



Tourism EXPO Japan in Okinawa

Business Meetings & Exhibition

Forum Report

Keynote Speech

International Tourism Forum

October 29, Thursday, 2020
Okinawa Convention Center

Tourism EXPO Japan in Okinawa Business Meetings & Exhibition Forum Report

C O N T E N T S

Forum Theme

Driving Tourism Recovery towards the Attainment of SDGs

Congratulatory Message

4

Speaker: Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili
Secretary-General, UNWTO (Video Message)
Ms. Gloria Guevara Manzo
President & CEO, WTTC (Video Message)

Keynote Speech 1

8

Resilient Tourism, Friendly Okinawa

Speaker: Mr. Yoshiro Shimoji
Chairman, Okinawa Convention & Visitors Bureau

Keynote Speech 2

12

Enhancing Tourism's Resilience and Sustainability

Speaker: H.E. Ms. Bernadette Romulo-Puyat
Secretary of Department of Tourism
Republic of the Philippines (Video Message)

International Tourism Forum

16

Overcoming the COVID-19 Crisis: Building the foundations for future resilience and sustainable tourism growth





Congratulatory Message



Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili **Secretary-General** **World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (Video Message)**



Dear Excellencies,
Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Tourism EXPO Japan 2020.

This meeting sends a strong message that tourism is united and ready to restart.

I congratulate the organizers of this EXPO. Against an unprecedented challenge, you have brought together tourism leaders from the public and private sectors.

This cooperation must continue. Tourism has a long history of meeting challenges and adapting. It will do so again.

But only through strong collaboration

and partnerships can we succeed in not only restarting but growing back better.

This is the time to show the unique power of tourism: To create and support jobs and to drive economic growth.

It is also the time to realize tourism's ability to transform lives and to build resilience.

Tourism EXPO Japan offers the perfect forum to collaborate, share ideas and look to the future.

I wish you all a productive and inspiring EXPO. And I look forward to meeting you again soon.

Thank you.

Congratulatory Message



Ms. Gloria Guevara Manzo
President & CEO
World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) (Video Message)



Hello, travel and tourism partners, friends and distinguished guests. What an honor it is to be here with you all today. I would like to first of all congratulate the organizers of Tourism EXPO Japan, Japan Travel and Tourism Association, Japan Association of Travel Agents and the Japan National Tourism Organization. The way that you all work together with the government of Japan is very impressive. As I have said before, you guys are a role model in the world in terms of public and private collaboration and it's very impressive. I congratulate you for that. I also want to specially thank Hiroyuki Takahashi who is the

Chairperson of Tourism EXPO Japan Executive Committee, and one of the WTTC members of JTB. Also, I would like to give a special thanks to Hiroshi Sawabe, Executive Director of the Office of International Tourism, JATA, for inviting me.

I understand this is the first time that this event is held in Okinawa as it is very important what is happening. As you know, Travel and Tourism countries lead to 230 million jobs, or one in 10. And 10% of the global economy depends on this sector. So we celebrate the fact that you are having together this event.

Unfortunately, as we know, COVID has

been an unprecedented crisis with unprecedented dimensions. According to our data as of September, 121 million jobs around the world have been impacted. Unfortunately, by the end of the year, this number is going to grow to 197 million jobs. However, the travel industry is resilient. Time and time again, we always have recovered from crises in the past. And we will do it again this time. This unprecedented crisis, as I said before, requires some unprecedented action and collaboration.

WTTC is taking different initiatives. For instance, the protocols that we have developed in cooperation with WHO and CDC and more than our 200 members to define how we can reduce the risk of getting COVID while having a good experience. Also, in the case of hospitality, hotel rooms were offered to doctors and nurses at the worst of the COVID situation in Italy, Madrid, for instance, or New York. And we were able to maintain those installations COVID-free, despite the fact that doctors and nurses were taking care of patients with COVID.

Why was that? It is because of the protocols in place, that knowledge with the expertise of medical experts, a lot of groups from around the world who contributed to the protocols. So like that we have built and defined multiple protocols so that we can

restore faster the confidence of the traveller. At the same time, our members assigned and stamped a safe travel stamp so the travellers, domestic or international, can understand what destinations have implemented protocols at the highest level, all related to the private sector, and what suppliers also have implemented these protocols in order to reduce the possible risks. So we believe that is crucial to restore consumer confidence.

Public and private collaboration is vital to resuming tourism and international travel. It was very evident when we made history on October 7 because for the first time under the leadership of Saudi Arabia, residency of the G20, we had the opportunity to have an event for the private sector. Forty five CEOs, including some members from the Japanese community, participated in this unprecedented event, where we presented per the request from Saudi, a plan to recover 100 million jobs, 100 million livelihoods.

So we appreciate the support from the government of Japan and also the private sector to implement this plan. It is crucial to resume international travel. At the center of the plan we have is how we resume international travel without exporting or importing the virus, of course, which is a mutual

priority. That's why testing before departure is crucial. Testing before departure, close-contact tracing—that is the way to go based on experience from the past. In this regard, Japan is already ahead of the rest, which we acknowledge and recognize.

We need to learn to co-exist with virus as we have done in the past because millions of jobs depend on this. We cannot wait for a vaccine to be ready. There's a way to co-exist and maintain and keep health and protect lives while at the same time we can resume travel.

So we really appreciate Tourism EXPO Japan for the invitation to WTTC to join in on this important conference as it is crucial to the recovery of our sector. It is also an important milestone as well to demonstrate how this is possible in preparation for the Olympics and Paralympics that would be held in Tokyo in 2021. We wish Tourism EXPO Japan a huge success. We are looking forward to our collaboration on discussions. I hope next time I can be there to enjoy your beautiful country. Thanks again and I wish you all success.

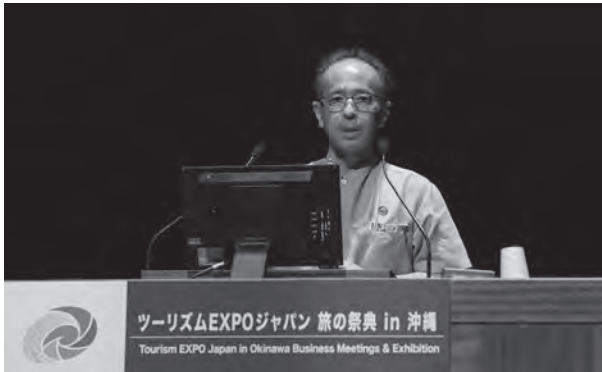
**Theme: Overcoming the COVID-19 Crisis: Building the Foundations
for Future Resilience and Sustainable Tourism Growth**

Keynote Speech 1

Resilient Tourism, Friendly Okinawa

Mr. Yoshiro Shimoji

Chairman, Okinawa Convention & Visitors Bureau (OCVB)



I feel very pleased that Tourism EXPO Japan takes place in Okinawa. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the people who made efforts to make this happen. Let us congratulate and praise the opening of the event and give ourselves a round of applause.

Today, I would like to talk about the theme “Resilient Tourism, Friendly Okinawa.” The day after tomorrow will mark one year after the fire at the Shuri Castle on Oct. 31. People

all over the world were shocked to hear the news, and we have received great encouragement and donations after the accident. The amount of donations is said to add up to about 5 billion yen today. In response to the voices of encouragement, we must work to rebuild the Shuri Castle and reconstruct the entire tourism industry in Okinawa. The main hall of the Shuri Castle is scheduled to be restored in 2026 under a major theme of “reconstruction

to exhibit.” I would like everyone who gathered today to take this opportunity to visit the castle during the EXPO.

Essence of Okinawa as a Collection of Islands

Okinawa has 47 manned islands stretching 1,000 km from east to west and 400 km from north to south, with a population of over 1.45 million. I believe that the essence of tourism in Okinawa lies in these islands. Okinawa is a collection of regions with diverse characteristics in terms of history and culture. As an island prefecture, Okinawa has its share of challenges, however, these 47 islands are integrated to create an attraction for the tourists from all over the world.

The number of tourists visiting Okinawa exceeded 10 million last year for the first time since the island was returned to mainland Japan in 1972. “How to develop the tourism in Okinawa in the era of 10 million tourists” has been a big challenge for us for the past two years. The ratio of tourists visiting Okinawa from home and abroad is roughly 70:30. About 50% of tourists from home come from the Kanto region and about 80% of tourists from abroad come from Taiwan, South Korea, mainland China and Hong Kong. I would like to focus on this structure too.

The path of tourism development in Okinawa has not been smooth, however, it has continued to develop until today through improvements in the tax system, accommodation facilities, air routes, etc., while maintaining nature and culture of the island as a major tour-

ism resource. In March, the second runway at Naha Airport was put into service, and development of other airports and harbors are also promoted, including Miyakojima Airport, Ishigaki Airport, and Kumejima Airport. The monorail has also been extended. Various accommodation facilities expanded into Okinawa, creating an environment to house about 150,000 guests per day. New accommodations are also scheduled to be completed over the next two years. Despite the situation with COVID-19, these robust infrastructures support tourism in Okinawa, and the attraction of Okinawa, both in hardware and software, is not affected at all.

Serving as a Model of Reconstruction for Japan Tourism

Entering the era of 10 million tourists a year, Okinawa had a certain benefit in terms of the number of tourists. The tourism economy in Okinawa, however, is still halfway through in terms of revenue from tourism and the ripple effects on the local economy. Okinawa Prefecture had set a goal of 1.1 trillion yen in tourism revenue generated by 12 million tourists for the next year. The situation changed completely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of tourists, which exceeded 1 million in August alone last year, did not even reach 1 million in the first half of this year.

The number of tourists from abroad has been zero since April, but before that, many direct flights from Asia and cruise ships from different cities in the world have been operating, creating a record 3 million foreign tourists

visiting Okinawa a year. We will open initiatives to restore the number by next March. Okinawa has a tourism market of 2 billion people within a radius of four-hour travel by air. We will aim to restart the air route from Taiwan first.

Tourism nationwide has also faced an extremely difficult situation since April compared to the previous year and the year before. Since Tokyo has been included in the Japanese government's Go To Travel Campaign, a program subsidizing domestic travel, including school excursions, which seem to be recovering, we expect that the number will come back after October. We must make it happen.

Yesterday, the Okinawa Convention & Visitors Bureau announced the target number of tourists both from Japan and abroad between April 2020 and March 2021 as 3.7 million. It is a very ambitious goal, however, considering the ability of tourism in Okinawa, I believe that we can achieve the goal especially through efforts in the second half of the year. We are asking the government to continue with the Go To Travel Campaign in the next fiscal year. I have a strong feeling that restoring tourism in Okinawa will serve as a model for revitalizing the tourism in Japan.

One indicator to show the importance of tourism in the economy of Okinawa is the ratio of travel consumption to the prefecture's gross domestic product. The typical ratio at prefectures focusing on tourism is 5% to 10%. Okinawa Prefecture, on the other hand, stands out at 20.9%, followed by 10.1% in Yamanashi Prefecture, showing a huge gap. The policy to integrate various industries such as agriculture,

forestry and fisheries, manufacturing, information, and communication in the prefecture with tourism is important to boost travel consumption further and to increase opportunities for other industries.

Achieving Safe Travel and Shift to Quality

In the era of the New Normal, we need to create a new environment instead of trying to go back to the same. We need to respond to various changes and emerging needs. Under the tag line of "Go and Chill Out in Okinawa," two major businesses have been currently promoted, one is the "promotion of epidemic-prevention tourism in Okinawa" to realize safe and secured travel, and the other is "improvement of tourist unit price" to shift from quantity to quality in tourism.

Regarding epidemic prevention tourism, it is important to work on creating and complying with the guidelines, taking frontline measures, and communicating the information all together. The Traveler's Access Center Okinawa (TACO) was set up at Naha Airport, staffed with nurses and open from 6 a.m. until 11 p.m. Receiving over 500 inquiries so far, the center surely offers a source of security for travelers. A big challenge for us is the enhancement of these functions. Thermal cameras have been set up at airports in Miyakojima, Ishigaki and Kumejima, but these devices do not detect people without symptoms. As an initiative to prevent infections in the city, "Shisa stickers (a lion-shaped ornament in Okinawa)" have been distributed to stores for endorsement of preventive measures against the infectious disease.

From Oct. 16, we have also launched the official LINE account “RICCA” in Okinawa Prefecture to support both prevention of spread of infection and socio-economic activities. The system supports preventing the spread of infection as users read the QR code with their smartphone in various places. Tourism EXPO Japan has also asked participants to use the COVID-19 contact-tracing app COCOA promoted by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare in Japan.

Looking Ahead: World Heritage Registration and Space Travel

In Okinawa tourism, “*Utuimuchi*” which means hospitality in Okinawan language has gained high recognition by customers from home and abroad. To promote epidemic-prevention tourism, we have to newly enhance digital hospitality. The ResorTech OKINAWA - Okinawa International IT Trade Fair 2020 - is also held simultaneously with the EXPO today. The major topics for the future include the application of digital into tourism and hospitality while maintaining the traditional practice of service. We can also shift from quantity to quality to improve the average visitor spending by providing tourists with the opportunities to enjoy nature of Okinawa and to get in touch with the culture of Okinawa.

Regarding MICE, we will promote the collaboration between real and digital in consideration of hybrid MICE, while tourist destina-

tions continue to focus on real as their responsibility. Business distributors in the prefecture are also putting significant efforts into the promotion of “workation”. In order to boost the long-term workation demand, we must take multiple measures such as enhancing educational support for children and medical support, instead of simply creating an office environment. We would like to further discuss the efforts taken in various fields at the symposia on Dark Sky Tourism and Adventure Tourism scheduled tomorrow.

In 2021, “Amami Oshima, Tokunoshima, Northern Okinawa Island and Iriomote Island” will be reviewed for the registration of the World Natural Heritage, and after 2025, Okinawa expects a space travel project and an opening of a theme park in the northern part of the main island. It is important for Okinawa to walk the path as a base for international exchange in various fields. We are also setting performance indicators to highlight the importance of tourism as perceived by local citizens. We have highlighted the “good to live and good to visit” aspects so far, but now we need to add a “good to welcome” element tourism.

In the book I read the other day, there was a passage saying, “The spirit of traveling is in our genes. The desire to travel is universal.” Let us energize Japan and the world with the power of travel, by stimulating our genes of traveling, from here, the venue of Tourism EXPO Japan in Okinawa.

Keynote Speech 2

Enhancing Tourism's Resilience and Sustainability

H.E. Ms. Bernadette Romulo-Puyat
Secretary of Department of Tourism, Republic of the Philippines (Video Message)



In 2019, the Philippines celebrated its Tourism Decade with the theme “Celebrating the rise of the Philippine travel industry with the Tourism Act of 2009”. The celebration of the tourism decade honored the industry’s contributions to the improvement of the lives of the Filipino people and highlighted its functions as an engine of investment, employment, growth, and national development. In a period of ten years, tourism has significantly transformed and improved the lives of thousands of individuals and communities.

This transformation is better demonstrated

in numbers. In the same year, we surpassed our target visitor arrivals with a record-high statistic of 8.26 million foreign visitors. Domestic tourism also boasted a strong performance, with almost 110 million domestic trips recorded last year. These numbers boosted the tourism industry’s contribution to the country’s gross domestic product, amounting to 12.7% of the GDP in 2019. These numbers underscore the influence of the tourism industry as a strong economic driver in the Philippines.

This transformative power of the tourism industry is also highlighted in the 5.71 million

people employed under Philippine tourism industry as of last year. However, just like the rest of the world, the Philippines faced staggering losses not only in revenue but also in employment. But the Philippines is no stranger to facing adversities of all kinds, and we as a nation have overcome natural calamities of great magnitude before. The Filipino spirit is far greater than any adversity, and this is what powers us to strive harder and better in the midst of these difficult times.

As we espouse the UNWTO's advocacy of Putting People First, it is very important for us to protect our people and preserve their livelihood, our destinations, products, and the rich culture of our islands, especially during these unprecedented times. This is where sustainability and inclusivity come into the picture.

Sustainability is making sure that our grandchildren will still be able to bring their friends to our destinations because we in the present have taken an effort to preserve our resources. Inclusivity is making sure that no one is left behind. The National Tourism Development Plan, or the NTDP of the Philippine Department of Tourism, anchors on sustainability and inclusivity in developing our products and destinations, and while it led us to greater heights, the current global situation called for us to revisit and recalibrate our targets, strategies, and activities.

The Philippines is currently updating our NTDP to adapt to the new normal. This includes assessing and evaluating policy measures initiated by the Department to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, developing model scenarios to steer the industry during unprece-

ded times, and identifying and refocusing products to be prioritized in light of the new normal.

Also among the discussions on the NTDP are two of the current major plans and programs of the Department, namely, the TourRIST program, or Transforming Communities Towards Resilient, Inclusive, and Sustainable Tourism, and the Tourism Response and Recovery Plan.

The TourRIST Program is in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank and World Bank. Both the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank will provide loan and technical assistance to develop and manage several tourist destinations in a sustainable, resilient and inclusive manner through the upgrade of local infrastructure, local economic development, disaster and crisis management and policy reforms. Given the current coronavirus pandemic, the TourRIST Program will also place a special emphasis on helping its pilot destinations recover and bounce back, through the provision of sanitation and health infrastructure and equipment, and the training/adaptation of the tourism industry to the new normal scenario.

The Tourism Response and Recovery Plan, known for short as the TRRP, was created in response to the adversities brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. This called for swift and steady measures to abate the impact of the pandemic especially on our stakeholders – majority of which come from the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The main objective of the TRRP is to address and mitigate the immediate and prolonged impacts of

COVID-19 crisis on tourism industry with emphasis on capacitated workforce, sustained businesses, and protected vulnerable groups. The TRRP serves as the agency's master plan to guide the department and our stakeholders in navigating the tourism industry under the new normal in the next three years.

Therefore, as the Philippines slowly restarts tourism under the new normal, we keep looking forward and working hard towards bouncing back better. However, with majority of international borders still closed for tourism, we are counting on domestic travel to lead recovery. This sentiment is shared by our ASEAN neighbors, who mostly allow only essential movement of foreign nationals.

In an article published by the UNWTO in May 2020, the panel of experts surveyed by the organization said that domestic demand is expected to recover faster than international demand in tourism.

In line with this outlook, we turn our gaze inward for the catalyst in the tourism industry's recovery. And it is fortunate that our domestic tourism has historically been performing even better than expected over the last few years. In fact, out of the 12.7% contribution of the tourism industry to the country's gross domestic product in 2019, 10.8% is attributed to domestic tourism.

As we recalibrate existing products and develop new ones, we have identified seven tourism products that we will focus on. These are: 1) nature-based tourism, 2) cultural tourism, 3) farm tourism, 4) education tourism, 5) sun and beach tourism, 6) health and wellness tourism, and 7) dive and marine sports tourism.

As such, the Philippine Department of Tourism is providing strong assistance to the local government units in the development of these tourism products and in the slow but sure reopening of tourism destinations.

The first step is always the hardest, and it holds true in our current situation. In a survey conducted by the Department, 77% of respondents expressed willingness to travel domestically even in the absence of a proven vaccine. However, 99% of respondents also say that they want to see certified disinfecting protocols and regular sanitation of establishments.

Recognizing that health and safety will be the new amenity, the Department issued nationwide guidelines on minimum safety and health protocols for various tourism sectors such as Accommodation Establishments, Restaurants, Tourist Land Transport, MICE, Island and Resort Destinations, Travel and Tour Operators, and most recently, Diving.

The Department also issues a Certificate of Authority to Operate only to those accommodation establishments that are accredited by the Department and strictly observe the mandated standards of quality and safety.

To make the accreditation process easier and also in observance of the new normal, we have meticulously upgraded our Online Accreditation System. We have also been assisting our stakeholders digitize their operations and transition to more contactless transactions.

These are just some of the initiatives of the Department aimed at innovating our old ways to allow us to meet, if not exceed, the current expectations of our travelers under the new normal.

As we slowly restart tourism with these safety and health protocols and innovations in place, we have reopened a few of our prime destinations including El Nido, Boracay, Baguio, and Ilocos.

In September, we also staged the first virtual Philippine Travel Exchange (PHITEX) 2020, the country's largest travel exchange fair, in the island of Panglao, Bohol. By way of virtual technology, we were able to stage a hybrid event – a first MICE initiative of its kind in the world. The event was participated by 122 foreign buyers from 34 countries and 345 seller-delegates from the 161 Philippine-based tourism enterprises and groups interacting online. The success of the PHITEX 2020 gives us confidence that we can hold MICE events mixed with tourism activities under the new normal, as long as health and safety protocols are strictly observed.

Also in the same month, the Philippines became the 100th destination to get the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) Safe Travels Stamp, a seal that enables travelers to recognize destinations around the world which have adopted health and hygiene global standardized protocols.

Having our efforts recognized only makes us strive harder in working towards a more resilient Philippine tourism industry. Looking further into the future, the Department of Tourism remains unwavering in coming up with responsive and sustainable measures to ensure that jobs will be generated, if not retained.

The Philippines recently hosted the ASEAN National Tourism Organization's Retreat Mid-

Term Review of the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan. The Mid-Term Review served as a venue for the NTOs to discuss and agree on the ASEAN tourism policies and priority projects, and to assess the ATSP 2016-2025. This included the development of a revised work plan and programs that will respond to the new normal and in the recovery efforts of the region for the tourism industry.

For the Philippines, we are pursuing the following strategic thrusts in the coming year: 1) to ensure responsive and timely formulation of policies in support of safe and fun tourism, 2) to cultivate convergence to develop and promote sustainable tourism, and 3) to enhance capacity among tourism workers to ensure employability and productivity.

These are all in support of our efforts to help restart tourism businesses and bring back livelihood especially in local communities as these communities enable movement in a ripple effect – a business that is able to recover can employ more, an employee who is able to get his or her job back can once again contribute to economic recovery, and an economic recovery will open opportunities for growth.

As tourism is a cross-cutting, cross-border industry, these efforts will only come into fruition with the help of each and every one. While changes take place, and the situation is still very fluid, we call for our stakeholders and our partners to remain relentless in pursuing the path towards a more resilient and more sustainable industry under the new normal.

Thank you.

International Tourism Forum

Overcoming the COVID-19 Crisis: Building the foundations for future resilience and sustainable tourism growth

Collaboration  SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
UNWTO

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, six panelists including ambassadors to Japan and top executives from Japan's public and private sectors gathered in Okinawa to share their insights about tourism in the post-coronavirus "new normal," sustainable growth of the industry based on the collaboration among diverse stakeholders, the need for partnerships between the public and private sectors, as well as the prospect of cross-border travel.

Key points from the Q & A centered on how the issues of health, safety and confidence in travel among consumers can play an essential part in creating the circular ecosystem of tourism. Panelists expressed how opening up borders will depend on conditions in other countries and worldwide to ensure travel can resume. Travel must also reflect



quality as part of SDGs while stakeholders can play a role in disseminating information that travel is indeed welcoming and safe. To conclude the session, Dewey said, "By working together, we can create sustainable tourism."

Moderator Opening Remarks

Realizing Sustainable Tourism Through Public-Private Collaboration



Ms. Marjorie Dewey

President, Connect Worldwide Japan Co., Ltd.

The pandemic has threatened the very existence of our industry, bringing it to a complete stop. As the world stopped moving and the global and local economies marked historical downturns, travel and tourism proved to be the life stream without which the re-building of the economy and a healthy society would be impossible. Recognizing that the movement of people is instrumental in re-building life in the new normal, the governments around the world have created guidelines, implemented measures for safe and seamless travel, and given green light to the restart of travel and tourism. The forum will seek to provide clear, reliant and workable framework to mobilize travel and tourism priorities and partnerships to enable the building of strong resilience and all-encompassing sustainable growth in the new reality.

Keynote Video Message

Strength of the Role Tourism Plays**Mr. Antonio Guterres**

9th Secretary-General of the United Nations

International tourist arrivals decreased by more than half and some \$320 billion in exports from tourism were lost. Overall, some 120 million direct jobs in tourism are at risk. Many are in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, which employ a high proportion of women and young people. It is a major shock for developed economies, but for developing countries, it is an emergency, particularly for many small-island developing states and African countries. For women, rural communities, indigenous people and many marginalized populations, tourism has been a vehicle for integration, empowerment and generating income.

Tourism is also a pillar for the conservation of natural and cultural heritage. It is imperative to rebuild the tourism sector. But it must be in a safe, equitable and climate-friendly way. I have identified five priority areas: 1) Mitigate the



socio-economic impact of the crisis; 2) Build resilience across the entire tourism value chain; 3) Maximize the use of technology in the tourism sector; 4) Promote sustainability and green growth; 5) Foster partnership to enable tourism to further support the SDGs. Let's ensure tourism regains its position as a provider of decent jobs, stable incomes and the protection of our cultural and natural heritage.

(Video Message)

Video Greeting

Momentum for Resuming Exchanges**Dr. Mario Hardy**

CEO, Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)

The current COVID-19 pandemic presents the greatest challenge the world has ever seen and it has drastically changed the entire travel and tourism landscape. Nevertheless, the current situation has also given the industry an incredible opportunity to restart tourism and reassess the interdependence of relationship between tourism, the economy, the environment and society as well as the importance of travel and tourism as a global vehicle for socio-economic growth. PATA will continue to support the need for the industry to restructure and rebuild with a focus on positively benefiting people in the local communities and prioritize



health and safety for the public, travelers and local communities. Today's International Tourism Forum is a perfect platform to exchange information, strengthen friendships, and deepen cooperation between the tourism industry stakeholders.

(Video Message)

Speech Summaries

Domestic Travel Incentives to Boost Economy First

H.E. Mr. Singtong Lapisatepun
Ambassador, Royal Thai Embassy in Japan



The Thai government has launched the Amazing Thailand Safety and Health Administration (SHA) to raise safety standards in the tourism industry and restore the confidence of domestic and international tourists amid the COVID-19

crisis. Tourism sectors in Thailand can apply for SHA certification. Thailand has issued a Special Tourist Visa (STV) for those from low COVID-19 risk nations as it slowly opens up borders.

Every Crisis Brings Opportunities

H.E. Mr. Jorge Toledo
Ambassador
Embassy of the Kingdom of Spain in Japan



Several reactivation plans have been launched to guarantee the recovery of tourism amid the pandemic, including short-term financial support: Next Generation EU Recovery Fund (140 billion euros for Spain in 6 years).

Future uncertainties must be faced with perspectives based on local communities to increase resilience, sustainable tourism to promote ecological transition, diversification of destinations, activities, and travel schedules. In these difficult times, we are seeking opportunities.

Protocols Introduced in Sector to Boost Recovery

H.E. Mr. Ayman Kamel
Ambassador
Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Japan



Egypt was among the first to take measures to control COVID-19: locking down and restricting incoming air traffic on March 23, including the suspension of Narita-Cairo service, leading to an economic toll with tourism

being the most impacted. In May, amid declining infections and pressing economic needs to return to business, Egypt began a comprehensive plan in compliance with WHO recommendations to resume domestic tourism through various incentive programs, then inbound tourism in July for all international visitors.

Restart of Tourism and Risk Management

Mr. Tomohiro Kaneko
Vice Commissioner, Japan Tourism Agency
Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism



To overcome the crisis of the tourism industry due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Japanese government launched "Go To Travel Campaign," aiming to stimulate the domestic tourism demand and to promote infection

prevention measures. With the gradual relaxation of immigration restrictions, the government is preparing to accept visitors from abroad and promoting the creation of new tourism content to be ready for the restart of the international exchange through tourism.

Achieving Sustainability in Inbound Tourism

Ms. Akiko Yoshida

Executive Senior Vice President
Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO)



JNTO recognizes the importance of working with various stakeholders including local communities to make an enhanced effort to diversify tourist destinations and solve the “overtourism” problem amid development of sustainable

tourism. Considering tourism as an essential tool to revitalize local communities and their cultural heritage, the JNTO continues to support the establishment of local systems to accommodate visitors, refine tourism contents, maintain relationships with travelers and share information.

Ecosystem of Customer Journey

Mr. Eijiro Yamakita

President and CEO, JTB Corp.



Now is a good time to reconsider tourism. Sustainable tourism will be achieved by creating the ecosystem of customer journey that places the highest priority on improving the customer experience in all stages of

travel. To realize this, a strong partnership needs to be formed among stakeholders including not only tourism business operators such as accommodation and transportation providers but also entrepreneurs that can offer digital technologies which help secure social distancing.

Closing Remarks

UNWTO – A Platform for International Cooperation

Mr. Zhu Shanzhong

Executive Director, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

We will surely highlight lessons learned from today's discussions, which can facilitate the recovery of the travel and tourism sector in the new reality. UNWTO will stand stronger as a global platform which enables international cooperation. I encourage all stakeholders to continue their work in delivering thoughts and solutions on restarting tourism in a sustainable way. Before concluding today's forum, allow me to express our deep appreciation to the Executive Committee of Tourism EXPO Japan. Thanks to their dedication and great efforts, in this difficult time, we were able to host the International Tourism Forum in place of the



Ministerial Round Table discussions. At the same time, we look forward to the Ministerial Round Table next year and to meeting all of you in person in Japan. I wish you all a very successful Tourism EXPO Japan in Okinawa.

(Video Message)

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