

## World Tourism Day 2021: Inclusive Growth at the Centre of Tourism's Restart

**Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 27 September 2021** – *Global tourism has reaffirmed its commitment to making the sector a pillar of inclusive growth. At the official World Tourism Day 2021 celebrations in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, political and business leaders united behind a common message of solidarity and determination to 'leave nobody behind' as tourism restarts and grows back.*

Prime Minister Patrick Achi and Minister of Tourism Siandou Fofana welcomed international delegates, signalling Cote d'Ivoire's firm support of tourism and **Tourism Ministers from 12 countries, the biggest Ministerial participation for an official World Tourism Day celebration.** The day featured 1,500 participants, including representatives of international organizations and the private sector.

### "Showing tourism's human face"

The Prime Minister said that "Cote d'Ivoire is proud to host a World Tourism Day like no other. It is important that we realign tourism so the sector meets the hopes and expectations of people. Tourism is a key sector for Cote d'Ivoire's growth and development. And the right path for Cote d'Ivoire is also the right path for all of Africa, using tourism as a locomotion to drive our economies forward and create jobs for women and youth." Minister of Tourism Siandou Fofana added that World Tourism Day 2021 "showed the human face of tourism," stressing the sector's unique ability to lead recovery from the impacts of the pandemic, in Africa and worldwide.

### Innovation, investments and inclusion

Ministers and experts explored how the pledge to drive inclusive growth can be achieved. The importance of **innovation, targeted investments and of strengthened collaboration** between public and private sectors was made clear. The speakers also underscored the need for inclusive policymaking as tourism slowly returns and looks to the future.

Opening the day, UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili stressed the sector's "commitment to inclusive growth so that tourism's restart brings hope for millions worldwide and ensures that everyone who has a stake in tourism also has a say in its future".

## A future built around shared values

In addition to recognising the challenges of the present, World Tourism Day also looked to the future. In Abidjan, “The Future of Africa” focused on the potential of the continent’s youth as well as its innovators and entrepreneurs. Against the backdrop of World Tourism Day, UNWTO signed two Memorandums of Understanding, reflecting the broad scope of tourism’s reach and relevance. The **Didier Drogba Foundation**, chaired by one of Africa’s most-recognized and celebrated athletes, agreed to actively commit to UNWTO’s goals and values, above all to providing opportunities for African youth and those living in rural communities. Stressing the importance of tourism as a driver of opportunity for the continent, **Channels TV of Nigeria** joined as a new UNWTO media partner and will now actively incorporate the theme of tourism for development within its editorial commitments.

Underscoring UNWTO’s leadership in uniting all of the tourism sector, its Affiliate Members also met in Abidjan, bringing together African businesses as well as civil society leaders, academics and destination management organizations. The side event showcased the benefits of being part of the global **Affiliate Members Network** and the technical support and networking opportunities available through being part of UNWTO’s work.

## Related Links

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[UNWTO Regional Department for Africa](#)

[UNWTO and Didier Drogba partner to build opportunity for African youth](#)