Africa Day message

Dear Friends,

Today we celebrate Africa's rich heritage, its people, cultural diversity and exciting gastronomy. These are all reasons why African tourism has been on the rise over recent years. And this gives us good reason to be **optimistic as we look to the future**.

This year, **Africa Day** comes against the backdrop of an unprecedented global challenge.

This is a challenge that has upended the global economy. It also places many **millions of jobs at risk**. And it threatens to roll back the social and economic benefits tourism has been delivering across Africa.

However, tourism has long proven its **resilience**. And Africa has shown its determination to grow back better and stronger.

As countries begin to slowly open their borders again, our sector can build **trust and confidence**. These are the essential foundations for recovery.

Recovery will also be driven by innovation. During this crisis, **African entrepreneurs** have adapted to the new realities. They have been an inspiration, not least in the way they have delivered health and economic solutions to shield the most vulnerable.

At the same time, this crisis has also once again highlighted the importance of **strong leadership and of cooperation across borders**. The African Union has responded to this public health emergency with urgency and responsibility. And, in supporting calls for a global ceasefire, have helped shield the most vulnerable.

Strong leadership and solidarity are at the heart of our **Recommendations for Recovery**. And they form the basis of our Agenda for Africa.

On this Africa Day, I call on all countries to continue with the spirit of solidarity you have shown during this crisis.

Cooperation between countries, and between the public and private sectors, will allow **tourism to keep growing, providing opportunities and better lives** for millions in the years ahead.

**ZURAB POLOLIKASHVILI**
SECRETARY-GENERAL

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