

DECLARATION OF PUNTA CANA DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF MINISTERS OF TOURISM OF THE AMERICAS

(Approved on 7 May 2021)

We, the Ministers and Authorities of Tourism of the Americas and Heads of Delegation of the Member States of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), meeting in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, at the invitation of the Ministry of Tourism of the Dominican Republic, on the occasion of the holding of the “Extraordinary Meeting of Ministers of Tourism”,

WHEREAS tourism is a priority activity that contributes to the socio-economic and cultural development of countries, the generation of jobs and foreign exchange, the attraction of foreign investment, the reduction of poverty, and the empowerment of young people, women and vulnerable groups,

WHEREAS the COVID-19 crisis has devastated the tourism economy, with unprecedented impacts on employment and businesses, with negative effects on the wellbeing of people,

WHEREAS the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), as the United Nations specialized agency responsible for tourism, is addressing the need to lead efforts to support and guide the sector in the current reality that affects developing and developed nations alike,

WHEREAS it is necessary to urgently adopt national and international political measures and increase coordination in all sectors and across borders to restore the confidence of travellers and the business environment, stimulate demand and accelerate the recovery of tourism,

WHEREAS, in order to ensure the recovery of tourism activity, it is necessary to secure the commitment, cooperation and solidarity of public and private actors of the sector, which since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis have had to adapt to the new reality, putting public health first,

WHEREAS the UNWTO, together with regional bodies, is collaborating in the development of regional recommendations to support the harmonization of biosecurity protocols in Latin America and the Caribbean, focused on the accommodation, food service and local transport subsectors and in the areas of airports, ports and beaches, and

RECOGNIZING the importance of the resilience of persons, communities and destinations for sustainable tourism, as well as the need to achieve more focused resilience and to improve capacity-building efforts,

DECLARE:

1. That we reaffirm the responsibility and commitment of all governments and international organizations to provide support to tourism in order to ensure its swift, effective, safe and sustainable recovery;
2. That we firmly and determinedly support the tourism sector, prioritizing the adoption and dissemination of unified international biosecurity and travel facilitation protocols for the safe and expeditious restart of tourism, with high levels of quality;
3. That we recognize innovation and digital transformation as essential factors to make tourism more resilient and to enable it to advance decisively in the implementation of new models of development;
4. That we are orienting the restart of tourism towards becoming a responsible and sustainable sector that promotes inclusion, gender equality and accessibility for all, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
5. That we understand the reactivation of tourism as an opportunity to transform the sector based on a long-term vision that places the conservation, preservation and protection of biological diversity at the centre of tourism strategies and contributes to solving the major issues associated with climate change, loss of biodiversity and land degradation;
6. That we promote public-private partnerships and governance mechanisms through cooperation, the analysis and generation of policies and joint actions among all national, regional and international actors that are involved in the tourism value chain, in order to strengthen governance in the implementation of transformative actions, improve employment conditions in territories and contribute to the economic revitalization of countries and the region;
7. That we are strengthening support and coordination mechanisms to help workers, destinations and companies that are struggling to survive, including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) through instruments that support the sector;
8. That we urge the governments of the Americas, within the framework of the sovereignty of the Member States, to coordinate their working policies to safeguard livelihoods, cultures and ancestral knowledge, and ensure the protection of the most vulnerable segments of society;
9. That we reaffirm our commitment, as Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the UNWTO Member States of the Americas, on behalf of their Governments and in compliance with their laws, to work together to reactivate the tourism sector through concrete and comprehensive measures that contribute to the sustainable economic growth of tourism and the simultaneous fulfilment of environmental, social and cultural aspects; and
10. That we express our gratitude and appreciation to the Ministry of Tourism of the Dominican Republic for the invitation and hospitable reception that made it possible to hold this meeting successfully.

Done in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, on 7 May 2021.