



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

***UNWTO Regional Conference on the Image of Africa  
Enhancing Brand Africa, Fostering Tourism Development  
Ghana, 17-19 August 2015***

***Background***

Africa's tourism, and thus the capacity of the tourism sector to contribute to the development of the continent, is often hindered by the negative perception of Africa and the generalization of crises situations in specific locations to the whole of a country or the region. The effects of Ebola on the tourism sector in Africa in 2014 are a point in case. International tourist arrivals to Africa, which had been growing at an average of 5% a year in the previous two years, grew by only 2% in 2014 under the impact of the misperception about the health risks. At the same time, there are numerous positive stories of Africa that do not manage to reach a global audience and impact on the perception of the region.

Tourism is one of the Africa's most promising sectors in terms of development. In 2014, Africa received 56 million international tourists up from 26 million in 2000. International tourism receipts in Africa amount to US\$ 36 billion or 7% of all exports in the continent. Furthermore, Africa has a major opportunity to harness the potential of tourism to foster development, increase its participation in the global economy and generate revenues for investment in other activities. In addition, tourism creates opportunities for millions of host communities in Africa and provides revenues for environmental preservation.

Creating capacity in Africa to build and manage a strong image and brand, including crises communications, is fundamental to build resilience in the tourism sector and foster its further growth and thus a pre-condition to promote development through tourism in Africa.

The *UNWTO Regional Conference on the Image of Africa: Enhancing Brand Africa, Fostering Tourism Development* to take place in Ghana 17-19 August 2015 aims to:

- Analyse the situation of Brand Africa and its impact on tourism in the region
- Identify the key challenges facing Brand Africa and that of African countries
- Exchange national experiences on country branding and tourism branding
- Explore how African destinations can successfully build a strong brand in an increasingly competitive marketplace and a constantly changing business environment
- Create synergies among African countries towards greater cooperation in the promotion and positioning of a common African Tourism Brand

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### Areas of discussion

- Positioning and Branding
- E-communications
- Media Relations
- Crisis Communications
- Public/Private Partnerships
- Resources and Capacity Building

### Audience

The Conference is aimed at all tourism stakeholders - NTOs, DMOs, tourism ministries, tourism associations, the private sector, media and communication organizations – but also representatives from other sectors which have an impact and an interest in branding Africa and in the development of the region.

### Format

- The Conference aims to bring together a number of tourism ministers to set a common action plan to advance Africa's image and brand as a tourism destination
- The Conference aims to be practical, informative, and participative. The emphasis is on learning from experts and from each other.
- Presentations from global experts will be complemented by experiences of practitioners from African countries.
- Issues will be debated among participants. This is aimed at giving everyone an opportunity to participate actively and learn from each other.
- The Conference will aim to achieve a balance between insights from destination managers (e.g. NTOs and ministries of tourism) and commercial practitioners (e.g. tour operators and marketing agencies). This will ensure that both market reality and policy imperatives are considered, as these are issues that destinations need to align on an on-going basis.

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