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PRESS RELEASE

CLARIFICATION ON THE OFFICIAL TOURISM EXCELLENCE AWARDS OF KENYA

The Tourism Regulatory Authority (TRA), a State Corporation established under Section 4 of the Tourism Act, No. 28 of 2011, issues this press release to clarify matters relating to tourism awards within the tourism and hospitality sector in Kenya.

The Authority has noted, with concern, the emergence of privately organized initiatives using the name “*Tourism Excellence*” or similar terminology, some of which require payment by participants or members of the public to vote or influence outcomes. While such initiatives may be privately organized and permissible as commercial promotions, ***they do not constitute the officially recognized Tourism Excellence Awards of Kenya.***

The Authority wishes to inform stakeholders and the public that the **Tourism Excellence Awards Kenya (TEAK)** is the official national annual tourism awards programme, coordinated under the statutory mandate of the Tourism Regulatory Authority. The Awards Scheme is anchored in the Authority’s regulatory role of promoting, monitoring, and enhancing quality of service delivery among all tourism enterprises regulated under the Ninth Schedule to the Tourism Act.

The official Tourism Excellence Awards Kenya are based on pre-approved and objective evaluation criteria, national tourism standards and regulatory requirements; including licensing, accreditation, and classification; and regionally harmonized East African Community (EAC) standards aimed at improving service quality, competitiveness, and destination excellence. The awards process is guided by professional evaluation, independent assessment, transparency, integrity, merit, and continuous quality improvement, and does not involve paid participation, voting or fee-based influence.

Privately organized awards schemes are not subject to the Authority’s regulatory oversight, do not operate within the nationally approved tourism quality assurance framework, and should ***not be presented or perceived as nationally recognized or regulator-endorsed tourism awards.***

The Authority advises stakeholders and the public to exercise due diligence when engaging with private award schemes, avoid confusing them with the officially recognized Tourism Excellence Awards Kenya, and seek verification from the Tourism Regulatory Authority where the status of any tourism awards programme is unclear.

The Tourism Regulatory Authority remains committed to safeguarding credibility, integrity, fairness, quality assurance, and excellence within the tourism sector. This clarification is issued in the interest of transparency, public awareness, and consumer protection.

For further information, please contact

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