



RWANDA HIGH COMMISSION IN KENYA

NEWSLETTER ISSUE 16 - JANUARY 2026

IN THIS ISSUE

- Rwanda-Kenya Relations
- Diplomacy
- Security
- Environment



Rwanda High Commission In Kenya

RDF deploys military engineers to support infrastructure rehabilitation in Jamaica



PG. 9

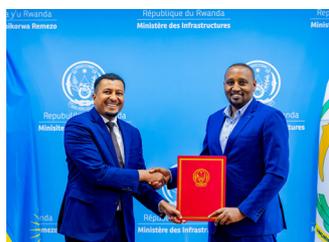
Rwanda backs Mushikiwabo for third term as Francophonie SG

PG. 4



Rwanda, Kenya formalise KPA Kigali office to strengthen regional trade

PG. 5



Rwanda, Mexico celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations

PG. 6



Oman Air to start direct flights to Kigali

PG. 7



Foreword



H.E. Ernest Rwamucyo
*High Commissioner of the
Republic of Rwanda to Kenya*

Dear Reader,

We are pleased to share this edition of the High Commission of the Republic of Rwanda in Kenya newsletter, which captures a period marked by active diplomacy, strengthened partnerships, and Rwanda's continued engagement at regional and global levels.

The stories featured in this issue reflect Rwanda's commitment to principled multilateralism and constructive international cooperation. They highlight key developments, including Rwanda's support for effective leadership within the International Organisation of La Francophonie, efforts to deepen regional trade and logistics cooperation with Kenya, and milestones in bilateral relations with partners across different regions of the world.

This edition also underscores Rwanda's growing connectivity and openness, as demonstrated by new air links, visa facilitation agreements, and initiatives aimed at enhancing people-to-people exchanges. In parallel, it showcases Rwanda's contribution to global peace, stability, and recovery efforts through peacekeeping deployments and humanitarian support, as well as the country's dedication to inclusive development through conservation-driven community initiatives.

Collectively, these engagements illustrate Rwanda's foreign policy approach—one that prioritises dialogue, mutual respect, shared prosperity, and practical solutions to common challenges. They also reaffirm Rwanda's belief in partnerships that deliver tangible benefits for citizens, the region, and the international community.

We invite you to read on and engage with the stories that follow, which offer insight into Rwanda's ongoing efforts to build meaningful cooperation and advance shared interests with Kenya and partners around the world.

Rwanda backs Mushikiwabo for third term as Francophonie SG



The Government of Rwanda has decided to back Louise Mushikiwabo for a third term as Secretary-General of the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF).

In an interview with *Jeune Afrique*, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Olivier Nduhungirehe noted that the decision followed strong support expressed by several OIF member states during the organisation's ministerial conference held in Kigali in November last year.

He added that, in light of Mushikiwabo's widely recognised record, and following consultations

with her, Rwanda decided to re-submit her candidacy at the OIF Summit scheduled for November in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Since taking office in 2019, Mushikiwabo has overseen what the minister described as a profound, structured and coherent transformation of the organisation, strengthening its political credibility, institutional clarity, and operational effectiveness.

"We are therefore quite confident in the success of this proposal," he said.

If re-elected at the November summit, Mushikiwabo would become the second Secretary-Gen-

eral of the OIF to serve three terms, after former Senegalese President Abdou Diouf.

Last year, while in Kigali for the Francophonie Summit, Mushikiwabo addressed questions about a possible third term, saying she would first consult Rwanda's leadership before making a decision.

"I have been solicited by several countries that have asked me to consider campaigning. I was very touched and honoured by the request of our member states," she told journalists during a press conference held on the sidelines of the bloc's two-day summit in Kigali.

Rwanda, Kenya formalise KPA Kigali office to strengthen regional trade



On January 22, Rwanda and Kenya formalized the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) establishing the Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) Liaison Office in Kigali, marking a significant milestone in strengthening bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

The ceremony was presided over by Mr. Canoth Manishimwe, Permanent Secretary at Rwanda's Ministry of Infrastructure, alongside Mr. Mohamed Daghar, CBS, Principal Secretary in the State Department for Transport, Ministry of Roads and Transport of Kenya.

The signed MoU establishes a strategic framework to strengthen institutional and commercial linkages between Rwanda's business community and Mombasa Port services, and is expected to enhance coordination, improve access to port services, streamline logistics operations, and ultimately boost both local

and regional trade competitiveness.

Speaking during the ceremony, Daghar highlighted the strong growth in Rwandan cargo volumes transiting through the Port of Mombasa, noting an increase from approximately 600,000 metric tons in 2024 to over 800,000 metric tons in 2025.

He further described this upward trend as highly promising, with the potential to reach one million metric tons in the near future, an indicator of growing trade confidence and improved performance of the Northern Corridor.

The Principal Secretary also informed participants about the recent completion of the Kipevu Oil Terminal, a strategic investment expected to significantly improve efficiency in the handling of petroleum products. He encouraged the Rwandan business community to leverage

these infrastructure developments to expand trade volumes through the Port of Mombasa, reaffirming KPA's commitment to providing reliable, efficient, and competitive port services.

In his remarks, Manishimwe emphasized that the MoU goes beyond a formal agreement, describing it as a clear demonstration of the strong and long-standing partnership between Rwanda and Kenya, anchored in mutual trust, shared regional interests, and a common vision for economic integration and sustainable development.

"As a land-linked country, Rwanda places strategic importance on efficient, reliable, and cost-effective access to regional and international markets," he noted, underscoring the critical role of the Northern Corridor, with the Port of Mombasa serving as a key gateway in Rwanda's trade and logistics ecosystem.

The Permanent Secretary highlighted that the KPA Liaison Office in Kigali will operate as a one-stop interface between Rwanda's public and private sector stakeholders and the Kenya Ports Authority.

This arrangement is expected to improve cargo tracking and predictability, reduce transit times, address operational challenges more efficiently, and lower the overall cost of doing business—outcomes fully aligned with Rwanda's national development priorities and regional trade commitments under the East African Community (EAC) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Rwanda, Mexico celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations



On January 28, Rwanda and Mexico celebrated 50 years of diplomatic relations, highlighting growing cooperation in diplomacy, finance, tourism, and multilateral engagement.

The event was held in Nairobi and hosted by the Ambassador of Mexico to Rwanda, with residence in Kenya, Amb. Gisele Fernández Ludlow.

In her remarks, Amb. Ludlow noted that despite the geographical distance between Mexico and Rwanda, the two countries have developed strong relations in areas of mutual interest.

“Mexico and Rwanda have cultivated a relationship in tax transparency, financial integrity, and broader diplomatic engagement through Africa-focused initiatives, reflecting a shared commitment to global governance and cooperation,” she said.

The celebration, she added, invites both countries not only to honour the past and acknowledge the

present, but also to renew the shared commitment to the future.

“Rwanda’s growth in Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) tourism, combined with Mexico’s experience in this field, opens new avenues for exchange, investment, and cooperation in tourism,” she noted.

Speaking at the event, Amb. Ernest Rwamucyo, High Commissioner of Rwanda to Kenya, underscored that Rwanda highly values the cordial and principled cooperation it enjoys with Mexico, both bilaterally and on the international stage.

“Over the past five decades, Rwanda and Mexico have maintained sustained and meaningful interactions, particularly within multilateral forums, where our countries have consistently upheld shared principles of multilateralism, dialogue, international solidarity, and respect for international law,” he said.

These engagements, he added, have strengthened mutual understanding and contributed positively to global peace and sustainable development.

Amb. Rwamucyo also underlined that Rwanda remains keen to further strengthen bilateral cooperation with Mexico across a broad range of areas, including political consultations, trade and investment, education, innovation, tourism, agriculture, climate action, and South–South cooperation.

Currently, Mexico is accredited to Rwanda through its Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, and maintains an Honorary Consulate in Kigali. Conversely, Rwanda is accredited to Mexico through its Embassy in Washington, D.C.

According to Aimable Rumongi, Honorary Consul of Mexico in Rwanda, who was at the celebration event in Nairobi, there have been growing people-to-people relations between the two countries following the inauguration of Mexico’s Honorary Consulate to Kigali in 2019.

Representing the Government of Kenya at the celebration, Amb. Stella Munyi, Deputy Director-General for the Americas and Caribbean Directorate at the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs of Kenya, congratulated Rwanda and Mexico on the milestone, noting that Kenya enjoys warm and cordial bilateral and multilateral relations with both countries, grounded in matters of common interest.

The celebration featured an exhibition of photographs and historical documents that trace fifty years of friendship between Rwanda and Mexico. Among the displayed items was the original telegram announcing the establishment of diplomatic relations and the official press communiqué issued on 21 January 1976.

Oman Air to start direct flights to Kigali



Oman Air has announced the launch of direct flights between Muscat, Oman, and Kigali, aimed at strengthening air connectivity between the Sultanate of Oman and East Africa.

The flights are expected to commence in June this year, subject to regulatory approvals, the airline said in a statement issued on January 11.

The announcement was made during an official visit to Oman by Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Olivier Nduhungirehe, who led a delegation that included Minister of Finance and Economic Planning Yusuf Murangwa, Minister of ICT and Innovation Paula Ingabire, and Minister of State for Infrastructure Affairs Jean de Dieu Uwihanganye.

“As we continue to expand our network in markets with strong long-term potential, the launch of services to Kigali supports closer engagement between Oman and Rwanda and unlocks the growing tourism potential of both countries,” said Con Korfiatis, CEO of Oman Air.

He added that the new route will enable seamless connections between Africa and Oman Air’s wider network, while offering travelers the airline’s award-winning service and renowned Omani hospitality.

The new Muscat-Kigali route is expected to boost tourism and business travel, particularly in MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions), while providing travellers with wider connectivity to Oman Air’s global network across the Middle East,

Asia, Europe, and the Pacific.

Minister Uwihanganye noted that enhanced air connectivity will support Rwanda’s vision to position Kigali as an important international centre for aviation, economic, and social activities.

Oman Air flights between Kigali and Muscat will enhance the development of close cooperation with various countries, he added.

In a related development, on October 7, the Chamber of Deputies approved draft laws ratifying air service agreements signed with 12 countries, including Oman, signed on different occasions between 2022 and 2024.

These agreements aim to expand Rwanda’s international and regional aviation connections, facilitating trade, tourism, and economic cooperation.

Rwanda, Togo sign Visa Waiver Agreement



Rwanda and Togo have signed a Visa Waiver Agreement allowing holders of all categories of passports to travel between the two countries without requiring visas, a move aimed at strengthening bilateral relations.

The agreement was signed in Togo's capital, Lomé, by Rwanda's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Amb. Olivier Nduhungirehe, and his Togolese counterpart, Prof. Robert Dussey.

The visa waiver is expected to enhance people-to-people exchanges, facilitate trade and

investment, and promote tourism between Rwanda and Togo. By easing travel restrictions, the agreement is also anticipated to strengthen business ties, deepen diplomatic cooperation, and support broader African integration efforts in line with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the African Union's agenda on free movement of people.

Minister Nduhungirehe was in Lomé to attend a High-Level Meeting on the Coherence and Consolidation of the Peace Process in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the

Great Lakes Region on Saturday, January 17, as African Union (AU)-led mediation efforts intensify to ease tensions in eastern DRC.

The meeting, hosted by Togo, brought together key AU-appointed facilitators including former Presidents Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya, Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, Sahle-Work Zewde of Ethiopia, Mokgweetsi Masisi of Botswana, and Catherine Samba-Panza of the Central African Republic, alongside Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

RDF deploys military engineers to support infrastructure rehabilitation in Jamaica



On January 14, the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) deployed a contingent of military engineers to Jamaica to support the country's recovery efforts through the rehabilitation of infrastructure damaged by Hurricane Melissa last year.

The deployment was carried out in accordance with a bilateral agreement between Rwanda and Jamaica aimed at assisting

in the rehabilitation of critical infrastructure affected by natural disasters.

Prior to their departure, the RDF engineers received a briefing from Brigadier General Faustin Tinka, Commander of the Mechanised Division, on behalf of the RDF Chief of Defence Staff. He urged the deployed personnel to apply their full expertise, professionalism, and technical skills to

successfully accomplish the mission entrusted to them.

Hurricane Melissa struck the Caribbean region in late October 2025 with devastating force, with Jamaica experiencing the most severe impact. The disaster prompted a large-scale, multi-agency humanitarian response to address widespread damage to infrastructure and livelihoods.

Rwandan peacekeepers in CAR awarded UN service medals



Rwandan peacekeepers deployed in Bria, Central African Republic (CAR), were on January 7 awarded United Nations service medals in recognition of their dedicated service and significant contribution to peace and stability in the country.

The medals were presented to personnel from Rwanda Battle Group VII (RWABG VII) and the Rwanda Level II+ Hospital (RWAMED X), both serving under the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

The ceremony was presided over by the MINUSCA Deputy Force Commander, Major General Maychel Asmi, who commended the

Rwandan contingents for their professionalism, discipline, and operational effectiveness.

He particularly highlighted their vital role in supporting the electoral process, in line with MINUSCA's mandate.

Major General Asmi praised RWABG VII for its sustained efforts in securing the Bria, Ouadda, and Sam-Ouandja areas, and commended RWAMED X for providing critical medical services to both United Nations personnel and the local population.

In his remarks, Lieutenant Colonel Willy Ntagara, Contingent Commander of Rwanda Battle Group VII, described the medal

parade as one of the highest honours in a military career. He noted that the recognition serves as strong motivation for continued commitment to the mission's objectives and mandate.

Rwanda, one of the world's largest contributors of peacekeepers, first deployed to the Central African Republic in 2014—ten years after its first-ever peacekeeping deployment to Sudan's Darfur region.

In CAR, Rwandan troops are tasked with providing security for high-ranking government officials, including the President, as well as safeguarding key state installations. Rwanda also deploys police peacekeepers in the country.

Nyungwe National Park allocates Rwf1.2 billion to finance community projects



Nyungwe National Park's steady growth in visitor numbers over the past two decades has translated into tangible benefits for surrounding communities, with a record Rwf1.2 billion (more than \$820,000) tourism revenue-sharing fund set to finance six community projects in the 2024/2025 fiscal year.

The projects will be implemented across five districts bordering the park—Karongi, Rusizi, Nyamasheke, Nyaruguru and Nyamagabe—and were selected jointly by the Rwanda Development Board (RDB), park management, local government authorities and community representatives.

According to Nyungwe National Park Manager Protais Niyigaba, the growth of the revenue-sharing fund reflects the park's rising tourism profile and Rwanda's broader strategy to position conservation as a driver of inclusive development.

"One of the major positive outcomes has been the growth of tourism revenue-sharing funds that support selected community projects in the five districts where Nyungwe is located," Niyigaba said.

"For instance, the fund has grown from less than Rwf50 million in 2008 to more than Rwf1.2 billion in the 2024–2025 fiscal year," he added.

Projects eligible for revenue-sharing support are restricted to those addressing challenges affecting the park such as poaching, wildfires and human-wildlife conflict.

"Projects must also foster a sense of pride among communities living near the park and encourage active participation in conservation," park officials said.

Since the programme's launch in 2005, more than Rwf4.5 billion (more than \$3 million) has been shared with communities around Nyungwe alone. Nationwide, over Rwf5 billion (about \$3.5 million) will be allocated this year to communities neighbouring all of Rwanda's national parks, bringing total revenue sharing over the past 20 years to Rwf18 billion (more than \$12 million).

The share allocated to communities rose from 5 per cent of tourism revenues at the programme's inception to 10 per cent in 2017.

Tourism growth drives community benefits

Data from the Rwanda Statistical Yearbook 2025 show that visitor numbers to Nyungwe increased from 2,386 in 2005 to 29,667 in 2024, a surge that has significantly boosted revenues available for community development.

Nyungwe's international profile has also been elevated by its inscription on UNESCO's World Heritage List, making it Rwanda's first site to receive the designation and reinforcing its appeal as a premium ecotourism destination.

Niyigaba attributed the rise in visits to national efforts that prioritise tourism under a "high-value, low-volume" model.

"Initiatives such as Visit Rwanda

go beyond branding. They are part of a comprehensive strategy to market Rwanda as a diverse, all-round tourism destination," he noted.

Conservation, partnerships and new attractions

Gazetted as Rwanda's third national park in 2005, Nyungwe has since benefited from sustained investments in conservation, tourism infrastructure and community engagement. A key milestone was the Public-Private Partnership between the Government of Rwanda, through RDB, and African Parks Network, which led to the establishment of the Nyungwe Management Company.

This partnership enabled the development and upgrading of major tourism products, including the Canopy Walkway, Uwinka and Gisakura coffee shops, Uwinka and Gisovu guest houses, the Cyinzobe three-day trail, the Gisakura ropes course, one of East Africa's longest ziplines, and the 110-kilometre Nyungwe Traverse trail along the Congo–Nile Divide.

Nyungwe National Park is projected to generate USD 3.4 million in tourism revenue following the rollout of new attractions, including a 1,900-metre zipline and a 280-metre Gisakura ropes course. The park aims to reach USD 5 million in annual tourism revenue by 2030, with the zipline alone expected to attract about 9,000 visitors.

A recent report on the State of the Wildlife Economy in Rwanda estimates Nyungwe National Park's overall economic value at USD 4.8 billion, underscoring its importance not only as a conservation asset but also as a catalyst for community development.



<https://www.rwandainkenya.gov.rw>





- 📍 Rwanda High Commission to Kenya
- 🐦 @RwandaInKenya
- 📷 @rwandainkenya
- 🌐 rwandainkenya.gov.rw
- ✉️ ambanairobi@minaffet.gov.rw

