

UNWTO in Uruguay: Celebrating Resilience and Supporting Tourism's Sustainable Restart

Montevideo, Uruguay, 23 November 2020 – *The Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has concluded his official visit to the Americas with a series of high-level meetings in Uruguay. Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili met with President Luis Lacalle Pou to learn more about his government's work to support tourism businesses and workers, and to agree on deepening UNWTO's collaboration on the ground. This was followed up with meetings with key private sector leaders.*

As a long-standing UNWTO member and as one of the **co-hosts of World Tourism Day 2020**, Uruguay has long shown its commitment to harnessing the power of tourism for growth and opportunity. Secretary-General Pololikashvili thanked President Lacalle Pou for his **strong support for the sector during the pandemic** and his efforts to restart tourism safely and responsibly. This includes a focus on **growing domestic tourism** and, in line with the theme of World Tourism Day, using this to provide opportunities for rural communities across Uruguay.

UNWTO cites example of Uruguay

Over the past decade, Uruguay has emerged as one of the strongest destinations in the Americas region. In the wake of the 2009 Global Financial Crisis, UNWTO singled the country out as an example of the **sector's unique resilience**. Now, on this latest official visit to the country, the UNWTO leadership recognized the ongoing commitment to tourism, with the sector remaining a priority throughout changes in government.

Mr Pololikashvili said: "Uruguay showcases just how resilient tourism is and how it can bounce back and drive recovery when given the right support, benefitting both the overall economy and local communities. I thank President Lacalle Pou and his government for their unwavering support for UNWTO and for our sector, and I look forward to continuing working together to strengthen cooperation over the challenging months ahead."

Collaboration key to recovery

The UNWTO delegation also met with Minister of Tourism Germán Cardoso to hear his plans to support and restart tourism with a focus on sustainability and inclusivity. This also presented UNWTO with the opportunity to share the outputs of the most recent meetings of the **Global Tourism Crisis Committee**, including plans to bring governments and

private sector leaders together to boost confidence in international travel, most notably through the creation of a first **International Code for the Protection of Tourists**.

Further highlighting UNWTO's determination to **foster high-level collaboration** in order to accelerate the restart of tourism and ensure that innovation and sustainability are at the heart of future recovery, Secretary-General Pololikashvili brought together the **Tourism Ministers of both Brazil and Uruguay** for a special meeting with President Lacalle Pou. The two Ministers signalled their commitment to working together towards shared goals, including not just greater sustainability but also promoting investment in tourism so as to drive economic growth and job creation.

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