

## **The World Tourism Organization Unites With Tourism Ministers in the Americas To Relaunch Tourism in the Region**

**Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, May 7, 2021** - Minister of Tourism David Collado along with 15 more ministers and vice ministers of tourism of the Americas established partnership agreements and procedures for relaunching tourism in the region in a meeting called by the World Tourism Organization and led in its inauguration by Luis Abinader, President of Dominican Republic.

Tourism leaders in the Americas committed to jointly addressing the reactivation of tourism, making the sector a priority and adopting international protocols. Additionally, they agreed to emphasize innovation and digital transformation, develop sustainable tourism and strengthen support mechanisms for workers and impacted companies.

At the beginning of the meeting, the Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Zurab Pololikashvili commended the way Dominican Republic has handled the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and highlighted that “reestablishing trust in travel is a key first step towards tourism recovery, bringing hope to millions of people in the Americas and igniting the economic recuperation in general.”

In his welcome to the Tourism ministers and representatives from throughout the Americas, President Luis Abinader highlighted the role of UNWTO as a catalyst for innovation and synergies and called on those present to strengthen themselves as a shared destination and as a region through unity, determination, focus and joint vision. Minister Collado stressed that the tourism sector generates employment opportunities for more than 500,000 families and contributes 15% of the country's Gross Domestic Product. Similarly, he endorsed the commitment “with the Dominicans, with sector partners and with the millions of tourists who are eagerly waiting to visit and know the beautiful destinations within Dominican Republic.”

Among the main topics of discussion included re-establishing confidence in travel, protecting businesses and jobs, and ensuring that the benefits of the tourism revival are felt beyond the industry itself. The working sessions were attended in person by ministers and vice ministers of Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Puerto Rico, Uruguay and Venezuela, and virtually by government officials from Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Chile, Nicaragua, and Peru.

The meetings were developed with the coordination of the host country through the Ministry of Tourism of Dominican Republic, with the participation of representatives of the

International Air Transport Association (IATA), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the Association of Hotels and Tourism of Dominican Republic, among other sector organizations.

The summit ended with attendees signing the Declaration of Punta Cana which sealed the commitment of the regional leaders to make tourism a pillar of sustainable development and ensure an effective recovery plan post-COVID.

**Related links:**

[Declaration of Punta Cana, Dominican Republic](#)

[UNWTO: Regional Department for Americas](#)

[Guiding tourism's recovery](#)