

ISSUE

52

January 2016

RWANDAFUL

The Hague

Monthly
Roundup of
Rwanda's
Stories

President Kagame calls on Africans to work together to address the continent's challenges



President Paul Kagame has called on leaders from across Africa to work together to address the challenges that the continent still faces. Speaking at a dinner reception dubbed 'Africa's Future' on the sidelines of the just-ended World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland; President Kagame noted that when Africans talk about their problems, they are together, but when it comes to seeking solutions and implementing them, that togetherness vanishes. Each country ends up standing individually, trying on its own.

"We have to do some alignment. Let's discuss the problems together, let's discuss the solutions together and actually let's implement them together; let's work together," President Kagame stated at the dinner which was also attended by Gabon President Ali Bongo Ondimba, Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, Ivory Coast Prime Minister Daniel Duncan, as well as African Development Bank President Akinwumi Adesina.

President Kagame further pointed out that failure to work together leads to missing the opportunity of picking solutions from a broad range of ideas and possibilities. This explains why the continent keeps falling short and gives an impression of a 'Failing Africa'.

"We need to deal with our situation of the continent with a sense of urgency. The solutions are clear. What we need to do to deal with our problems is very clear. Let us just go ahead and do it together."

The President also reiterated the need for African countries to integrate further for shared prosperity. He emphasised that the individual approach in addressing challenges holds the continent back.

At the dinner, President Kagame spoke following a panel discussion moderated by James Irundi Mwangi, the Executive Director of Dalberg Group; Donald Kaberuka, former President of African Development Bank; Sara Menker, founder and CEO of Gro Intelligence; Bono, lead singer of U2; and Jubril Adewale Tinubu, the chief executive of Dalberg Group.



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Challenges remind us there are things we should be doing - President Kagame tells WEF

On Wednesday 20 January 2016, President Paul Kagame was in Davos, Switzerland took part in this year's World Economic Forum (WEF). While speaking on a panel titled 'The Transform of Tomorrow' that discussed the implications of the digital revolution, President Kagame said that Rwanda and Africa are in transition to become part of making technology – not just consuming it.



The President further stressed that Africans and Rwandans in particular have seen multiplier effect of technology on growth, development and connecting people to solutions. Digital technologies have benefited and improved millions of lives. He pointed out that what Africa needs now is to address the policy side: "We have to address policy side and how we use technology to reduce other divide that exist. In Rwanda, making sure women are involved and using technology to serve society are policy decisions that we bring together."

President Kagame called on governments across the continent to put more efforts in facilitating the involvement of digital technologies in all sectors. On the panel, President Kagame was speaking alongside leaders in the digital technologies industry including Facebook chief operation officer Sheryl Sandberg, Microsoft Chief executive Satya Nadella, the director of Indian company Mahindra and Mahindra, Anand Mahindra, and the founder of Open Gov., Zachary Bookman.

On Thursday 21 January 2016, the President spoke on a panel about 'Africa's Next Challenge' alongside Ethiopian Premier Hailemariam Desalegn, and the President of the African Development Bank Adesina Akinwumi. Later in the evening, the President hosted 'Rwanda Night' where he welcomed participants to WEF Africa in Rwanda.

Hosted annually in Davos, Switzerland, the World Economic Forum discusses world economic issues, and is an opportunity for countries to sell their economic potentials to prospective investors. This year, the four-day summit discussed other critical challenges; including security and climate change in relation to global economic growth. The Summit was attended by over 2,500 delegates from around the world.

President Kagame hosts annual diplomats' luncheon

President Paul Kagame hosted envoys accredited to Rwanda to the annual diplomats' luncheon at Urugwiro Village. Prior to the luncheon, four new envoys from China, Denmark, Kuwait and the Czech Republic presented their credentials to the President.

Addressing the envoys, President Kagame expressed his appreciation for what the diplomats do to keep the diplomatic ties between Rwanda and their respective countries strong. He later pointed out that through combining the country resources and integration partnerships, Rwandans are determined to prosper. The President listed some projects like the Northern Corridor Integration Projects and the recently globally endorsed Sustainable Development Goals whose implementation require firm partnerships.

"Rwandans are working to be our best selves, fully responsible for our future, a burden to no one. You are in position to see this first-hand and provide useful context, back to headquarters, when called upon," President Kagame told the envoys. President Kagame further reiterated that Rwanda values the free open dialogue with friends and partners by listening carefully and participating whenever necessary. He stressed that Rwanda contributes significantly to global cooperation because, "it reflects who we are as a people." President Kagame assured the diplomats that Rwanda's diplomacy and international engagement will continue to be resolutely multilateral, collaborative and judicious.

Speaking on behalf of the envoys, the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Uganda's Ambassador to Rwanda, Richard Kabonero, said that it is clear to everyone that Rwanda registers remarkable progress every year: "A few of us who have been here longer, have witnessed a lot of development in ICT, peacekeeping, education, peace and stability. We congratulate the people of Rwanda for a well organised referendum (...) Rwanda will be a prosperous country in the not so distant future."

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Louise Mushikiwabo said that Rwanda's diplomacy has enlarged, and Rwandans hope the New Year would come with better tidings.



President Kagame holds talks with US Secretary of Commerce

On 28 January President Paul Kagame received in his office a delegation led by the United States Secretary of Commerce, Penny Pritzker, for a business roundtable themed “The economic benefits of integration”. The delegation included 13 members of the US President’s Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa (PAC-DBIA) and African CEOs.



The meeting is a follow up to the US-Africa Summit that took place in the US in August, 2014. Speaking at the meeting, President Kagame said that it is encouraging to have business leaders in the region and national leaders coming together to discuss investment opportunities in the region and in Rwanda in particular. “I welcome you on the backdrop of the relationship we have had for a long time and want to strengthen the relations between the United States and the East African Community and the wide Sub-Saharan Africa,” President Kagame said.

The President expressed his gratitude for the follow up on commitments made between countries during the US-Africa Summit.

In her remarks, the US Secretary of Commerce, Penny Pritzker pointed out that the US President’s Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa has chosen Rwanda as their second destination during their visit to the continent because the country is one of Africa’s remarkable economic success stories.

“I visited Rwanda five years ago and found the people of Rwanda quite remarkable. We are focused on steps the US Government can take to support the establishment of stronger and lasting commercial partnerships between the US and the Africa private sectors – especially regions and countries where there have been considerable economic success. Rwanda is a prime example of this.”

She further added that from a commercial perspective, Rwanda’s climb to the World Bank ease of doing business is notable. She recalled how during her last visit to Rwanda, she was impressed with the one-stop-shop for investors, both local and foreign that she went back to her hometown Chicago and proposed that they need to do the same thing.

The Business Roundtable focused on enhancing regional integration in Africa. Participants included business leaders and executives from the United States, CEOs doing business on the continent as well as in Rwanda.

The US Secretary of Commerce and President Obama's Advisory Council met RDB Officials on Doing Business in Rwanda

On 28th January 2016, Rwanda Development Board CEO Honorable Francis Gatare hosted the US Secretary of commerce, Penny Pritzker, and delegation comprised of senior executives of leading American companies including GE, McKinsey and the renowned Carlyle Group. The main intention of the visit was to experience key aspects in the development of Rwanda including trade, business and tax collection.

During the meeting, CEO Gatare highlighted investment opportunities in Rwanda and the incentives offered to investors. He also pointed at Rwanda's recently updated investment code and the simplified tax regime. “We have made great progress in building Rwanda as a preferred investment destination and instituted several initiatives to reform the doing business environment,” he said

The head of the delegation of American investors, Secretary Penny Pritzker, who had previously visited Rwanda as a member of the private sector, said that it was terrific to watch the evolution of Rwanda. “We are very impressed by the remarkable progress made in the economic and social sectors,” said Ms Pritzker.



Rwanda Revenue Authority Deputy Commissioner General Bizimana Pascal added that the institution’s growth and the increasing role of tax revenues in national development was very clear. “We will soon establish a special desk for VAT refund to investors to addressing tax-related concerns of foreign investors,” he noted, pointing out that investors will be taken through the new investment code to achieve clarity.

The delegation was briefed on the ongoing regional integration efforts in East African Community, and particularly within the Northern Corridor framework. “They were impressed with the various common projects and initiatives already implemented, including the Single Area Network, the Common Tourist Visa, as well as various infrastructure projects in transport, energy, and ICT”, said CEO Gatare

The American business leaders expressed strong commitment to explore partnership in many of these projects. Progress will be assessed during a planned US-Africa Business summit later this year. This is the Council’s first trip to the African continent, they chose Rwanda and Nigeria as two destinations because over the past 20 years, the countries have been a remarkable success story. Much of this positive progress is the result of a concerted and focused approach to economic and commercial policymaking.

First Lady calls on young leaders to learn from their elders

First Lady Jeannette Kagame has called on young leaders to learn from their elders who fought to stop the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, liberate the country from a bad leadership and pave the way for sustainable development. The First Lady spoke on Saturday 09 January 2015 in Bugesera, Eastern Province where more than 300 young leaders were gathered to reflect on the different aspects of good leadership.

First Lady Jeannette Kagame also advised the youth to maximize the opportunities availed to them by the country's leadership: "I encourage you to learn from those who have paved the way for you and maximize from the many opportunities availed to you, the precious sons of daughters of this land." She further added that young leaders should always bear in mind that they don't have to be hostages of theories proclaiming that progress/prosperity are reserved for a select number of civilizations.

The First Lady reminded the youth that leaders are defined by tough choices in the face of great adversity and encouraged them to pursue their dreams no matter what happens on the way. "You should not shy away from taking a tougher stand and hold your ground, for fear of unknown consequences. Aspire to great things, nurture this fighting spirit in you, and its flame will guide you to even greater heights."

Young leaders at the conference shared their testimonies on how, a few years ago, they dared to start their own businesses, and today, they are enjoying the fruits of their efforts. One of them, Clarisse Iribagiza, the CEO and Founder of Hehe Lab, a technology innovation hub, said that among the things that helped her business prosper are the various platforms that she was given – as one of the rare women entrepreneurs, to explain her project.

Themed 'Sowing seeds of excellence in young leaders generation'; the gathering was the first of its kind, a prelude to the National Prayer Breakfast.

Rwandan leaders vow to always strive to fulfill people's needs

Rwandan leaders from central and local government, civil society organisations and private sectors have vowed to always strive to fulfill Rwandans' needs as the country moves forward towards a more sustainable future.

The leaders who were gathered at this year's National Leaders Fellowship Prayer Breakfast held yesterday expressed their gratitude to God for the country's visionary leadership which has been at the forefront of the tremendous achievements registered in the past two decades.



Speaking at the gathering, Prime Minister Anastase Murekezi listed a number of milestones reached last year, most of which recognised globally. These include the recent World Bank report that ranked Kigali among globally competitive cities; the 2015 Global Competitiveness Report where Rwanda stands out among the most efficient governments; and last year's World Bank Doing Business that ranked Rwanda second-best on the African continent.

The Premier attributed all the numerous strides made in 2015 to God, who, he said, has always been close to the country and its leadership. "God has availed us with a visionary leadership and helped Rwandans to work together with unity and passion aimed to bring the best out of everyone of us towards national dignity."

Organised by Rwanda Leaders' Fellowship (RLF), the National Leaders Fellowship Prayer Breakfast was initiated in 1995 as gathering for leaders in high-ranking positions across the government and the private sector for fellowship to pray for the country's leadership and the whole nation.

Themed "Instilling Godly Values in Leadership", this year's gathering brought together cabinet members, parliamentarians, members of the judiciary, military and national police representatives, as well as members of the civil society and private sector organisations.

Budget revised upward as social protection, education and health get more funding

On 29 January the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, Claver Gatete, tabled before Parliament the proposed 2015/16 revised Budget. The latter has been revised upward by Frw 40.6 billion meaning that the budget estimates for the fiscal year now stand at Frw 1,808.8 billion, up from Frw 1.76 which was initially approved by Parliament in June 2015.

Presenting the revised Budget before Parliament, Minister Claver Gatete pointed out that the upward revision is a result of a budgetary loan from the World Bank worth Frw 18.4 billion for social protection, Frw 15.9 billion support from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) for education programmes and Frw 15.6 billion from Global Fund HIV budget.

Domestic resources are increase to Frw 1,048.6 billion from Frw 1,046.2 billion that was initially approved by Parliament. This has an overall slight increase of Frw 2.5 billion.

The Minister stressed that the revision will help in the speeding up and completion of ongoing development, play a role in reducing fiscal deficit as the country aims to cut down reliance on external financing.

On the expenditure side, the recurrent budget has been revised upward to Frw 891.6 billion from Frw 877.2 Billion in original budget indicating a net increase of Frw 14.4 billion.

The rise in expenditure

e will cover major spending shortfalls as follows: Addition of Frw 3.0 billion to National Electoral Commission to cater for referendum and local government elections, Frw 2 billion to cater for African Nations Championship (CHAN) organization, Frw 3.7 billion to cater for operations in Rwandan Diplomatic Missions abroad and Frw 4.3 billion for the salaries of new teachers to be recruited and shortfall in salaries of police officers, the army, Workforce Development Agency and National Agriculture Export Development Board.



Rwanda welcomed Chan 2016 participants

National teams from across Africa arrived in Kigali as the country geared up to host the fourth edition of the African Nationals Championship known as 'Chan 2016'. Organized by the African Football Confederation (CAF), the biennial tournament was reserved for African football players who played in their national leagues contrary to the higher profile Africa Cup of Nations championship in which African players based overseas can also participate. Previous editions were hosted by Ivory Coast, Sudan and South Africa respectively.

In an interview, the Minister of Sports and Culture, Julienne Uwacu pointed out the fact that, in order to welcome Chan 2016 participants, Rwanda has waived visa fees for all nationals from countries that will compete at the tournament. For African passport holders, visas are being issued on arrival. "We did this to open Rwanda to the world. As we are expecting a big number of fans who will be coming to support their teams; we are trying to remove all the barriers that could hinder their being part of this. Rwanda and Rwandans are ready for the African Nations Championships," Minister Uwacu said.

The Minister further stressed that Chan 2016 presents an ideal opportunity not only for Rwandan players but for all participating African players to show their abilities. Agents for big teams will be scouting for players throughout the tournament. To the Rwandan National team, Minister Uwacu said, Chan 2016 is an occasion for them to gauge themselves against bigger teams which leads to improvement.

In the build up to the championship, major renovations were carried out in Kigali City at both Amahoro and Nyamirambo stadiums; in Huye District at Huye Stadium and in Rubavu District at Umuganda Stadium. The four stadiums are ready and the service provides from accommodation, to logistics, to health care.

The Government invested an estimated 16 billion Rwandan Francs on infrastructure and general organisation.

The 16 competing nations were divided into four groups: Group A is composed of Gabon, Ivory Coast, Morocco and Rwanda; Angola, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia make up Group B; Group C contains Guinea, Niger, Nigeria and Tunisia and Group D is made up of Mali, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. DR Congo won the title.



Chan 2016 Opening Ceremony and Opening Match

A cocktail of events, including traditional dance, acrobatics, skating, drumming and mixed views on which team would win the tournament coloured with public excitement underpinned the opening of the 2016 CAF African Nations Championship, with President Kagame gracing the opening ceremony in Kigali.

The president, who was accompanied by First Lady Jeannette Kagame, was flanked by CAF president Issa Hayatou, who is also the acting head of FIFA.

He condensed Rwanda's pride in hosting the tournament in a few words. "I declare the fourth edition of the African Nations Championship 2016, Rwanda, open," Kagame said to deafening applause.

Earlier, each country bedecked in their respective national colours showcased traditional performance, marching around the pitch to thunderous applause.

The opening match between Rwanda's Amavubi (Wasps) against Ivory Coast's Elephants kicked off at 3pm local time, with the stadium filled to capacity with largely local fans drawn from across the country at the tournament at Amahoro National Stadium.

It was a bright start for hosts Rwanda with a 1-0 victory over Ivory Coast in the opening game of the 2016 African Nations Championship (CHAN).



Minister Mushikiwabo attended the World Economic Forum

Rwanda's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Louise Mushikiwabo, took part in the 46th World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting where she addressed two panels. The 46th WEF took place in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland from 20-23 January 2016.



Minister Mushikiwabo addressed a panel on the "New Security Context" where panelists discussed how the international security landscape is transforming in the wake of violent extremism, regional rivalries and proxy wars. Minister Mushikiwabo said that leaders need to think first about their people and improve inclusiveness and management of diversity. She said: "For Africa, insecurity mostly stems from a sense of exclusion within certain parts of our nations' populations. As leaders, we will need to improve inclusiveness and management of diversity."

On Thursday 21 January 2016, Minister Mushikiwabo was part of a session entitled "Responding to Fragility" where she featured as panelist. In Africa, she asserts that fragility is not a fatality. Minister Mushikiwabo said: "As leaders, we should work harder and give a sense of belonging to our people; avoid neglect in our societies. As leaders, we will have to work harder and diligently to deliver on hopes and expectations vested in us. Finally, we must provide employment to African youth if we are to address volatility and fragility of our societies."

Over 2,500 leaders from business, government, international organizations, civil society, academia, media and the arts took part in the 46th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland. The theme of the Meeting was "Mastering the Fourth Industrial Revolution". WEF discusses world economic issues, and is an opportunity for countries to sell their economic potentials to prospective investors.

Rwanda's Participation in Davos 2016 sets pace for upcoming Regional WEF Meeting in Kigali

Every year, world leaders and senior government officials congregate in Davos, Switzerland to discuss the most pressing global issues at the World Economic Forum. This year's 46th edition ran from January 20-23, 2016 and Rwanda was well represented. The delegation led by His Excellency Paul Kagame included among others the CEO of Rwanda Development Board, Francis Gatare, the Minister of Finance, Claver Gatete, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Louise Mushikiwabo, and the Minister of Youth and ICT Jean Philibert Nsengimana. The four day forum themed "Mastering the Fourth Industrial Revolution", discussed the implications of a digital revolution on a universal scale.

The digital era has swept over the globe and has left none immune to its effect. This year's forum served to debate the world's readiness in managing a digital revolution with the panel discussions bringing forth strong points in support and contention. While technology is often touted for accelerating business and economic growth worldwide, many still hold the view that an uncalibrated shift to technology risks to remove jobs from the market and minimize the role of humans in the economy. Those in support of the digital revolution hold strongly that technology can improve people's lives, while those with reservation fear it may intensify existing inequalities in societies across the world. As in past revolutions, the anticipated Fourth Industrial Revolution is sure to trigger a shift in labor, productivity and societies, raising concerns among WEF participants as to the role of humans in the big picture.

Speaking on a panel titled 'The Transformation of Tomorrow' President Kagame expressed his views on the impact of a digital revolution in Rwanda and said, "Revolutions create winners and losers; our job is to make sure there are fewer losers and more winners." Without a doubt, technology has had a big role in mapping the economic transformation witnessed in Rwanda and other developing nations around the world. Investment in technology through the Smart Rwanda plan has focused on creating technology solutions to some of the country's biggest problems like banking, education and health services. The use of technology has helped create connections and access to information for a country where the majority of the population lives away from urban centers.

The general assembly's theme "Mastering the Fourth Industrial Revolution" was unpacked in several panel sessions, while trying to address the impact of the digital revolution in the various sectors of the economy.



Rwanda at 2016 Vakantiebeurs Tourism Exhibition

For the 7th time Rwanda was showcasing its marvelous tourist attractions at the Vakantiebeurs tourism exhibition, the largest tourism exhibition in the Benelux taking place this week until Sunday 17 January in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

The exhibition kicked off on Tuesday with a trade day for the Dutch travel industry and travel media and at the official opening with many VIPs the audience was impressed by a performance of Rwandan cultural dancers, who will continue entertaining visitors in front of the Rwanda stand and on stage in the Africa hall.

After the opening Rwanda's Ambassador to the Netherlands, H.E. Jean Pierre Karabaranga, invited Mayor Van Zanen of Utrecht to the Rwanda stand to discover the tourism opportunities in the land of a thousand hills. They made a photo at the Rwanda photo booth for visitors to take souvenir photos in the Rwanda landscape.

Ambassador Karabaranga said that he noticed a remarkable growth in interest and enthusiasm of Dutch tour operators:

'Tour operators specialized in Africa are extending their product offer and are offering Rwanda as a 'standalone' destination. Some, like AV Tours & Safari and All for Nature Travel, told me that they were grateful for the invitation from the Rwanda Development Board to attend Kwita Izina and discover Rwanda in September 2015. This trip showed them that Rwanda's tourism is very diversified and is much more than Gorilla tracking only'.

'Inviting tour operators and travel journalists is the best way to achieve the remarkable progress and the Embassy is working closely with the Rwanda Development Board to continue those media and tour operator familiarization trips in 2016', said Ambassador Karabaranga.

Rwanda is among the 160 countries that participated at the Vakantiebeurs which also attracts more than 125,000 visitors. Amahoro Tours, Great Seasons Hotel Kigali, Mountain Gorilla Safaris and Wildlife Tours Rwanda are represented during the six-day event.

During the consumer days Rwanda's exhibition stand is receiving many visitors who are enjoying Rwandan coffee and tea, and entertained by Rwandan traditional dancers. They are engaging in the lifetime offer to take a photo in Rwanda style for free and sharing it on the travel Rwanda Facebook page.

The following Dutch tour operators just launched Rwanda holiday packages:

AV Tours: <http://avtours.nl/individuele-rondreizen-afrika/rwanda/>

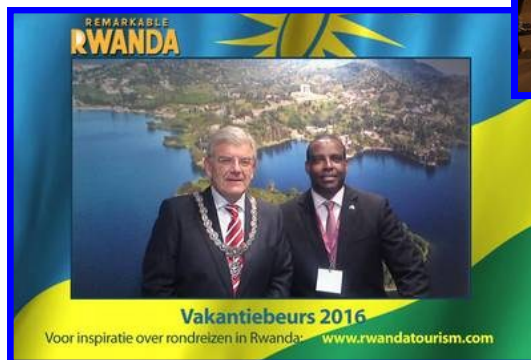
Travel Trend: <http://www.traveltrend.nl/reviews/gorilla-trekking-in-rwanda/?bestemming>

All for Nature Travel: <http://www.allfornature.nl/reizen/rwanda-ultimate-wildlife-safari/>

Jambo Safari Club: http://www.jambo.nl/Rwanda_-_NIEUW_846.html

Rwanda was also launched on the nr 1 Travel Blog in the Netherlands:

Droomplekken: <http://www.droomplekken.nl/specials/rwanda-land-van-de-berggorillas.html>



Dutch firms explore investment opportunities in tourism sector

Representatives of several Dutch companies interested in the tourism sector were in Rwanda to identify viable investment opportunities. The companies, led by GreenDreamCompany, a Dutch group that specializes in sustainable area development of natural and cultural heritage sites with the use of tourism stayed for a week.

The trade mission came a week after local industry operators again showcased Rwanda's vast tourism potential during a week-long tourism fair Vakantiebeurs 2016 in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

The GreenDreamCompany owners, Léon van Rijckevorsel and Leontine van Hooft, led the delegation. "The GreenDreamCompany is specializing in leisure and tourism sector development. All parties who joined the mission are companies who are involved in our planned developments in Rwanda. This is a fieldtrip to visit all locations and to meet local stakeholders," van Hooft, told Sunday Times in an e-mail. "We ourselves have been coming here for the past three years. This is the first time our design and development team comes to see the locations and to start up the creative process."

Their website indicates that GreenDreamCompany has a vision to create a 'chain' of beautiful tourism resorts and destinations in Africa, all inspired by the travels of the ancient King Solomon. They are working to connect beautiful locations in 15 countries under their brand name: "Solomon's Hidden Treasures." Their first projects will be located in Rwanda and Ethiopia, two countries rich in cultural and natural heritage. The couple and a group of partners developed 'Solomon's Hidden Treasures Rwanda' which aims to develop sustainable projects serving tourists.

Robert Kayinamura, First Counselor at the Rwandan embassy in The Hague, said that for the past three years, they had been meeting GreenDreamCompany owners and provided assistance. Kayinamura said: "Now they are coming with partners and financiers to meet all stakeholders and then finalize plans. The embassy has met them several times in line with the country's economic policy of tourism development which will play an important role in economic development. They are going to add to our infrastructure. Then they will be part of the marketing of Rwanda as a tourist destination."

The countries that GreenDreamCompany wants to connect through the Solomon's Hidden Treasure chain of resorts are: Israel-Egypt-North and South Sudan-Ethiopia-Uganda-Burundi-Rwanda-Tanzania-Zambia-Malawi-Zimbabwe-Mozambique-South Africa and Lesotho. Meanwhile, the recently published 2015 edition of the Africa Tourism Monitor, an annual report of the AfDB, New York University's Africa House and the Africa Travel Association, says tourism is on the rise on the African continent but is yet to reach its full potential. The report said Africa international tourism arrivals increased to 65.3 million in 2014 while international tourism receipts total \$43.6 billion in the same year.



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Aromatic Profile

UMUTIMA wa lake Kivu is a highly aromatic and refreshing union of fluid texture with bright, juicy fruit notes, enhanced by a delicate aftertaste.

<https://www.nespresso.com/nl/en/order/capsules/umutima-wa-lake-kivu-rwanda>



Rwanda Community in Netherlands elects new committee

On 30th January 2016, the Rwandan Community in Netherlands gathered in the city of The Hague to elect a new governing committee and to wish each other a prosperous new year.

Members of the new elected committee include:

SAFARI Emmanuel as Chairman,
UMUNYANA Aline as 1st Chairperson,
KABAGEMA Elie as 2nd Chairperson,
MUKABALISA Olive as Secretary,
NGABONZIZA Ambroise as treasury,
NDABARASA Claude as the in charge of communication and external relations,
SAFARI Christine as the in charge of gender affairs,
IRADUKUNDA Innocent in charge of sports and culture,
NIYONGERE Bede in charge of youth and mobilization.

As per the Rwandan Community in Netherlands statute, the new committee will serve a 2-year term. Among the attendants were Dutch Friends of Rwanda, Nigerians, Congolese, Burundians, Ugandans, and Kenyans all who echoed the exemplary organization and achievements of Rwandan Community in Netherlands despite their being in numbers compared to other diasporas.

Ambassador Karabaranga who graced the occasion as the guest of honor, thanked for the outgoing committee for their efforts and determination in running the activities of the Diaspora ongoing in the last 2 years. He further thanked the outgoing committee and the Rwandan Community in Netherlands generally for the mutual collaboration with the Embassy during the 2015 Rwanda Day. While addressing the new committee, Ambassador Karabaranga challenged them to aim higher and achieve what wasn't achieved by their predecessors.

The new year's party winded up the event with all attendants toasting to greater achievements.



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Rwanda maintains fair ranking in corruption report

Rwanda has maintained good ranking in its stance against corruption among the East African Community peers, according to a new report. The Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2015 by Transparency International shows that Rwanda is the fourth least corrupt country in Africa and 44th globally.

In the East African Community, Rwanda comes on top followed by Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Burundi. In sub-Saharan Africa, Botswana claimed the top position followed by Cape Verde, Seychelles, Rwanda, then Mauritius and Namibia.

Rwanda's percentage score improved from 49 to 54 percent, it says.

In 2014 Rwanda was ranked among the five least corrupt countries in Africa and 55th out of 175 countries surveyed globally with 49 per cent.

The CPI covers 168 countries around the world, tackling public perceptions for corruption in the public sector. At a global level, Denmark emerged as the least corrupt nation for the second year running, followed by Finland, Sweden, New Zealand, Netherlands and Norway.

Speaking at the report launch, Marie-Immaculée Ingabire, chairperson of Transparency International Rwanda, implored Rwandan government to fight perceived corruption in public sector, especially during contract negotiation for public investments and procurement in order to improve its ranking further.

Clément Musangabatware, Rwanda's deputy Ombudsman in charge of preventing and fighting corruption cautioned there is still a long way to have a free corruption society despite the fair ranking.

Corruption, he said, remains the most daunting challenge to good governance, sustainable economic growth, peace, stability and development in Africa. "Corruption stops economic growth by discouraging foreign investments, creates distortion in resource allocation and competitive markets, increases the cost of doing business, and reduces the net-value of public spending," said Musangabatware.

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Rwanda in the media - Highlights

Govt will meet forestry targets in time, says Minister Biruta

Briefing a senatorial standing committee in charge of economic development and finance, on the status of forestry in the country, the Minister for Natural Resources said the country's current forest coverage has so far reached 29.2 per cent from 25.9 per cent in 2010, with the target expected to be hit by 2018. A ministry report shows that at least 4.7 percentage points were added to the country overall acreage in less than five years. [Read more.](#)

Kagame to court CEOs of world's largest energy firms

Kagame will be among the key speakers at the 35th conference of IHS CERAWEEK, a world leading forum on the future of energy taking place in Houston, Texas, U.S. CERAWEEK 2016 will bring together leaders from the global energy community for dialogue and insight into the energy future, and responses to the current volatilities and uncertainties. [Read More](#)

Interested in African market entry? Start in Rwanda!

Dr Harnet Bokrezion is co-author of the book '101 Ways to Make Money in Africa'. She coaches start-ups and helps existing companies make smart and strategic business decisions when entering Africa's emerging markets. Following a recent business trip to Rwanda, Club Africa asked Dr Harnet to share why she thinks Rwanda makes for an excellent entry point into Africa. [Read more.](#)

400 students to graduate at UTB

Up to 436 students will today graduate with degrees and certificates in different disciplines during the fourth graduation ceremony of the former Rwanda Tourism University College, now University of Technology and Business studies (UTB). The graduands are from the faculties of Capacity Building in Hotel and Restaurant Management, Travel and Tourism Management and Business Information Technology and Vocational Training programme. Speaking during a news conference, yesterday, Dr Callixte Kabera, the UTB Vice Chancellor, said their focus is to produce competent graduates through careful recruitment of lecturers, giving students sufficient time for industrial attachment, and emphasis on communication, among others. [Read more.](#)

Rwanda ideal for financial services – bankers

Rwanda has been described as an ideal investment destination for financial services by top global investors in the sector, including the co-founders of Atlas Mara Group, a sub-Saharan financial services group. The Atlas Mara co-founders, Ashish Thakkar and Bob Diamond, who last year acquired two Rwandan banks, said Rwanda fared well as a financial services destination due to its position in the East African Community and the government's commitment to development. They made the remarks, yesterday, on the sidelines of the ongoing World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. [Read more.](#)

Rwanda keen on producing technology, says Kagame

President Paul Kagame has said Rwanda and Africa have begun to shift focus from consuming technology to becoming producers. The President made the remarks yesterday at the ongoing World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Kagame spoke at a panel session, "The Transformation of Tomorrow," that debated the implications of the digital revolution. The President spoke alongside leaders in the digital technologies industry, including Facebook chief operation officer Sheryl Sandberg, Microsoft chief executive Satya Nadella, Anand Mahindra, director of Indian company Mahindra and Mahindra, and Zachary Bookman, the founder of Open Gov. In 2015, the World Economic Forum's Global Information Technology report ranked Rwanda among the top nations in the world in government success in ICT promotion cluster. [Read more.](#)

RDF officers in CAR decorated

A total of 750 peacekeepers of the Rwandan contingent (RWABATT 2) serving under the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), were Saturday decorated at their base in M'poko, Bangui. This was during a ceremony that marked the end of 190 days characterised by good and loyal services of the contingent, presided over by Diane Corner, the deputy special representative of the UN secretary general. [Read more.](#)

Rwanda in the media - Highlights

Rwanda seeks to attract businesses at Davos forum

The annual World Economic Forum opens today in Davos, Switzerland, to discuss world economic issues, with the government looking to the summit to sell the country's economic potentials to prospective investors.

Speaking to The New Times from Switzerland, yesterday, the Minister for Finance and Economic Planning, Amb. Claver Gatare, said the meeting will provide a huge opportunity for Rwanda to show where it has reached economically. [Read more.](#)

RDB markets Rwanda for 'wedding tourism'

Rwanda Development Board has moved to position Rwanda as a destination for 'wedding tourism'. This was highlighted at the recently concluded India International Travel and Tourism Fair (IITT 2016). During the discussion, Rwanda emerged as an attractive and new destination for wedding tourism. Clarence Fernandes, representative of RDB who was on the panel, highlighted the uniqueness of Rwanda. "There is great new destination appeal and given the high levels of safety and security which Rwanda is well known for, the country could easily attract Indians to come to this new African dawn to celebrate the wedding of their son or daughter," Fernandes said. [Read more.](#)

Firm to invest Rwf37bn in lighting up rural homes

At least 250,000 households could soon get access to electricity, thanks to a new deal between the Government of Rwanda and Ignite Power Ltd, a Mauritian firm engaged in large-scale deployment of clean energy solutions in Africa. The agreement will see Ignite Power Ltd invest more than \$50 million (about Rwf37 billion) into off-grid power solution for the next five years, Yariv Cohen, the director of Ignite Power Ltd, said. The deal provides a framework for large-scale deployment of solar electric systems across rural communities in Rwanda. [Read more.](#)

Isabukuru mountain gorilla family welcomes twins

Isabukuru Family, one of the 20 groups of mountain gorillas gazetted for research and tourism in Volcanoes National Park welcomed a rare gift of twins born to Isaro yesterday.

According to Belise Kariza, the Chief Tourism Officer at Rwanda Development Board, the birth of the twins is great news to the tourism sector because it's so rare.

"We are extremely happy to report the birth of twins that occurred today. The birth of twins is very rare; only 4 births have been recorded in last 12 years. The first set of twins was born in 2004 when Nyabitondore gave birth to twins Impano and Byishimo in Susa family," Kariza said during an interview yesterday. [Read more.](#)

Govt to set up logistics platform to facilitate international trade

The Ministry of Trade and Industry has signed a 25-year renewable concession agreement with Dubai Port World to develop and operate a logistics platform, expected to boost international trade and competition in external market.

The envisaged Kigali Logistics Platform (KLP) refers to a defined inland location for the consolidation and distribution of goods that has functions similar to those of a seaport and which includes customs clearance services.

The partnership follows a competitive tender process where DP World emerged the winner to invest in the programme after negotiations, the minister said after the signing last Friday. [Read more.](#)

Rwiza Village, Rwanda's hidden getaway treasure

Within the hills of Kibuye, stands a serene place close to the lakeside with a surrounding that depicts nature's beauty. As I watch and enjoy the breeze, a methodical sound echoes from water that ripples over the lake's surface. Looking at the lake in a distance; bare-chested fishermen row into the sunset in small boats, children play in the nearby trees and chirping birds hover into the sky.

Overlooking the stunningly beautiful Lake Kivu, Rwiza village qualifies for a perfect getaway spot within Rwanda considering that fact that it hangs on top of a hill and everything within its surrounding is eye catching. That would be just enough for a tourist interested in gazing at nature while inhaling the cool air within from the Lake Kivu. [Read more.](#)

How CHAN 2016 participants can unwind in the land of a thousand hills

The world and Africa in particular have their eyes on Rwanda as it hosts the second biggest football tournament on the continent- African Nations Championship (CHAN) and as the host country, thousands of people will be in the country to experience Rwanda, probably for the first time.

While the majority of people will be content with just watching the games and attending related activities, there are many others who want to see more.

Rwanda offers a unique insight into the history of its people, and its heritage sites serve to highlight historic moments, both good and bad. It's also a growing adventure hub with amazing panoramas that will give you a once of a lifetime experience as you trek the volcanoes and ride past serene rivers. [Read more.](#)

Rwanda in the media - Highlights

How Twagirayezu minted a fortune from farming

"I consider my farm as a shop. When one has a shop, they have to open it daily which explains why I spend the biggest part of my day on my farm, because this is where I eke out a living." These are the words of Jean Marie Vianney Twagirayezu, a coffee and banana farmer from the remote Kigembe Sector in Gisagara District.

At the time of the interview, he was in his coffee plantation, supervising his employees. Twagirayezu, 42, employs at least 100 workers in his various businesses and earns Rwf3 million from agriculture every year.

His coffee plantation sits on 17 hectares of land, with 42,000 trees from which he harvests about 50 tonnes of coffee berries every year. [Read more.](#)

World Bank official commends Rulindo farmers

The World Bank Vice President, Operations Policy and Country Services, Hartwig Schafer, has commended farmers in Rulindo District for working hard to increase productivity. Schafer was visiting farmers in Buyoga Sector, in the company of government officials on Wednesday.

They toured various activities supported by the World Bank such as land management, compost production and improved farming projects which have greatly increased crop production and improved livelihoods.

Over the past six years, the World Bank has been supporting the Ministry of Agriculture through a project dubbed 'Land Husbandry, Water Harvesting and Hillside Irrigation Project' (LWH-RSSP), which helps farmers improve methods of farming to increased production. [Read more.](#)

First Lady challenges youth on leadership

First Lady, Jeannette Kagame yesterday called on youth leaders to cultivate positive values, which will lead Rwanda through future challenges.

Mrs. Kagame said this while at the Young Leaders Conference themed "Sowing seeds of excellence in young leaders generation", held at the Golden Tulip Hotel in Nyamata, that brought together about 250 young leaders from across the nation—representing various sectors. The first edition of the Young Leaders Conference was organised—by Rwanda Leaders Fellowship (RLF)—as a prelude to the National Prayer Breakfast to be held today. Pastor Dr. Antoine Rutayisire, the Chairperson of the Rwanda Leaders Fellowship reiterated that the rationale behind the creation of the Fellowship is to affirm conviction that the Bible has much to offer in terms of molding the character of leadership. [Read more.](#)

Nkombo island potentials get unlocked as electricity connections attract new small scale local investments

Nkombo Island, in Lake Kivu, is saturated with captivating beauty, a beauty that has been splashed on her endearing face and surface by creation—the silent ripples that create mobile glows as they consume the cast rays of the sun, the luxuriant green vegetation that drunkenly leer about and the abundant aqua life—all give the island a unique glamour that had been neglected for long. [Read more.](#)

Rwanda maintains high-end tourism strategy as visitors to Africa surge

Tourism is on the rise on the African continent but is yet to reach its full potential, according to the 2015 edition of the Africa Tourism Monitor. The report, produced annually by the AfDB, New York University's Africa House and the Africa Travel Association, released last week, shows that Morocco, Egypt, South Africa, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe remained the five most visited African destinations.

CAR officials learn from Rwanda's reconciliation process

A delegation of 30 people from the Central African Republic (CAR) is in the country to learn about Rwanda's unity and reconciliation process. The delegation arrived on January 10, for a six-day, study tour that will end on January 17. The group, on Thursday met with Rwandan judicial officials at the Supreme Court.

Rwanda's economic outlook for 2016

The Rwanda Development Board has been pivotal in ensuring policies deliberated upon are implemented. Later this year, Rwanda hosts the World Economic Forum, bearing testimony to progress made in sharing the big stage with larger economies. Joining CNBC Africa to take stock of this, and discuss the country's economic outlook for 2016, is Serge Kamuhinda, Chief Operations Officer at the Rwanda Development Board.

CNBC Africa to relocate regional studios to Kigali

Business news television channel, CNBC Africa, is set to move its regional studios in Kigali, from Nairobi, according to officials at the network. The regional headquarters and studios will be opened in Kigali next month. Speaking to The New Times, Patrick Ojil, the Business Development Manager at CNBC Africa, said their decision was inspired by the goodwill and support from the Rwandan government. "Rwanda is a very receptive country. We have received support from the Government through Rwanda Development Board (RDB)," he said. [Read more.](#)