

Special address of the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) on the occasion of the inauguration of the 26th Ukraine International Travel Market - UITM'2019

On behalf of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), a Specialized Agency of the United Nations for travel and tourism, I wish to heartily welcome all the industry stakeholders of Ukraine and from all the other countries participating in this 26th Ukraine International Travel Market – (UITM2019). The organizers of this important event deserve a special mention here for their hard work and cooperation.

Ukraine is a very important Member State of ours. Alongside my colleagues at UNWTO, I regularly have reason to commend the country's growing tourism sector, one that is, I believe, an example for other countries to follow closely.

The way our sector is viewed has changed dramatically over recent years. Tourism is now the third-largest export earning category after chemicals and fuel, generating one in every 10 jobs globally. This means tourism now plays a crucial role in the global agenda as well as in the daily lives of people our planet. To meet all the challenges facing international travel and tourism and to support our growing family of 159 Member States and the leading private sector stakeholders, UNWTO sets five key priorities in its global agenda: 1) Make tourism smarter: innovation and digital transformation; 2) Grow our competitive edge: investments and entrepreneurship; 3) Create more and better jobs: education and employment; 4) Build resilience and facilitate travel: safe, secure and seamless travel; 5) Protect our heritage: social, cultural and environmental sustainability.

The diversity of the Ukraine's cultural and natural heritage and the warmth of the people make the country a unique and marvelous tourism destination. Supportive policies and other incentives, strong public and private partnerships and the effective positioning of the country in the global tourism map will drive the rapid development of inbound and domestic tourism in Ukraine.

We at UNWTO stand ready to continue and strengthen our excellent cooperation with the Government of Ukraine within these core priorities in order ensure the sustainable and competitive growth of Ukraine's tourism sector through our partnership.

I wish all participants and guests of UITM 2019 a very successful fair.

Zurab Pololikashvili
Secretary-General
World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)