

“Tourism Always Comes Back” – UNWTO Celebrates Official Opening of ITB Berlin

***Berlin, Germany, 7 March 2023** - Tourism is on track to achieve full recovery this year and ready to deliver on its potential as a pillar of peace and sustainability, UNWTO has told sector leaders at ITB in Berlin.*

As the leading tourism trade fair celebrates its first in-person event since 2019, UNWTO data shows that more than twice as many people travelled internationally in January as they did at the start of last year. According to UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili, the message is clear: **“Tourism always comes back”**, and the return of ITB, alongside the recent re-opening of China, is clear proof of **renewed confidence** in international travel.

Building a better tourism

Secretary-General Pololikashvili was invited to be part of the official inauguration ceremony for ITB 2023, alongside Germany's Vice-Chancellor Robert Habeck, Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili, Berlin Mayor Franziska Giffey, and public and private sector leaders. While welcoming the positive data, he also stressed that tourism has a **“responsibility to grow back better**. We must speed up and scale up to a more sustainable and resilient tourism.”

Outlining UNWTO's priorities for the sector, Mr. Pololikashvili urged both governments and businesses to recognize the importance of **education and training**, as well as the crucial role of **investment** – the “missing ingredient” for turning plans for greater sustainability and resilience into reality. Investment will be the theme for World Tourism Day 2023, to be celebrated on 27 September.

UNWTO at ITB 2023

At ITB 2023, UNWTO will be part of a special Industry Roundtable, focusing on ‘transitions in travel’, while also sharing key knowledge and insights into tourism's climate action efforts, and expectations for tourist behaviour as the sector's recovery continues. UNWTO will also provide an update of its leading work in tourism for rural development, including through the Best Tourism Villages initiative.

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