

## 21st session of the UNWTO General Assembly

### Guidelines for Participation in the General Debate “Tourism: Fostering Inclusive Development and Social Transformation”

In a mere six decades, international tourism grew from 25 million international arrivals in 1950, to 700 million in 2000 and 1,133 million in 2014. UNWTO long-term forecasts indicate that the sector will continue growing to reach 1.8 billion tourists by the year 2030. Today, the figures speak for themselves. With 1,133 million international tourists travelling the world every year and six billion more within their own countries, the sector creates directly or indirectly one in eleven jobs, accounts for as much as 10% of the world’s GDP and generates 6% of international trade.

Furthermore, in recent years the tourism sector has proven its resilience to many global challenges including the economic downturn, geopolitical tensions, and natural and man-made disasters, asserting itself as one of the world’s leading socioeconomic drivers. On average, international tourist arrivals have grown 4.5% since 2010—growth that has translated into economic progress, increased exports and employment.

Beyond these big numbers, the scope of tourism takes on much greater significance. As the United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, highlighted on the occasion of World Tourism Day 2014, “Harnessing tourism’s immense benefits will be critical to advancing our sustainable development.”

The year 2015 will be marked as a milestone year as governments are set to adopt the post-2015 development agenda at the United Nations Summit in New York. The post-2015 development agenda is a transformative, people-centred agenda, elaborated from the collective engagement of a broad range of global stakeholders, with bold and ambitious targets for a more sustainable future.

In this framework, the 21st session of the UNWTO General Assembly, taking place in Medellín, Colombia, a country that has seen the transformative power of tourism working for peace, understanding and development, is a unique opportunity to reflect on how the international community, national governments and the private sector, can enhance the contribution of tourism to inclusive development and social transformation.

For the purpose of a fruitful and lively participation in the General Debate on the theme “Tourism: Fostering Inclusive Development and Social Transformation”, the Secretariat proposes that delegations focus their interventions **on some of the following issues**:

1. How would you describe the impact of tourism in your country in terms of promoting social transformation and inclusive development?
2. What main policies measures have been implemented to promote sustainable tourism development in your country?
3. How are national tourism policies promoting the distribution of tourism benefits within host communities and their active participation in the tourism value chain?
4. Does your country measure/evaluate the impact of tourism in terms of socioeconomic development and environmental impacts; if yes, how?
5. What measures would you like to see put forward by the private sector to promote a bigger impact of tourism in socioeconomic development and social transformation and how can national tourism policies support the private sector in contributing to such objectives?

***Procedure:***

Delegations wishing to take the floor during the General Debate are kindly requested to **e-mail the Secretariat by 31 August** ([zyakovleva@unwto.org](mailto:zyakovleva@unwto.org)) indicating "General Debate" in the subject.

The Secretariat will place their names on a speakers' list so that the Debate may be organized as satisfactorily as possible. In view of time constraints, it is essential to limit the speaking time of each head of delegation to a maximum of four minutes.

Simultaneous interpretation will be available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Written statements delivered during the debate of the General Assembly will not be translated.