

UNWTO Commission for Africa

Sixty-fourth meeting
Sal (Cabo Verde) 2 September 2021

CAF/64/2/COMM. CHAIR
Madrid, August 2021
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Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Communication of the Chairperson of the UNWTO Commission for Africa

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General presents to the UNWTO Members of the Commission for Africa, the communication of the CAF Chairperson (Zambia).



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

ADDRESS
BY THE CHAIRPERSON
OF THE
UNWTO COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
&
HON. MINISTER OF TOURISM AND ARTS
AT THE
64TH UNWTO COMMISSION FOR AFRICA MEETING
AND THE 2ND EDITION
OF THE
UNWTO GLOBAL TOURISM INVESTMENT FORUM IN AFRICA
SAL ISLAND, CABO VERDE
2ND SEPTEMBER, 2021

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Poeta Joan Maragall 42, 28020 Madrid, Spain. Tel: (34) 91 567 81 00 – info@unwto.org / unwto.org



HONOURABLE HOST MINISTER,

HONOURABLE MINISTERS FROM ACROSS THE AFRICAN CONTINENT AND
BEYOND,

YOUR EXCELLENCY THE UNWTO SECRETARY GENERAL, AMB. ZURAB
POLOLIKASHVILI,

YOUR EXCELLENCIES HEADS OF MISSIONS PRESENT,

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,

MEMBERS OF THE PRESS,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

1. LET ME JOIN MY FELLOW DELEGATES IN THANKING THE GOVERNMENT
AND THE PEOPLE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CABO VERDE FOR THE WARM

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RECEPTION AND HOSPITALITY ACCORDED TO US SINCE OUR ARRIVAL
IN THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY ON SAL ISLAND.

2. IT IS AN HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE TO ADDRESS YOU ON THIS
AUSPICIOUS OCCASION AT THE 64TH REGIONAL MEETING OF THE
UNWTO COMMISSION FOR AFRICA (CAF). I ALSO TAKE COGNISANCE OF
THE FACT THAT THIS MEETING IS RUNNING CONCURRENTLY WITH
THE 2ND EDITION OF THE UNWTO GLOBAL TOURISM INVESTMENT
FORUM IN AFRICA.

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,

3. IT IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT WE MEET TODAY IN PERSON
AFTER ONE AND HALF YEARS OF WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST
IMPROBABLE JOURNEY FOR OUR NATIONS.
4. BARELY TWO YEARS AGO, NO ONE WOULD HAVE PREDICTED THAT A
PANDEMIC OF SUCH HUGE PROPORTIONS WOULD ENGULF THE
WORLD AND AFFECT US ALL IN THE MANNER IT HAS.

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5. MILLIONS DEAD. MILLIONS MORE STRUGGLING TO RECOVER FROM
BROKEN LIVES AND BROKEN BUSINESSES. THE SKIES BARELY
OPENED TO INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND OUR TOURISM INDUSTRIES
WERE MOST AFFECTED.
6. THAT HAS BEEN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.
7. AND SO, IT IS WITH A PULPABLE SIGH OF RELIEF THAT WE MEET
AGAIN.
8. ALLOW ME TO, THEREFORE, WELCOME THE UNWTO SECRETARY
GENERAL TO OUR CONTINENT OF AFRICA.
9. AMBASSADOR ZURAB POLOLIKASHVILI, WE WELCOME YOU.
10. THE SECRETARY GENERAL IS A FRIEND OF AFRICA
TO WHOM I AM DELIGHTED TO DELIVER OUR HEARTY
CONGRATULATIONS FOR WINNING HIS SECOND TERM OF OFFICE, AS
THE OUT GOING CHAIR OF THE CAF.

11. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE UNWTO CAF WILL CONTINUE ADVANCING A LOT OF ISSUES, PARTICULARLY TO DO WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM INDUSTRY AS A CATALYST FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, AND WE COUNT ON YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT TO ENSURE AFRICA DOES NOT LAG BEHIND GIVEN THE UNCERTAINTIES BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE COVID -19 PANDEMIC.

12. IT IS A NOTORIOUS FACT THAT TOURISM PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN DRIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH, CREATING JOBS AND GENERATING INCOMES FOR OUR PEOPLE.

13. TOURISM ALSO BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER AND NARROWS CULTURAL BOUNDARIES.

14. IT IS ALSO AN IMPORTANT STIMULUS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND SKILLS THAT LEAD TO ADVANCEMENT OF SOCIETIES.

15. THEREFORE, AFRICA CANNOT AFFORD TO HAVE ITS TOURISM SECTOR IN THE DOLDRUMS AS THESE FACTORS HINGE ON THE UNWTO PRIORITIES.
16. IN CHARTING THE PATH FOR AFRICA'S RECOVERY FROM THIS PANDEMIC, CAF HAS LAID EMPHASIS ON INNOVATION AND RE-ENGINEERING OF THE TOURISM SECTOR.
17. WE HAVE REALISED THAT WE ALSO NEED TO CHANGE OUR MARKETING STRATEGIES IN ORDER TO REMAIN AFLOAT AND COMPETITIVE. WE NEED TO BRAND AFRICA AND I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK OUR SECRETARY GENERAL AND SECRETARIAT FOR THE TIRELESS EFFORTS IN MAKING THIS A REALITY. IT IS OUR SINCERE HOPE THAT THIS EXERCISE WONT END WITH NAMIBIA AND CABO VERDE ONLY BUT THAT ALL CAF MEMBERS WILL BENEFIT SO THAT TOGETHER WE CAN WALK AS ONE AFRICA!

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

18. TODAY'S MEETING AGENDA, HAS BEEN DEVISED TO COVER TOPICS THAT ARE NOT ONLY RELEVANT BUT ASSIST IN ACCELERATING THE REBOUNDED OF THE TOURISM SECTOR. THIS IS IN TANDEM WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY TO GROW TOURISM ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT. I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO PRODUCTIVE DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION TO ENABLE US EXPLOIT THE MAGNIFICENT NATURAL WONDERS IN OUR COUNTRY IN ADDITION TO OUR RICH AND DIVERSE CULTURAL HERITAGE.

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES

19. IN TERMS OF THE IMPACT OF COVID-19, THERE IS PRACTICALLY NO COUNTRY THAT HAS BEEN SPARED. WE HAVE ALL SUFFERED JOB

LOSSES, A DECLINE IN REVENUES, A SCALE DOWN IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND LOSS OF LIVES, AMONG OTHERS.

20. INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY AFFECTED BY THE COVID-19 PROTOCOLS THAT REQUIRE MANDATORY TESTING WITHIN A SPECIFIED PERIOD, QUARANTINES AND, IN CERTAIN CASES, THE COMPLETE CLOSURE OF BORDERS.

21. IN CASE I AM MISUNDERSTOOD, THESE MEASURES HAVE BEEN NECESSARY, BUT LIKE ALL 'EFFECTIVE MEDICINES', THEY COME AT A PRICE.

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,

22. THE UNWTO RECORDED 87 PERCENT DROP IN TOURISM IN JANUARY, 2021 (ON A YEAR TO DATE BASIS) AS GLOBAL TOURISM CONTINUED TO SUFFER SETBACKS.

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23. POSSIBLE RECOVERY WAS PROJECTED TO HAVE STARTED DURING THE THIRD QUARTER OF THIS YEAR.
24. BASED ON THE CURRENT TRENDS, THE UNWTO DID FORECAST THAT INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL WOULD BE DOWN BY ABOUT 85 PERCENT, THEREBY REPRESENTING A LOSS OF 260 MILLION IN INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS WHEN COMPARED TO PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS IN 2019.
25. TOURISM RECOVERY HAS ALSO BEEN SLOW GIVEN THE COVID -19 PANDEMIC. HOWEVER, THIS SITUATION HAS COMPELLED THE TOURISM SECTOR TO LEARN TO DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY.
26. GIVEN THAT LESS THAN 10 PERCENT OF THE AFRICAN POPULATIONS HAVE BEEN FULLY VACCINATED AGAINST COVID-19, IT IMPLIES THAT WE WILL NOT EASILY TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE CONTINENT.
27. TO SURVIVE, WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO LOOK TO AFRICA AND TO OURSELVES.

28. THAT MEANS AFRICA WILL NOT BE THE SAME AS WE NEED TO ENGAGE IN THE FOLLOWING:

- INTER AND INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE AND TOURISM;
- OPENING MORE BORDERS IN CONDUCTING TOURISM BUSINESS;
- TWINNING OF OUR AFRICAN DESTINATIONS IN ORDER TO INCREASE TOURISM EXPERIENCE AND THE DURATION OF STAY;
- ATTRACTING MORE TRADE AND INVESTMENT IN THE TOURISM SECTOR;
- SOCIAL RE-CONSTRUCTION SO AS TO CATALYSE INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT;
- FOCUSING ON GREEN TOURISM, RESILIENT TRAVEL, AND DEVELOP NICHE MARKETS FOR BOTH TOURISM PRODUCTS AND SOURCE MARKETS;

- LOBBYING FOR MORE COVID- 19 VACCINES DOSES FOR AFRICA TO PROMOTE VACCINE EQUITY, AND ACCELERATED THE RECOVERY OF THE TOURISM SECTOR.

29. IT IS AGAINST THIS BACKDROP THAT WE SHOULD HEED THE CALLS OF UNWTO IN ATTAINING STRONGER COORDINATION ON TRAVEL PROTOCOLS BETWEEN COUNTRIES.

30. THIS WILL ENSURE A SAFE RE-STARTING OF TOURISM AND AVOID ANOTHER YEAR OF MASSIVE JOB LOSSES FOR THE TOURISM SECTOR.

31. IT IS, THEREFORE ESSENTIAL TO SCALE UP THE VACCINE ROLL-OUT AMONG OUR PEOPLE SO AS TO RESTORE CONFIDENCE AND ALLOW INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TO RESUME SAFELY AHEAD OF THE PEAK SUMMER SEASON IN PARTS OF AFRICA.

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,

32. THE CONVENING OF THIS REGIONAL MEETING COULDN'T BE MORE TIMELY. AS AFRICA, WE NEED TO SET CLEAR RECOVERY

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PARAMETERS. PARAMETERS THAT DEFINE THE AFRICAN BRAND, IDENTIFY LEVERS TO GROW THE BRAND AND REVIEWING THE BRAND MESSAGE.

33. THEREFORE, THIS MEETING SHOULD ENSURE THAT WE COME OUT OF SAL ISLAND WITH A CLEAR VIEW OF HOW WE WANT TO PROCEED ARISING FROM THE RECORDED ACHIEVEMENTS.

34. ALL MEMBER STATES AND ALL STAKEHOLDERS MUST TAKE BOLD AND TRANSFORMATIVE STEPS IN ORDER TO SHIFT THE BALANCE OF THINGS TOWARDS A MORE RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE PATH.

35. AS OUT – GOING CHAIR OF THE CAF, ZAMBIA STANDS READY TO CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY TO THIS NOBLE CAUSE. WE WILL WORK CLOSELY WITH THE SECRETARIAT AND IN –COMING CHAIR WHERE NEED BE, SO THAT WE MAKE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING DECISIONS TAKEN IN THE LAST TWO YEARS.

36. OUR ACTIONS TODAY IN CONVENING THIS MEETING ARE INSPIRATION BY THE AFRICAN UNION GOAL OF MAKING AFRICA THE MOST PREFERRED TOURIST DESTINATION IN THE WORLD.

37. IT IS FROM THIS PREMISE THAT WE RECOGNISE AND SUPPORT THE EFFORTS OF THE AFRICAN UNION TO DEVELOP A CONTINENTAL TOURISM POLICY IN LINE WITH AGENDA 2063.

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES

38. THE UNWTO, HAS SHOWN RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF COVID-19 AND THAT SHOULD GIVE US CONFIDENCE AS WE FACE THE FUTURE.

39. WHILE WE WERE IN THE GRIPS OF THE PANDEMIC, THE UNWTO DID NOT SIT BACK. IT SUCCESSFULLY HOSTED A NUMBER OF EVENTS INCLUDING THOSE DONE THROUGH THE CAF. THESE PREPARED

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MEMBER STATES TO RIDE IN THE WAVE OF UNCERTAINTY AND ARRIVE AT A PLACE WHERE TOURISM IS AT THE MOMENT.

40. TO THIS END, I AM GRATEFUL TO THE MEMBER STATES THAT HAVE WORKED WITH THE SECRETARIAT IN THE PAST YEAR IN DEFINING CONCRETE ACTION POINTS FOR THE RECOVERY OF THE TOURISM SECTOR.

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES

41. IT HAS BEEN A PRIVILEGE TO SERVE YOU AS THE CAF CHAIR AND FOR MY COUNTRY, ZAMBIA TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR THE CONTINENT OF AFRICA. YOU MAY WISH TO NOTE THAT THIS IS THE LAST MEETING OF ZAMBIA BEING THE CAF CHAIR.

- THE COVID PANDEMIC WAS A HUGE CHALLENGE BUT I AM PROUD TO STATE THAT CAF LED THE WAY WITH VIRTUAL MEETINGS.

AGAINST ALL ODDS, THE 63RD CAF CONFERENCE WAS HELD SUCCESSFULLY IN JUNE 2020 AND OTHER REGIONS WERE ABLE TO RIDE ON THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM THAT MEETING. THANK YOU TO MY FELLOW MINISTERS FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION, THANK YOU SECRETARY GENERAL AND YOUR TECHNICAL STAFF. SINCE THEN IT HAS BEEN A MARVEL TO APPRECIATE THE AMOUNT OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING, CAPACITY BUILDING THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE THROUGH THESE VIRTUAL MEETING WITH GASTRONOMY AND BIG DATA TAKING CENTRE STAGE.

- WOULD NEED A WHOLE DAY TO GO THROUGH ALL THE WORKSHOPS, MEETINGS AND EVENTS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN OUR REGION BUT KUDOS GO TO OUR ABLE DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA FOR HAVING WORKED THIS HARD.

42. AS I CONCLUDE MY COMMUNICATION, I WISH TO THANK ALL THE DELEGATES FROM THE VARIOUS MEMBER STATES FOR ELECTING ZAMBIA AS CAF CHAIR.
43. IT WAS NOT EASY BUT TOGETHER WE ACHIEVED MORE, TOGETHER, WE WORKED AS ONE AND TOGETHER WE WILL FORGE AHEAD AS ONE AFRICA. I WISH THE NEXT CHAIRPERSON SUCCESS AND WOULD LIKE TO ASSURE HIM OR HER OF OUR UNRESERVED SUPPORT
44. I THANK YOU ALL.