

## NEWS RELEASE

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## **AFRICA TRAVEL ASSOCIATION'S YOUNG PROFESSIONALS PROGRAM INAUGURAL AFRICA TOURISM ROUNDTABLE PROVIDES INSIGHTFUL DISCUSSION FOR YOUTH**

**Young and Seasoned Professionals and Students Gathered at New York  
University to Discuss the Significance of Tourism for Recovery  
During Turbulent Times**

**New York, NY, September 23, 2011** – The Africa Travel Association's Young Professionals Program (YPP) hosted a successful Africa Tourism Roundtable, with the theme *Resilient Africa: Managing Tourism in Turbulent Times*, at New York University on Tuesday, September 20, 2011, preceding ATA's Sixth Annual Presidential Forum on Tourism. The event was co-hosted by New York University's Graduate Hospitality and Tourism Society (HTS) of the Preston Robert Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism, and Sports Management.

With over eighty young and seasoned professionals, students, and faculty in attendance, individuals from varied backgrounds came together over a common interest—the role travel and tourism play in Africa's economic development. A panel of six distinguished guests shared experiences their countries or industries have faced to demonstrate the resiliency of Africa and the significance of tourism in economic recovery and growth. Speakers shared their expertise with young professionals and students, and stressed the power of the youth on the future of the African tourism industry.

When asked what she saw as the future of industry, Achma Asokan-Foster from the Air Promotion Group USA said, "It is the young students and professionals in this room are the future of the tourism industry in Africa."

Countries represented at the roundtable included: Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Sierra Leone, and Zimbabwe. The roundtable featured participants Filippo Bozotti from Tribe Wanted Sierra Leone, Evelyn Chidyausiku from the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority, Achma Asokan-Foster from the Air Promotion Group USA, Mohamed Hegazy from the Egyptian Tourist Authority, Dr. Gnaka Lagoke from the US-Cote d'Ivoire Trade Investment Corporation, and Dr. Chika O. Onyeani from the African Sun Times. Mark Walton from The Africa Channel moderated an interactive and stimulating discussion.

The success of the event and the positive feedback received from participants and attendees paves way for future events, partnerships, and opportunities to allow young professionals and students to continue the dialogue.

The event was supported by The Africa Channel, Bati Ethiopian Restaurant, NYU School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS) Graduate Student Council, Precision Air, and RwandAir.

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### **About ATA's Young Professionals Program**

YPP seeks to engage tourism and hospitality students and young industry professionals in Africa's tourism industry. The program aims to help future industry leaders gain access to tourism professionals focusing on Africa in order to help them build the relationships and networks now that will serve the industry and ATA later, connecting a new generation to ATA. For more information, visit

<http://africatravelassociation.org/about/organization/ypn.html>

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