

## Africa News

May 23, 2008 Friday

Zimbabwe;  
Country Participates At Africa Travel Association Congress

**BYLINE:** The Herald

ZIMBABWE is participating at the Africa Travel Association's 33rd Annual Congress being held in Arusha, Tanzania.

The congress, which started on Monday and ends at the weekend, is being attended by 600 delegates who include tour operators, government ministers and chief executives from Africa, Europe, Asia and North America.

At the congress, tourism stakeholders in Africa are expected to deliberate on tourism marketing and development strategies, ahead of the 2010 World Cup finals slated for South Africa.

They are also expected to seal tourism development and marketing deals with European, Asian and North American tourism industry stakeholders.

Zimbabwe Tourism Authority chief executive Mr Karikoga Kaseke is leading a team of tour operators, agents and hoteliers to the east African country.

In a statement yesterday, ZTA said participants were deliberating on issues that includes the hosting of soccer World Cup tourists, the general development of the tourism industry in the continent and new regional initiatives.

"Stakeholders are having the opportunity to meet and deliberate on issues concerning tourism development on the continent as well as programmes that will boost tourism within member states.

"The congress is also providing a forum for the tourism industry in Africa to deliberate on the continent's rich and diverse tourism opportunities," said the statement.

"Zimbabwe," said ZTA, "will have the opportunity to market itself as a safe and attractive tourist destination in Africa. It was through Government recommendation that that Zimbabwe is fully represented by both the public and private sector operators in order to make a big impact, despite the spate of negative publicity, which might have impacted on Africa tourism."

ZTA said Zimbabwe was taking advantage of the ATA Congress in order to offer the American, European and Asian traveller an alternative destination that includes the mighty Victoria Falls, one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

Zimbabwe has already confirmed its willingness to host the next Ecotourism Symposium in November 2008 in Victoria Falls.

ATA is an international travel-industry organisation, which has a mandate to promote African tourism and travel partnership.

The Association was established in 1975 and has its headquarters in New York City, USA.

Since its establishment, ATA has enabled 18 000 participants worldwide to go to Africa with the aim of building a bridge between Africa and the United States.

ATA has significant ties with Tanzania tourism industry, which was the president of the ATA Board of Directors from 2001 to 2005. Tanzania also hosted the 23rd Congress in Arusha in May 1998. In December 2003, Zanzibar hosted the ATA's 7th Ecotourism Symposium and the last Congress was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2007.