

President roots for culture to boost tourism

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KAMPALA. President Museveni has urged tourism sector players to woo more foreign visitors into the country by adding cultural elements to the industry.

The President, who was speaking to a group of investors at the Giants Club Conservation and Tourism Investment Conference at Lake Victoria Serena Hotel, asked the players

to add language, norms, values and artifacts to enhance consumers' appreciation of the attractive places, animals, and plants.

He said tourism as a huge global industry accounts for 9 per cent of world's GDP, which translates into \$6.6 trillion.

"Despite the inefficiency of the sector by policy administrators, the arrivals are now at 1.3 million people and this was from a very low base of less than 1,000 people [per year]," he

said. The President said the current income from tourism is \$1.3 billion, which has been boosted by deliberate initiatives by government, including guaranteeing security.

Ms Rosa Malango, the UNDP resident coordinator, urged Uganda to prioritise conservation even as it pushes to develop its tourism industry.

"This forum comes at critical moment for Uganda's future. This sector is poised to be an accelerator for

achievement of Vision 2040 and a driver for middle income status by 2020," Ms Malango said.

The forum unveiled investment opportunities that can boost tourist arrivals from about 1.3 million in 2016 to four million by 2020.

The Giants Club unites leaders of African elephant-range states, enlightened heads of major businesses operating in Africa, global philanthropists, and influential wildlife protection experts.