

KENYA TRIES HARD TO REGAIN ITS POPULARITY AS TOURISM DESTINATION



Media all around the world have reported on the Kenyan post elections violence. More than 1,000 people were killed and this situation certainly did not help the Kenyan tourism industry. Tourists were scared off. The sector loses are estimated to account for KES 4 billion (€39 million) per month following the skirmishes. According to the Tourism Trust Fund chief executive Dan Kagagi, these numbers are just estimates. Real data are needed to deal with the drop in demand. The precise data are necessary to identify which sectors in the industry mostly need boosting.

The tourism ministry already plans a recovery program. According to the Tourism and Wildlife Permanent Secretary Rebecca Nabutola, experts are working on marketing initiatives that should restore confidence and interest in the country's tourism industry. There will be an investment of approximately KES 1.2 billion (€12 million) in projects that should attract international tourists. Numerous competitors are profiting on present Kenya's instability. Various marketing activities among them the presence at the last ITB trade fair in Berlin Germany are expected to reverse the situation. The country needs to be reported positively by world's journalists because lately Kenya was only a synonym for chaos. Secretary Rebecca Nabutola says that the media should assist in recovering the country's glory.

The tourism industry is very important for the country's economy. Kenya Tourism Federation Spokesman Jake-Grieves Cook claims that last year they had over 1 million international tourists visiting the country but after the violence, the number has dropped. Tourists were warned by their governments therefore many of them decided not to go to Kenya. This resulted in massive cancellations of tourist bookings. Bed occupancies in the Coast region and Nairobi dropped significantly and so did the chartered flights reservations. Officials are, however, optimistic about the further development. A sign of the positive development is the fact that France, Germany and Switzerland had already lifted the travel advisories.

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