Ministerial Panel Session – 27 July 2023

RETHINKING TOURISM FOR AFRICA: ADDRESSING GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Speakers
Mrs. Zain VERJEE, Founder & CEO the ZVG

Zain Verjee is one of the world’s most respected and recognized journalists, with an action-packed background and experience as a storyteller, entrepreneur, communicator, and interviewer. She is well known as a former CNN anchor and correspondent and has made a successful transition into the world of communications and creative entrepreneurship.

Her communications firm, the ZVG, has worked with a deep lineup of organizations and entities such as the United Nations, Bloomberg Media, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Pfizer Inc., Equity Group Foundation of Kenya, World Health Organization, GE Africa, OCP, The Aga Khan Development Network, The MiSK Foundation, the Templeton Foundation, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa on their communications and public relations delivery and strategies via advisory, consulting, and content production. She is a highly sought after facilitator and interviewer and has spoken on platforms such as TED and Africa House. She is a senior fellow (non-resident) at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Africa Program. She is a guest opinion columnist on African issues for The National, UAE.

During the Coronavirus pandemic, she created covidHQafrica.com in partnership with MasterCard Foundation, which is a storytelling, data and information site for Africa. Last September, she created and produced Unstoppable Africa, which was hosted by the Deputy Secretary-General of the UN in New York before the Annual General Assembly week, as well as hosting and producing the Qatar Economic Forum in Doha in June.

Hon. Peninah MALONZA, Cabinet Secretary for Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage, Republic of Kenya

Ms. Peninah Malonza, OGW, was born in 1974 in Kitui South Subcounty, Kitui County in South Eastern Kenya. Peninah desires to touch the lives of ordinary Kenyans by uplifting their livelihoods. She is passionate about teamwork, networking and building strong relationships with key stakeholders in an effort to positively impact people’s lives.

Peninah served as the Deputy Governor of Kitui County, 2013-2017 where as a member of the County Executive Management Team, she managed and coordinated the implementation of both County and National Government legislation.

Prior to her entry in the public service, Peninah worked in development organizations including Compassion International - Kenya Office 2006-2013 where she rose to the position of Partner in Training and Support Director.

Peninah is a graduate of the University of Nairobi in Anthropology. She also holds two masters’ degrees from the same institution in Public Health and in Project Planning and Management.
Hon. Didier MAZENGA MUKANZU, Minister of Tourism, Democratic Republic of Congo

The current Minister of Tourism of the Democratic Republic of Congo attended the University of Kinshasa (Unikin) from 1996 to 2004, specifically the Faculty of Law, Department of Private and Judicial Law. At the end of this course, he obtained his Bachelor's degree. He also received on-the-job training in computer skills (Word, Excel and Power Point). He also benefited from several other training courses, including one abroad on OHADA law, criminology and human rights.

In 2018, he was elected provincial deputy for Kwilu, for the Masimanimba electoral constituency. He is a lawyer by profession and a politician, Deputy Secretary General of the Parti Lumumbiste Unifiée (PALU), the oldest political party in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In this capacity, he was elected Provincial Deputy for Kwilu, for the Masimanimba electoral constituency.

From 2019 to April 2021, he was Minister of Transport and Communications.

From 2021 to 2023, he was Minister for Regional Integration and Francophonie.

From May 2023, he is Minister of Tourism.

Hon. Rhodney SIKUMBA, Cabinet Minister of Tourism, Republic of Zambia

Mr. Rodney Malindi Sikumba is the Minister of Tourism and a Member of Parliament for Livingstone Central Constituency (under the United Party for National Development).

Honourable Rodney Malindi Sikumba has a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Zambia and a Master's in Business Administration - Strategy and International Business from Hult International Business School, USA. The Honourable Minister is also trained in Diplomatic and International Studies.

After graduating from the University of Zambia, he joined Professional Insurance Corporation Zambia Plc, as a graduate trainee. In 2006, he joined Celtel Zambia Plc (now Airtel) as a Corporate Sales Executive.

After completing his Master’s Degree in the United States, he returned to Zambia and was appointed Head of Customer Experience for Airtel Zambia. In 2014, he was headhunted to lead Zamtel’s Enterprise Department and successfully managed a portfolio valued at US$ 22 million.

In 2017, Honourable Rodney Malindi Sikumba established the Hult Investments Group of Companies (HIGC) whose portfolio includes Hult Ice, Hult Apartments, Hult Travel and Tours Limited (HTTL) and Hult Commodities.
In 2001, he joined the United Party for National Development (UPND) and in 2021, he stood for election as a UPND candidate for the first time and he won the elections. During the same year, he was appointed as Cabinet Minister, Minister of Tourism.

Hon. Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim AWAL, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Republic of Ghana

Dr. Ibrahim Mohammed Awal is Ghana’s Minister for Tourism, Arts and Culture. Before his appointment, he was the Minister for Business Development. He was adjudged the Most Business Oriented Minister of Africa, Designing Economic Development through Innovative Solutions. He was also named the Best Performing Minister and the Most Outstanding Minister in Ghana for 2018 and 2019 respectively. Dr. Awal was Ghana’s Marketing Man of the year, ‘2009’. Among other laurels, he has been accredited with developing an entrepreneurship policy for Ghana.

During his tenure as Business Development Minister, Dr. Awal served as a Special Envoy of the President to a number of countries such as Hungary, Morocco, Italy, Central African Republic, Kenya, and Guinea Bissau on African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA) and World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

Dr. Awal is the former Managing Director of Graphic Communications Group Limited, Ghana’s biggest media organization. He was also the Managing Director of Chase Petroleum. As an entrepreneur, Dr. Awal is the founder and owner of a number of companies such as Marble Communications Group Limited, publishers of The Finder Group of Newspapers, HMW printers, Marble Consultants and Marble Developers.

He holds a Doctorate Degree in Business Administration with specialty in succession planning and business competitiveness from the Swiss Business School and three master’s degrees in various disciplines from different universities.

Hon. Lisa S. SINGH, UN Resident Coordinator for Mauritius and Seychelles, United Nations

Ms. Singh has more than over 25 years of experience in international development in Asia and Africa continents, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, Laos, Nepal, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Uganda and Vietnam.

Prior to her appointment as United Nations Resident Coordinator, Lisa Singh served as UNDP Resident Representative ad interim (ai) in Chad. She previously worked as UNDP Director of Programme and Deputy Resident Representative ai in Mali. She has significant senior policy expertise advising governments on issues of economic transformation, regional integration, sustainable development and disaster and climate risk resilience.

Lisa Singh is adept in intergovernmental processes to include leadership roles in facilitating regional collaboration, knowledge brokering, south-south partnership and financing solutions.
Ms. Singh obtained her master’s degree in Economics from Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada. She holds a bachelor’s degree in Liberal Arts (Economics and French) from Mount Holyoke College, Massachusetts, USA.

Dr. Nazia M Habib, FRSA, Head, Centre for Resilience and Sustainable Development, University of Cambridge, UK

Dr Nazia M Habib, FRSA, is the Founder and Research Centre Director for the Centre for Resilience and Sustainable Development (CRSD). She holds a Professor equivalent post with appointments at the Department of Engineering and Department of Land Economy at the University of Cambridge.

Trained at Oxford University and at University of Cambridge, Dr Habib believes that to reduce inequality, inability and inefficiency experienced globally, the decision makers and Social Science academics need to improve the methods used to create evidence for decision making. Her research currently focuses on integrating systems thinking for applied resilience and sustainable development in the context of good governance, responsible innovation and sustainable investment. Leaders of more than 57 countries have benefited from her research methods and have seen improvements in their abilities to manage uncertainty. Dr Habib has also advised over 20 governments on sustainable development and climate change related policy issues. She was recognised on the Commonwealth Day 2023 by the King of England at Buckingham Palace for her research on the Commonwealth Small States. Dr Habib is currently setting up the world’s first food system with the FAO.

Dr Habib is a Board Member of the University of Cambridge’s Board of Scrutiny, Special Advisor for the EAT Foundation, Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (RSA), among others. Dr Habib is active within several Cambridge University based research centres: Sanger Institute, Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, Cambridge Centre for Science and Policy (CSAP), Cambridge Global Food Security (CGFS), Cambridge Zero and Cambridge Forum for Sustainability and the Environment (CFSE) to name a few.