ethiopian.

"My Airline also tries its level best to satisfy the ever increasing expectations of Ghanaian customers. In fact, Ethiopian flight to Ghana plays a pivotal role in boosting trade, investment, tourism and cultural exchanges between the two sisterly countries," she said.

Alemayehu urged Ghanaians to continue to choose Ethiopian as their preferred airline while thanking authorities for their support.

She said: "Today, Ethiopian is connecting Ghanaian brothers and sisters with the rest of the world. Due to this, I urge all Ghanaians to prefer and fly Ethiopian Airlines as their home carrier. I also hope that the Government of Ghana can support the air transport services between the two countries through a number of facilitations and concessions. Lastly, I would also thank all Ghanaian government officials, specifically those who are in the aviation sector, aviation stakeholders and my Ghanaian colleagues for their usual support to Ethiopian."

Virgin Atlantic announces new service to Cape Town

Sunseekers this winter can head down to South Africa on Virgin Atlantic's new daily seasonal service flying between London Heathrow and Cape Town.

With the first flight taking off on 25th October 2020, the new service will operate on a Boeing 787-9 aircraft complementing the existing daily service to Johannesburg.

Juha Jarvinen, Chief Commercial Officer, Virgin Atlantic commented: "2020 is an extremely exciting year

of continued growth for Virgin Atlantic. Not only are we launching a new service to Sao Paulo in March but we're delighted to announce a new seasonal service to Cape Town offering more choices for our customers than ever before."

"We're delighted to be flying to Cape Town again - we're expecting a high proportion of leisure travellers on this route taking advantage of the winter sun, the safaris and of course, the world-famous wine region."

The VS478 will operate as a night flight departing Heathrow at 16:20pm arriving in Cape Town at 05:55am whereas the inbound, the VS479, will depart at 08:00am landing later that day at 18:00pm. Return Economy fares start from £713 per person.

The new services will be on sale from 18th February 2020. Visit www.virginatlantic.com for more information and to book.

SANAD and Ethiopian Airlines sign agreement to establish MRO Centre of Excellence in Africa



• Officials of Ethiopian and SANAD signing the agreement

Sanad Aerotech (Sanad), the leading provider of aircraft engine maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) solutions and part of Sanad - a wholly owned subsidiary of Mubadala Investment Company (Mubadala), has elevated its business expansion ambitions in Africa by signing a landmark agreement with Ethiopian Airlines, the continent's fastest growing airline and one of the reputed aviation brands in the world.

Signed at MRO Africa, the agreement paves the way for Sanad and Ethiopian Airlines to collaborate and maximise on untapped MRO business opportunities in the region. The initial phase of the agreement will see Sanad and Ethiopian Airlines establishing a Centre of Excellence

for the repair and overhaul of auxiliary power units (APU) in Addis Ababa and will start with APU's used on B737 and A320 aircraft. This will pave the way for future collaboration in the provision of APU MRO services to other African airlines.

The strategic alliance also has future aspirations to expand capabilities to include aircraft components and aircraft engine MRO.

The latest agreement between Sanad and Ethiopian Airlines builds on a 2018 MOU to collaborate on APU capabilities, among others.

Mansoor Janahi, Sanad Aerotech CEO, said: "Sanad continues to push ahead with its strategy of expanding a global presence through strategic alliances with well-established companies that

share the same vision for quality and excellence. Our strategic alliance with Ethiopian Airlines goes beyond this announcement, as it provides greater opportunities for us to jointly collaborate and develop mutually beneficial activities across the entire African continent."

Ethiopian Airlines Group Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Tewolde GebreMariam, on his part said, "This Strategic Alliance with Sanad Aerotech is consistent with Ethiopian Airlines vision of making its MRO facility the leading MRO service provider in Africa through strategic partnerships with OEMs and selected international MRO Service Providers. Our MRO facility is ready to provide cost effective and efficient overhaul services with standard turnaround time (TAT) to APUs of African Airlines. Ethiopian would like to expand this cooperation with Sanad Aerotech to cover other aircraft components."

Sanad has built strategic relationships with leading international OEMs including Rolls-Royce, General Electric (GE), and International Aero Engines (IAE), which have enabled Sanad to deliver competitive aircraft engine MRO expertise throughout a variety of engine maintenance service programs across multiple engine platforms.

AIR SEYCHELLES HANDLED OVER 1 MILLION PASSENGERS IN 2019

Air Seychelles has announced that the national airline recorded an extremely strong performance in its ground handling business in 2019.

The positive result driven by the increase in the frequency of flights to the Seychelles including arrival of new customer airlines have also been supported by a number of ad hoc private charters operating at the Seychelles International Airport.

Between January and December

2019, the ground handling department handled 475,029 incoming and 533,686 outgoing passengers amounting to 1,008,715 passengers in total compared to 927,856 passengers in 2018.

The 5% growth which includes a total of 80,859 more passengers handled in 2019 also comprises of 34,113 transiting passengers accessing the Seychelles hub, connecting with other carriers to their final destinations.

Vania Larue, Head of Ground Services said: "2019 was one of the busiest period for the Seychelles ground handling team, following the increasing number of arrivals and departures at the Seychelles International Airport.

"To manage the high volume of passengers, last year, we reviewed the entire ground handling procedures, implemented new work schedules for our staff members in addition to making considerable investment in our ground support equipment.

"Having surpassed the 1 million passenger threshold is indeed a great achievement. I proudly extend my congratulations to the ground handling team for keeping up the great team spirit and for delivering the highest performance in 2019." she concluded.



Combining both inbound and outbound travel including the domestic network, Air Seychelles alone contributed a total of 414,088 passengers having operated 1,983 flights across its regional network.

KENYA AIRWAYS APPOINTS NEW CEO

Kenya Airways KQNA.NR named the head of its low-cost subsidiary as its new chief executive on Thursday.

Allan Kilavuka, who had been named as acting CEO in December, was chief executive of loss-making Kenya Airways' Jambojet subsidiary. His appointment takes effect on April 1, a company statement said.

"During his short time as acting CEO ... Kilavuka has thrown all of his energy into this role while still maintaining his position of CEO as Jambojet," the Group's chairman, Michael Joseph, said.

Kilavuka has been CEO of Jambojet since late 2018.

Kenya Airways was privatised more than 20 years ago but sank into debt and losses in 2014 after a failed expansion drive and is to be renationalised after Kenyan lawmakers voted in July to take back control of the airline.

The airline is 48.9% government owned while Air France-KLM AIRF. PA holds a 7.8% stake.

Source: Reuters



• Allan Kilavuka, CEO, Kenya Airways

"Investour offered us opportunity to engage investors"- Ghana's Tourism Minister

Ghana's Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture Barbara Oteng-Gyasi has lauded the organization of the 11th Tourism Investment and Business forum in Africa (InvesTour) during FITUR in Spain.

The Minister who was participating at the conference for the first time said the event created the platform to interact with investors.

"Participating in Investour offered the opportunity to provide information on opportunities to businesses interested in investing in Africa. With the anticipated boom in tourism numbers in view of the BEYOND THE RETURN initiative which is a ten year project 2020 - 2030, it is important that we generate and drive the much needed investment into areas such as hotels which will provide affordable accommodation close to important tourist sites, rest stops and restaurants along tourist routes/sites to ensure an end to end enjoyable experience as well as for the flagship tourism enclave project, the Marine Drive, envisaged to dramatically change a significant part of the coastline of Accra, the capital city for tourism and commercial purposes"



• Ghana's Minister of Tourism, Arts & Culture – Barbara Oteng-Gyasi

The Ghanaian lawmaker also added that there are several opportunities for investment in the tourism sector in Ghana as the country aggressively pursues a growth agenda in tourism as a strategic pillar for economic transformation.

Mrs Oteng-Gyasi underscored the crucial role of service delivery in enhancing the tourist experience. She said the Ministry was working assiduously to secure the right investment in that segment of the tourism industry in Ghana.

"We also recognize that an underlying factor for a good tourist

experience is excellence in service delivery and therefore investment opportunities in hospitality training to ensure a critical mass of well trained and skilled personnel is also crucial. The Ministry is seeking strategic partnership to establish and manage a State of the Art Training Institute in the very short term" she concluded.

Investour is a dedicated Forum to promote sustainable development in Africa and also encourage discussions on investment and business opportunities on the continent of Africa.



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THE LANDSCAPE OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM DISTRIBUTION IS CHANGING SIGNIFICANTLY AGAIN



• Thomas Mueller, CEO Rainmaker Africa

While five to seven years ago it was easy for hospitality and tourism businesses to do business, this has dramatically changed and it will change significantly in the near future again. Dealing with a few tour operators and DMC was once very comfortable.

But now since the value chain of the DMCs as we know them are often no longer sustainable and under great pressure, the next wave of disruption is underway.

For example, travelers' behavior has changed and while group and bus scheduled tours have declined in many destinations, individual and self-drive travel has increased at the same time. On the other hand, people don't travel 3-4 weeks at once, but 4-5 times a year. This alone has changed the tourism landscape and the products the destinations need to offer.

At the same time, hundreds of digital platforms have disrupted the once comfortable value chains of the DMCs. Many tourism businesses of them are now dependent on market-dominating Online Travel Agents to which they give away 60 to 80% of their profits and customer ownership.

However, Google makes big inroads and will change how hospitality and

tourism businesses are found and all respective information is provided at the first touchpoint in Google Search, Maps and Hotels.

Amazon apparently is also looking to enter the travel space and one can expect a significant disruption as well.

TUI, now the largest travel company in the world with more than 21 million customers has successfully turned into a digital platform company within only five years and has vertically integrated everything from the customer to its mid-office already.

The next step for TUI is to establish vertical integration towards the destination and the hospitality and tourism businesses. This move will dramatically change the role of the DMC and the entire traditional value chain as is known.

It, however, provides huge opportunities for destinations, and their hospitality and tourism businesses to become less dependent on the current value chains and to operate more sustainably.

TUI has implemented its own blockchain platform to manage its hotel inventory, making them much more efficient. TUI now aims to open this platform to destinations and to independent hospitality and tourism businesses. TUI becomes

the first travel company that is able to provide complete end to end services to its customers.

Thomas Cook, the once second largest travel company in the world, on the other hand, tried to manifest the status quo of the traditional value chain from the high street travel office through themselves as the wholesalers and the DMC as to the supplier. But in this day and age and with the power of digital transformation it does not work out.

It, therefore, becomes more and more important for destinations and their hospitality and tourism businesses to take back control of their visibility, digital presence, reputation, communication, and distribution for a sustainable tourism development.

Rainmaker has created the award-winning VISTA Destination Network Open Platform and Ecosystem for Destinations which are entirely aligned to the UNWTO Digital Transformation Strategy and contributes to the Sustainability Goals. Its Public-Private Partnership and Freemium model inclusively enables destinations and their hospitality and tourism businesses to keep more tourism spend in the destination for sustainable tourism development.

Author: Thomas Mueller, CEO Rainmaker Africa



• Vincent Oparah, Tourism Advisor at the African Union Development Agency

AU-NEPAD WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT YOUTH INNOVATION IN TOURISM - OPARAH

The African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) has restated its commitment to support African youth whose works are geared towards finding innovation solutions to challenges within the sector.

Sustainability remains one of the main focus when it comes to tourism on the continent as many of the products exist in their natural state, and with high youth unemployment rate, the sector is seen as a vehicle for economic growth.

“Part of what we do at NEPAD is the promotion of sustainable tourism, and one of the components is working with the youth because we believe that unemployment rate in Africa cannot be tackled through one sector. We also believe that tourism

can contribute to the significant reduction of unemployment, especially among the youth population,” says Vincent Oparah, Tourism Advisor at the African Union Development Agency.

In an interview with VoyagesAfric he said they work with the youth and also encourage them to come up with innovative ideas on sustainability, ecotourism, and different kinds of tourism initiatives for support.

“Also some of them get training through masterclasses as well as attend the business school like the IE Business School in Madrid. So far we've been able to support about five students since 2018. And during the second edition of the Tourism Tech Adventure and the Tourism Startup Competition on the global level, we've been partnering with the

World Tourism Organization in this initiative,” he said.

Oparah disclosed that a number of startups will receive support from the Agency during the upcoming UNWTO Commission for Africa (CAF) Meeting in Seychelles this year.

“On the margins of the CAF Ministerial Conference in March, we intend to work with startups from 2018 and startups from the 2020 edition by bringing them together to come up with innovative ideas on sustainability. They have to identify a problem in the tourism sector and come up with a solution on how these problems can be tackled which will also be recommended to the Ministers attending the conference,” he stated.

Seychelles records impressive growth in Tourism



• **Mr. Didier Dogley,**
Minister for Tourism, Civil Aviation,
Ports and Marine,

The Seychelles tourism sector recorded impressive growth during the 2019 financial year. The National Statistics Bureau confirmed a 6% increase in visitor arrivals for last year.

The information was communicated to the tourism stakeholders during the Seychelles Tourism Board (STB) Marketing Review on Tuesday January 14, 2019 at Eden Blue in the presence of the Minister for Tourism, Civil Aviation, Ports and Marine, Mr. Didier Dogley and the Principal Secretary for Tourism Mrs. Anne Lafortune.

The meeting also saw the presence of the Principal Secretary for Civil Aviation, Ports and Marine, Mr. Alan Renaud, the Chairperson of SHTA, Mrs. Sybille Cardon and the STB Board members.

The board's presentation of the quantitative review stated that around 384,204 visitors arrived in the country from January to

December 2019 compared to the visitor arrivals of the same period in 2018.

It also presented the leading markets to be Germany with 72,509 visitors, France in second position with 43,297 visitors followed by United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, Italy, United Arab Emirates (UAE) counting 29,971, 27,289 and 24,609 visitors respectively and the sixth position, Switzerland with 15,300-recorded arrivals.

Speaking at the meeting, Mrs. Sherin Francis mentioned her satisfaction to see the numbers have exceeded the expectations. She explains that the target set by the Tourism Board at the beginning of January 2019 was at 4 percent.

"It is very satisfactory to see that the tourism arrival numbers and the receipts remain on the rise showing that the efforts to honour our core mandate are being accomplished. I would like to reiterate my gratitude to our trade in Seychelles and our international partners, as they have been an immense support in helping the destination remain visible while enticing potential visitors," said Mrs. Francis.

According to the figures presented by the National Statistics Bureau, a general increase of 10 % has been recorded on the European market for the corresponding period in 2018 with an increase of 18 percent for Germany, 14 percent for Switzerland, 12 percent for UK and Northern Ireland, 12 percent for Italy and 9 percent in Russia. The American

market also showed a significant increase of 9 percent in 2019.

During her presentation, Mrs. Francis also highlighted that one of the main areas of focus for the year 2020 will be increasing the number of visitors in the months of May, June and September. She maintained that even if the figures are satisfactory, there is room for improvement as they are considered as low performance months compared to the rest of the year.

"2020 is a very prominent year for us as a country as we feature in the Dubai 2020 Expo and also celebrating our 250th anniversary as a country.

As we market the country to our diverse audiences, we would also concentrate on the extensive promotion of our smaller establishments receiving lower occupancy," added Mrs. Francis.

As the tourism, arrival figures have been increasing, so have the revenue for the country; according to the latest figures for 2019 a 3 percent growth in terms of income coming from the tourism industry has been recorded, this amounts to 576.4 million USD equating to a little over eight billion Seychelles rupees.

Also presented at the STB marketing meeting, on the digital side, the destination's performance across all platforms on social media has increased by 5.6%, from 392,612 to 414,764 with 222.3% increase in impressions and 31.8% in engagement.



• **The Minister in a group photo with staff and management of Seychelles Tourism Board**

Anne Murungi joins Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast City as Director of Sales & Marketing

Anne Murungi has been appointed as Director of Sales & Marketing at Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast City Accra. She brings with her over 16 years' experience, having worked in various positions in the hospitality industry. Anne is not new to the brand, as she has in the past worked as Director of Sales & Marketing at Kempinski Hotel in Kenya, and also as an Area Sales Manager role with the same brand.

Until her appointment, Anne was the MD and Lead Consultant of Hospitality (K) Consult, a firm that provides business, industry and market intelligence to investors intending to invest in the hotel business in East Africa, as well as advising existing hotels in evaluating their performance and creating systems that increase efficiency and maximise profits.

Anne serves as the Chairperson of the marketing committee of the Kenya Tourism Federation, the umbrella body of all tourism and

travel associations in Kenya. She was the champion of the organisation of the 79th SKAL International World Congress 2018. In 2016, Anne was appointed to the Taskforce to establish Kenya's National Convention Bureau by the Cabinet Secretary of Tourism and Wildlife in Kenya, and presented a report that saw the launch of the Bureau in 2019. In 2017, she was voted one of the AKWAABA Top 100 Women in Tourism and Travel in Africa.

Manish Nambiar, the General Manager, in his announcement of the new appointment, stated that "Anne is an inspirational business leader who has a deep understanding of market trends and strongly believes in empowering and developing her teams to exceed business performance. We are excited to have her back and with Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast City Accra."

In her acceptance speech, Anne commented, 'Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast City Accra is the leading hotel



• **Anne Murungi**

in the chain in the Middle East and Africa in business performance. It is a great challenge to be given this hotel because my biggest task will be to steadily grow the hotel's revenue performance and maintain the brand's position in the region, as the market leader. I come back to a brand that I have a lot of confidence in, a brand that has continually set a benchmark on the true definition of luxury.'

AIRBNB NAMES MARINA NOVELLI AS INDEPENDENT ADVISOR ON TASK FORCE

A University of Brighton tourism expert has joined a team of experts to underpin the development of Airbnb's planned registration system for rentals in the UK.

Professor Marina Novelli, Professor of Tourism and International Development and Academic Lead for the University's Responsible Futures Research and Enterprise Agenda, will be coordinating the research processes and collaborate with consultants, BritainThinks, for Airbnb's registration roadshow consultations.

Professor Novelli, who has worked in policy development for a number of years, said: "Airbnb have a desire to develop their relationships with local communities and work with government, policy makers and city leaders to develop a host registration system that is accessible and effective. This project allows us to explore all the options available."

Airbnb is promoting the registration initiative with a roadshow tour

aimed at "forging collaborations with hosts, communities and politicians across the UK to jointly develop proposals for a clear, modern and simple registration system for short-term rentals".

Chris Lehane, Senior Vice President of Global Policy and Communications at Airbnb, said: "The UK is a fantastic destination with hosts in more than 2700 cities, towns and villages welcoming guests from within the UK and around the world into their communities. At Airbnb, we want to serve and strengthen local communities by driving our people-to-people model of sustainable tourism right across the country. That's why we're also looking forward to kicking off our roadshow to meet with communities and stakeholders around the country to discuss our proposals for a national registration system."

During February and March roundtable consultations will be held to discuss the registration across the



• **Professor Marina Novelli**

country, starting in Brighton. The consultation process will culminate in an Airbnb policy presentation to the Government.

Airbnb's plans coincide with the release of their new data revealing that more than 10 million guests used the platform around the UK during 2018.

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HOSPITALITY NEWS

Akilah Institute's footprint on the hospitality sector in East Africa

• *By Aline Kabanda, President, Davis College Rwanda*

Over the past 25 years, Rwanda has exemplified transformation through visionary leadership, placing forward-thinking principles squarely at the center of its strategies and policies. The Rwanda's investment in technology, conservation, tourism, financial services, and entrepreneurship has firmly placed the country as an economic and social leader, regionally and globally.

Not only has it positioned itself as one of Africa's most vibrant economies, but Rwanda features regularly as one of the world's top travel destinations. Under successful strategies like Rwanda's National Meetings, Incentives, Conferences/Conventions and Events/Exhibitions (MICE), tourism has grown exponentially. With new experiences and destinations, the country regularly hosts major global conferences like the World Economic Forum, while tourists come in record numbers to see Rwanda's gorillas, Akagera's mesmerising Big Five, and to take on the challenge of hiking the country's towering volcanoes while basking in the spectacular scenery. We are incredibly proud that so many of our Akilah Institute graduates are part of this thriving ecosystem.

As international guests continue to visit the country, we're thrilled to collaborate with employers and thought-leaders in the tourism industry, providing a pipeline of talent to international industry leaders like Marriott International and Radisson Blu. Our Hospitality Management Diploma program and competency-based learning model further prepare students to excel as entrepreneurs within the industry. From advisory positions with the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) to corporate management roles in Dubai and Doha, Akilah's graduates continue to leverage their practical knowledge in eco-tourism, hospitality entrepreneurship, and business management to support sustainable growth and innovation across the industry.

Ultimately, our goal is for students to graduate from Akilah prepared for career successes, and to lead innovative and sustainable development in any industry or career path of their choosing. A recent survey revealed that 90% of Akilah graduates secured employment within six months of graduation. 58% of graduates have received at least one promotion in position and/or salary since graduating, and 36% of them are in supervisory positions.

As Rwanda prepares to welcome over one million visitors this year and host the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, Davis College and Akilah remain committed to contributing to the development of skills in the hospitality sector, transforming youth into career-ready experts prepared to help build on the country's growing reputation as one of the world's most exciting destinations in 2020 and beyond.



• *Graduation ceremony at Akilah Institute*



Radisson Hotel Group on track to triple Indian Ocean portfolio in 2020

Radisson Hotel Group has surpassed one of its five-year development objectives to “double its Indian Ocean portfolio by 2022”, with the group on track to instead triple the portfolio in 2020. The group has identified the Indian Ocean as a key market in its African development strategy, with a current portfolio of seven hotels in operation and under development. This forms part of the Radisson Hotel Group’s portfolio of almost 100 hotels in operation and under development across 33 African markets.

Erwan Garnier, Senior Director, (Development), French and Portuguese Speaking Africa, Radisson Hotel Group, said, “2019 was a milestone year for the group as we debuted in two Indian Ocean Islands, Madagascar and Reunion, increasing our presence to three of the four main Indian Ocean Islands. Our development strategy in the Indian Ocean focuses on both leisure and business segments for resorts, hotels, serviced apartments and mixed-use developments across our five hotel brands. Seychelles is the next priority island in the group’s expansion strategy. Mauritius also remains a priority market for further expansion, supported by a proactive strategy for Madagascar and Reunion Islands.”

“As part of our aggressive African development plan, 65% of our future hotel supply will come from our newer brands, specifically Radisson, positioned in the full-service upscale segment and already gaining significant traction across Africa, and Radisson Collection, in the affordable luxury segment. We will continue in the lifestyle upscale segment of the market with the Radisson RED brand, building on the momentum gained by the success of the Radisson RED hotel in Cape Town. Finally, we will continue to take advantage of the success of Radisson Blu, our flagship upper upscale brand, that remains the fastest growing hotel brand on the continent.”

Reunion Island

Radisson Hotel Group recently debuted in Reunion Island, with the signing of a 124-room upscale hotel. The converted Radisson Hotel is due to open in the fourth quarter of 2020 in Saint Denis, the administrative capital of the French overseas region, located on the north end of the island.

Radisson Hotel Saint Denis will be located within walking distance from the main commercial and financial district. The hotel will feature five food and drink outlets, with cuisine suited to every taste at the all-day dining restaurant, the destination restaurant as well as the lobby café. For a refreshing drink, guests are invited to explore the hotel bars, which includes a bar and lounge on the rooftop that overlooks the infinite views of the Island.

Garnier added, “The Radisson Hotel Saint Denis will spearhead the upscale hotel market in the capital city. Expanding our presence in Reunion Island, our next step would be to enter Saint Pierre with Radisson Blu and Radisson branded hotels, uplifting the upper upscale and upscale hotel markets respectively.”

Madagascar

The group entered Madagascar in 2019, with a portfolio deal signing of three hotels, comprising 254 rooms which will spearhead the upper upscale and upscale hotel markets in the capital city of Antananarivo. The portfolio consists of two hotel conversions and one hotel under construction in the capital city, with all three hotels scheduled to open in 2020.

Garnier added, “Our next step in Madagascar would be to enter Nosy Be with our Radisson and Radisson Blu brands.”

The Radisson Blu Hotel Antananarivo Waterfront and the Radisson Hotel Antananarivo Waterfront will be ideally positioned in a central location at the crossroads of the city centre in the main business and commercial district. With three

entrance gates, the hotels will have unrivalled access to Antananarivo International Airport, less than 30 minutes away. The Waterfront is a quiet compound which is secured (24-hour manned CCTV system). It is also surrounded by a large lake and multiple outlets including restaurants, a mall and cinema.

The third property, Radisson Serviced Apartments Antananarivo City Center, is located in a vibrant area within the city center, surrounded by bars, restaurants as well as major banks, ministries and the ancient Presidential Palace.

Mauritius

Mauritius remains a key strategic market for Radisson Hotel Group, with ambitious plans to expand its five brands on the island which currently operates two Radisson Blu hotels: Radisson Blu Azuri Resort and Spa and Radisson Blu Poste Lafayette Resort and Spa.

“We plan to introduce our international affordable luxury brand, Radisson Collection; our upscale full-service brand, Radisson; our unique upscale lifestyle brand Radisson RED brand and our upper midscale brand, Park Inn by Radisson, all perfectly suited for the islands leisure and business segments. Building on our current portfolio in the East Coast, we are aiming to establish a presence on the West Coast, in areas such as Le Morne, Flic-en-Flac and Grand Baie. In addition, we are targeting the business segments of the islands flourishing business hubs, particularly, Ebène, Moka, Bagatelle and Port Louis,” added Garnier.

Seychelles

Commenting on the Group’s plans in Seychelles, Garnier concluded, “Seychelles is a major resort destination in the Indian Ocean and a top priority market for Radisson Hotel Group’s resort expansion. We are aiming to introduce our Radisson Collection and Radisson Blu brands with world-class resort products, primarily on the islands of Mahé and Praslin.



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MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL GROWS FOOTPRINT IN SOUTH AFRICA WITH FIRST PURPOSE-BUILT HOTEL



• Lobby of the Johannesburg Marriott Hotel Melrose Arch

Marriott International has announced the opening of Johannesburg Marriott Hotel Melrose Arch and Marriott Executive Apartments Johannesburg Melrose Arch. The opening marks the debut of Marriott Executive Apartments in South Africa and the first purpose-built Marriott Hotel in the country. Owned and developed by the Amdec Group (www.amdec.co.za), the hotel and apartments are situated in the bustling Melrose Arch Precinct and provide a premium destination for business travelers and a fully serviced extended stay destination.

"We are thrilled to open Johannesburg Marriott Hotel Melrose Arch and Marriott Executive Apartments Johannesburg Melrose Arch, further strengthening our relationship with the Amdec Group in South Africa. The openings are part of Marriott International's commitment to expand our footprint in Africa and deepen our brand portfolio in South Africa. The property is a strong representation of two brands which will deliver tailored services, sophisticated spaces and enriching experiences," said Sandra Schulze-Potgieter, Vice President Premium & Select Brands, Marriott International Middle East and Africa.

Commenting on the opening, James Wilson, CEO for the Amdec Group, said: "The opening of Johannesburg Marriott Hotel Melrose Arch and

Marriott Executive Apartments Johannesburg Melrose Arch marks the continuation of a long-standing relationship between Marriott International and the Amdec Group. We are proud to play a part in paving the way for Marriott International's expansion into Africa. Melrose Arch is one of three Amdec Group developments to accommodate Marriott branded hotels. The Yacht Club in Cape Town is home to Africa's first AC Hotel by Marriott, while Harbour Arch which is currently under construction will house a second 5-star Marriott Hotel along with a Residence Inn."

Marriott Hotels began a worldwide transformation six years ago featuring a new design including locally-inspired accents, open closets and a flexible work surface which allow guests to freely move and use technology however they desire. To celebrate the transformational journey, Marriott Hotels launched the "Let Your Mind Travel" campaign and led meaningful conversations through a first-of-its-kind partnership with TED.

Johannesburg Marriott Hotel Melrose Arch is the first Marriott Hotel in South Africa to showcase the brand's new design touchpoints. The property features 306 guest rooms, including 10 Junior Suites. Each of the spacious rooms are thoughtfully designed with a balance of tailored utility and contemporary style for the traveler who believes

that form is just as important as function. Local accents add a sense of place to the sleek aesthetic, while open workspaces allow for flexibility to connect anytime.

Johannesburg Marriott Hotel Melrose Arch is home to spaces that spark brilliance and seamlessly blend work and play with state-of-the-art business facilities, such as the Greatroom - a contemporary space located in the hotel lobby designed for socializing, relaxing and working. Guests can enjoy an elevated experience through the Mobile Guest Services, delivered with the warm and professional service for which the brand is globally renowned.

Access to the M Club Lounge, an exclusive space reserved for Marriott Bonvoy Elite loyalty members and Club paying members, provides complimentary breakfast, evening drinks, hors d'oeuvres and premium beverages. The M Club Lounge also offers the brand's signature Mind Menu, a collection of delicious snacks and beverages infused with active ingredients to enhance the mind and body. Accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the M Club Lounge provides free wi-fi, printing and power supplies to ensure uninterrupted productivity for business travelers.

Marriott International currently operates 61 hotels in South Africa and have 8 hotels in the pipeline.

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Accor set to expand Ethiopian presence with management agreement for new Ibis Styles hotel

Accor a world-leading augmented hospitality group, is expanding its presence in Ethiopia after signing a management agreement to open a new property under its design-led economy brand, Ibis Styles.

In a move that ramps up its ambitious development plans in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Group has partnered with private conglomerate, Yuluch Elyano Trading plc, to operate the 150-key Ibis Styles Addis Ababa, its fifth upcoming property in the capital, with a scheduled opening date of 2023.

Conveniently situated in a secluded location just off the city's main thoroughfare, Bole Road, 1km from Addis Ababa Bole International Airport and close to corporate institutions and embassies, the property will appeal to regional and international business travellers seeking stylish and affordable accommodation.

"Our partnership with Yuluch Elyano Trading provides Accor with an exciting opportunity to showcase the Ibis Styles brand in a market where demand for innovative budget hospitality concepts is being driven by the continent's booming

domestic travel sector," said Mark Willis, CEO Middle East & Africa for Accor.

"The deal also marks another important step in our African development strategy, growing our Ethiopia pipeline to five properties strong and across a diverse range of targeted brands and strengthening our presence in a region we have earmarked for accelerated expansion."

Mr. Goitom Girmay, Major Shareholder and CEO, Yuluch Elyano Trading plc, said: "Ethiopia is Africa's fastest-growing economy, fueled by significant investments in infrastructure and

manufacturing, and visitor numbers to the capital are surging. This calls for high-quality accommodation operated by world-leading hospitality groups and our agreement with Accor to deliver a cutting-edge economy hotel brand in the dynamic capital aims to meet this market need."

The hotel will join Accor's growing pipeline of properties in Addis Ababa under brands including MGallery, Mercure, Pullman and Mövenpick.

Ibis Styles has already proven a popular concept in other fast-growing African markets including Nairobi in Kenya and Accra in Ghana, with a total of seven properties in operation in the Middle East and Africa and seven more in the pipeline.

Accor's Africa portfolio currently comprises 159 properties (25,389 keys) with another 58 hotels (13,413 keys) in its development pipeline, growing its presence to 25 diverse brands.



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POMP AND PAGEANTRY AS LIMPOPO GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP WRAPS UP

The curtains came down on the four days Limpopo Championship in the Euphoria Golf and Lifestyle estates in the Waterberg region of Limpopo, South Africa.

Limpopo's Tourism Agency's Chairperson, Andrew Dipela, has hailed the hosting of Limpopo Championship from 30 January to 02 February as a great success. JC Ritchie successfully defended his 2019 title, defeating Wilco Nienaber in Euphoria Golf Estate and Hydro.

"I am excited that we hosted a successful golf tournament and reached the objectives we set from the beginning. We wanted to showcase Waterberg and its ability to host international golf tournaments. Both Koro Creek and Euphoria Golf Estate were in pristine conditions that won the hearts of both the European Challenge Tour and the Sunshine golfers," said Dipela.

Dipela further said that he was pleased with the temporary jobs that were created as a result of the tournament. He gave examples of the increase in the number of caddies that had to be used and the increase in numbers in the hospitality services.

"I also want to congratulate JC Ritchie for winning the tournament two years in a row. On Tuesday, 28 January 2020, I played alongside him at the Pro-Am challenge; seeing



• Cultural performances by traditional dance Troupe to climax the event

him determined to defend his title added to the excitement of the tournament," Dipela concluded.

Thomas Abt, Deputy Commissioner of the Sunshine Tour said: "This was a huge success, exposing international players to two golf courses and having a bigger reach with the European audience. We went to all of Europe via our live streaming channel."

"There is no doubt that we shall continue with the relationship we have established with Limpopo Tourism Agency, it is absolutely wonderful, the dedication of the team throughout the tournament has encouraged us to forge forward with the partnership," added Abt.

There were 204 players registered for the tournament that included

102 European Challenge Tour golfers and 102 from the Sunshine Tour Southern Africa. Their week-long stay in the Waterberg has had a greater impact on accommodation as well as other services that made their stay comfortable.

Some of beneficiaries from the tournament have been amateur golfers who had the opportunity to play alongside the professionals during the Pro-Am challenge on Tuesday, 28 January 2020.

Felicity Shiba, a golf blogger and amateur said: "I played with Ben Stow from the UK who was here for the first time. He enjoyed the weather but was also patient with us, showing us techniques in this oftentimes difficult Euphoria course. This tournament cements the growing golfing culture in Limpopo and this was for me an enjoyable experience."

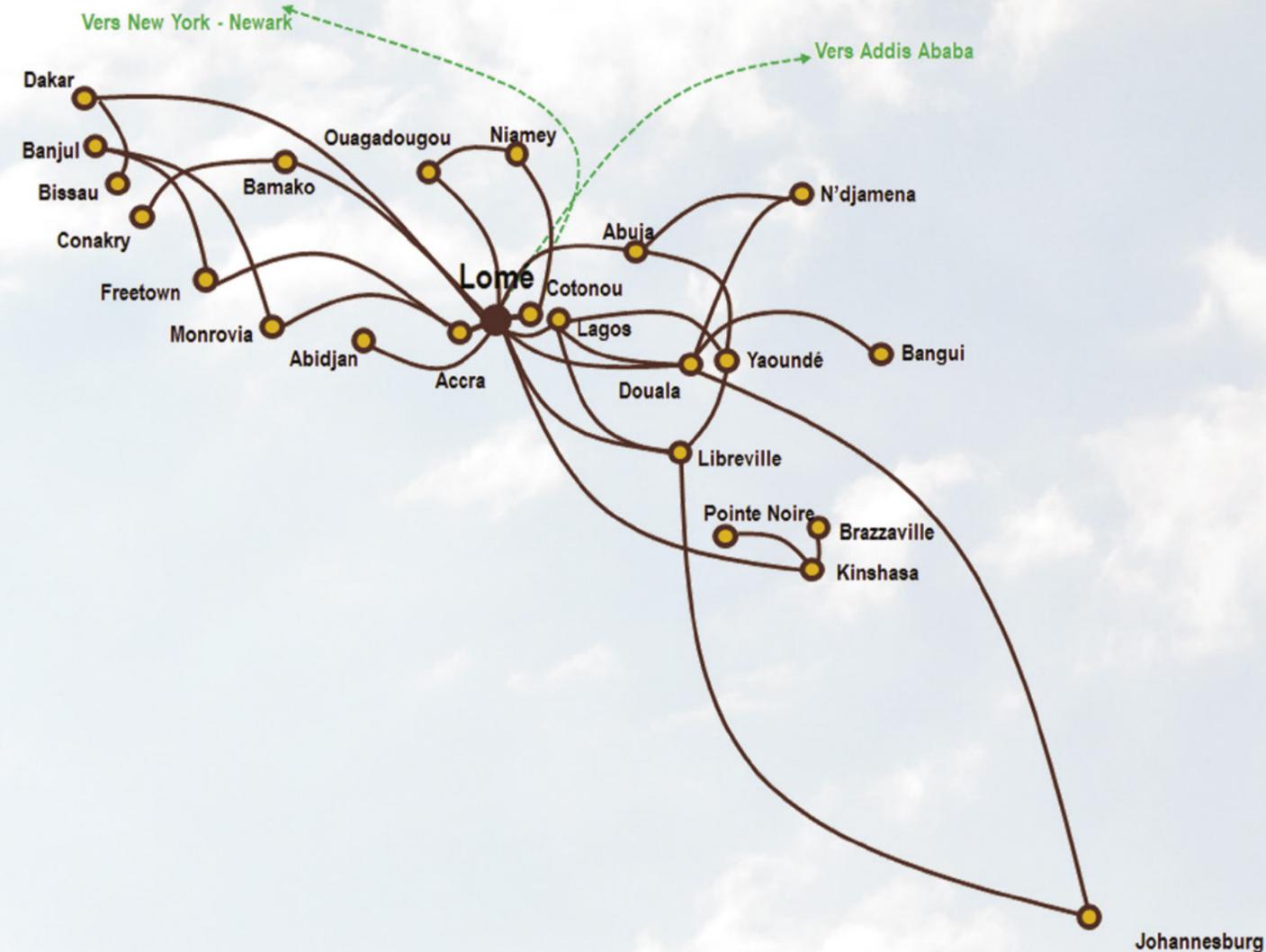
The tournament ran parallel activities that added to the tourism mix. Famous Limpopo comedian, Mashabela, performed on Friday night whilst Ricky S and his band had revellers ease into the night with the jazz offering.

Small, medium and micro-enterprises from the five Limpopo districts had the opportunity to exhibit and sell their products at Euphoria during the tournament. Products ranged from local gin, clothing, shoes, food paste, books, beads and other accessories.



• The Board Chairperson of Limpopo Tourism Agency Andrew Dipela handing over the prize to the winner of the championship JC Ritchie

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