Winston Duke Appointed as United Nations Ambassador for Responsible Tourism

October 4, 2023 – The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has announced the appointment of acclaimed actor Winston Duke as its newest Ambassador for Responsible Tourism. Recognized for his exceptional talent and commitment to global philanthropic efforts, Duke will advocate for sustainable tourism practices and raise awareness about the transformative power of travel, in support of UNWTO’s latest campaign, “Tourism Open Minds.”

Duke, renowned for his captivating performances in critically acclaimed films such as “Black Panther,” “Us,” and “Nine Days,” has consistently demonstrated his dedication to social causes, making him an ideal choice for this prestigious role.

As UNWTO Ambassador for Responsible Tourism, Duke will actively support UNWTO’s mission to promote responsible and sustainable tourism practices. He will work closely with the Organization to advocate for the importance of tourism in fostering economic growth, preserving cultural heritage, and protecting the environment.

The "Tourism Open Minds" campaign, launched by UNWTO on the occasion of World Tourism Day on 27 September, aims to promote inclusive and sustainable tourism by fostering dialogue, understanding, and respect among travelers and local communities. It encourages travelers to embrace diverse cultures, traditions and perspectives, while also highlighting the positive impact of tourism on local economies and the environment.

Expressing his enthusiasm for the new role, Winston Duke stated, “I am deeply honored to join the United Nations World Tourism Organization as an Ambassador. To journey, to travel is the act of confronting the truth...in that truth, we see that we are so much more alike than we are different, and without knowing it, we build bridges. If travel is a bridge, then tourism is the engineer. Tourism is the globe’s lifeblood of our global economy. It is the most human sector of our economies. With it, we can engineer mutual respect amongst nations as it is a reminder that, though we are individual spaces, what we have in common are a bounty of beautiful people and experiences.”

UNWTO Secretary-General, Zurab Pololikashvili, welcomed the appointment, saying: “UNWTO is honored to welcome Winston Duke as our Ambassador for Responsible Tourism. As an actor, he is a master storyteller and capable of showcasing the power of tourism to open minds and transform lives, and as a humanitarian, he lives tourism’s values of empathy, delivering opportunity for all and going the extra mile for the common good. UNWTO looks forward to an exciting and fruitful relationship with Duke.”
Winston Duke will actively participate in various initiatives, campaigns, and events organized by the UNWTO across the world to promote responsible tourism practices and advocate for the sector’s recovery. His influential voice and global reach will undoubtedly contribute to raising awareness and inspiring positive change within the tourism industry.

About Winston Duke

Winston Duke rose to global stardom in Marvel’s critically acclaimed BLACK PANTHER franchise, the third highest-grossing film ever in the United States. Duke played the fan-favorite character M’Baku. He reprised his role in BLACK PANTHER: WAKANDA FOREVER in which he was named the King of Wakanda.

His other prominent film credits include Peter Berg’s Netflix crime drama SPENCER CONFIDENTIAL, Jordan Peele’s, US, and Sony Picture Classics' NINE DAYS. Duke not only played the lead role, but also served as an Executive Producer.

Duke’s upcoming projects include Universal Pictures THE FALL GUY, in which he costars with Ryan Gosling and Emily Blunt.

Duke was awarded with the Advanced Imaging Society's Social Justice Lumiere Award for his work as the star and executive producer of “The Messy Truth VR Experience,” a virtual reality (VR) short doc which provides viewers with a look at the timely themes of race, mercy, and redemption through someone else's eyes.

While onscreen, Duke is known as one of Hollywood's most prominent rising film stars; offscreen, he is equally known as a prolific champion of social justice.

Duke has been appointed as the global ambassador for Partners in Health, a nonprofit global health and social justice organization dedicated to bringing the benefits of modern medical science to impoverished communities around the world.

He is an advocate for the HeForShe movement which aims to promote gender equality and has joined the American Diabetes Association® to spark a national dialogue about diabetes - a disease that impacts nearly half of the U.S. adult population.

A native of Trinidad and Tobago, Duke received his Bachelor of Arts in Theatre at the University at Buffalo and Master of Fine Arts at Yale School of Drama.

About UNWTO

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is the United Nations specialized agency for fostering tourism as a vehicle for equal, inclusive and sustainable development. Working with its Member States, international organizations and the private sector, UNWTO promotes safe and seamless travel for all. UNWTO also works to make tourism the foundation of trust and international cooperation and a central pillar of growth and opportunity. As part of the wider UN system, UNWTO is at the forefront of global efforts.
to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through its ability to create decent jobs, promote equality and preserve natural and cultural heritage.

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