

UNWTO Official Visit to Brazil to Support Sustainable Recovery of Tourism

Brasilia, Brazil, 19 November 2020 - *The Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has reaffirmed his commitment to working closely with the Government of Brazil to help the country's tourism sector recover and become a key driver of sustainable development. The statement of support came as Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili led a UNWTO delegation to meet with President Jair Bolsonaro and Minister of Tourism Marcelo Álvaro Antônio.*

Making good on his commitment to resume in-person visits to Member States as soon as possible, Mr. Pololikashvili led the UNWTO delegation to Brazil, on a **first visit to the Americas region since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic**. The highlight of the visit was a meeting with President Bolsonaro, during which Secretary-General Pololikashvili thanked him for making tourism a central part of his government's agenda and for his ongoing support for UNWTO. The President and his government were cited as **a strong example of Member States working together with UNWTO** to advance education and training in the tourism sector, foster innovation, and drive both job creation and investment.

Strong support for tourism

In meetings between the UNWTO leadership and the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism, Minister Marcelo Álvaro Antônio outlined how he has been working to support the sector through the unprecedented crisis posed by the pandemic. Measures taken include advancing US\$1 billion of loans to support tourism businesses, as well as promoting investments in the sector, including through modifying the existing legal framework.

Alongside this, UNWTO is working closely with private partner Wakalúa, the first global tourism innovation hub, and the Brazilian government to make the **country a hub of tourism innovation**. Furthermore, the Brazilian government used the occasion of these meetings to again express an interest in hosting a new UNWTO Regional Office for the Americas.

The UNWTO delegation also met with Brazil's Foreign Affairs Minister Ernesto Araújo and shared with him the roadmap to restart tourism designed on the back of continued dialogue with the Global Tourism Crisis Committee. The meeting also focused on the need for stronger cooperation to advance tourism's contribution to inclusive and sustainable development, including for rural communities across Brazil.

UNWTO building confidence in tourism again

The UNWTO Secretary-General said: "Tourism is a powerful force for good for Brazil and for all of the Americas. As UNWTO guides the global restart of tourism, we are on our first official visit to the region since the start of the crisis. I thank the Government of Brazil for the ongoing, strong support for tourism and I am particularly encouraged by the commitment to growing innovation in tourism and using the sector as a tool to advance sustainable development for all."

Secretary-General Pololikashvili also used the occasion of the official visit to Brazil to share the steps UNWTO is taking to ensure confidence returns to international tourism. These include plans to introduce a new **International Code for the Protection of Tourists**, which will also have the additional benefit of spreading responsibility for tourists faced with emergency situations more fairly across the sector. Furthermore, the UNWTO delegation stressed the heightened importance of strong collaboration, both between governments and also between the public and private sectors.

Next stop - Uruguay

After visiting Brazil, the UNWTO delegation will leave for neighbouring **Uruguay** where the Secretary-general is expected to meet the country's political leadership and key public and private tourism players.

Related Links:

[UNWTO Regional Department for the Americas](#)

[New International Code to Provide Greater Legal Protection for Tourists](#)

[UNWTO in Namibia: First Visit to African Member State Since Start of Pandemic](#)