

Hotels cash in on delegates attending conference

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For the past five years, hotels with international acclaim have dominated Nairobi's hospitality industry are celebrating with the trade conference currently taking place.

The 14th United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (Unctad) started yesterday and will stretch until Friday, with hoteliers describing business as "good".

Intercontinental Hotel's general manager Dieter Franke said delegates started coming in more than two weeks before the conference.

"We are really happy about these large functions ... we are doing well," he told the *Daily Nation* in a phone interview.

Revival

SHOT IN THE ARM FOR TOURISM

Tourism earnings went down from Sh87.1 billion in 2014 to Sh84.6 billion in 2015 according to the 2016 economic survey.

International visitor arrivals also declined by 12.6 per cent to 1.2 million last year.



According to the website, the hotel is charging guests a minimum of \$185 (about Sh19,000) a night, and as much as \$210 (about Sh22,000).

Mr Franke said that the nationalities that visited the hotel were "representative of the delegates that are going to attend Unctad".

This is because Nairobi will be home to a diplomatic community drawn from 150 countries.

Boasting of globally recognised brands such as Villa Rosa, Hilton, Intercontinental and the latest, Radisson Blu, which pitched camp in Kenya last year, it is understandable why the hotels are nearly fully booked.

With marketing techniques capitalising on Internet connection and subsidised rates, the hotels attracted delegates. Unctad comes barely two

months after the United Nations Environmental Programme meeting, also held in the city.

These conferences couldn't have come at a better time when the tourism industry was struggling after advisories that kept tourists from the Kenyan shores.

However, Kenya hosting the tenth World Trade Organisation ministerial conference and the Global Entrepreneurship Summit in 2015 is testimony that confidence tourism is a rapidly growing segments in the industry and is largely associated with travel for business purposes in Kenya.

In their April market outlook, JLL — an international financial firm that specialises on commercial real estate services and investment management — termed Nairobi as the third largest hotel market in terms of overall demand.

President

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improved among

price different states

The President would also boost geographically based sp

in Africa, reduction of vuatta has to external trade shocks and it of a the continent's participation in TTA) trade to reduce dependency on and external borrowing.

President Kenyatta also contributed to the summit's discussions on the African year of human rights with particular focus on women's rights. He said countries that respected women's rights witness faster development.

In addition, the President said he looked forward to working closely with all leaders to ensure the strengthening of the UN-Habitat in Nairobi. (PSCU)