Tourism Leaders Place African Focus on Global Challenges

Pointe aux Piments, Mauritius, 10 August 2023 - The Conference on Rethinking Africa: Rethinking Tourism for Africa: Addressing global challenges; Promoting investment and partnerships brought expert African perspectives to global challenges, highlighting the need of investments towards a greener tourism sector and access to finance within the sector and the need to further strengthen public-private collaboration at every level.

Tourism Ministers set out visions.

- Reflecting the heightened relevance of tourism as a solution to a range of global challenges and pillar of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Conference was structured around two thematic sessions with a ministerial panel on Addressing global challenges followed by a second one focusing on “Promoting Investment and Partnerships in Tourism for Economic Development. His Excellency Steven Obeegadoo, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Housing, and Land Use Planning and Minister of Tourism for the Republic of Mauritius, and Vice-Chair of the UNWTO Executive Council joined Albert Muchanga, Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals, African Union who delivered the keynote address.

- A special Ministerial Panel Session focusing on global challenges featured contributions from the Ministers of Tourism of DR Congo Didier Mazenga Mukanzu, Minister of Tourism of Ghana Hon. Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim Awal, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture of Kenya Peninah Malonza, and Cabinet Secretary for Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage of Zambia Rhodney Sikumba, as well as Ms Lisa Singh, the UN Resident Coordinator for Mauritius and Seychelles and Prof Nazia M Habib, Head, Centre for Resilience and Sustainable Development at the University of Cambridge.

Advancing investments and partnerships

In line with UNWTO’s priorities for the sector, the second session put the focus on the importance of building strategic relations and partnerships as well as the vital need for more and better-targeted investments in tourism, building tourism intelligence particularly in projects with the potential to deliver greater sustainability, resilience and inclusivity. UNWTO Executive Director Natalia Bayona opened the session with an overview of the tourism investment climate followed by presentations by Mr. Kevin Ramkaloan CEO Business Mauritius and messages from Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe,
Secretary General of The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and Leila Farah Mokaddem, Director General, Southern Africa Region, African Development Bank.

Botswana's Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Conservation and Tourism Philda Kereng, and Hon. Siandou Fofana, Minister of Tourism, Republic of Côte d’Ivoire, also contributed their unique, expert insights into rethinking tourism investments and partnerships. They were joined by Ms. Amanda Serumaga – Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme for Mauritius and Seychelles, Ms. Michaella Rugwizangoga, Chief Tourism Officer, Rwanda Development Board and Mr. Mamadu Serifo Jaquite, Mamadu Serifo Jaquite, Commissioner in charge of the Department of Human Development of the West African Monetary and Economic Union.

**The Mauritius Declaration**

The conference culminated with the presentation of the *Mauritius Declaration* by the host country and UNWTO. The program of actions proposed in the Mauritius Declaration, aims to promote sustainable and resilient tourism ecosystems through multi-sectoral partnerships, ethical practices, investment promotion, nature-based solutions, decarbonization, coordination of public health, policy alignment and data-driven decision-making. This program includes a range of measures, including:

- Encourage partnership and tourism ethics;
- The promotion of investment, innovation and accessibility to financing;
- Public health coordination and crisis management;
- The integration of internal and regional tourism;
- The encouragement of responsible and solidarity tourism;
- The implementation of blue tourism;
- Partnerships between public, private and community actors and models of governance; And
- Pan-African Fund for Sustainable Tourism;

To enable this programme to be carried out under the best possible conditions, the Declaration also calls for the support, in accordance with their respective mandates, of the Member States of the UNWTO, the African Union Commission, the regional economic communities organizations, regional aviation institutions, banking institutions, the African Development Bank, international aid partners, donor communities and financial institutions.

**Related links:**

[UNWTO Members Meet to Rethink Agenda for African Tourism](https://www.unwto.org/unwto-members-meet-rethink-agenda-african-tourism)

[The 66TH Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for Africa](https://www.unwto.org/66th-meeting-unwto-commission-africa)