

## **Restoring Growth via Tourism at the 'Future Hospitality Summit'**

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (ots/PRNewswire) - Under the auspice of the G20 International Conferences and Events, and the Ministry of Tourism of Saudi Arabia "The Future of Hospitality Summit" concluded today after two days of conversations. Key players of the travel and tourism industry, from both the public and private sector, gathered to discuss reshaping the tourism landscape for recovery by promoting sustainable and inclusive growth.

The Future Hospitality Summit gathered over 6,000 participants, in Riyadh and virtually, from all over the world to discuss a path forward based on building a tourism and hospitality sector that is relevant to a post-pandemic world and attractive to future travelers, consumers and workers. Speakers, including His Excellency Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary General of the UN World Tourism Organization and Gloria Guevara, President & CEO of the World Tourism Council, among other government leaders and industry giants, also considered ways of encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship, while ensuring that tourism development remains sustainable in economic and environmental terms.

Reflecting on the success of the Future Hospitality Summit, His Excellency Ahmed Al Khateeb, Minister of Tourism of Saudi Arabia said: "The Future Hospitality Summit has convened leaders from national governments and the global hospitality sector to put tourism at the heart of the agenda, resulting in an exciting and productive dialogue across the international community. The past two days have highlighted the vital importance of public-private sector collaboration, as well as community engagement, to drive forward the tourism and hospitality sectors' contribution to the global economic recovery. Embracing technology and innovation as we rethink the future of tourism, using them as tools to ensure that the sector is more sustainable, will create opportunities for everyone, and a sector that is more resilient than ever before".

The G20 are ensuring a safe recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the travel and tourism sector and are working collectively to safeguard lives and livelihoods and create a more resilient sector in the long-run. Earlier this month G20 ministers endorsed the Diriyah Communique, which included actions and

guidelines towards an inclusive and safe recovery from the pandemic.

The travel and tourism sector contributed to 10.3% of the world's gross domestic product (GDP) and 330 million jobs (direct, indirect, and induced) in 2019. Today it is one of the most heavily impacted sectors by the COVID-19 pandemic, with an anticipated 60-80% decline in international tourism in 2020. Swift and coordinated efforts are needed to restore growth in an industry that accounts for or 28% of the world's service exports and it generates a greater impact on domestic economies than overall exports. The sector also has a workforce comprised of 54% women, compared to 39% in the broader global economy.

The G20 Tourism ministers agreed during their working sessions that facilitating the sector's recovery and resiliency from the pandemic entails, among other measures to:

- \* Support those most impacted by the crisis within the sector, including women, and micro-, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), and economies that rely on travel and tourism.
  
- \* Plan tourism as a growth enabler, improving sustainability and inclusive community development, and supporting regional and local economies.
  
- \* Enhance connectivity and creative use of new technologies to improve safety and security, and the traveler experience.

The G20 International Conferences and Events (IC&E) facilitates conversations that matter among the private sector, scientific community, civil society, government, media and the general public, amplifying G20 Initiatives and their impact in the protection of lives and livelihoods, the restoration of growth for all and the shaping of a better world.

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