

# 2025 | KATA AGM & CONVENTION

“Going further, together”



## Event Report



# 2025 KATA AGM & CONVENTION

## EVENT VENUE



Pridelnn Paradise Beach  
Resort, Mombasa

## NUMBER OF DELEGATES



350+

## DELEGATES' COMPOSITION

Travel Agents, Airlines' Executives, Travel Technology Partners, Hotels, Insurance Providers, and Financial Institutions from **over 10 countries**. Ministries, Government Agencies, and Mombasa County Government were present among others.

## EVENT SPONSORS

12



## EXHIBITORS

15



## EVENT PARTNERS





# Message from the CEO

Dear Members, Partners, and Industry Stakeholders,

It is with immense gratitude and pride that I present this report of the KATA 2025 Annual General Meeting and Convention, held under the theme “Going Further, Together.” This year’s event was more than a gathering, it was a testament to the strength, resilience, and unity of Kenya’s travel industry. With over 350 delegates in attendance, representing both local and international sectors, we witnessed the power of collaboration in action.

From impactful keynote sessions and thought-provoking panels to cultural showcases and masterclasses, every moment of this convention reinforced one message: our progress is tied to our partnerships.

The presence of policymakers, global leaders, innovators, and our dedicated members helped create a platform that not only addressed current industry realities but also looked boldly toward the future.



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**This year, we also saw the fruits of deeper stakeholder engagement, digital transformation efforts, and the commitment of our members to adapt, lead, and grow. Whether in tackling data privacy, embracing new distribution systems, or supporting regional cooperation, your voices were central, and your energy, unmatched.**

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I extend my deepest appreciation to our sponsors, partners, and exhibitors for their unwavering support, and to the KATA Secretariat and planning teams for their hard work behind the scenes. To our members: thank you for your trust, your ideas, and your commitment to advancing our shared mission.

As we move forward, let us carry the momentum built in Mombasa into our everyday practice—fostering innovation, championing ethical leadership, and standing united in our advocacy for a more inclusive and sustainable travel industry.

We are indeed going further—because we are going together.

***Nicanor Sabula***  
**CEO, Kenya Association of Travel Agents (KATA)**

# Convention Summary



The 2025 Annual General Meeting and Convention marked a significant milestone in the evolution of Kenya's travel and tourism industry. Held from 26th to 28th June 2025 at the Pridelnn Paradise Beach Resort in Mombasa, the event convened over 350 delegates from Kenya, the African region, and the international travel community. It served as a dynamic platform to forge cross-border partnerships, confront sectoral challenges, and articulate a bold vision for the future of travel in Africa.

Under the unifying theme "Going Further, Together," the AGM underscored the centrality of collaboration in shaping a resilient, digitally empowered, and inclusive travel ecosystem. The three-day gathering featured impactful keynote addresses, thematic panel sessions, interactive masterclasses, and networking engagements that directly addressed current trends such as airline retailing, cruise tourism, policy advocacy, and the role of artificial intelligence in travel services.

The convention catalyzed tangible progress in areas such as regional integration, private-public partnerships, and technology-driven service delivery.

It reaffirmed KATA's leadership role in convening diverse stakeholders, and in influencing policy direction and professional standards within the travel sector.

The event built on the momentum generated in previous years, but this time, the urgency to act collectively was more apparent than ever. As the travel and tourism industry rebounds from the economic and operational setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2025 AGM provided a much-needed platform for evaluating recovery strategies, sharing success stories, and acknowledging persistent challenges.





# Recognition of Sponsors & Partners

The success of the KATA 2025 AGM and Convention was made possible through the generous support, collaboration, and participation of our sponsors, partners, and exhibitors. Their contributions not only helped bring this event to life but also enriched the experience for all delegates in attendance.

## PLATINUM SPONSOR

We extend our deepest gratitude to **Kenya Airways**, our Platinum Sponsor, whose unwavering support enabled us to deliver a high-impact event with extensive reach and visibility. Kenya Airways also played a key logistical role in flying over half of the delegates to Mombasa, further underscoring their commitment to the travel trade in Kenya and across Africa.



## SILVER SPONSORS

We acknowledge the contributions of our Silver Sponsors who played an instrumental role in enabling a high-quality conference environment and enriching content through their participation and presentations.



## SUPPORTING PARTNERS

We appreciate the ongoing partnerships with organizations whose involvement in both programming and logistics helped shape the impactful outcomes of the convention.



## EXHIBITORS

We thank all exhibiting organizations for showcasing innovative travel solutions, products, and technologies, which provided delegates with valuable resources and business linkages. The exhibition area served as a hub of activity, fostering meaningful interactions and business opportunities.



## RAFFLE TICKET SPONSORS

Special recognition goes to the sponsors and contributors of the KATA CARES initiative. Their sponsorships helped raise funds in support of KATA's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities. These contributions underscore the shared value our members and partners place on giving back to society and uplifting communities through travel.





# Pre-Event Activities

Behind the success of the KATA 2025 AGM and Convention was a meticulous and well-coordinated preparation process that spanned several months. The groundwork laid by the Secretariat, Board, and partner teams played a vital role in delivering a seamless and high-impact event.

## PLANNING MEETINGS



Planning for the KATA 2025 AGM and Convention began earlier in the year at the board level, where strategic direction, event objectives, and theme development were first discussed. Once the overarching goals were established, the process transitioned to the KATA Secretariat. Under the leadership of the CEO, structured weekly meetings were held every Friday at the Secretariat office. These sessions brought together administrative staff to help drive implementation. They served as critical coordination points to review progress, troubleshoot logistical issues, align timelines, and fine-tune key deliverables to ensure the success of the event.

## STRATEGIC EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS

A comprehensive email outreach plan was deployed to ensure that all key stakeholders remained informed and engaged. Members, sponsors, and partners received periodic updates with curated information on program developments, exhibitor registration, accommodation and transport logistics, and sponsorship opportunities. This consistent communication helped foster trust, manage expectations, and maintain excitement in the lead-up to the event.



## DIGITAL MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



KATA launched a targeted multi-platform social media campaign to build anticipation and maximize reach. Through visually engaging content, countdowns, testimonials, speaker announcements, partner shoutouts, and nostalgic highlights from past AGMs, KATA cultivated a vibrant online community.

# Pre-Event Activities

## DELEGATE REGISTRATION AND SUPPORT



This year, KATA fully transitioned from manual to digital registration, streamlining the process for members, non-members, sponsors, exhibitors, and other delegates. An online form was used to capture details efficiently and the secretariat issued instant confirmations. The KATA Secretariat remained available throughout to support queries and offer personalized assistance. Delegates received regular updates, travel information, and logistical support. The Secretariat coordinated all categories of participants to ensure a smooth and well-organized experience.

## SPONSOR AND PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

The Secretariat held a series of engagement meetings with event sponsors and partners to secure collaboration and ensure visibility. These engagements addressed branding placements, exhibition setups, speaking opportunities, and customized sponsorship deliverables. Platinum, Silver, and Supporting partners were integrated across both the program and the event space for maximum brand exposure and alignment.



## BUILDING MOMENTUM



By the time the first delegates arrived in Mombasa, there was already a tangible sense of momentum. Months of behind-the-scenes planning had culminated in an energized and organized welcome. Thanks to the dedication and coordination of all involved, the groundwork laid during this period ensured that the 2025 KATA AGM and Convention would stand out as one of the most impactful and celebrated gatherings in the association's history.

# DAY ONE (THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 2025)

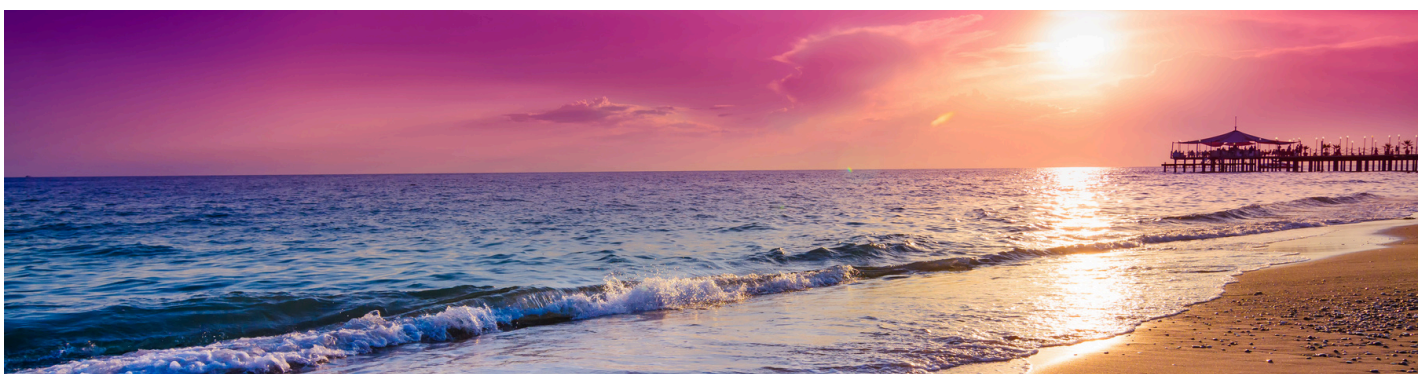
## MASTERCLASS – “THE ART OF SELLING CRUISE TRAVEL”

The intellectual highlight of the day was the **masterclass** titled “**The Art of Selling Cruise Travel**,” led by cruise industry veterans Ruhan Shah (Holiday Bazaar) and Irshaad Yasseen (Whitestar Cruise & Travel). This session was tailored to equip travel agents with practical skills and fresh strategies for entering the lucrative cruise tourism market. The facilitators demystified the cruise segment, discussing client segmentation, packaging, pricing models, and emerging global trends.

Participants learned how to position cruise holidays not just as luxury products but as experiential journeys—accessible and aspirational for a diverse client base. Case studies and interactive exchanges deepened the learning experience. Delegates left feeling inspired and empowered to diversify their offerings and redefine their service approach in line with global travel shifts.



## SUNSET WELCOME COCKTAIL AT KONEKONE LOUNGE



As the day transitioned into evening, delegates reconvened at the picturesque Konekone Lounge for the Sunset Beach Welcome Cocktail. With the Indian Ocean as a stunning backdrop, the informal gathering served as both a networking session and a soft ceremonial opening. The cocktail created a relaxed and inviting environment where travel agents, corporate partners, government officials, and industry leaders mingled freely. The occasion fostered connections that would blossom into deeper conversations over the course of the convention. Guests enjoyed music, refreshments, and coastal charm in equal measure.



# DAY TWO (FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 2025)

## OPENING SESSION

The day began with a dynamic opening session led by KATA Chairman Dr. Joseph Kithitu, KATA CEO Mr. Nicanor Sabula, and Coast Chair Patrick Kamanga. Patrick Kamanga emphasized the importance of intra-African travel and acknowledged Kenya Airways for flying half the delegates to Mombasa. Hasnain Noorani, Managing Director of Pridelnn Group, welcomed participants by framing the event as a classic MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) moment. He stressed that MICE is about creating stories and memories, and underlined that travel agents are not just customers but strategic partners in growth.



Mr. Sabula noted that the industry stands at a pivotal moment post-COVID, riding a wave of momentum that must be harnessed through unity and resilience. He reiterated the importance of the theme, "Going Further, Together," highlighting the need for bold conversations and collaborative action. Dr. Joseph Kithitu emphasized that the AGM was not just a routine meeting, but a platform for reflection, assessment, and strategy.





## OPENING SESSION

Also speaking during the Opening Session, Julius Thairu, Chief Commercial & Customer Officer at Kenya Airways, aligned the airline's vision with the convention theme, "Going Further Together." He highlighted Kenya Airways' return to profitability and record-breaking passenger and cargo volumes, crediting the travel trade for its support. Thairu announced a new route to Gatwick, London, launching in July, and noted upcoming fleet additions to enhance operations. His remarks reinforced KQ's commitment to collaboration with travel agents in shaping a resilient and customer-focused industry.



Sunil Kumar R, President of the Universal Federation of Travel Agents' Associations (UFTAA), who delivered a powerful message centered on resilience, reinvention, and shared growth. He encouraged travel professionals to stay committed to their purpose, reminding them that even in the face of adversity, the industry must keep pushing forward. "No matter what waves may stop us, we have to push ourselves beyond," he said.



Sunil emphasized that the values of respect, humility, and openness are what build trust—and trust, in turn, is what moves industries forward. He urged the sector to meaningfully engage the youth, warning that failure to do so could risk losing future leaders of the industry. He also underscored the importance of genuine partnerships in achieving mutual growth, noting that this is a time for continuous learning and sincere collaboration.

Looking ahead, he shared a global outlook, noting that the online travel market, valued at USD 354 billion in 2021, is projected to grow to USD 1.8 trillion by 2030—a clear signal of opportunity for those ready to innovate and adapt.



## PANEL 1: BUILDING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR TOURISM

A key session on Day Two was the panel titled "Building an Enabling Environment for Tourism,". The discussion brought together leading figures from the public sector, each tasked with shaping policy, regulation, skills development, and research in Kenya's tourism industry. It was a timely conversation that addressed the foundation needed for the sector to thrive.

Francis Gichaba, Chair of the Kenya Tourism Board (KTB), underscored the importance of collaboration between public institutions and private players. He stressed that Kenya's target of attracting over 5 million tourists in the coming years could only be achieved through strong partnerships with travel agents, hoteliers, and service providers. KTB, he noted, is not just a marketer; it is a connector of people and experiences.



Norbert Taalam, CEO of the Tourism Regulatory Authority (TRA), announced the digitalization of all TRA services, a move aimed at reducing bureaucracy and improving access for tourism operators. He also clarified that while association membership is encouraged, it remains voluntary. His remarks highlighted a shift toward a more enabling and less prescriptive regulatory approach.

Representing the education sector, Mark Rachuonyo of Kenya Utalii College emphasized the institution's role in supplying skilled labor for the industry. He proudly noted that 80% of Kenya's active travel agents are Utalii alumni. Looking ahead, the college plans to work more closely with the industry to align training with real-world needs and ensure graduates are job-ready.

David Gitonga, CEO of the Tourism Research Institute, closed the session by stressing the importance of using data to shape tourism strategy. He urged agents to embrace targeted, experience-based offerings rather than relying on generic travel packages, emphasizing that consumer preferences are becoming more specialized and data-driven.

Together, the panelists painted a clear picture of a tourism industry in transition, one that must be grounded in smart policy, skilled human capital, responsive regulation, and relevant research. Their collective message was simple: a thriving tourism ecosystem can only be built when public and private sectors move forward together.



## PANEL 2: TRAVEL AGENTS ROUNDTABLE

Moderated by Hamisi Hassan, KATA Vice Chairman, this panel brought together travel association leaders from across Africa to explore shared challenges and solutions. Panelists included Folami Yinka (Nigeria), Samuel Makuza (Rwanda), Pearl Hoareau (Uganda), and Dr. Joseph Kithitu (Kenya).



Representing Nigeria was Folami Yinka, Chair of the National Association of Nigeria Travel Agencies (NANTA), who delivered a candid and passionate critique of the ongoing tensions between airlines and agents. He questioned why airlines continue to treat agents as competitors rather than collaborators. "It flies in the face of logic," he stated, "for airlines who call themselves principals to compete with the very partners that sell and support their services." His remarks sparked a wave of agreement in the room, highlighting a shared frustration among agents globally about the erosion of their role in the distribution chain.



From Uganda, Pearl Hoareau, Vice Chair of the Uganda Association of Travel Agents, brought a refreshing perspective rooted in progress. She applauded the positive steps taken by the Ugandan financial sector, noting that KCB Bank in Uganda had actively supported travel agents by offering favorable bank guarantee facilities. This kind of partnership, she explained, had not only built trust but had enabled agents in Uganda to secure airline partnerships and IATA accreditations with more ease. Her comments stood out as a model of what is possible when financial institutions recognize and empower the role of agents in the travel value chain.



## DAY TWO (FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 2025)

Kenya's voice on the panel came from Dr. Joseph Kithitu, Chair of KATA, who offered a sobering insight into the local challenges. He raised a critical issue facing Kenyan agents: the purchase of airline tickets without timely payment, a practice that continues to strain agent-airline relationships. "Agents are not banks," he reminded the audience, adding that sustainable business relationships can only exist if all parties uphold basic financial accountability. His comments were a call to action for structural solutions and deeper financial discipline within the industry.



Together, the panelists painted a picture of a dynamic yet uneven playing field across Africa. What united them was a shared belief in the need for regional travel agent associations to collaborate more intentionally, to learn from each other, harmonize advocacy efforts, and push back against systems that undervalue the travel agent's role

### PANEL 3: AIRLINES ROUNDTABLE

The Airlines Roundtable brought together key executives from leading African carriers to explore the role of airlines in shaping a more collaborative, efficient, and accessible travel ecosystem across the continent. The panel featured Julius Thairu, Chief Commercial & Customer Officer at Kenya Airways (KQ); Karanja Ndegwa, CEO of Jambojet; Diana Nyambura, General Manager of Skyward Airlines; and Betty Ingabire, Country Manager for RwandAir Kenya.



Kicking off the session, Julius Thairu reaffirmed Kenya Airways' strategic focus on growing its intra-Africa network, noting that too few African cities are directly connected today. He emphasized the airline's commitment to replacing older Embraer aircraft, which had led to route reductions, with more suitable equipment to restore and expand service. Thairu also made a strong case for collaboration over competition, stating, "We need to see ourselves as collaborators and not competitors. When we do that, more opportunities will come our way."





## DAY TWO (FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 2025)

Representing the domestic market, Karanja Ndegwa shared impressive metrics from Jambojet, highlighting that the airline commands 53% of market share in the domestic aviation space. He noted that since its inception in 2014, Jambojet has flown over 8.6 million passengers across its routes. More importantly, he described Jambojet's philosophy as one of unlocking possibilities rather than simply moving people from point A to B. "Journeying with Jambojet isn't just about travel—it's about unlocking possibilities, together," he said. He further explained that Jambojet's operational efficiency, including maintaining a single aircraft type, had helped the airline keep costs low, allowing them to offer affordable fares even in the face of rising fuel prices.



Diana Nyambura, GM of Skyward Airlines, delivered a heartfelt and practical message. She acknowledged that while Skyward had transitioned from a general aviation operator to a recognized domestic carrier, infrastructure limitations continue to hinder their growth. "We'd like to do more as a domestic carrier, but we depend on Kenya Airports Authority to build the needed infrastructure," she remarked. Nyambura emphasized the need to stimulate the market and grow Kenya's middle class, noting that more disposable income would lead to increased travel demand. On a community note, she proudly shared Skyward's CSR initiative, sponsoring Dandora Youth Football Club, as a way of transforming lives through sport. "We're trying to change the narrative," she said, "Dandora is often called a dumping site, but we want to show it's a place of potential."

Betty Ingabire of RwandAir announced that the airline was planning to resume flights to Mombasa and Zanzibar, routes that had been suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic. "Before COVID, we operated three weekly flights—we may not start at that level, but we are returning," she said. She also highlighted RwandAir's investment in cargo, noting that the airline currently runs two freighter flights per week between Rwanda and Kenya and plans to expand its cargo business as part of its future growth strategy.





# DAY TWO (FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 2025)

## GALA DINNER: “BACK TO THE ROOTS”

Held at Pridelnn Flamingo Beach Resort, the “Back to the Roots” gala dinner was a colorful celebration of Kenyan heritage, cuisine, and culture. Delegates enjoyed a diverse spread of local dishes, from Swahili biryani and coconut fish to nyama choma, ugali, and traditional desserts, reflecting Kenya’s rich culinary landscape.

The evening featured captivating cultural performances, including music, dances, and vibrant drumming displays. Guests embraced the theme by donning kenyan flag themed attire and joining in the festivities, making the night not only entertaining but a powerful reminder of unity through shared identity and culture.





# DAY THREE (SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 2025)

## OPENING SESSION

Day Two of the KATA AGM & Convention 2025 opened with renewed energy and purpose, as delegates gathered for a powerful lineup of addresses from industry leaders and government representatives. Hon. Teresia Mbaika, Principal Secretary for the State Department for Aviation and Aerospace Development, offered a compelling government perspective on partnership, infrastructure, and industry reform. She affirmed that the theme “Going Further Together” could not be more timely, as public-private partnerships are no longer optional—but essential in shaping the future of Kenya’s aviation and travel sectors.



Positioning the government as an active enabler, she assured delegates that travel agents are recognized as a critical bridge between aviation infrastructure and the traveler experience, a role her department fully supports. She introduced the newly established Department of Aviation and Aerospace Development, outlining its mandate to lead policy direction, regulatory oversight, and safety frameworks that will shape the future of air travel in Kenya.



Hon. Mbaika highlighted key priorities, including continued infrastructure investment at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, support for open skies agreements, and the need for strategic collaboration to ensure Kenya’s long-term competitiveness in the regional and global aviation markets.

Importantly, she reminded delegates that the travel experience begins the moment a flight is booked, making the work of travel agents a direct extension of national aviation strategy. Her remarks concluded with a strong call to action: to co-create a globally connected and regionally inclusive travel ecosystem that delivers both opportunity and resilience.

Also delivering remarks during the Day 2 Opening Session was H.E. Mário Constantino, the Angolan Ambassador to Kenya, who brought a warm and forward-looking message. He reaffirmed Angola’s strong diplomatic and commercial ties with Kenya, emphasizing that the relationship between the two nations continues to flourish—anchored by shared interests in tourism, trade, and regional cooperation.



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Ambassador Constantino underscored the power of partnership, stating that “Going Further Together” was not just a theme but a guiding principle, one that strengthens regional unity and unlocks new possibilities for African nations. His presence at the convention symbolized Angola’s growing interest in deeper engagement with Kenya’s travel and tourism ecosystem and its commitment to building mutually beneficial cross-border alliances.



### MOTIVATIONAL TALK: JANETH JEPKOSGEI

Olympic silver medalist and 800m world champion Janeth Jepkosgei delivered a powerful keynote that wove together themes of resilience, leadership, and purpose. Drawing from her journey in athletics, she spoke of early struggles where, despite national wins, she felt overlooked. “I didn’t feel seen. But I wanted to be the first Kenyan woman to bring home a world medal and show that women can do better,” she shared.





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She emphasized that failure is not the end, but an opportunity to reflect and improve. “Even when I lose, I don’t stop. I ask: What didn’t work? Who can I talk to? What can I change?” Her words resonated deeply with industry professionals navigating their own challenges.

Janeth also spoke of her work uplifting refugees through sport, reminding the audience of the power of dignity and hope. “Sports give refugees dignity. They’re not forgotten. They can still run, learn, and dream.”

Her efforts have gone beyond the track, she’s founded schools and mentors youth, believing firmly in using her success to elevate others. “We are the best ambassadors in the world. Sportspeople carry the voice of nations.”

Closing her talk, she encouraged delegates to celebrate every small win, highlighting that leadership is about rising, and helping others rise, with every step forward.



### PANEL 4: AIRLINE RETAILING AND AGENT PARTNERSHIPS

Moderated by Mr. Nicanor Sabula, KATA CEO, this high-impact session brought together key players in airline distribution and travel retailing to explore the evolving relationship between airlines, agents, and technology platforms. Panelists included Rahma Elmi, Sales Director at Amadeus Kenya; Jinal Shah, Managing Director of Holiday Bazaar; and Doreen Maiteri, Program Manager, NDC Systems & Distribution at Kenya Airways.





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The discussion focused on how New Distribution Capability (NDC) is transforming airline retailing, and what this means for travel agents who must now adapt to modern platforms, evolving workflows, and increased customer expectations.

Rahma Elmi opened by sharing Amadeus' progress in transitioning from legacy systems to modern NDC-based platforms. "We have overhauled our systems, moving from the legacy system to incorporating NDC into our workflow," she said. She emphasized that agents can now view and book NDC content, low-cost carriers, hotels, and retail services all from a unified platform, representing a major leap in convenience and retail power.

But this shift, she noted, requires significant training and adaptation. "We were doing things a certain way, and now we've introduced a new, modern way of working. Training will be key," she stressed. Amadeus, she added, is committed to supporting the trade during this transition by listening to queries, resolving escalations, and helping close gaps through transparency and partnership.



Jinal Shah brought the agent perspective to the table. While acknowledging the promise of NDC, he expressed concern about the growing disconnect between airline innovations and agent inclusion. "There's a gap between what the airline is doing and how agents are being involved," he said. He stressed that while technology is advancing, many agents are being left behind, either due to lack of access or poor communication around new systems and their benefits. He echoed the importance of proper onboarding, training, and collaboration, urging airlines and tech providers to see agents not as passive users but as active partners in modern retailing. "We need to do more because our customer is changing," he added, highlighting how traveler behaviour is now more personalized and digitally driven.

Representing Kenya Airways, Doreen Maiteri gave insights into how the airline is embracing customer-first systems and evolving beyond legacy thinking. "We are spearheading this shift not because we have everything in place, but because we understand the customer comes first," she said. She noted that the airline is moving away from waiting for customers to come and instead proactively bringing partners, especially agents, on board to co-create experiences.

Together, the panelists acknowledged that modern airline retailing can't succeed in silos. True innovation, they concluded, depends on shared investment in tools, training, and transparency, with the end goal being a more seamless, personalized, and efficient experience for today's traveler.



## PANEL 5: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES SHAPING THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY

*(Artificial Intelligence, Data Privacy, and Human Resource Management)*

Moderated by Geoffrey Kobia, Managing Director of Greattimes Tours & Travel, this forward-looking panel delved into some of the most urgent and evolving challenges facing the travel industry today, ranging from artificial intelligence (AI) and data privacy to legal and human resource considerations. Panelists included Mutua Mutuku of the Data Privacy and Governance Society of Kenya (DPGSK), Ronald Okumu, Managing Director of AI Connect Ltd, and Wycliffe Ndege, legal expert and Partner at Mugweru & Ndege Advocates.



Opening the discussion, Mutua Mutuku gave a compelling overview of the legal frameworks surrounding data protection, especially in light of Kenya's Data Protection Act. He emphasized that consent must be explicit and not implied, likening the importance of consent to that in personal boundaries: "Take consent in the same sense as sexual consent, it must be expressed and communicated," he stated. Mutua warned travel companies that using client data (such as photos or marketing materials) without proper permission exposes them to legal risk. "In Kenya, there's nothing like implied consent, consent is expressed," he reiterated.



He further clarified the distinction between internal documentation and external marketing, noting, "If I take a photo at this event, I don't expect it to be used for marketing without my permission, but for internal documentation, that's acceptable." His message to the industry was clear: in an increasingly digital and regulated environment, businesses must adopt strong data governance protocols to maintain trust and avoid penalties.

Taking the conversation into the realm of emerging technology, Ronald Okumu of AI Connect highlighted how Africa, and particularly its travel sector, is still significantly behind in the adoption of AI tools and infrastructure. "Africa-wise, in AI, we are still very behind. A lot of the data we use now is based on models built in Europe and elsewhere," he said. He explained that although vertical AI solutions exist in corporate sectors, travel-specific applications are only beginning to emerge.

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Okumu also raised concerns about shared data usage, noting that without structure, multiple travel agents may end up using the same datasets without clear boundaries or ownership. He called for the industry to define cut-off periods for data collection and establish sector-specific guidelines to ensure AI implementation supports innovation without violating privacy or fairness. His presentation challenged delegates to begin investing in digital transformation not just as a trend, but as a competitive imperative.

Wycliffe Ndege, a legal practitioner, brought a practical lens to the conversation. Speaking from a compliance and HR perspective, he highlighted the growing legal risks for employers in the digital space—especially around employee data handling, contracts, and intellectual property. “For me, being a lawyer, the obvious risk is being detained because of litigation,” he said bluntly, underscoring how missteps in data use or employment disputes can have costly consequences. He encouraged agencies to seek legal advice proactively, rather than waiting for problems to arise. “There’s a lot of time and money wasted—especially from an employer’s perspective. My advice on this emerging issue is: seek professional help.”



The session painted a sobering yet empowering picture: while innovation through technology is accelerating, so too is the need for legal, ethical, and compliant business practices. From AI integration to safeguarding data and protecting human capital, the panelists called on the industry to future-proof itself through awareness, compliance, and collaborative adaptation.

### CLOSING SESSION



The convention officially concluded with remarks from Mohamed Osman Ali, County Executive Committee Member (CEC) for Tourism and Trade, Mombasa County, who represented the Governor. Speaking on behalf of Governor Abdulswamad Nassir, the CEC emphasized the vital role that tourism plays in regional economic development and the broader coastal economy. He applauded KATA’s leadership in convening industry stakeholders and driving forward a national and continental agenda for sustainable travel growth. His closing remarks reaffirmed Mombasa County’s commitment to supporting the tourism sector through continued investment, partnerships, and policy support.



# DAY THREE (SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 2025)

## KATA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

This members-only session brought together registered KATA members to deliberate on core association matters. The meeting included presentations of the 2024 annual report, financial statements, and a review of the year's strategic milestones. Members also voted on key resolutions and participated in board elections to shape the association's direction for 2025–2026. It was a critical forum for accountability, reflection, and setting future priorities.





## DAY THREE (SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 2025)

### CULTURAL DINNER : “SWAHILI KANGA NIGHT”

The convention concluded with a vibrant Swahili Kanga Night, sponsored by the Tourism Promotion Fund. Delegates dressed in colourful Swahili attire, enjoyed a rich spread of global cuisine, and danced to traditional music under the stars. The evening featured cultural performances, spirited mingling, and a stunning fireworks display, marking a celebratory end to the event in true coastal style.





