

Open Letter to Heads of State and Government

Travel and Tourism is today one of the world's biggest generators of employment and export earnings, and a key driver for economic growth and development. Travel and Tourism currently accounts directly and indirectly for about 3% to 5% of global GDP, as well as 30% of the world's export of services. If the induced impacts of travel and tourism are factored into the calculations, its total contribution is greater still.

The total contribution of Travel & Tourism to employment – including jobs indirectly supported by the sector – is estimated at 7% to 8%. This makes Travel & Tourism a vital contributor to the global development agenda, affording it a unique role in building strong, sustainable and balanced global growth.

Travel and Tourism: Creating Jobs

Through the creation of sustainable enterprises and decent jobs, Travel & Tourism provides the necessary security and stability for millions of people worldwide to build better lives. As a fast entry point into the workforce for young people and women, it provides crucial opportunities for fair income, social protection, gender equality, personal development and social inclusion.

Travel and Tourism: Enhancing Development

Travel & Tourism is one of the major export sectors of developing countries and the primary source of foreign exchange earnings in the vast majority of these, creating much needed employment and opportunities for development. At the same time, it has the power to deliver significant international earnings for environmental protection, as well as giving economic value to cultural heritage. It is also a sector built on bringing people together, in order to learn about and understand each other, fostering mutual respect and tolerance.

Travel and Tourism: Supporting the 'Green Economy'

As tourism activity continues to grow, Travel & Tourism is increasingly intertwined with environmental sustainability. Environmentally responsible tourism is one of the new growth poles of the 'green economy', providing sustainable infrastructure, business opportunities, jobs and income.

UNWTO and WTTC: Joining Efforts to Maximise Travel & Tourism's Contribution to Economic Growth and Development

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO/OMT) is a specialised agency of the United Nations and the leading international organisation in the field of tourism. The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) is the global forum for business leaders in Travel & Tourism.

In light of this ongoing campaign, we would like to extend an invitation to H.E. Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of South Africa to join hands with other world leaders, as well as with UNWTO and WTTC, and add his voice to our effort to position Travel and Tourism higher on the global agenda.

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