

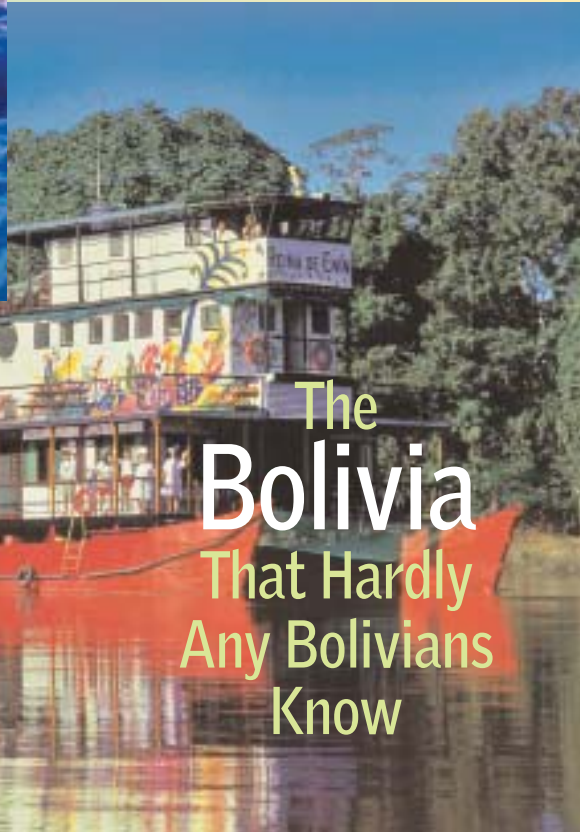
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Travel World

The Magazine for Destination Travel Specialists

NEWS®

*South African Airways Continues to Fly High
After 75 Years of Serving Its Spectacular Homeland*



The
Bolivia
That Hardly
Any Bolivians
Know



Mexico City *Reborn*

Africa Travel Association Holds 34th Annual Congress in Cairo

Tourism Ministers and Leading Travel Experts From Across Africa Convene and Connect The Africa Travel Association (ATA), in cooperation with the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and the Egyptian Tourist Authority (ETA), hosted its Annual Congress May 17–21 in Cairo, Egypt. Under the banner "Connecting Destination Africa," the event gathered tourism ministers, tourism boards, airlines, hoteliers, and ground operators, as well as corporate, non-profit and academic sectors and press, to help shape Africa's tourism agenda.

Held at the Conrad Cairo Hotel, the congress was hosted by Hon. Mohamed Zoheir Garranah, Egypt's Minister of Tourism.

Honorable Shamsa Mwangunga (MP), ATA President and Tanzania's Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, opened speaking of tourism as a driver of African development.

"Africa realizes the important role tourism can play in each country particularly in the areas of economic development, poverty reduction and promotion of peace. In fact, we have already seen that most peaceful countries have witnessed a steady increase in tourism arrival receipts," she said.

In his introductory remarks, Amr El Ezaby, Egyptian Tourist Authority Chairman, said the congress presented an opportunity to share information and ideas on marketing Africa's tourism products, especially during challenging times.

"Until twenty to thirty years ago, Egypt was a one-product destination: the classic Egypt tour. But in the 1980s Egypt started to diversify its product in order to retain its competitive edge, by developing resort tourism on the Red Sea, desert tourism and cultural tourism. This diversification led to dramatic demand and generated an increase of infrastructure from 18,000 rooms in 1982 to 210,000 rooms in 2008." "Today," he said, "Egypt is striving to change its image even further by developing high-end resorts to appeal to the luxury market."

The success of Egypt's diversification strategy is reflected in the country's increase in the number of tourism arrivals, with 17-percent growth in 2008 despite the climate.

Dr. Elham M. A. Ibrahim, the African Union's Commissioner of Infrastructure and Energy, sent words of support: "The African Union counts on ATA to come up with practical solutions particularly on how to cost-effectively promote Africa's tourist attractions as well as foster cooperation among all tourism stakeholders includ-



(L to R): Paulino Baptista, Angolan Deputy Minister of Hotels & Tourism; Bello Gada, Nigerian Minister of Culture, Tourism and National Orientation; Shamsa Mwangunga, Tanzanian Minister of Natural Resources & Tourism; Hisham Zazzou, First Assistant to the Minister, Egyptian Ministry of Tourism; Edward Bergman, ATA Executive Director; Tadelech Dalecho, Ethiopian State Minister of Culture & Tourism; Amr El-Ezaby, Chairman, Egyptian Tourist Authority; and Mohamed Hegazy, Deputy Director, Egyptian Tourist Authority USA & Latin America (photographs courtesy of Egyptian Ministry of Tourism).

ing policymakers, development planners, investors, financiers, operators and the public at large, with a view to addressing the specific development needs of the tourism sector in Africa... I wish to assure you that the African Union will always be ready to work closely with ATA to ensure that the continental tourism industry meets its primary objectives of facilitating socio-economic development and integration of Africa," she wrote in the letter to the delegates.

Edward Bergman, ATA Executive Director, spoke of ATA's longstanding ties with Egypt and the opportunity the congress presented to build public-private partnerships.

"ATA is thrilled to be joined by so many distinguished leaders in the industry who bring their unique experiences and expertise to the congress and lead us in addressing the key issues facing Africa's emerging tourism industry today," he said.

High-profile delegates included Lisa Simon, President of the National Tour Association (NTA), who discussed what travel professionals need to know when doing business in the United States.

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