



May/June, 2026

International Institute for Peace through Tourism - **Travel Promotes Peace** - iipt.org -

Greetings to our global IIPT community,

If you are anything like me, each day begins with anticipation as we absorb the latest news and developments from around the world. In times of uncertainty and rapid change, it is especially important to draw inspiration from those who continue to shine a light of hope, optimism, and positive action.

One of the greatest sources of encouragement comes from the remarkable work being carried out by members of our own international family of peacebuilders and tourism leaders. Together, we continue to advance initiatives that foster understanding, compassion, and positive change—keeping the momentum moving firmly in the direction of peace and good.

In this month's newsletter, we are delighted to spotlight the IIPT Southern Africa Chapter and the many impactful activities they are undertaking in their communities. As always, the Caribbean Chapter continues to inspire through its strong presence and leadership at tourism events across the region, such as in Jamaica. We also share an exciting update on plans for IIPT's 40th Anniversary Summit, a milestone celebration that promises to honor our legacy while looking ahead to the future of peace through tourism.

Thank you for being part of this extraordinary global movement. Your dedication and commitment continue to make a meaningful difference in communities around the world.

MESSAGE FROM ADMIN



IIPT 40TH ANNIVERSARY UPDATE

DEAR FAMILY:

At the outset, please accept our sincere appreciation for your patience and support as we have worked our way through a decision regarding the proposed IIPT 40th Anniversary Summit. As we all know, the world has changed significantly since the initial plans for this summit were announced. That is why an in-depth review was given to the best procedural strategy for the 40th Anniversary Celebration at our last IIPT Board Meeting. Given the current political and economic climate, as well as significant global conflicts, the Board decided to change the structure of the anniversary event from a primarily in person event with a virtual audience to an exclusively virtual global event. The new date will be Thursday, September 10, 2026, 9:00 am New York Time. Please SAVE THE DATE.

As previously discussed, the anniversary celebration will look back over IIPT's impressive accomplishments under Lou's stewardship, as well as chart out future strategies to advance the Peace Through Tourism mission and movement throughout the world over the next forty years. Each of you will be crucial to that future.

The in-person summit will be rescheduled for July/August 2027 at the United Nations World Headquarters in New York City. The specific dates will be announced later.

Again, we thank you for your patience and your steadfast support, and we look forward to all of us working together to make the virtual summit a truly memorable and successful event. More details to follow.

Sincerely,

Timothy Marshall

Timothy Marshall
Chairman
IIPT Board of Directors

Ajay Prakash

Ajay Prakash
Global President IIPT

NEWS FROM THE SOUTHERN AFRICA CHAPTER

Dr. Mmatsatsi Ramawela and her chapter have compiled an inspiring grouping of news which makes them the spotlight chapter of this issue. Normally, we are briefer with stories in our IIPT newsletter, but this material documents a great deal of activity performed by this chapter for which there should be a record! From peace parks to soccer grannies, news from the Southern Africa chapter will serve to remind us of the power we have in our hands to make a difference in our communities.

Story 1: Women Advancing Global Tourism - IWDC 2026 Tourism Sectoral Programme

The International Women's Development Council (IWDC) Conference 2026, held from 25–29 March, showcased the transformative role of women in tourism under the theme: "Women Advancing Global Tourism: Driving Economic Growth, Cultural Exchange and Sustainable Destinations."

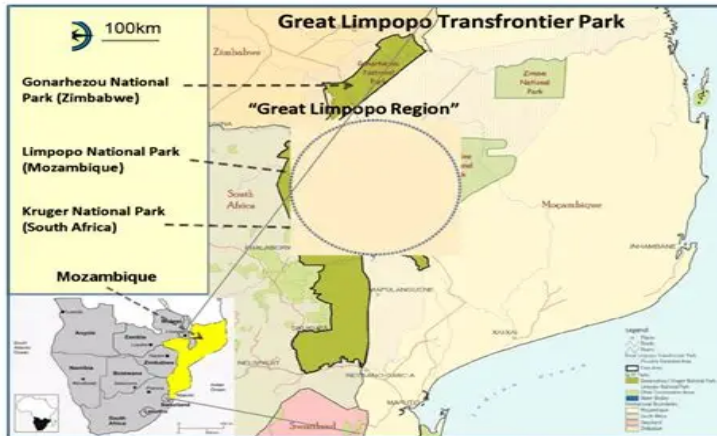


On Day 4, the Tourism Sectoral Programme was convened by Ms Bunny Bhoola, Tourism Sectoral Head within the IWDC Secretariat, and moderated by Dr Mmatsatsi Ramawela, Chapter President of IIPT Southern Africa. Together, they curated a programme that highlighted women's leadership, innovation, and

commitment to using tourism as a force for peace and prosperity.

Story 2: Tourism Without Borders – The Great Limpopo Peace Park

The Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park is one of Southern Africa's most compelling examples of tourism as a force for peace. Stretching across South Africa, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, the park unites three nations under a shared vision of conservation and sustainable tourism. Communities along the borders benefit from eco-tourism initiatives, job creation, and cultural exchange, while wildlife corridors allow species to roam freely across boundaries. This collaboration demonstrates that nature knows no borders, and tourism can be a platform for peaceful coexistence



- **Map of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park**

Story 3: Responsible Tourism Awards – Africa’s Inclusive Growth Model

At the 2026 WTM Africa Responsible Tourism Awards, several South African operators were honored for their innovative approaches to community engagement and sustainability. These projects range from lodges that reinvest profits into local schools, to tour operators who prioritize cultural exchange and inclusivity. The awards highlight how responsible tourism can reduce inequality, empower marginalized communities, and promote environmental stewardship. By embedding peace and equity into tourism practices, Africa is showing the world that tourism can be more than leisure — it can be a driver of social justice and reconciliation. The recognition of these initiatives underscores Southern Africa’s leadership in shaping tourism as a tool for inclusive growth and peaceful development.



- **WTM Africa Responsible Tourism Awards ceremony**

Story 4: Heritage Tourism – Africa–Europe Dialogue

A new collaborative project is linking heritage sites in South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana with European partners to foster cultural dialogue and shared learning. Sites such as Robben Island, Namibian rock art, and Botswana’s Okavango heritage landscapes are being connected with European museums and cultural institutions. This initiative positions tourism as cultural diplomacy, enabling communities to share histories, confront painful legacies, and celebrate common values. By encouraging exchanges between African and European heritage custodians, the project reinforces peace through mutual respect and understanding. Heritage tourism becomes not only a journey into the past, but also a pathway to reconciliation and global solidarity.



Namibian rock art at Twyfelfontein

Story 5: Community-Led Tourism – Empowerment in Limpopo & KwaZulu-Natal

In Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal, grassroots tourism projects are transforming

communities. Local cooperatives are offering cultural storytelling experiences, traditional craft workshops, and conservation education programs. These initiatives generate livelihoods, build local pride, and foster respect between visitors and hosts. For example, community guides in Limpopo share indigenous knowledge about medicinal plants, while KwaZulu-Natal artisans showcase beadwork traditions that carry deep cultural meaning. These projects demonstrate how tourism can empower communities to become custodians of both culture and peace. By giving local people ownership of tourism initiatives, the industry becomes a vehicle for harmony, dignity, and sustainable development.



- **Tourists participating in cultural workshops**

Story 6: *Peace Towns Programme – IIPT Southern Africa*



- **Municipal leaders with community members (symbolic representation)**

The Peace Towns initiative, spearheaded by IIPT Southern Africa, is gaining momentum. The programme designates towns and communities as “Peace Destinations,” encouraging municipalities to embed tourism in strategies that promote harmony, inclusivity, and cultural exchange. By aligning tourism planning with peace-building objectives, towns are

encouraged to celebrate diversity, foster dialogue, and create welcoming spaces for both residents and visitors. This pioneering model demonstrates how local governance can integrate tourism into broader social development agendas. The Peace Towns Programme positions Southern Africa as a trailblazer in embedding peace into tourism policy and practice, offering lessons that can be replicated globally.

Story 7: Pietermaritzburg Gandhi Foundation Youth Fest 2026



On 24 April 2026, the Pietermaritzburg Gandhi Foundation hosted its Youth Fest at the historic Railway Station. Learners and students from primary schools to universities showcased creativity through skits, poetry, and artwork themed around *Sarvodaya* — the welfare of all. The event fostered dialogue on social issues, encouraged collaboration, and featured an interactive art workshop

with over fifty learners. The presence of dignitaries, educators, and peers created an uplifting atmosphere, reinforcing the importance of youth platforms in shaping civic awareness. Together, these events remind us that whether through football or art, communities thrive when people of all ages are given space to express themselves, connect, and inspire.

Story 8: Soweto Soccer Grannies Tournament



Grannies National Football Tournament 2026 The Soweto Senior Citizens Football League will host the Grannies National Football Tournament from 30 September to 5 October 2026 at Nike Stadium, Soweto. Elderly women aged 60+ from KZN, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, and Cape Town will compete in a spirited five-day event. Beyond the matches

scheduled for 3–4 October, the tournament celebrates resilience, health, and joy in later life. Teams will manage their own travel and accommodation, with a modest registration fee ensuring smooth administration.

Go Grannies!

NEWS FROM FABIO CARBONE

Dedicated IIPT contributor Fabio is pleased to share this interview published by the Italian national newspaper *Il Fatto Quotidiano*, where he had the opportunity to discuss my work across academic research, cultural heritage, tourism, cultural diplomacy, and Education in Emergencies.

A journey built through universities, international projects, and field engagement, guided by one constant belief: knowledge must create real impact for people and communities.

Fabio extended warm thanks to *Il Fatto Quotidiano*, and *Il Fatto Quotidiano - Cervelli in fuga*, in particular Marco Vesperini for this opportunity to reflect and share.

<https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2026/04/26/archeologo-italiano-regno-unito-carriera-cervelli-fuga/8363263/>

NEWS FROM THE CARIBBEAN CHAPTER

Diana McIntyre-Pike has sent a PDF file with details regarding Jamaica and the Caribbean Home of Community Tourism PP being sent to the chapter's VP of CCTN/VAB Donovan Longmore to present at the upcoming Jamaica Diaspora Conference.

The entire PDF file is attached for further reference, and the document outlines the 2026-2027 strategy for promoting community tourism in Jamaica and the Caribbean, focusing on sustainable development, cultural preservation, and community empowerment.

CLICK ON THE IMAGE FOR PDF FILE:



MORE FROM THE CARIBBEAN CHAPTER

Accra, Ghana – June 24, 2026 — Renowned cultural strategist, traditional diplomacy advocate, and Founder of the Sister Kingdom Network, **Dr. Tengol K. Kplemani**, has been appointed **Ambassador for Africa** by the Countrystyle Community Tourism Network/Villages as Businesses (CCTN/VAB), with endorsement from the International Institute for Peace Through Tourism (IIPT).

The prestigious appointment recognizes Dr. Kplemani's leadership in advancing African cultural unity, traditional diplomacy, creative industries, cultural tourism, and stronger ties between Africa and the global African Diaspora.

The appointment was endorsed by **Diana McIntyre-Pike**, Founder and President of CCTN/VAB, **Ajay Prakash**, President of IIPT, and **Dr. Louis**

D'Amore, Founder of IIPT. They commended his leadership through the Sister Kingdom Network in uniting African traditional institutions, creatives, entrepreneurs, and communities through culture, tourism, and sustainable development



Dr. Kplemani has been recognized for expanding Africa's digital music and entertainment ecosystem, building cultural partnerships across Africa and the Diaspora, establishing platforms such as the Cultural Oneness Festival, promoting heritage preservation and economic empowerment, advancing Pan-African traditional diplomacy, and fostering unity among people of African descent worldwide.

As Ambassador for Africa, he will strengthen cultural and tourism partnerships between Africa, the Caribbean, and the Diaspora, supporting peace through tourism, community

tourism, cultural exchange, youth empowerment, heritage preservation, and the creative economy.

Accepting the appointment, Dr. Kplemani said:

"This appointment is both an honour and a responsibility. Africa's cultural wealth and creative potential are powerful tools for peace, economic empowerment, and global unity. I look forward to strengthening connections between Africa, the Caribbean, and the Diaspora through culture, tourism, and our shared heritage."

In his new role, Dr. Kplemani will represent IIPT and CCTN/VAB across Africa and internationally by building partnerships, supporting community

tourism initiatives, promoting cultural diplomacy, mentoring youth and entrepreneurs, and participating in international forums and cultural missions.

The appointment reflects a shared commitment to using culture, tourism, heritage, and the creative industries to advance sustainable development, peacebuilding, and international collaboration.

AND FINALLY . . .

Best wishes to all for a summer of peace, and please think of sending your news to be published in this newsletter. This way, we can build on each other's strengths as we continue our work in our little corners of the world

Bea Broda

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