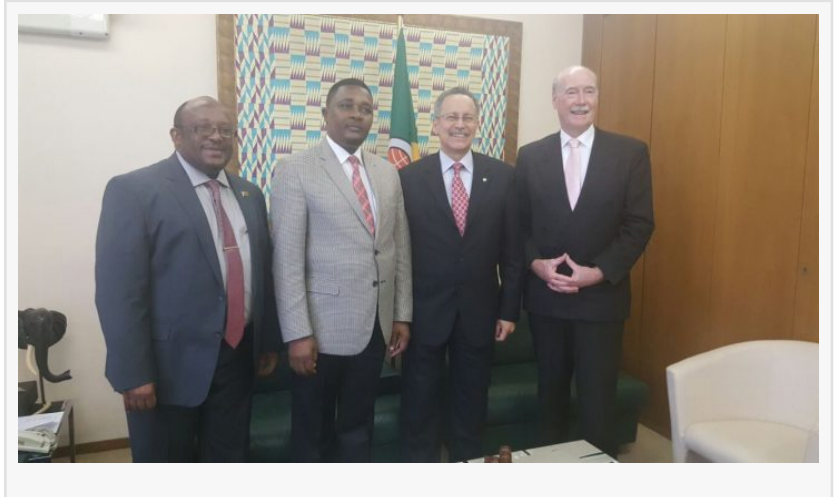


# UNWTO Secretary General election campaign through the eyes of the Hon. Walter Mzembi

HARARE, ZIMBABWE, March 1, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Endorsed by the African Union (AU) during the July 2016 summit in Kigali, Rwanda, Dr. Walter Mzembi is continuing his worldwide outreach to garner international support for his bid to secure the top job at the Madrid-based tourism organization. Who will be the next Secretary-General of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)?



Elections for the next Secretary General will take place at UNWTO Headquarters, in Madrid, from 11 to 12 May 2017, during the course of the 105 Meeting of the Organisation's 33-member Executive Council.

Mzembi has traveled the globe over the intervening months, engaging directly with the governments of key UNWTO Executive Council member states – detailing his vision for the future development of global tourism under the UNWTO umbrella should he be elected Secretary General.



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*Hon. Dr. Walter Mzembi*

His most recent travels have taken him to Saudi Arabia, Iran, and India. An additional stop was made in Istanbul, Turkey, where, along with his counterpart Ministers from Azerbaijan and Ghana, both UNWTO Executive Council members. Mzembi participated in the 2017 World Tourism Forum in Istanbul.

The Minister then traveled to Brussels where he met

Ambassadors of the 79 member African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) Grouping. His final stop was the United Nations Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. Under the chairmanship of the African Union Permanent Delegate to the UN Organisations based in Geneva, he met with the 51 African Permanent Representatives to the UN. The same representatives have administrative oversight for the African Union at the UNWTO. UNWTO is based in Madrid, Spain.

Mzembi, who is also the minister of tourism and hospitality for Zimbabwe is due to spend only a few days home in Harare before embarking on the next leg of his outreach mission.

A final round of visits is being scheduled from mid-April to early May.

As the March 11 deadline for the submission of candidatures to the UNWTO post approaches, there

are 5 officially declared candidates for the Secretary General's post.

Apart from Dr. Mzembi there is Mrs. Doh Young-shim (Korea). She entered into an unprecedented electoral alliance with Mr. Carlos Vogeler, a serving Executive Director of the UNWTO, a Venezuelan- Spanish national. Mr. Marcio Favilla a Brazilian, Ambassador Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili from Georgia and Mr. Alain St Ange from the Seychelles are also competing with Dr. Mzembi for the post.

Dr. Mzembi said: " In a very real sense, the electoral contest is between a group of candidates from Korea/Spain, Brazil, and Georgia who constitute and who promise little more than a continuation of the status-quo and stand for UNWTO to carry on as before. My candidature is about my promise to bring significant change to the manner in which the UNWTO approaches and delivers upon its mandate."

According to Dr Mzembi, his assessment is shared by many of those he had engaged in his outreach program. Mr. Mzembi feels that to surrender the UNWTO Secretary-General-ship to yet another bureaucratic succession will be to condemn the Organisation to further peripheralisation and irrelevance within the global system. According to Mr. Mzembi, this is an outcome which can in no way serve the best interests of the tourism industry or the millions upon millions across the globe whose livelihoods depend on legitimate, unfettered, facilitated travel.

Dr. Mzembi envisages a UNWTO more audible and more visible both within the UN system and more broadly on behalf of the international tourism industry. This vision includes promoting sustainable tourism, in all its many facets, to the very mainstream of global socio-economic development under the SDG platform. It includes securing widespread recognition of tourism as a major contributor to the quest for global understanding, harmony, and peace.

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