



## UN Tourism Commission for Africa Meets to Boost Social Impact, Innovation, and Youth Empowerment

**Abuja, Nigeria, 12 June 2025** – The UN Tourism Regional Commission for Africa (CAF), brought together tourism leaders, government officials, and creative-sector stakeholders to chart a future where tourism drives lasting, inclusive development across the region. The event brought together more than 300 delegates, including **18 Ministers of Tourism**, reflecting the high-level support for UN Tourism’s work and vision for the region.

Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili opened the 68th session with a call to action rooted in partnership and progress. Reflecting on his first visit to Abuja in 2018, he noted that “progress is built on partnership and Africa’s story is one of resilience and renewal.” He lauded the region’s rapid recovery in tourism, driven by streamlined protocols, digital innovation, and targeted skill development, and reaffirmed commitment to the Agenda for Africa: Tourism for Inclusive Growth.

### Shared progress celebrated

In Abuja, UN Tourism’s Member States in Africa were given a thorough overview of the progress made in advancing shared goals since the Regional Commission’s last meeting. Key highlights of this shared progress include:

- The launch of the Thematic Office on Innovation for Africa in Morocco, designed to drive investment, capacity-building, and digital transformation in tourism.
- A strong emphasis on creative industries, music, film, fashion, and cuisine, as drivers of culture-led tourism, visitor engagement, and local livelihoods.
- Advancements in education and youth empowerment, including new courses, academy launches in Zambia and Zimbabwe, and expansive training and entrepreneurship programmes.

“Tourism can be a ladder and a platform for leadership,” Pololikashvili said, urging further investment in digital literacy, vocational training, and youth entrepreneurship, particularly for women and marginalized communities.

## Key roles for African Member States in UN Tourism

In Abuja, Africa's Member States fulfilled their statutory obligations with elections to key positions that will guide UN Tourism's work forward over the coming years:

- Angola; Kenya; Seychelles; Zambia; Zimbabwe will serve on the UN Tourism Executive Council (2025-2029)
- Nigeria and Zimbabwe will serve as Vice-Presidents of the UN Tourism General Assembly (2025)
- Zambia will Chair the Regional Commission for Africa (2025-2027), with Angola and Nigeria the Vice-Chairs

Looking ahead, Seychelles will host the 69th Meeting of the UN Tourism Commission for Africa (date TBC). Cabo Verde will then host the official celebrations for World Tourism Day 2027.

## Innovation to shape Africa's tourism future

The week's discussions underlined a shared vision: tourism led by Africans, powered by innovation, and rooted in cultural identity. Delegates stressed that technology and Artificial Intelligence must serve people first, by widening market access, easing travel, and reinforcing ethical standards.

On the sidelines of the 68th CAF meeting, UN Tourism held a **Technical Workshop on AI and Innovation** shaping Tourism and Creative Industries for local officials. Discussions focused on placing AI tools and innovation to be at the forefront of tourism development across Africa, as well as on supporting education and entrepreneurial skills for growth as well as the importance of public-private partnerships.

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