



During the visit of H.E. Amina Salum Ali, Ambassador of the African Union to the United States to address the Pacific Council on International Policy, the SoCalATA Board of Directors hosted a reception in her honor. This provided an official welcome to Southern California for the top African diplomat representing the 54 member nations of the African Union. The reception was attended by Ambassadors of the African Consulates officed in Los Angeles, including their senior consular officers. Ambassador Ali's remarks centered on Africa's incoming tourism and expressing her acknowledgement of Southern California as the key source market, providing the largest percentage of U.S. leisure travelers to majority of the African destinations. Further, her remarks provided insight into the official collaboration between the AU and ATA in providing development and promotion of Africa's tourism.



## Destination **AFRICA**

**54**  
unique  
nations of  
the African  
Union  
invite you

Algeria  
Angola  
Benin  
Botswana  
Burkina Faso  
Burundi  
Cameroon  
Cape Verde  
Central African Republic  
Chad  
Comoros  
Congo-DR  
Republic of Congo  
Cote d'Ivoire  
Djibouti  
Egypt  
Equatorial Guinea  
Eritrea  
Ethiopia  
Gabon  
The Gambia  
Ghana  
Guinea  
Guinea-Bissau  
Kenya  
Lesotho  
Liberia  
Libya  
Madagascar  
Malawi  
Mali  
Mauritania  
Mauritius  
Mozambique  
Namibia  
Niger  
Nigeria  
Rwanda  
Sahrawi  
Sao Tome & Principe  
Senegal  
Seychelles  
Sierra Leone  
Somalia  
South Africa  
Sudan  
Swaziland  
Tanzania  
Togo  
Tunisia  
Uganda  
Zambia  
Zimbabwe

## African Cruising on the Move

As many in the industry know SoCalATA has been one of the most active forces to get cruising in African waters into the industry's mainstream. Not long ago we initiated our **Africa Cruise Night Dinner/Seminars** – very successful. Plus at every meeting, congress, industry presentation, the governments, the DMOs (destination management organizations) – we bring up the need to engage the cruise industry and the major tour operators to take a closer look at Africa's oceans and rivers as a leisure market cruise product.

Our efforts are paying off, **AMA Waterways** has announced its initial Africa cruise product by chartering the Zambesi Queen, launched last year on the Chobe River in Botswana and offering four day cruises as part of their Africa Safaris and Wildlife Cruise program. We sincerely appreciate the AMA effort by its chief, Jimmy Murphy, who most of us in Southern California know as the senior statesman of the industry for succumbing to our haggling efforts.

In another development a long time **ATA member, Cox & Kings** has announced their entry into the Africa cruise market with a 10 day Africa West Coast cruise on board of the Callisto. Cox & Kings has been associated with Africa tourism for decades, this over 250-year young tour company, now headquartered in Los Angeles, should be welcomed as the newest Africa cruise operator!

Then there is **MSC Starlight Cruises** sailing out of Durban, South Africa. Although at low-profile in the U.S. market, they are operating scheduled cruises in the south African waters – a perfect product for the America safari market, e.g. from LA fly to SA – take a 3 or 4-day safari stay at Sabi Sands and hop on a cruise to relax and explore Africa.

And of course the two West Africa "regulars" – the **Variety Cruises** with a weekly West Africa River Cruises, operating out of Dakar, Senegal every Friday (Dec-April), and the **Travel Dynamics International** with their great selections of West Africa coastal cruises.

These are in addition to the traditional Egyptian cruise products, such as the **Viking River Cruises** and others on the Nile and the Red Sea. These continue to be popular and established a level of market interest for Africa cruising.

**African Mediterranean**, cruises are on a bit of a hold, however after the political issues stabilize our efforts addressing moving some of the existing European Mediterranean cruise business to the waters of the African Mediterranean will resume. The major international cruise lines are including Africa in their itineraries and some are starting to integrate scheduled sailings from and to African ports – all are welcomed as new business and products to sell.

*All these are very much answering the three criteria that ATA places on product development – to benefit the travelers with excitingly new options; provide the travel trade with new products to expand their business and finally, assist the economic development in Africa – every one of the cruise passenger we send from the U.S. or Canada contributes directly to the socio-economic wellbeing of Africa—and that is part ATA's job.*

## Zambia and Zimbabwe to host the 20th Session of the UNWTO General Assembly

As alluded to during the SoCalATA Zambia Dinner/Seminar, Zambia and Zimbabwe have won the bid to jointly host the 20th Session of the UNWTO (World Tourism Organization) General Assembly in 2013. The Session will be hosted in the countries' two major tourist towns, Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe and Livingstone in Zambia.

Zambian new Information, Broadcasting, and Tourism Minister, Given Lubinda, noted that the hosting of the UNWTO General Assembly will greatly contribute to the growth of tourist arrivals to the region—we agree.

Two ATA Member Airlines have announced new destinations that will open up the Central and Southern Africa to easier and more convenient air connections. **Emirates**, with service from Los Angeles and San Francisco, via Dubai are starting flights to Lusaka, Zambia and Harare, Zimbabwe as of 1st of January 2012. Zambia and Zimbabwe, which share the Victoria Falls, one of the natural wonders of the world, will now be linked with a five times weekly flight from and to Dubai.

From New York, Washington, DC and Atlanta, **South African Airways (SAA)** will start service via Johannesburg to Kigali, Rwanda and onwards to Bujumbura, Burundi. Effective January 17, 2012. The return flights will operate from Bujumbura to Kigali and onwards to Johannesburg's Tambo International airport.

These flights are now available for reservations in your GDS or directly with the carriers.

## Three Major California Travel Shows are coming up.

Starting with the **Los Angeles Travel & Adventure Show at the Long Beach Convention Center** during which SoCalATA will be making special trade and consumer presentations. January 14 and 15, 2012.

**LOS ANGELES  
TRAVEL &  
ADVENTURE  
SHOW.**

**Los Angeles Times  
& TRAVEL  
SHOW**

Followed on January 27, 28 and 29, 2012 by the **Los Angeles Times Travel Show**. An important aspect of the L.A. Times show will be Friday, January 27, the day is being reserved for the travel and tour trade only—no consumer. This should provide for some new presentations geared totally to the tourism and travel professionals, with the SoCalATA booth featuring the **Southern California based tour operators** either specializing in Africa or having Africa as a major part of their portfolio.

**Bay Area  
TRAVEL &  
ADVENTURE  
SHOW.**

SoCalATA will be at North California **Bay Area Travel & Adventure Show** on February 18 and 19, 2012 at the Santa Clara Convention Center. SoCalATA will be at all three shows—put the dates on your must-attend calendars.

**The SoCal travel agent and tour operator community continues to provide the largest number of leisure travelers to every one of Africa's tourist destinations.**

The Africa portion of California's travel business keeps growing. In all of the Africa destinations Southern California provides the largest percentage of U.S. incoming tourists—in most cases from 25 % to 50% of the totals (Tanzania 50+%, Egypt 27%).

**The most startling revelation reported in various industry reports is that Africa receives more tourists than the Caribbean, Central America and South America combined.**

**Consider learning how to sell AFRICA  
by joining the**

**Africa Travel Association**

**Southern California Chapter**

Call Sylvia at 818 760-0327 or go to the SoCalATA website:

**[www.SocalATA.Org](http://www.SocalATA.Org)**

## ATA Airline Partners

الخطوط الجوية الأفريقية  
**AFRIQIYAH AIRWAYS**

**Arik  
INTERNATIONAL**

**DELTA**

**EGYPTAIR**

**Emirates**

**Ethiopian**  
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**royal air maroc**

**SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS**  
A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

**APG  
GLOBAL ASSOCIATES**

## ATA Member NOTE

Please send us your contact updates for the **SoCalATA Consumer Listing Handout** being finalized for the upcoming consumer travel shows and the ATA outreach. Email to: **[InfoATA@earthlink.net](mailto:InfoATA@earthlink.net)**

## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



**About ATA:** Africa Travel Association (ATA) is the principal global trade organization promoting travel and tourism to Africa and strengthening intra-Africa partnerships. Established in 1975, ATA serves both the public and private sectors of the international travel and tourism industry. ATA is a non-profit 501 (c) 6 professional association. ATA membership comprises African governments, their tourism ministers, tourism providers and boards, airlines, cruise lines, hotels, resorts, front-line travel sellers and operators; tour operators and travel agents, and affiliate industries. ATA partners with the **African Union Commission** to promote the sustainable development of tourism to and across Africa. ATA's annual events in Africa and the USA bring together industry leaders to shape Africa's tourism agenda. ATA directly and indirectly generates over \$15 billion annually in tourism receipts as direct contribution to Africa's export earnings.

More information: **[www.AfricaTravelAssociation.Org](http://www.AfricaTravelAssociation.Org)**—**[www.SocalATA.Org](http://www.SocalATA.Org)**

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