

# EAST AFRICA TOURISM PLATFORM

PRESS RELEASE

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Kigali, September 27, 2020



# EATP CELEBRATES WORLD TOURISM DAY

- The 2020 edition of World Tourism Day, with the theme of "Tourism and Rural Development", celebrates the unique role that tourism plays in providing opportunities outside of big cities and preserving cultural and natural heritage all around the world.
- This year marks the 40th World Tourism Day; it is an excellent opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of tourism in the East Africa Region and its economic value.
- The significance of travel and tourism to the EAC partner states economies cannot be over-emphasized. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Tourism in East Africa contributed an average of 8.1% to GDP and 17.2% to export earnings and generates 7.1% of employment. As regards employment, tourism employed about 1,278,000 direct and 1,981,000 indirect jobs in the partner states.
- Speaking on the occasion, Mr Fred Odek, the East African Tourism Platform Chairman, said 'the East African region as a tourism destination is well renown, mainly due to its unique attractions. It has some of Africa's most evocative safari destinations and the world's last remaining mountain gorillas. From Wildebeest over the savannah in the Serengeti-Maasai Mara ecosystem, rhinos stand in the shade in Ngorongoro crater and Chimpanzees in Western Tanzania's Gombe Stream and Mahale Mountains parks to mention a few. He added that the Platform is working closely with key stakeholders in the industry towards recovery from the effects of COVID-19
- The celebration also comes at an unprecedented time with the COVID-19 pandemic. The EAC partner states were projected to lose over US\$5.4 Billion of tourists spending this year given the long-term closure of seaports and airports with about 7.4 Million international tourists not travelling to their preferred EAC destinations this year.
- As the region reopened international travels, Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania earned the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) global health and safety stamp, thus are designated as "Safe Travels" Destinations. Uganda also recently announced reopening of the country's international airport and land borders and resumption of tourism activities.
- The EATP encourages regional, continental and international tourists to visit East Africa as it is a safe destination.

## **Notes to Editor:**

The East Africa Tourism Platform is the apex private sector body for Tourism in East Africa. The EATP Mission is to promote intra and inter-regional tourism through advocacy, marketing, skills development, research and information sharing. The East Africa Tourism Platform was established 2011 and is supported by Trademark East Africa. The Platform under the leadership of key tourism leaders in the region motivates and define private sector participation in the emerging EAC policies and behavior. It makes the voice of the private heard and relevant in the regional integration process, pursuing common a common agenda as a sector.

EATP Secretariat is in Kigali and is hosted by the Rwanda Chamber of Tourism. The Rwanda Chamber of Tourism is the private sector pillar, of the Rwanda Private Sector Federation, which is dedicated to promoting and representing the interests of the Rwandan business community.



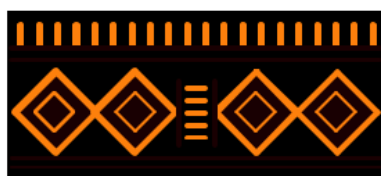
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