



SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL TOURISM FORUM  
FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES

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**Plenary session 1**

**Tourism navigating the economic crisis**

Keynote speaker:

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**(Summary)**

During the first eight months of 2010 there were 642 million international tourist arrivals, an increase of 7% as compared to 2009. As on previous occasions, such as the after the 9/11 attacks in 2001 and the 2003 SARS outbreak, tourism has again confirmed a strong capacity for recovery. Following a decline of 4% in international tourist arrivals in 2009, the sector is already showing real growth and is expected to beat previous records by the end of 2010.

These results demonstrate that tourism is one of the most dynamic economic sectors and a key driver in creating so much needed growth and employment. It also show that governments which acted quickly and effectively in mitigating the impact of the crisis with stimulus measures contributed to increase tourism's capacity to react and return to growth.

According to recent IMF analysis the global economy will grow at 4.8% this year. However, ongoing market volatility reminds us that we must remain vigilant as recovery is still fragile, uneven and easily reversible and growth will surely slowdown next year. Increasing unemployment is a major concern and the rise in taxation, particularly on travel, as well as the phasing out of stimulus measures, as a consequence of growing public deficits, is putting extra pressure on households and companies, namely in major tourism source markets.

Adding to the economic challenges, issues such as climate change and poverty reduction can not be overshadowed by economic concerns as these are parts of one single interconnected global challenge.

Despite tourism's role in stimulating the global economy; enhancing employment and creating jobs; alleviating poverty and supporting development, the sector is still not sufficiently accounted for in global decision-making. We face a political challenge – making the case for tourism.