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AUTO NEWS – SEPTEMBER 2008

Chairman's Column

My fellow colleagues, ladies and gentlemen.

Let me echo that warm welcome to all of you.

I want to begin by thanking all of you for taking time to turn up at the AGM in order to carry forward the important work of this organization.

We have it in our power to change AUTO but only if we are true to our ideals. And that starts by telling the truth to members. As Chairman that's my first pledge – I will restore trust and credibility to AUTO.

In the months ahead let us be optimists and not opponents. Let us build unity in the AUTO family, not angry division. Let us honor the diversity of this association by respecting one another. When people come together and work for the common good of each other, great things begin to happen.

There is an African proverb that says, 'If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together'. We need to go far and quickly, however we must abandon the conceit that individual, isolated, private actions are the answer. They can and do help sometimes, but they will not take us far enough without collective action.

It is time we steered by the stars and not by the lights of every passing ship. The way ahead is difficult in the sense that, the outer boundary of what we currently believe is feasible is still far short of what we actually must do. That is just one way of saying that we have to expand the boundaries of what is possible. We must make the path as we walk because currently we are standing at the most fateful fork in that path.

We have everything we need to get started save perhaps the political will. But political will is a renewable resource, so let us renew it and say together: 'We have a purpose, we are many for this purpose, and we will rise and act'. I am sure that with your continued support we should see the results of our hard work paying off year after year.

In closing, I would like to thank you all for what you do and for continuing to place the interests of AUTO first.

Henry Okecho
CHAIRMAN

AUTO Update

The Association of Uganda Tour Operators had their Annual General Meeting on 29th May 2009 at the Kampala Serena Hotel Conference Centre.

The new Executive Committee voted in was:

Chairman: Henry Okecho henry@explore-uganda.com

Vice chairman: Cam Mcleay cam@adrift.ug

Treasurer: Jane Goldring jane@wildfrontiers.co.ug

Secretary: Babra Vanhelleputte babra@asyanuttours-safaris.com

Executive Committee members:

Mohit Advani mohit@global-interlink.org

Geoffrey Baluku apsafari@africaonline.co.ug

Co-opted Executive Committee Members

Charlotte Kamugisha bunyonyi@utlonline.co.ug

Boniface Byamukama kitanda@infocom.co.ug

Ex-officio UTA & UWA representatives:

Amos Wekesa gls@utlonline.co.ug

Connie Tumusiime cbt_acacia@yahoo.com

Spectacular Sights of Uganda...



Lioness at Murchison Falls National Park



Top of the falls – Murchison Falls

Photos courtesy of Rajesh Advani

Why AUTO?

Benefits of being an AUTO member...

1. Trade referrals through the Association Website, a useful source of business
2. Representation through the Association on ATTA, the African Travel and Tourism Association. All benefits may be viewed on the ATTA website www.atta.co.uk
3. The ability to participate in the purchase of gorilla permits.
4. The ability to receive discounted rates when attending trade fairs.
5. Processing Private Sector Foundation - BUDS applications for 50% co-funding on trade fairs.
6. Representation in the industry at a senior level for problems you are experiencing in running your business.
7. Facilitation of tour operator licenses from the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry.
8. Assistance with the funding of familiarization and educational trips for your agents.
9. Access to latest industry bulletins and updates useful in the successful running of your tour business.
10. A reference library at the Association Secretariat of various relevant industry publications.
11. Group representation for the industry through the AUTO organisation and its associates.
12. Listing on the AUTO website.

Property Profile – *Ishasha Wilderness Camp*

This exclusive tented camp is situated on the banks of the Ntungwe River, in the remote southern sector of Queen Elizabeth National Park famous for tree climbing lions that can sometimes be spotted resting in the branches of the large fig trees in the area. Combined with excellent game viewing opportunities for buffalo, elephant, kob, topi, hippos and fantastic birdlife, the camp provides the ideal safari location. Ishasha Wilderness Camp offers only ten large en suite tents with individual privacy, excellent views and shade from the African sun. Outdoor dining and an evening fire place complement the true African safari experience offered at this camp.

Ishasha Wilderness Camp is part of *Exclusive Camps and Lodges* managed by Wild Frontiers. *Exclusive Camps and Lodges* aims to provide visitors with good quality, comfortable facilities and excellent service, while at the same time ensuring that these facilities are provided in an eco-friendly manner with the "footprint" being as small as possible. Bush showers, solar power and energy saving water heating facilities are used. For more information, contact info@wildfrontiers.com



Ishasha Wilderness Camp – Queen Elizabeth National Park

Ngamba Island's 10th Birthday (1998-2008)

Ngamba Island, a home to orphaned chimps, was established in 1998 to provide orphaned chimpanzees with a safe haven and to implement a comprehensive approach to chimpanzee conservation. As part of several activities to mark 10 years of Ngamba Island Sanctuary existence, a workshop was organized under the theme, "Preserving our heritage and protecting our closest relatives".

The workshop held on 3rd and 4th July 2008 was graced by the presence of re known primatologist Dr. Jane Goodall. She gave a key note address that centered on the plight of chimpanzees world over. Several other local and international academicians, researchers, conservationists, tour operators attended the workshop that centered on the existing challenges of Great Ape conservation.

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Conservation Corner

Do your part towards conserving wildlife...

Eco-tips when in national parks / protected areas:

- Respect the privacy of animals – minimum viewing distance is 20 metres.
- Remember that animals are wild and can be dangerous.
- Do not disturb the animals with sudden movements or loud noises.
- It is an offence to feed wild animals.
- Stay in your vehicle except at designated places.
- Respect the speed limit of 40 kilometres per hour in parks.
- Never drive off road as it degrades habitat.
- Do not leave litter or discard lighted cigarettes.
- Respect the culture of the people – never take photographs of local people without their permission.
- It is illegal to collect any living or dead item from a protected area.

"Take nothing but photographs & leave nothing but footprints."

Lilly Ajarova, the Executive Director of Ngamba Sanctuary passionately appealed for government support in as far as the islands activities are concerned. Hon Gagawala Wambuzi – Minister of State for Trade promised to convey the message to his line Minister who would hopefully follow up the issue.

As the chimpanzee populations increase on the island, their home range continues to decline. It is with this reason that government needs to help locate more land for these orphaned chimps. Cox who works with the Jane Goodall Institute noted that the fact that chimpanzees were now in sanctuaries meant that the world had failed in its duty of trying to keep chimpanzees in their natural habitats.

Workshop participants urged governments' world over to help in the fight against poachers as it was the only way the issue of orphaned chimpanzees would be controlled.



Dr. Jane Goodall & Baluku Geoffrey

Skål News

Skål is a professional organisation of tourism industry leaders around the world, promoting global tourism, peace and friendship. It is the only international group uniting all branches of the travel and tourism industry. Its members, the industry's managers and executives, meet at local, national, regional and international levels to discuss and pursue topics of common interest.

Skål International today has approximately 25,000 members in 650 Clubs throughout almost 100 nations with a functioning tourism industry. Most activities occur at local levels, moving up through National Committees, under the umbrella of Skål International, headquartered at the General Secretariat in Torremolinos, Spain.

The Skål Club of Kampala meets for dinner on the last Wednesday of the month at different locations. The club has started a Conservation Fund, and has donated to several organisations over the past few years.

The current President of Skål Club of Kampala is Kaine Sabiti. For information on monthly get-togethers, club activities, details on joining, or recommendations for Conservation Fund donations, contact Pearl Hoareau (Club Secretary) pearlhoareau@utb.co.ug or Marinka Sanc-George (Skål Club Programme Director) marinka@letsqosafari-ug.com



In May 2008, Skålleagues met for dinner at the Protea Hotel

AUTO News September 2008 compiled by Mohit Advani. Thanks to Babra Vanhelleputte (*Why AUTO* write-up) and to Baluku Geoffrey (*Ngamba Island's 10th Birthday* write-up).

Airline Update

Baggage rules on KLM, Air France and Northwest

If you are booked to travel on a KLM flight (codeshare with Air France or Northwest Airlines) to any destination via Amsterdam, you are entitled to two pieces of checked-in baggage. Each bag should not weigh more than 23 kg (economy class) or 32 kg (business class).

- An extra piece of luggage will cost €150 per piece.
- Economy class passengers having overweight luggage weighing between 24-32 kg will be charged an overweight fee of €50 per piece.

For more information, visit www.klm.com

Emirates waves goodbye to delays

Emirates Airlines is ensuring its flights leave Dubai International Airport as scheduled by closing the boarding gate 15 minutes before take-off time. The airline's customers will no longer be inconvenienced by delays and possible missed connections as late-comers to the boarding gate will be left behind.

Mohammed H Mattar, Emirates' Senior Vice President Airport Services (Dubai), said: "Emirates is implementing the 15-minute before departure gate closure in consideration of our customers who arrive on time for their flights. The new policy will allow aircraft to take off as scheduled as it takes about 15 minutes to locate and off-load the baggage of missing or late customers."

Over the summer peak travel period, some 11 million travellers are expected to pass through Dubai International Airport, and the new policy will help Emirates and the airport to facilitate smooth passenger flow, and increase on-time performance.

Emirates' customers are requested to check in two hours before departure and to arrive at the boarding gate 35 minutes before their flight departs.

Transit passengers from flights arriving late into Dubai will be escorted by airport staff through formalities to ensure they make their onward connections.

At the airport, customers will be given reminders about the new 15-minute gate closure policy when they check in. Written reminders have also been placed on e-tickets, tent cards in lounges, restaurants and smoking areas, as well as on information screens throughout the airport.

For more information, visit www.emirates.com