UN Tourism Celebrates Heritage and Culture on Official Visit to Iran

The Secretary-General of UN Tourism has concluded an official visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Zurab Pololikashvili led a high-level delegation to the country to join the official inauguration of the Tehran International Tourism Exhibition and for a series of bilateral meetings to advance common goals around tourism resilience, diversity and rural development.

Secretary-General Pololikashvili joined Iran’s President, His Excellency Ebrahim Raisi, in opening the 17th edition of the Exhibition. At the leading event, UN Tourism reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Iran grow its tourism sector through promotion and investments, while also supporting the country in educating a new generation of tourism workers. Mr Pololikashvili also met with the Mayor of Tehran, Ali Reza Zakani, with bilateral talks focusing on working together to make the city a more attractive destination both for tourists and for investors.

The Secretary-General explored the Tehran International Tourism Exhibition alongside Iran’s Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Ezzatollah Zarghami and Deputy Minister Dr. Ali Aqshar Shalbaqian. The UN Tourism leadership commended their hard work building the sector, with particular recognition of how tourism is celebrating Iran’s diverse ethnic groups and traditions while also providing a common vision for the future of the country. Representing UN Tourism’s growing Affiliate Members network, the CEO of Abbas Abad Cultural and Tourism Area, Seyed Hossein Hejazi, also met with Secretary-General Pololikashvili to make clear the role the private sector is playing in advancing shared goals.

In line with the Organization’s emphasis on rural development, Governor Malek Rahmati was presented with a plaque to commemorate Kandovan being included in the list of Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism. The significant potential for growing tourism as a pillar of rural development, benefitting communities across Iran, was also noted, with UN Tourism ready to work with destinations to help them join the Best Tourism Villages network.

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