



**Message on World Tourism Day 2016  
“Tourism for All -Promoting Universal Accessibility”  
by  
H.E. Mrs. Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul  
Minister of Tourism and Sports of Thailand**

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Tourism is vital and at the heart of forging friendships, creating a better understanding between each other and it connects people to people, hearts to hearts. At the same time, tourism is also a key economic development strategy and a catalyst for the growth of the country, while at the same time tourism is also a significant contributor to job creation and the provides an opportunity to work with people in local communities, giving them the tools to adapt to the needs of a modern day traveler. Tourism is an integral source of income for the people in local communities and it is certainly relevant and connected to the operations, as well as, the development in areas that would benefit the whole country in various aspects, both directly and indirectly. The state of our tourism industry has to be diversified, whether it is the social, cultural, or environmental aspects, all of these aspects bring about a sense of pride for the people who work ever so hard to maintain the balance of the quality of tourism that is presented to our guests. We are improving and developing human resources from the very people who know and understand the culture and who are able to the spread the charms of Thainess, while at the same time locals have to understand the meaning of quality tourism and sustainability.

This year of 2016, the Kingdom of Thailand or often referred to as “Amazing Thailand” and we are affectionately recognised to be the “Land of Smiles” by the world, has been honoured by the UNWTO in carrying out the responsibility of the host nation for the official celebrations of the World Tourism Day 2016. For this year’s theme, “Tourism for All – Promoting Universal Accessibility”, it is indeed a challenge for Thailand and the world to recognize the necessity of accessibility in the world of tourism and to accommodate everyone everywhere they may travel to and we feel that it is time for us to turn our attention to accessibility for all and the message must be, all are welcomed.

We have to understand the theory of Universal Design in order to fully support and accommodate our guests, there has to be a level of fairness in terms of a healthy competition of employment and competition amongst tourist destinations. As the world of travel and tourism is an expanding industry and the number of travelers increases every year, we have to

ensure that travelling the world has to be safe and seamless at its utmost. Understanding one another and providing flexibility and space, while at the same time we have to consider the impact of energy conversion has to our mutual goal of sustainable tourism.

For this year's World Tourism Day theme "Tourism for All – Promoting Universal Accessibility", it is a conscious reminder to us all around the world to push for integration in order to improve each other's potential in tourism and to promote a mutual understanding of different cultures and traditions. This is where tourism extends beyond numbers and figures, as tourism has the magic to bring people from all over the globe, from all walks of life to be together peacefully without discrimination and to be in a world where we respect each other and working towards a common goal of sustainable tourism and human capital development. There is not a greater time than now for us to integrate and work together for us to reach our optimum in the internationally recognized universal design and for us to work hand in hand towards the development of our beloved tourism industry.

On the occasion of World Tourism Day 2016, which falls annually on the 27<sup>th</sup> September, on behalf of the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Thai people, by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, I would like to express my sincerest thanks to the UNWTO for honouring Thailand by giving us, "Amazing Thailand", the opportunity to be the host of the official celebration for World Tourism Day 2016. My gratitude also goes out to every single one of you involved in the process and for making this year's celebration a grand success, and finally, I invite everyone around the world to celebrate this glorious day with us in the Land of Smiles and to be a part of the promoting of tourism for all and the development of universal accessibility.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized, cursive letters that appear to be 'M U' followed by a flourish.

**(H.E. Mrs. Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul)**  
**Minister of Tourism and Sports**