

Opening ceremony of World Tourism Day 2014

Speech by Mr. Carlos Vogeler, Director-Executive Secretary for Member Relations of the World Tourism Organization

**Your Excellency, the Constitutional President of the United
Mexican States, Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto,**

Madam Secretary, Claudia Ruiz Massieu,

Mr. Governor of Jalisco, Aristóteles Sandoval

Governors, Ministers, Ambassadors, Authorities

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I wish to relay to you very special greetings from our Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, who due to unforeseen circumstances unfortunately cannot join us in this celebration of World Tourism Day, although he will be with us tomorrow in the high-level dialogue.

On behalf of the World Tourism Organization, a specialized agency of the United Nations, it is truly a great pleasure and honour to open the official celebrations of World Tourism Day in this historic and emblematic city of Guadalajara in the state of Jalisco.

Mr. President, we thank you and we very much appreciate your honouring us with your presence today in this ceremony, as we are aware of the multiple concerns that call for your attention, especially the situation in Los Cabos.

Let me convey on behalf of the Secretary-General and the international tourism community our heartfelt solidarity and support for the Mexican people in their recovery efforts in Baja California, with the certainty that the extraordinary work being carried out will soon make it possible for all services and sectors to be fully operational.

Mr. President, your acceptance to preside over the official celebrations of World Tourism Day is a clear testament to the substantial support you provide to the tourism industry and an acknowledgement of the contribution of tourism to your development plans.

In this celebration of the day devoted to it, the entire international tourism community today looks to Mexico, and in this regard, I would like to express our deepest gratitude to your Government, the Government of the State of Jalisco and the authorities of Guadalajara for the commitment shown in hosting the celebration of this special day for the Community of Nations.

Mr. President, Secretary Ruiz Massieu, Governor Sandoval, we are truly appreciative and very grateful for the excellent preparations for this celebration and for gathering together at this event Ministers of Tourism from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe and, of course, the sister Republics of Latin America.

They have all responded to Mexico's call and will participate tomorrow in the "High Level Dialogue on Tourism and Community Development" along with Secretary Ruiz Massieu and our Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

In fact, it is the first time that a country hosting World Tourism Day has had the participation of so many foreign ministers, which is undoubtedly a sign of Mexico's ability to convene and host events.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mexico is today a lively, modern and vibrant kaleidoscope of cultures and has a surging economy.

From its dynamic modern cities with the flavour of older times, to its magical towns that have managed to retain the charm and rich culture and history they contain. From the extraordinary heritage of pre-Columbian civilizations and colonial cities to the beaches of the Pacific and Caribbean its folk traditions and, of course, its traditional cuisine inscribed by UNESCO on the World Heritage list and which we are already enjoying during our stay in Guadalajara.

Everything in Mexico radiates life, imagination, creativity and especially warmth, the warmth offered by the Mexican people, which makes the visitor feel the vibrations of a country that is able to entice millions of visitors from around the world.

Mexico is also a leader in world tourism and has always played a very active role in the World Tourism Organization, which was founded precisely here in Mexico and was fortunate to have an

illustrious Mexican as Secretary-General, in the person of Antonio Enríquez Savignac.

Clearly, Mexican tourism is in very good health, and despite the constant tests and challenges facing the world, it is maintaining high levels of growth.

However, this growth would not have been possible without the support from the highest level and without the application of transversal policies that give special attention to tourism.

An excellent example of this was one of your first initiatives, Mr. President, with the creation of the Tourism Cabinet, which brings together several ministries of your Government, coordinated by the Ministry of Tourism to attend specifically to tourism issues.

We congratulate you, Mr. President, on this successful policy, which is being replicated by other countries and shows strong support to the tourism sector.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

From all corners of the world we gather here today to celebrate World Tourism Day. It is an ideal occasion to stop and reflect on the profound impact that tourism has in our society and how we should manage its projected growth in a conscientious and responsible manner.