

# PGA sensitised to promote biosecurity, public health

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

MEMBERS of Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) have been tasked to take steps to promote improved biosecurity and public health within their countries to combat biological threat.

Natural Resources and Tourism minister, Dr Pindi Chana made the call in Dar es Salaam yesterday when opening the two-day PGA regional African parliamentary workshop.

The workshop is being attended by members of PGA from Togo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Somalia, South Sudan, Zimbabwe and USA.

She said PGA stands for Parliamentarians for Global Action and this is how and why this organization has always brought added value and stood apart among many organisations in the impact that it has.

The minister said putting in place biological security and public health measures now and implementing them is one such vital way to achieve this.

"It is similarly important that we also do this at the regional level to ensure the genuine success of such steps that is why your deliberations over the coming two days hold such importance. I am also pleased to hear that you will adopt the traditional PGA Plan of Action," said the minister.

She explained that many people recognise that each must at all times act in accordance with their own procedures and priorities adding that she is confident that, working together, consulting together and coordinating together they can all achieve their collective goals.

"I believe this is the 4th time in less than 10 years that PGA has convened here in Tanzania, taking into account also the inability to do so in the past 2 years, from so many countries across Africa, we are confronted with so many

challenges and threats in the world in which we live today," she said.

On Covid-19 issue, the minister said in Tanzania, the number of tourists who visited the country decreased by 59%, from 1,527,230 tourists in 2019 to 620,867 tourists in 2020 and revenue from same decreased by 72.5% from US\$ 2.6 billion to US\$ 0.715 billion. The decrease had negative implications on businesses, revenue and employment.

In response to these effects, Chana said the government adopted a series of unparalleled measures for prevention, control, and treatment, which has effectively curbed the spread of the epidemic in the country.

She said in 2021 began to show new hopes for the tourism industry in Tanzania whereby the number of international tourists who visited Tanzania in 2021 increased by 48.6 percent from 620,867 tourists in 2020 to 922,692 tourists in 2021.

She said revenue from the same increased by 76% from US \$ 0.715 billion in 2020 to US \$1.3 billion in 2021. Thanks to the global efforts which have begun to put us in motion again.

"It is a fact that for too long we have been unable to meet in the usual way and I therefore wish to commend PGA in taking this initiative so that we can also welcome visitors back to our shores. As Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism of Tanzania, I attach particular importance to meetings of this kind," she said.

She added that tourism means many things, but at its heart, it is about bringing people together, enjoying our company as well as learning from each other and often making the world a better and safer place in the process.

"As a Member of PGA, and long before I became a minister, I have always sought to endorse this reality by helping to convene a number of these regional meetings," she said.



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By Polycarp

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