

Zimbabwe's government to review visa regime to boost tourism

The government is in the process of reviewing the country's visa requirements to boost tourism and attract foreign direct investment, Vice President Constantino Chiwenga has said. He was speaking at a recent national tourism strategy workshop hosted by the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality Industry.



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Chiwenga said Zimbabwe should take advantage of the confidence of the international community in the new administration to market the country as a "preferred destination for tourists and investors".

"We should take advantage of the goodwill towards the new dispensation to vigorously market 'destination Zimbabwe' to the world," he said.

Facilitating smooth entry

"As part of the facilitation of smooth entry for tourists and investors, we have placed a high priority on the review and amendment of our visa regime within the first 100 days in office."

The vice president said Zimbabwe should move away from the trend in most African countries where almost two-thirds of the world's population must obtain visas before entry. He said the Ministry of Home Affairs was committed to having an e-government programme that would ensure visitors got instant visas at points of entry to improve efficiency.

"The National Tourism Sector Strategy should, therefore, make the entry and exiting of tourists smooth and also harness domestic tourism, which is a key component of growth," he said.

Chiwenga said the government would also revamp Air Zimbabwe and make it play its role of being the national flag carrier to improve the movement of tourists within and outside the country.

He said current foreign currency shortages had not spared the tourism sector, adding that the Treasury would ensure strategies are put in place to ensure the sector got a fair allocation. Zimbabwe does not currently have a tourism strategy that guides the sector and helps it unlock its growth potential and development.

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