

## AS TOURISM RESTARTS, UNWTO NOTES “STRONG AND RAPID” GOVERNMENTS’ RESPONSE TO COVID-CHALLENGE

**Madrid, Spain, 19 June 2020** – *The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) ensured the transformative power of tourism was a key part of the conversation at the latest edition of the UN Global Compact Leaders Summit. The world’s largest voluntary corporate sustainability initiative, the UNGC event brought together around 20,000 global leaders from 180 countries to discuss how business can support countries and communities around the world, with a particular emphasis on achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.*

The summit, one of the first major UN events to be held virtually since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, provided both business leaders and international organizations with important networking and learning opportunities. For 26 uninterrupted hours, sessions focusing on every part of the **sustainability agenda** were held in a virtual Networking Hall and Expo Area, and UNWTO was there to make clear tourism’s important role in driving **stronger and better recovery** from the current crisis.

### Private sector support vital for sustainable future

UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili said: “The support of the private sector is essential if we are to accelerate recovery from the impact of COVID-19, safeguard existing jobs and create new ones, and make tourism more inclusive and sustainable. This virtual summit showed the high level of interest among corporate partners for being part of building a better future for people and planet, and of tourism’s important role in achieving this.”

From a virtual pavilion, representatives from the UNWTO Affiliate Members Department were available for bilateral meetings with the interested participants, as well as attending to requests for information on prospective **cooperation and partnerships**. From its virtual pavilion, UNWTO also shared the Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism as well as the COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Technical Assistance Package, both made available to Member States and the private sector and providing a plan of action and an overview of the support UNWTO can offer.

## Tourism and the Decade of Action

At the event, the UN Global Compact released the UN Global Compact 20th-Anniversary Progress Report: Uniting Business in the **Decade of Action** — an analysis of progress businesses have made in embedding the Ten Principles in their strategies and operations to align with the universal values of the UN, and in contributing to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The COVID-19 crisis has coincided with the beginning of the Decade of Action, the countdown to the achievement of the 17 Goals deriving from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Tourism, in particular, has demonstrated its important role in sustainable development and that is why it must be part of relief programmes and actions, ensuring that no one is left behind. In order to be sustainable and to contribute to **inclusive growth**, the Tourism sector needs to bring all its stakeholders on board. The UNWTO, through its Affiliate Membership creates unique public-private partnership opportunities aiming at enhancing the collective endeavors and global solidarity.

### Related Links:

[UNWTO: Affiliate Members](#)

[UNWTO Launches Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism](#)

[UNWTO and IFC Partner to Facilitate Green Investment in Tourism](#)

[UNGC Leaders Summit - UNWTO's Work](#)