



WORLD TOURISM DAY MESSAGE
by Dr. Michael Frenzel

Tourism – linking cultures
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As vice president of the (WTTC) World Travel & Tourism Council, I welcome the theme of this year's World Tourism Day: "Linking cultures".

Generating some 9 per cent of global GDP and supporting more than 258 million jobs, the tourism sector is not only a major industry spanning the globe. No, our business goes far beyond a mere exchange of services, creating economic opportunities for large populations. Tourism embraces an immense opportunity for global society. Our products bring people together and serve as a catalyst for interaction and exchange, encounter and dialogue. At the end of the day, we build ties between the world's peoples and cultures. This is a crucial element of our business, whose effect cannot be overestimated.

Travel creates experiences and impressions that the digital world will never be able to replace. Travel builds understanding and fosters mutual trust. We will only appreciate and defend what we have experienced first-hand. In travelling and thus experiencing foreign cultures, feeling, tasting and smelling all they have to offer, we lose our fear of the unknown and learn to appreciate it.

Travel enables us to cross boundaries and break down mental barriers. As an industry, we should therefore jointly fulfil and courageously develop our role in society.

We therefore look forward to a broadly based, inspiring dialogue with all relevant stakeholders in the framework of the World Tourism Day.

Dr. Michael Frenzel

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