



MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND WILDLIFE
OFFICE OF THE CABINET SECRETARY

**CLOSING REMARKS FOR DR, ALFRED MUTUA, EGH, CABINET SECRETARY
FOR TOURISM AND WILDLIFE DURING THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE
3RD EAST AFRICAN EXPO AND MAGICAL KENYA TRAVEL EXPO AT THE
KICC ON 22ND NOVEMBER, 2023**

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- As we draw the curtains on the 3rd East African Region Tourism Expo and Magical Kenya Travel Expo, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible energy and enthusiasm that has permeated these past two days. Our journey through these expos has not just been an event; it has been a testament to the unity, diversity, and potential of East Africa's tourism sector.
- In the company of 239 exhibitors representing 8 countries and joined by 108 hosted and self-sponsored buyers, these expos underscore the significance of tourism for both Kenya and the East African Community. The collaborative efforts on display, bringing together nations, businesses, and individuals, reflect our shared commitment to promoting tourism as a catalyst for growth and understanding.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to my colleague Ministers and Deputy Minister, Members of the Diplomatic corps,

delegates, participants, exhibitors, and distinguished guests who have graced this event with their presence. Your commitment and dedication to fostering regional tourism cooperation are the cornerstone of our collective success.

- Together, we have identified challenges, explored innovative strategies, forged invaluable partnerships, and showcased the rich tapestry of experiences our region has to offer. The EARTE expo has not only illuminated the beauty of our landscapes and cultural diversity but has also highlighted the resilience and determination of our tourism sector in the face of challenges.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- The discussions, dialogues, and exchange of ideas over the past two days have laid a robust foundation for sustainable growth. We are committed to responsible tourism practices that prioritize conservation, community engagement, and economic empowerment.
- As we all know, the current population of Eastern Africa is over 489 million based on the latest United Nations estimates which is equivalent to 6.03% of the total world population. By combining our resources for marketing and promotion, selling the region as a single destination, and turning challenges into opportunities, we can triple our tourism numbers and earnings through the multiplier effect.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- To attract tourists, we propose a multifaceted approach:
 1. we need to identify and map out all our tourist attraction sites, brand and package them and develop tourists' circuits that will start from the first country to the last one.

2. we must develop and invest in tourism infrastructure including transportation, accommodation, roads, airports, and amenities to improve accessibility and comfort for tourists.
3. we should emphasize on sustainable tourism initiatives that preserve the environment, support local communities, and protect wildlife. In addition, we should collectively, focus on Eco-friendly accommodations, responsible tour operators, and conservation efforts that will attract eco-conscious travelers.
4. we should develop comprehensive marketing campaigns and place our region on the world map by using various media such as social media, travel fairs, partnerships with travel agencies, and digital marketing to reach potential tourists and showcase the region's attractions.
5. The Fifth strategy is, we should Fasttrack the process of a borderless region and also Simplify visa processes and regulations to encourage more visitors. By streamlining visa applications and offering visa-on-arrival or e-visa options we can enhance the ease of travel for tourists to our region
6. The Sixth strategy is, we should explore areas of collaborations with other African Countries and beyond, tourism boards, airlines, and travel agencies to create joint packages, cross-border tours, and regional marketing campaigns that showcase the diversity of the East African region.
7. The Seventh strategy is, we should ensure the safety of tourists through effective security measures and clear communication of safety guidelines. Let us remember that a safe and secure environment is crucial in attracting and retaining tourists.
8. Last but not least, we should emphasis on visitor experience enhancement in the region by offering high-quality services and memorable experiences that will encourage positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

- I believe that by leveraging on the above strategies collectively and continuously investing in the development and promotion of East Africa's unique offerings, the region can attract a diverse range of tourists and sustainably grow its tourism industry.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- As we bid adieu to this vibrant gathering, let us remain committed to nurturing our tourism industry, embracing innovation, and fostering inclusivity to ensure that the East Africa region continues to shine as a beacon of unparalleled beauty and warmth to the world.
- In conclusion, I wish to thank you once again for your unwavering support, passion, and dedication to the advancement of tourism in our region. I look forward to our continued partnership in shaping a brighter and more prosperous future for East African tourism.

Asanteni sana! Thank you very much!