

56th Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for Africa and Regional Seminar on Tourism and Air Connectivity in Africa

Angola hosted the 56th meeting of the UNWTO Commission for Africa (CAF) and the Regional Seminar on Tourism and Air Connectivity in Africa, from 28 to 30 April 2014. Over 300 delegates, from 39 countries, including 19 African Ministers of Tourism, attended the event.

The CAF meeting was opened by His Excellency Engineer Manuel Domingos Vicente, who officially welcomed the participants to Angola. Vice President stressed the importance of hosting such an important event in Angola and reaffirmed the commitment of its Government in making tourism work for the country's economy and people.

Over the CAF meeting various issues related to the development of tourism in Africa were discussed, with emphasis to a thematic debate on *Tourism and Biodiversity: Zero Tolerance for Poaching in Africa by 2020*. During this debate the Member States exchanged views and experiences on this matter that is affecting many African countries. Unanimously all participants congratulated UNWTO for bringing this issue to the Commission's agenda and urged the Organization to continue its international sensitization efforts against poaching in Africa, thus protecting one of the main tourism resources of the region which is wildlife.

The Commission meeting and Regional Seminar on Tourism and Air Connectivity in Africa was organized with the participation of public and private sector representatives. The seminar was set as a preparatory event for the First UNWTO-ICAO Ministerial Conference on Tourism and Air Transport in Africa, to be held in October, in the Seychelles.

The main outcome of the regional seminar was the Luanda Declaration on Tourism and Air Transport Connectivity in Africa, that among other aspects stressed "*the need for developing programmes of interregional cooperation between bodies responsible for tourism and air transport so as to improve and strengthen the basic conditions for the sustainable development of tourism in Africa*", and reaffirmed "*the need to address the obstacles and barriers that hamper the expansion of both tourism and air transport within, to and from African countries.*"