

## PRESS STATEMENT

### Africa Tourism Research Network (ATRN) On the Occasion of UN Tourism/ World Tourism Day

September 27, 2025

The Africa Tourism Research Network (ATRN) proudly joins the global community in commemorating this year's **United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) World Tourism Day/UN Tourism Day**. This special day provides not only a platform to celebrate the immense contributions of tourism to economic growth, cultural exchange, and international cooperation, but also an opportunity to reflect on the urgent challenges facing the sector in Africa and beyond.

Tourism remains one of Africa's most powerful drivers of sustainable development, job creation and regional integration. With our diverse cultures, natural wonders and vibrant communities, Africa has the potential to remain a global leader in authentic tourism experiences. However, realizing this potential requires **stronger commitment to research, innovation, policy alignment, and inclusive practices** that benefit local communities as much as international visitors.

As the theme of this year's World Tourism Day highlights the role of tourism in shaping a more sustainable and resilient future, ATRN underscores three critical priorities for Africa:

1. **Evidence-Based Policy and Research** – Data-driven decision-making must guide Africa's tourism strategies to ensure competitiveness and sustainability.
2. **Community-Centered Tourism** – Tourism growth must translate into tangible benefits for local people, safeguarding culture and heritage while creating jobs and opportunities.
3. **Sustainability and Innovation** – Climate-resilient, technology - driven and environmentally conscious tourism models must be at the forefront of Africa's tourism agenda.

On this occasion, ATRN calls upon **governments, private sector actors, development partners, and communities across Africa** to deepen collaboration and prioritize tourism not only as an economic sector but as a tool for peace, cultural understanding and inclusive prosperity.

Tourism is more than travel — it is about connecting people, protecting heritage and building a shared future. Africa must seize this moment to reimagine and reposition its tourism sector for global leadership.

We at ATRN remain committed to providing research, advocacy and partnerships that strengthen Africa's tourism ecosystem and ensure that our continent fully harnesses the opportunities that tourism presents.

**Happy World Tourism Day!**

**Signed:**

Emmanuel Frimpong, Founding President  
Africa Tourism Research Network (ATRN)