UNWTO Ministerial Roundtable on Tourism Resilience through Innovation and Digitalization in Asia and the Pacific

1500-1700, Male Time (GMT+5), 14 June 2022, CROSSROADS Maldives

In conjunction with
34th Joint Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for East Asia and the Pacific and the UNWTO Commission for South Asia,
& UNWTO Global Summit on Community-based Tourism
As we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of Maldivian tourism, I am extremely pleased that we are hosting the UNWTO Global Summit on Community-based Tourism in the Maldives. This year, for the first time, Maldives started a home-stay tourism initiative. Guests can now stay at the homes of local Maldivians where they can enjoy authentic local cuisine, learn the culture and traditions of us Dhivehin, and most importantly contribute meaningfully to the local economy at a community level. I hope this Summit would be a platform through which tourist destinations can learn and share our experiences with one another on how to make tourism more sustainable, resilient to climate change, and beneficial for local communities. I look forward to welcoming you all to the Maldives and participating in this Summit.

As part of the celebrations of 50 years of tourism in the Maldives, we are delighted to host the UNWTO Global Summit on Community-based Tourism, in association with World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) along with two major administrative meetings of the UNWTO, in the Maldives.

The theme for this summit aligns with the government’s efforts on diversification and linking tourism and its benefits to local island communities. This Summit will focus on areas of community-based tourism, such as agro-tourism, gastronomy tourism, eco-tourism which broadens and enhances the product base for the destination as they are fast becoming significant attractions for tourists.

I look forward to welcoming you to the Maldives to attend the Global Summit on Community-based Tourism, one of the key events of the Maldives Golden Year of Tourism.

This is an important year for tourism. After the devastation caused by the pandemic, it is heartening to see light at the end of the tunnel and the return of tourists to both Maldives and destinations everywhere.

UNWTO’s statistics show that international tourist arrivals worldwide more than doubled in January 2022 compared to 2021. This is a reflection of the growing confidence of travellers and it gives us reason to be optimistic as we mark the Golden Jubilee celebrations of Maldives' tourism development this year.

It is against the backdrop of the commemoration of these 50 years that we have joined hands with the Government of the Maldives to organize the 34th Joint Meeting of UNWTO’s two Asian Commissions here, in conjunction with the Ministerial Roundtable on Tourism Resilience through Innovation and Digitalization in Asia and the Pacific and with the Global Summit on Community-based Tourism.

After an unprecedented crisis, the time is ripe for policymakers and industry leaders to put their heads together to discuss the way forward towards a more sustainable and resilient tourism.

It is my pleasure to invite you to join UNWTO’s most important events in Asia in the Pacific in 2022, organised within the framework of Maldives’ landmark celebrations.
Preliminary Programme

Day 1 - 14 June 2022 (Tuesday)

15:00 – 17:00 UNWTO Ministerial Roundtable on Tourism Resilience through Innovation and Digitalization in Asia and the Pacific

(Venue: CROSSROADS Maldives)

Opening Remarks: Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary-General, UNWTO

Moderator: Ms. Sharanjit Leyl, International News Journalist

Speakers

- H.E. Dr. Abdulla Mausoom, Minister of Tourism, Maldives
- H.E. Mr. Faiyaz Koya, Minister of Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport, Fiji
- Ms. Angela Tanoesoedibjo, Vice Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy, Indonesia
- Mr. Yasuhiro OKANISHI, Vice-Minister for International Affairs, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), Japan
- YB Dato' Sri Hajah Nancy Shukri, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Malaysia
- H.E. Mr. Prem Bahadur Ale, Minister of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Nepal
- Ms. Verna Esmeralda C. Buensuceso, Assistant Secretary, Department of Tourism, Philippines (TBC)
- Mr. Nguyen Trung Khanh, Chairman, Viet Nam National Tourism Administration, Viet Nam
- Ms. Natalia Bayona, Director, Innovation, Education and Investments, UNWTO
- Mr. Stefano Baronci, Director General, Airports Council International Asia-Pacific
### ABOUT THE MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE

The Maldives was elected to host the 34th Joint Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for East Asia and the Pacific & the Commission for South Asia (34th CAP-CSA) at the 33rd CAP-CSA Joint Meeting held in 2021. The year 2022 marks the **50th anniversary** of the Maldives tourism industry. Therefore, in conjunction with the 34th CAP-CSA Joint Meeting and celebrating the **Golden Jubilee**, the UNWTO and the **Ministry of Tourism of the Maldives** agreed to organize the **UNWTO Ministerial Roundtable on Tourism Resilience through Innovation and Digitalization in Asia and the Pacific** and bring the highest levels of policymakers, including the Ministers and invited industry leaders for the Asia-Pacific tourism.

The Ministerial Roundtable will
- provide the in-person opportunity for the high-level officials and industry leaders to discuss one of the top and trendy priorities of tourism development – Innovation and Digitalization during the post-pandemic era,
- and affirm UNWTO’s commitment to tourism recovery through innovation and digitalization in Asia-Pacific.

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<td>Ms. Sharanjit Leyl&lt;br&gt;International News Journalist</td>
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<td>Mr. Stefano Baronti&lt;br&gt;Director General, ACI Asia-Pacific</td>
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Asia-Pacific Ministers/Deputy Ministers/Industry Leaders
ABOUT THE MALDIVES

The Maldives is an island nation in the Indian Ocean to the southwest of India and Sri Lanka that spans across the equator. The Maldives comprises 1,192 islands grouped into a double chain of 26 atolls that stretch along a length of 871 kilometers. Each island is surrounded by white sandy beaches, crystal-clear lagoons, and fenced by coral reefs which are home to a diverse range of colorful marine species. The islands lie just 1.5 meters above sea level. While the country covers an area of approximately 90,000 square kilometers, only 298 square kilometers of that is dry land.

The Maldives is among the first countries that fully opened its border to tourists after the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been exemplary in its resilience and ability to recover from the pandemic. In 2021, visitor arrivals reached more than 80 percent of pre-COVID levels, far outpacing other similar tourist destinations. With its exemplary approach towards COVID management and destination promotion, the Maldives was crowned, World’s Leading Destination Award by the World Travel Awards in 2020 and 2021.

ABOUT THE VENUES

CROSSROADS Maldives, which is located in the North Male’ Atoll (Kaafu or K. Atoll), is 8 kilometres away from the main international airport, Velana International Airport. It can be reached via speedboat in approximately 15 minutes. CROSSROADS Maldives is the stunning Emboodhoo Lagoon, encompassing the neighboring group of islands, spanning nearly seven kilometres.

Paradise Island Resort and Spa, which is located in the north Male’ Atoll (Kaafu or K. Atoll), is 6 kilometers away from the main international airport, Velana International Airport. It can be reached via speedboat in approximately 20 minutes. Paradise Island Resort and Spa is a 5-star resort in the Maldives run by local management.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE COORDINATOR:

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