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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UCOTA IS AWARDED 1ST RUNNER UP IN DEVELOPMENT AWARDS
Private Sector Foundation Uganda awards UCOTA in its annual Private Sector Development Awards.

KAMPALA, UGANDA (27 February, 2012)

On Friday, February 24, 2012, the Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA) was awarded 1st Runner Up in the category, "National Associations," in the 2011 Private Sector Development Awards by Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU). The awards were given to national-level associations that exhibited excellence in management in governance.

"UCOTA sincerely appreciates this level of recognition from the Private Sector Foundation Uganda," says Helen Lubowa, Executive Director of UCOTA. "We are very excited about receiving such high accolades amongst all the other competing associations and are pleased that the tourism sector, specifically an organization that represents community tourism has been given such an endorsement."

In its criteria, PSFU considers multiple factors including timely and well-recorded meetings, both internal and association-wide; corporate responsibility – how the organization assists its membership by giving back; trainings; networking; membership promotion and communications; the existence of a business plan, auditing reports, membership policy, and HIV/AIDS policy; and partnerships, both locally and internationally. UCOTA, in its mandate, serves in the best interests of its community based tourism organization members through annual general meetings and quarterly executive committee meetings, its five-module enterprise development training

program, as well as its innovative Pearls of Uganda marketing initiative, both of which were created and implemented in partnership with the USAID-STAR program.

The award ceremony was held in Kampala at the Serena Hotel and was attended by over 300 people, representing over 100 different associations and corporations in Uganda. UCOTA came second to the Uganda Insurers Association, which has won top honours three of the past four years.

About the Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA)

UCOTA exists to empower poor communities to improve their lives through community based tourism products including accommodations, guiding, crafts, cultural workshops, and performances. It spearheads community-based tourism development in Uganda in an attempt to ensure that the benefits of tourism stay as much as possible in the local community. UCOTA supports its members through capacity building, networking, advocacy, conservation, resource mobilization, and marketing of community tourism products through its innovative Pearls of Uganda program.

About Pearls of Uganda

Pearls of Uganda is a marketing program that promotes authentic cultural community attractions and experiences alongside sustainable tourism providers in Uganda, the country described by Winston Churchill as the "Pearl of Africa." Any trip to Uganda is incomplete without a visit to these pearls to experience real cultural encounters that will be an inspiring and memorable addition to your Ugandan wildlife safari. Cultural and community encounters include drumming performances and lessons, village walks, medicinal plant demonstrations, handcraft workshops and shopping, community-run accommodations, restaurants and more. Pearls of Uganda is supported by UCOTA, [USAID-STAR](#) and [leading tour operators and lodges](#) in Uganda.

About Uganda

Uganda is a land-locked country in East Africa that enjoys mild temperatures all year round. The country has long been a cultural melting pot, as evidenced by the existence of more than 30 different indigenous languages belonging to 5 distinct linguistic groups, and an equally diverse cultural mosaic of music, art and handicrafts. It is a country with fantastic natural scenery and a rich mosaic of tribes and cultures. The beauty of its landscapes and the friendliness of its people is what makes Uganda the Pearl of Africa.

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For more details about UCOTA, e-mail Chi Lo: chi@pearlsofuganda.org

Or visit one of our websites:

UCOTA: www.ucota.or.ug

Pearls of Uganda: <http://www.pearlsofuganda.org>