



## Kinshasa Sets the Stage: “The Rumba Route for Peace” Connects Tourism and Culture

**Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, 29 July 2025** – UN Tourism and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo successfully cast a global spotlight on music and tourism as dynamic engines for diplomacy, youth empowerment, and inclusive growth.

Held under the High Patronage of His Excellency President Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, the “Rumba Route for Peace” Festival (16–18 July) brought together representatives from across the globe to celebrate the power of music to heal, connect, and inspire across borders—an approach deeply echoed in UN Tourism’s advocacy for using culture as a bridge between people and nations. The event was also in full alignment with UN Tourism’s [“Agenda for Africa: Tourism for Inclusive Growth”](#).

### Where Rhythm Meets Global Leadership

At the Opening Ceremony, the Festival was inaugurated by President Tshisekedi, following keynote remarks by the Honorable Didier M’Pambia Musanga, Minister of Tourism; the Honorable Yolande Elebe Ma Ndembo, Minister of Culture, Arts, and Heritage; and UN Tourism Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili.

With the participation of government leaders, private sector giants like Sony Music Entertainment and Spotify (virtually), and institutions such as the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO), UNESCO, Sound Diplomacy, ConcertsSA, and the University of La Plata in Argentina, panel sessions explored bold ideas and practical solutions.

UN Tourism Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili said: “Tourism can be a channel for establishing peace and understanding. In Kinshasa, we showcased the power of music to bring people together, as well as the power of tourism to create opportunities, protect and celebrate unique cultures and embrace positive transformation through innovation.”

His Excellency Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo said: “By uniting the rhythms of the world and the treasures of our territories, this gathering reflects the ambition to build bridges between peoples through art, exchange, and discovery.”

## Panels Centre Youth, Innovation and Culture

The four high-level panels delved into music tourism's power to drive peace, protect artists' rights, boost economic development, and harness the digital revolution to amplify cultural heritage. From "Transatlantic Rhythms for Peace" to "From Vinyl to Viral," each session reinforced the critical role of youth, innovation, and fair ecosystems in shaping the future of creative industries.

A standout moment of the Congress was the "Fair Play" Masterclass, led by ARIPO, which underscored the critical importance of copyright and related rights protection. The session empowered 100 artists and creative entrepreneurs with practical tools to build fairer, more sustainable music economies across Africa and beyond.

The Festival also featured performances by artists from across Africa, including Angola, Kenya, South Africa, and Zimbabwe and offered hands-on experiences such as an immersive rumba initiation, inviting participants to connect with heritage through movement, flavor, and sound.

Hon. Didier M'Pambia Musanga, Minister of Tourism, Democratic Republic of the Congo said: "“This festival is a platform for exchange, sharing and discovery that crosses races and generations, embodying the spirit of a modern DRC open to the world.”"

## Presidential Audience as UN Tourism Supports Education

In Kinshasa, UN Tourism reaffirmed its strong commitment to a creative, youth-led, and sustainable future, notably through the awarding of 100 scholarships in Destination Marketing via its UN Tourism Academy. This initiative reflects a long-term investment in empowering the next generation of African tourism professionals and innovators.

An audience with President Tshisekedi further reflected the high-level national support for leveraging culture and tourism as strategic pillars of development.

## Related Links:

<https://www.unwto.org/events/first-world-music-and-tourism-festival>

<https://fmmt2025.com/en/>