

SWEDISH TOUR OPERATORS EAGER TO MARKET ZAMBIA

STOCKHOLM – FRIDAY, 10TH MAY, 2019 – TOUR operators in Sweden have pledged to work with the Zambian embassy in marketing Zambia as a tourist destination of choice. The operators made separate assurances to Zambia's Ambassador to Sweden, Her Excellency Ms. Rose Salukatula after a tourism seminar organised by the embassy in Stockholm on Wednesday.

Tour Africa has since described Zambia as a "strong destination" in which it aimed to have a product line in place so that it becomes a market leader in Sweden.

Tour Africa Marketing Manager, Mrs. Kicki Ohlsson has said that Zambia was an interesting destination to travellers but that most operators did not market it due to lack of adequate information.

"We have found that Zambia is super interesting to travellers. But the reason most operators don't sell the destination is lack of knowledge about it. Today's evening has been great and we will now be able to do more for both new and some of our old clients that want to see more of Africa," Mrs. Ohlsson said at the seminar.

And Scandinavia's largest tour operator into Africa, Jambo Tours, has said it will immediately add Zambia to its portfolio of African destinations.

Company Managing Director, Mr. David Karlsson disclosed this on the side lines of the tourism seminar.

Mr. Karlsson said his company has not had Zambia on its range of destinations since the last time it organised a safari trip eight years ago. He said as a result of the interaction with the embassy that had started, Jambo Tours would now bring back Zambia as one of its destinations.

Jambo Tours have been selling trips to Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Mauritius and Seychelles, among other countries in Africa, since 1974.

While Tour Africa is a Swedish private tour operator, founded in 1979 and has been producing tailor-made safaris and group travels for direct customers and travel agencies all over Sweden.

The tourism promotional seminar, dubbed, 'Explore Zambia' was meant to serve as a platform from which to share information and interact with tour operators and would-be tourists to Zambia.

The Zambia Tourism Agency gave the main presentation through Mr. Donald Pelekamoyo, who is First Secretary in charge of tourism at Zambia's High Commission in London.

And Ambassador Salukatula has said that the embassy aimed at providing tour operators and potential tourists with information fundamental to making one's visit an unforgettable experience. She pledged that the Mission would remain open to engage entities or individuals in a more detailed manner on specific areas of interest and urged all those interested to feel free to get in touch.

The Ambassador said Zambia was one of the most stable and peaceful countries in Africa, with a well-established reputation of hospitable and friendly people, which was a rare trait that should encourage would-be visitors to travel to Zambia.

"As you can appreciate, the tourism industry depends on peace and stability, a very delicate commodity which, luckily, we have in abundance in Zambia," she said.

Ambassador Salukatula pointed out that Zambia has the potential to be transformed into a tourism hub in the region and beyond and that it was in this regard that the government had prioritised creation of an enabling environment to spur growth in the tourism sector.

She noted that the sector has been steadily growing, with 2017, recording way over one million international tourist arrivals compared to 2016 which had about 900 000, representing an increase of over 13 percent.

"In case there are those who might want to consider investing in the tourism sector; I would like to urge you not to hesitate but go ahead as you will be making the right decision," the Ambassador said.

"I want to reiterate to you the potential visitors and marketers of our country that you will be sowing the right seed by including Zambia as one of your prime destinations as you look to exploring more of Africa. I, therefore, invite you to ensure that the next holiday you plan; you plan to explore Zambia," she added.

The Ambassador thanked Ethiopian Airlines, Royal Livingstone Hotel and Islands of Siankaba, for partnering with the embassy in organising the event.

Zambia's embassy in Stockholm partnered with Ethiopian Airlines, Royal Livingstone Hotel and Islands of Siankaba to organise the event. Ethiopian Airlines sponsored two return tickets to Lusaka while Royal Livingstone Hotel provided accommodation for two for two nights each which were given out as prizes to two winners in a raffle conducted at the seminar.

Ambassador Salukatula observed that the prizes would enable the winners to get a rare chance to go and sample Zambia's beauty and unique hospitality.

The event was also attended by some Zambians living in Sweden whom the embassy had invited based on the fact they would act as the best ambassadors in the promotion of the country's interests.

Issued by:

Nicky Shabolyo

Counsellor

ZAMBIAN EMBASSY IN SWEDEN

Cell: [+46 \(0\)700217618](tel:+460700217618)

Email: nshabolyo@gmail.com, nicky@zambiaembassy.se