

Agenda item 4

**Recommendation by the Executive Council to the General Assembly of a nominee for the post of Secretary-General for the period 2022-2025**

CE/113/4  
Madrid, 8 December 2020  
Original: English

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**Executive summary**

At the present session, the Executive Council is required to recommend to the Assembly a nominee for appointment to the post of Secretary-General.

At its 112th session, the Executive Council decided that the rules and procedures that have been consistently applied for the nomination for the post of Secretary-General since 1992 shall also be observed at the present session.

Two valid candidatures were received, complete and duly accompanied by the required documents (letter of the candidate, curriculum vitae, statement of policy and management intent and a certificate of good health signed by a recognized medical facility), along with the letter of support from the Government of the country of which the candidate is a national.

The Council shall make its recommendation at a private meeting by secret ballot in accordance with the long-standing rules.

The process will conclude with the recommendation, for transmission to the General Assembly, of a nominee for appointment to the post of Secretary-General for the period 2022-2025.

**DRAFT DECISION<sup>1</sup>**

**Agenda item 4**

Recommendation by the Executive Council to the General Assembly  
of a nominee for the post of Secretary-General for the period 2022-2025  
(document CE/113/4)

*The Executive Council,*

*Having examined* the report,

*Recalling* Articles 12(c) and 22 of the Statutes and Rule 29 of its Rules of Procedure,

*Having carried out* the process to recommend a nominee for the post of Secretary-General for the period 2022-2025 in accordance with the rules and procedure as adopted by its decision 14(CXII),

*Having held* a secret ballot,

*Recommends* to the General Assembly that \_\_\_\_\_ be appointed Secretary-General of the Organization for a term of office from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2025.

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<sup>1</sup>This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Council, please refer to the Decisions document issued at the end of the session.

## I. Introduction

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1. The term of office of the current Secretary-General, Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili, expires on 31 December 2021. Pursuant to Articles 12 (c) and 22 of the Statutes, it is therefore incumbent on the 24th session of the General Assembly to appoint, on the recommendation of the 113th session of the Executive Council, the Secretary-General for the period 2022-2025.
2. In its 112th session held in Tbilisi, Georgia, on 15-17 September 2020, the Executive Council decided through decision 14(CXII) that the rules and procedures that have been consistently applied for the nomination for the post of Secretary-General since 1992, in accordance with Rule 29 of its Rules of Procedure, shall also be observed at its 113th session. These rules are reproduced herein under Section III below.
3. In accordance with decision 14(CXII), the Secretariat sent a note verbale to all Members on 18 September announcing the vacancy and indicating that the deadline for the receipt of candidatures to the post of Secretary-General would be 18 November, i.e., two months before the session at which the Council is required to recommend a nominee to the post.
4. As per the practice, designated officials met with the representative of the Chair of the 113th session of the Executive Council to open and review the candidatures received at the Secretariat.
5. Subsequently, on 23 November the Secretariat informed all Members of the Organization through note verbale of the receipt of the following compliant candidatures:  
  
Ms. Shaikha Mai Bint Mohammed Al-Khalifa (Kingdom of Bahrain)  
  
Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili (Georgia)
6. For candidatures to be compliant with the rules established by the Council they must be accompanied by the letter of endorsement from the Member State, the Curriculum Vitae, the statement of policy and management intent, as well as the certificate of good health signed by a recognized medical facility.
7. The curriculum vitae and the statements of policy and management intent submitted by each candidate are annexed to this document (in Spanish alphabetical order of their surnames). The translation of the documents into the official languages of the Organization is provided by the Secretariat.

## II. Conduct of business of the private meeting for the recommendation of a nominee to the post of Secretary-General within a hybrid meeting of the Executive Council during the COVID-19 pandemic

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8. In accordance with Rule 29 of its Rules of Procedure and the long-standing rules and procedures applying for the nomination for the post of Secretary-General, reproduced herein under Section III below, the Council shall make its recommendation at a private meeting by secret ballot.
9. The Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council and the Guiding Principles for the Conduct of Elections by Secret Ballot (annexed to the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly), together with the above-mentioned long-standing rules, have been drafted in a manner that presupposes that Member States be physically present at the private meeting. However, in the current global context in which in-person formal meetings of the Council pose a significant challenge and large gatherings are discouraged worldwide, it has become imperative to explore temporary and extraordinary means to ensure that it takes crucial decisions for the proper functioning of the Organization.
10. To this effect, the Members of the Council adopted through silence procedure the decision "Special Procedures governing the Executive Council during the COVID-19 pandemic"<sup>2</sup> setting out special rules governing the conduct of virtual and in-person sessions of the Council during the COVID-19 pandemic and authorizing the Chair of the Council, with the endorsement of the Secretary-General, to hold sessions of the Council virtually insofar as the holding of an in-person meeting is not

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<sup>2</sup> CE/DEC/2(CXII)

practicable due to the pandemic, and to inform all the Members of such decision ten (10) days before the opening of the session.

11. The technological means currently available to the Secretariat do not allow, however, for holding a secret ballot online but rather only in person. In fact, no governing body of any other organization of the United Nations system has held a secret ballot online.
12. Consequently, even in case of a hybrid (online and in-person) session of the Council, on the item on the recommendation of a nominee to the post of Secretary-General, Members that are entitled to vote shall be physically present during the discussion of candidates ("restrictive private meeting") and during the secret ballot ("normal private meeting"). To this effect, the delegations of voting Members of the Council shall consist of at least one member who shall be physically present throughout the private meeting and duly empowered to cast the ballot<sup>3</sup>. Alternatively, a voting Member of the Council may be exceptionally and validly represented by a member of the delegation of another Member insofar as the relevant rules are observed<sup>4</sup>.
13. In sum, the representative of the voting Member of the Council physically present at the private meeting ("the voter"), be it a member of its own delegation or a member of a different delegation (proxy), must be duly accredited and empowered to cast the ballot on its behalf.
14. The Secretariat further recalls that a number of Member States have appointed their Ambassadors to the Kingdom of Spain as Permanent Representatives to the Organization with sufficient authority so as to represent them in meetings of the governing bodies and to cast ballots on their behalf, in accordance with the practice of other organizations of the United Nations system.
15. In relation to the designation of tellers as per the Guiding Principles for the Conduct of Elections by Secret Ballot, the Chair of the Council shall appoint two (2) tellers from among the Members of the Council whose delegations consist of more than one alternate physically present in the Meeting.
16. Finally, in order to guarantee the necessary privacy of the meeting pursuant to the rules, online participation will not be made available during the restrictive private meeting, and likewise, it may be also restricted when the secret ballot takes place.

### **III. Rules and procedures in force for the recommendation of a nominee to the post of Secretary-General of the Organization**

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#### **A. Statutory and regulatory texts**

17. Article 12 (c) of the Statutes:  
  

*"(...) [The Assembly's] functions, other than those which have been conferred on it elsewhere in the present Statutes, shall be:*

*(c) to appoint the Secretary-General on the recommendation of the Council"*
18. Article 22 of the Statutes:  
  

*"The Secretary-General shall be appointed by a two-thirds majority of Full Members present and voting in the Assembly, on the recommendation of the Council, for a term of four years. His appointment shall be renewable."*
19. Rule 29 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council:  
  

*"1. The Council shall recommend to the Assembly a nominee for appointment to the post of Secretary-General.*

*2. The recommendation shall be made at a private meeting of the Council.*

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<sup>3</sup> Only credentials issued and signed by the Head of State, or the Head of Government, or the Minister of Foreign Affairs or the Minister responsible for tourism or the Ambassador accredited to the Kingdom of Spain, will be regarded as valid pursuant to resolution 591(XIX).

<sup>4</sup> Representation of a Member of the Council by another Member is further explained in paragraph 25.

3. *The recommendation shall be made by a simple majority of the Members of the Council present and voting. If no candidate receives the majority in the first ballot, a second and, if necessary, subsequent ballots shall be held to decide between the two candidates receiving the largest number of votes in the first ballot.*"

## **B. Rules on the nomination of the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization**

20. The rules that have been consistently applied for the nomination for the post of the Secretary-General since 1992 provide that:
  - (a) Only nationals of States Members of UNWTO may be candidates;
  - (b) Candidates shall be formally proposed to the Council, through the Secretariat, by the governments of the States of which they are nationals, and these proposals should be received not later than (date to be determined), the postmark providing proof thereof;
  - (c) voting shall be conducted by secret ballot in accordance with the Guiding Principles for the Conduct of Elections by Secret Ballot attached to the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly;
  - (d) the vote shall be decided in accordance with Article 30 of the Statutes and Rule 28 of the Council's Rules of Procedure, by simple majority, defined as fifty per cent plus one of the valid ballots cast;
  - (e) the selection of one nominee by the Council shall be conducted, in accordance with Rule 29 of the Council's Rules of Procedure, during a private meeting, part of which shall be a restrictive meeting, as follows:
    - (i) discussion of candidates shall be conducted during a restrictive private meeting at which only voting delegations and interpreters shall be present; there shall be no written record and no tape recording of the discussions;
    - (ii) during the balloting Secretariat staff necessary to assist with the voting shall be admitted;
  - (f) the Executive Council decides not to recommend a candidate proposed by the government of a member State in unjustified arrears (paragraph 12 of the Financing Rules attached to the Statutes);
  - (g) the Council shall select only one nominee to recommend to the Assembly.
21. Since 1997, the nominees for election to the post of Secretary-General have made an oral presentation of their candidature and intentions during the Council's nominating session. Called in the Spanish alphabetical order of their surnames, the nominees were allotted equal time for making their presentations, which were not followed by discussions. A time limit of 10 minutes may be proposed.
22. In accordance with Rule 29(3) of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council, the recommendation to the Assembly of a nominee for appointment to the post of Secretary-General:
 

*"shall be made by a simple majority of the Members of the Council present and voting. If no candidate receives the majority in the first ballot, a second and, if necessary subsequent ballots shall be held to decide between the two candidates receiving the largest number of votes."*
23. In accordance with the constant practice of the Organization, recalled in decision 17(XXIII) of 1984, a simple majority is "defined as 50 per cent plus one of the valid ballots cast". This rule was confirmed in 1988 and 1992 (decisions 19(XXXIV) and 19(XLIV). In the event of an odd number, it seems in conformity with logic, with the ordinary meaning of words and with the dominant practice, to define it rather as representing the number of votes immediately higher than half of the votes validly cast<sup>5</sup>. After counting the votes, the tellers are responsible for determining the number of votes necessary to constitute the majority required, as defined above.

<sup>5</sup> CE/84/12 Add.1. Summary note by the Legal Adviser on the procedure and timetable for the election of the Secretary-General of the Organization for the period 2010-2013.

24. On the procedures of the “second” and “subsequent ballot” mentioned in Rule 29 (3), if they were necessary, the clarifications provided by the Legal Adviser in the Information Document for the Election of the Secretary-General in 1989 and confirmed in 2008 (decision 16(LXXXIV)) would apply in the event that two candidates should share the second place in the first ballot. The consequence would be that another ballot (and as many additional as necessary for achieving the required majority) would be organized between the three candidates to decide which two candidates, having received the greatest number of votes, will subsequently participate in the final ballot.
25. Representation of a State by another Full Member of the Organization during the election of the nominee will comply with the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly: resolution 591(XIX), resolution 633(XX) and resolution 649(XXI). Therefore, if a Full Member is unable to participate in the voting, it can be exceptionally represented by a member of another State’s delegation other than its Head, provided it submits a formal letter or fax signed by the competent authority, explaining the exceptional circumstances to do so, designating the individual that will represent it and, if applicable, giving him/her the power to vote on its behalf. It is recalled that credentials in breach of the principle of secrecy of the vote will be considered as invalid. It should be further noted that, unless the items for which the power to vote is given are clearly specified, it will be understood that the delegate has full powers to cast a vote on behalf of the Government he/she is representing by proxy on any agenda item. While only one mandate for representation may be given to a delegate, delegations are also requested to avoid having more than one delegate representing another State for an orderly conduct of business.
26. It is recalled that Members to which Article 34 of the Statutes and paragraph 13 of the Financing Rules attached to the Statutes are being applied at the time of the election are deprived of the Member’s privileges in the form of services and the right to vote in the Assembly and the Council unless they have been granted a temporary exemption from the application of such provisions by the Assembly.

### **C. Meetings of the Executive Council for the nomination of the Secretary-General**

27. Since 1992, the Executive Council provides for two types of meetings to nominate the Secretary-General, both private:
  - (i) a restrictive private meeting;
  - (ii) a normal private meeting.
28. It should be noted that in order to hold meetings, and hence in order to be able to decide on the “nomination of the Secretary-General”, the Executive Council must have the necessary quorum. According to Rule 15 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council, a “majority of the Members of the Council” constitutes a quorum. The Chair of the Council must confirm at the beginning of the meeting that there is the necessary quorum.

#### **Restrictive private meeting**

29. During the restrictive private meeting, which will precede the normal private meeting, the Executive Council shall conduct a “discussion of candidates”. “Only voting delegations and interpreters” shall be present at this meeting.

#### **Normal private meeting**

30. During the normal private meeting, the Executive Council votes to select a nominee to the post of Secretary-General. This meeting may be attended by Full, Associate and Affiliate Members (though, of course, without participating in the vote), which, according to the provisions of Rule 1 of its Rules of Procedure, have the right to participate in the work of the Council. Thus, the normal private meeting, during which the vote will be held, may be attended by:
  - (a) the Members of the Executive Council, whose delegations must be composed in accordance with Rule 31 of its Rules of Procedure: “*The delegation of each Full Member of the Council shall consist of one delegate, who may be accompanied by one or more advisers entitled to act as alternates*”;
  - (b) one delegate of an Associate Member;
  - (c) one representative of the Affiliate Members;

- (d) Full Members that are not Members of the Executive Council, in an observer capacity;
- (e) Members responsible for the chairmanship of the Regional Commissions specifically invited to participate in the Council in accordance with Rule 6(7) of its Rules of Procedure;
- (f) Secretariat officials designated by the Secretary-General and necessary for the conduct of the vote;
- (g) the interpreters.

**D. Other questions that may arise and covered indirectly by the regulatory texts, or have been resolved in practice**

**Presence of the candidates at the private meeting (restrictive and normal) of the Council during nomination of the Secretary-General**

- 31. It is the generally accepted practice in international organizations that candidates should not be present. Nevertheless, if the Council so decides, candidates may be heard by the Council when discussion of the agenda item in question begins. This practice was observed in both 1997 and 2001, with the candidates being called to address the Council, under the same conditions and in alphabetical order.

**Discussion during the vote itself**

- 32. No discussion or intervention may take place during the vote itself, which may not be interrupted under any circumstances, except in the case of force majeure or purely technical problems.

**Suspension or adjournment of the meeting in the event of two or more ballots**

- 33. According to Rule 23 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council, suspension or adjournment of the meeting may be proposed by a delegate and decided upon by the Council by a simple majority of Members present and voting. A motion to suspend or adjourn the meeting cannot be debated and must be immediately put to the vote. It should be noted that the practice at UNWTO has always been for the Executive Council to proceed immediately with as many ballots as necessary, without suspending or adjourning the meeting.

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## Annex I: Candidatures for the post of Secretary-General for the period 2022-2025

## A. Curriculum vitae and statements of policy and management intent of Ms. Shaikha Mai Bint Mohammed Al-Khalifa submitted with the support of the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain

## Summary

Mai Al Khalifa is an influential international figure known for her work in the field of culture, art and sustainable development. She was listed as one of the 50 most influential women in the Arab World by Forbes Magazine in 2005. Acknowledging the power of culture as a driver of sustainable development, Al Khalifa has spearheaded innovative projects to develop infrastructure to deliver on the SDGs.

Her bold vision was transformed into reality when she launched the 'Invest in Culture' scheme in 2006. An overarching and unprecedented initiative in the MENA region, the programme cultivates active partnerships between the private and public sectors. To date, the initiative has secured a total of US\$125 million in support of cultural tourism projects. In 2019, the Kingdom of Bahrain won the prestigious Aga Khan Architecture Award for the revitalisation of the historic town of Muharraq. The link between culture, tourism and sustainable development has always been foregrounded in her work and was recognised in her appointment as the UNWTO Special Ambassador of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development in 2017.

She is the recipient of many distinguished awards, not least the *Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur*, the *Watch Award* of the World Monuments Fund and the *Colbert Prize for Creativity and Heritage*. Mai Al Khalifa is also recognised as an outstanding leader of organisations within both the governmental and non-governmental sectors, having received the 'Distinguished Arab Woman in the field of Administrative Leadership' prize from the Center of Woman Studies, Paris, in 2004 and the Arab League prize for Administrative Competence and Excellence.

Under her leadership, the Bahrain Authority for Culture & Antiquities has significantly enhanced the preservation and establishment of sites that promote heritage tourism: three of these sites are now on the World Heritage List. Her most recent work has focused on the craft sector, establishing creative local economies in line with the SDG goals.

**Mai Al Khalifa**  
Patron of Culture and the Arts





### Principal Positions Held

President: Bahrain Authority for Culture & Antiquities

Chairperson: Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH)

Founder & Chairperson: Shaikh Ibrahim bin Mohammed Al-Khalifa Center for Culture and Research

### Awards & Recognition

- 2019 Agha Khan Award for Architecture
- 2019 Scientific Achievement Award by the Sultan bin Ali Al-Owais Cultural Foundation, United Arab Emirates
- 2017 Special Ambassador of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development by the World Tourism Organization UNWTO
- 2016 Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, by the French Government
- 2015 The Watch Award, by the World Monuments Fund
- 2014 Order of the Italian Star, by the Office of the President of the Italian Republic
- 2010 Colbert Prize for Creativity and Heritage; Noble Honour for the distinguished international personality in the field of Ideology and Culture by a royal decree from His Majesty Muhammad VI, King of Morocco
- 2008 Chevalier de la Legion d'honneur from the French Government  
Order of Merit first class medal from His Majesty the King of Bahrain



## Experience & Summary of Achievements

### Government Experience

#### President Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities 2015 to Date

- Spearheaded renovation of the historic centre of Muharraq City, recognised by the Agha Khan Award for Architecture in 2019
- Continuing with Bahrain's 'Invest in Culture' national Public Private Partnership scheme
- Registering Bahrain's Dilmun Burial Mounds as a World Heritage Site
- Leading Bahrain's successful request to UNESCO for the proclamation of the International Day of Islamic Art celebrated annually on 18 November
- Hosting the World Heritage Committee's 2018 meeting in Bahrain, held for the first time in the Arab World

#### Minister of Culture 2010–2015

*The cabinet reshuffle established an independent Ministry for culture with the mandate culture and tourism.*

- Established the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage, the only category II UNESCO centre in the Arab World
- Listed Bahrain's second World Heritage Site: Pearling: Testimony of an Island Economy
- Acted as the Commissioner General for Expo Milan in 2015. The Bahrain National Pavilion won the Silver Award for Best Architecture and Landscape at the Milan Expo
- Branded Bahrain tourism by maximising participation in international exhibitions and strengthening international presence

- Achieved the inauguration of the Bahrain National Theatre funded by HM King of Bahrain
- Manama was selected as 'Capital of Arab Culture' in 2012 and 'Capital of Arab Tourism' in 2013

#### Minister of Culture & Information 2008–2010

*Ministry of Culture and Information was mandated with the media, culture and tourism.*

- Revamped the Bahrain tourism sector, focusing on branding, marketing and international presence
- Launched a series of events and festivals to stabilise tourism flow into Bahrain and maximise tourism revenue: Bahrain Summer Festival (running to date) Spring of Culture and others
- Established the Arab Tourism Day to raise the image of the sector in the Arab World
- Participated in The Venice Architectural Biennale; the pavilion won the Golden Lion Award in 2010
- Launched Bahrain TV new identity and brand
- Coordinated Bahrain's participation in Expo Shanghai 2010

#### Undersecretary for Culture and National Heritage Ministry of Information May 2002–2008

- Listed Bahrain's first World Heritage Site Qal'at Al Bahrain on the World Heritage List
- Established Bahrain Fort Site Museum as the first national collaboration between the private sector and the government in 2008



### Non-Governmental Experience

**Founder and Chairperson**  
**Shaikh Ebrahim bin Mohammed Al-Khalifa Center for Culture and Research**  
 2002 to Date

Founded a leading NGO dedicated to the memory of Sheikh Ebrahim, a leading historical figure, and initiated the 'Invest in Culture' scheme, securing funding from the private sector estimated at US\$50 million for a major rehabilitation scheme in the Old City of Muharraq. This leading cultural centre has now over 29 renovated traditional houses open to the public and is shaping the cultural landscape of Bahrain.

**Historian and Researcher**  
 1993–2002

Independent scholar focused on documenting the history of Bahrain from the eighteenth century onward (see publications below).

### Publications

- 2002 *Abdallah bin Ahmed: The Warrior that Never Rested*, The Arab Institute for Research and Publishing
- 2000 *Charles Belgrave: Memoirs and Biography*, The Arab Institute for Research and Publishing
- 1999 *100 Years of Education in Bahrain, the Early Years of Establishment*, The Arab Institute for Research and Publishing
- 1999 *The Qarmatians from Concept to State*, The Arab Institute for Research and Publishing
- 1998 *Sebazabad and the Men of the Glorious State: The Story of British Control of Arab Control of the Gulf*, The Arab Institute for Research and Publishing
- 1996 *Mohammed Bin Khalifa 1813–1890: The Legend and the Parallel History*, Dar Al Gadid
- 1993 *The Sheikh of Letters*, Al Rayes Publishing

### Education

- 2005 MA in Political History, University of Sheffield, UK

### Language

Arabic: Native  
 English: Fluent





## Mai Al Khalifa

### Statement of Policy and Management Intent

At its best tourism is an astonishing tool for sustainable development. At its worst tourism can inflict cruel damage upon societies and environments. The current Covid19 hiatus offers the sector an opportunity for transformation. UNWTO must seize that opportunity that has opened before us for structural change. We should be relentless in defining and delivering achievable outputs that maximise contribution to SDGs. This, in my view, requires a particular emphasis on reducing climate-change harm, including moving wherever possible towards support for more 'local' forms of tourism. In order to ensure that it is fit for purpose to manage crisis and sectoral change, UNWTO needs to reflect on its own ability to innovate and deliver value for money to the full range of both its current and its potential Members.

My vision for the future of UNWTO depends upon seven pillars as summarised below. For the sake of clarity, they are presented independently. But they should be read holistically.

#### 1. Crisis Management and Future Planning

The impact of Covid19 has starkly highlighted the fragility of the tourism sector. Given the worldwide pandemic, discretionary travel has inevitably suffered dramatically. The collapse in demand combined with a legally enforced lockdown of tourism globally has placed many at the lower end of the industry's employment ladder in danger of extreme poverty. UNWTO has a moral imperative to help alleviate their plight. Although not a funding body in its own right, UNWTO must seek to ensure that those organisations that control resources are fully aware of the particular circumstances and hardships faced by these many individuals – and advise on appropriate relief strategies.

Not far behind this imperative should be a commitment to help salvage viable businesses. Again, relief must depend in the first instance upon those organisations that command resources. Many schemes have already been introduced by national governments to relieve immediate financial strains, including employee subsidies; tax holidays; low-interest loans; demand stimuli; and investor bonuses. Under current arrangements, the main contribution of UNWTO in this field should be to scan the horizons of such schemes, disseminate best practice and advise where appropriate. I would wish to further assist through negotiating with key financial institutions in the public and private sector.

Close liaison with WHO and other institutions with health expertise is required to ensure that protocols for safer travel can be internationally agreed. Negotiations with WHO should ensure that: travel restrictions are kept to a minimum; and that a support system is in place to assist the hospitality sector that are faced with new requirements that are beyond their fields of expertise and their financial capability.

It is hard to peer too far into the future. But we can be confident that at some point this pandemic will abate. We can also be confident that exploration remains central to the human spirit and that consequently at some point there will be huge pent up demand for tourism services. The silver lining to the disaster of Covid19 is that by *force majeure* it has drawn a 'line in the sand', providing an unprecedented opportunity to redesign the sector comprehensively in the light of SDGs. During this pandemic, for example, people have travelled more locally and the 'staycation' sector has boomed. It is time now to launch a campaign to support this trend. This will help ensure economic and environmental sustainability.

UNWTO should facilitate Member States' capacity to incorporate tourism within crisis management and national risk mitigation plans. It is clear however, that UNWTO's ability to respond adequately to crisis is currently hampered by inadequate independent funding. Guided by other successful initiatives within the UN system (for example the World Heritage International Assistance Scheme), I recommend the development of a UNWTO Assistance Fund to support both Full and Affiliate Members of UNWTO to cater for emergency interventions. I have had in my current role considerable success in securing long-term low-interest loans and grants from banks and funding agencies relating to such circumstances.





## 2. Tourism and the SDGs

It is relatively easy to list the SDGs and to commit to their targets: far harder, however, to realise them. This is particularly urgent given the commitment of Member states and the UNWTO to implement them fully within the next decade. In my judgement, this can only be achieved by the translation of voluntary commitments into national regulatory frameworks.

Although tourism is specifically mentioned in a selected few of the SDGs. I would strongly argue that it is integral to every one of them. UNWTO should systematically interrogate the extent to which the sector and governmental regulatory frameworks comply. Tourism, for example, is central to "poverty eradication", "gender equality" and "decent work and economic growth". The power of tourism is that it is a highly visible sector that can highlight in microcosm what can be achieved in wider contexts.

The impact of tourism on climate change must not be underestimated. We should for example develop long term strategies to incentivise rail travel particularly within regions where the infrastructure is already largely in place. There of course will always be a place for air travel to underpin the industry. Research and development should be directed towards reducing emissions, using alternative energy, managing water, and minimising waste. Such initiatives should be an integral part of licensing and quality assurance for new and existing projects.

To strengthen the relationship between tourism and the SDGs, I will especially focus on more strategic issues. The incorporation of the SDG targets and the Global Code of Ethics into national regulatory frameworks is a fundamental KPI for this coming phase of UNWTO.

## 3. Finance and Membership

Resources underpin an organisation's ability to deliver on its mission. At the moment, UNWTO relies almost exclusively upon a Member subscription model to finance itself. Given that fact, it is surprising to see the number of major state and private sector 'players' that have chosen not to subscribe. I believe it is essential to interrogate UNWTO's ability to deliver value for money in relation to the subscriptions it charges and the outputs it delivers. We need to be absolutely clear as to *why* Full and Affiliate Members choose to subscribe and *why* conspicuous 'absentee' potential Members have chosen not to join. I intend to make this a priority and to make every effort to broaden the UNWTO Membership base.

In my opinion this is equally true in relation to Affiliate Member status. It is striking how many of the large hospitality groups, tour operators and cultural entities – many of whom have access to substantial CSR funds – have decided not to be Members of UNWTO. This is a pressing concern.

My priorities would be to encourage non-Member states to join; reinvigorate UNWTO as an inclusive organisation with active engagement from all Members; provide a wide range of demonstrable benefits to these Members; and widen, diversify and re-conceptualise the Affiliate Membership mandate.

## 4. Innovation and Technology

It is remarkable to recall that Google was only launched 22 years ago. In that brief period, technology has transformed the tourism sector. It has driven efficiencies within the industry in such matters as bookings and dissemination of consumer choice. In this regard digitalisation is crucial, particularly within my own specialist fields of heritage preservation, management and interpretation. It has allowed 'locked down' citizens to explore the world from their living rooms - while at the same time cutting their carbon emissions.

Smart destination and digital transformation should remain a UNWTO priority. Technology is however both a powerful but a fickle force which is rightly primarily led by the private sector. UNWTO does however have an important role to play: that is to scan horizons; develop collaborative models of best practice; disseminate these; and to pump prime as and when resources are available targeted initiatives.





Innovation of course is not exclusively linked to technology. Since the onset of the pandemic the sector has found many 'low key' innovative measures to enhance its operations, such as timed entry to museums, accentuating the open-air potential of sites, and the adaptation of venues to accommodate social distancing. Such practical but vital measures also need celebration.

I am particularly keen to emphasise however that innovation should 'begin at home'. If appointed, within a short period, I would wish to meet personally (or indeed via technology) with staff representatives from across the organisation to initiate a detailed 'innovation audit'. In my view this is a prerequisite for the management of any modern organisation. We need to be assured that UNWTO is fit for purpose to deliver on its mission: that it is deploying appropriate technology; that its staff are 'bubbling with ideas'; that they have the forums in which to express these; and that we are prepared to both to seize upon those ideas and act upon them.

## **5. Increasing Collaboration with International Organisations**

UNWTO needs to look carefully into the structural relationship it enjoys with other international entities. Many synergies are found between the mandate of UNWTO and those of other UN agencies such as with: UNEP for protecting the environment; UNESCO for protecting and promoting cultural heritage; UNIDO for innovation and developing craftsmanship; in addition to UNFPA; UN Women and UNICEF for the empowerment and well-being of women, youth and children. We should indeed nurture these synergies and through diplomatic channels and collaboration seek to enhance them.

In particular, UNWTO should foster channels of approach to the major funding agencies. It has a significant role to play in developing guidelines and protocols that will smooth the path for Members to access fiscal incentives covering both short-term crisis relief and long-term investment.

One of UNWTO's chief strengths is that it is part of such a strong family. Clearly the diplomatic relationships within it should be nurtured and harnessed. From the perspective of my current role as Chair of the UNESCO Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH), I can see clearly that there are many potential synergies to build upon.

## **6. Education, Training and Employment**

UNWTO should also play a more prominent role in the field of education and training. This could usefully be further encouraged by the establishment of a UNWTO postgraduate programme, similar to the World Maritime University in Malmo, which is endorsed by the International Maritime Organisation and serves all Members. This would represent a much-needed step to elevate the standards of sector-specific qualifications that can enrich the sector with research and innovation.

UNWTO should also introduce a programme of sponsored Academic Chairs (along the lines of the existing UNESCO model). This initiative will create a network of international researchers and a range of activities that will put into action the UNWTO vision.

I would also wish to endorse the introduction of a UNWTO internship scheme that encourages international work experience, especially for those with otherwise limited opportunities to travel, to gain experience within major tourism and hospitality corporations.

Finally, I would like to diversify employment policy within UNWTO by encouraging secondment schemes from Member states and applications from candidates with varied backgrounds, especially in terms of age, gender and nationality.



## 7. Harnessing the Private Sector

Tourism is a sector that is founded on the private sector. While recognising that UNWTO is an inter-governmental organisation, no initiative at governmental level will be fruitful without buy-in from the private sector, where tangible change is made possible.

UNWTO can and should facilitate B2B activities via mobilising investment opportunities amongst Affiliate Members; negotiate favourable terms with governmental and international financial institutions; and in general act as a platform that offers value added products to its Members.

UNWTO should be keen to bring on board both tourism and non-tourism corporates such as Google, Volkswagen, Toyota and others with their generous grant and CSR schemes. These links will ensure that there is a common platform where initiatives related to responsible tourism are communicated. This can initiate a win-win scenario as these industry partners can themselves benefit from business opportunities available via this network.

A special focus should be given to support SMEs, facilitating finance, access to markets, training and capacity building. A twinning scheme between large corporations and SMEs that ensures knowledge transfer and accessibility to markets should be explored. In this regard, I intend to rebuild the strong relationship the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) and other private sector representative organisations on the national level.

## Concluding Remarks

I have worked long enough within the culture, tourism and heritage sectors to appreciate that glossy brochures do not always depict a truthful version of reality. My dream is to make tourism work for people, not only for governments. UNWTO has come a long way in disseminating information and creating awareness; I appreciate all this work and will build on it. I want to make my term about taking action and delivering value for money for all Members. I am a doer – this is what I am known for and what I have proven to be.

If appointed, I will undertake to be a dynamic leader of UNWTO. I will aspire to make UNWTO “walk the talk” so that it becomes itself a living example of sustainability, diversity, integrity and responsibility. I will throw myself wholeheartedly into the role and by the end of the first 12 months of tenure I will have:

- Listened carefully to the views and needs of every Member state and consulted them on the way forward
- Conducted a wide-ranging innovation audit
- Secured additional funding streams
- Identified and initiated strategic projects that deliver on the SDGs
- Attracted additional Full and influential Affiliate Members
- Completed a comprehensive Strategic Action Plan





**B. Curriculum vitae and statements of policy and management intent of Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili submitted with the support of the Government of Georgia**



**CANDIDATE TO THE POST  
OF THE SECRETARY-  
GENERAL  
OF THE WORLD TOURISM  
ORGANIZATION  
(UNWTO)**

**MR. ZURAB  
POLOLIKASHVILI**

#### PROFESSIONAL CAREER

- Mr. Pololikashvili has broad experience of working both in private and public sectors at high-profile positions.
- He has extensive diplomatic experience, serving as Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), as well as having served as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Kingdom of Spain. He also held a position of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2005 to 2006.

**CURRENT POSITION**      **Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)**  
(2018-2021)

**2012 - 2017**      **Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia** to the Kingdom of Spain, the Principality of Andorra, the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria and the Kingdom of Morocco  
Permanent Representative of Georgia to the World Tourism Organization

**2009 - 2010**      **Minister of Economic Development of Georgia**

- As Minister of Economic Development of Georgia, Mr. Pololikashvili was responsible for overseeing the country's long-term fiscal growth strategies, for advancing foreign trade and investment policy initiatives, as well as promoting the development of tourism, infrastructure and transportation sectors. He was instrumental in launching an innovative policy for the development of tourism of Georgia, prioritizing the sphere on both the governmental and private sector agendas.
- During Mr. Pololikashvili's tenure as the Minister of Economic Development, through key policy reforms, marketing activities, improvement of infrastructure and visa liberalization initiatives, Georgia managed to nearly double the annual number of international arrivals, from 1,5 million in 2009 to exceeding the 2,8 million mark by 2011. These reforms paved the way for sustainable tourism practices in Georgia and poverty alleviation initiatives, placing Georgia among top tourism destinations in the region.





- Mr. Pololikashvili successfully led the economic liberalization processes, introducing more supportive policies for SMEs, and incentive programs to attract foreign investment for the development of hard and soft infrastructure.

**2006 - 2009**

**Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia** to the Kingdom of Spain, the Principality of Andorra, the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria and the Kingdom of Morocco

**2005 - 2006**

**Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia**

- In his capacity as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, he supervised the departments for administrative, budgetary, financial and consular affairs, as well as the Department for Human Resources Management. Mr. Pololikashvili was responsible for ushering in a new phase of more liberal and secure visa regimes, facilitation of processes to ease boarder crossing procedures, and deepening relations with various international organizations, including UNWTO.

#### EXPERIENCE IN PRIVATE SECTOR

Mr. Pololikashvili's private sector experience includes several years in the financial and banking sectors, serving as the Manager of international Operations for TBC Bank (one of the most successful banks in Georgia), Director of TBC Bank's Central Branch Office (2001-2005) and the Vice President of TBC Group (2010-2011).

In 2011-2012, Mr. Pololikashvili was CEO of FC Dinamo Tbilisi, the leading professional football team in Georgia.

#### ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

<b>2008 - 2009</b>	Global Senior Management Program (GSMP), IE Business School, Instituto de Empresa, Madrid, Spain
<b>1994 - 1998</b>	Bachelor's Degree in Banking, Georgian Technical University, Tbilisi, Georgia

#### PERSONAL DATA

<b>Date of birth</b>	12 January 1977, Tbilisi, Georgia
<b>Marital status</b>	Married, has three children
<b>Languages</b>	Georgian (native) English, Russian, Spanish (fluent) French, Japanese, Polish (spoken)



## STATEMENT OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT INTENT "TOURISM FOR GREATNESS"

**ZURAB POLOLIKASHVILI**

**Candidate to the Post of the Secretary-General of the UNWTO for 2022-2025**

### I. Foreword

- Tourism ended 2019 with impressive results: around 1.5 billion international tourists travelled the world while the volume of domestic tourism accounted for 8.8 billion arrivals. Export earnings from our industry totalled 1.5 trillion USD. It is remarkable that during the past ten years tourism grew faster than the world economy as a whole.
- The COVID-19 Pandemic has dramatically changed the global track and our sector, which was the third biggest export earning category after fuels and chemicals for many years became one of the hardest-hit sectors experiencing a decline in international tourist arrivals of 65% in the first half of 2020 over the same period last year. Apart from the socio-economic impact, the crisis generated cultural and environmental implications for our sector.
- My vision for reinventing tourism is based on maintaining strong coordination between all actors of the sector ensuring that we build up the future in a sustainable, responsible and resilient way by fostering new innovative models across the globe for the creation of millions of new jobs.

### II. Main achievements and progress of the UNWTO in 2018-2020

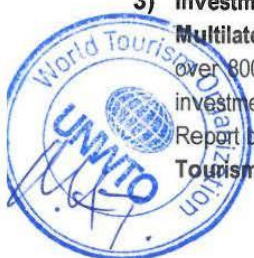
After assuming the post of Secretary-General in January 2018, I presented to the 108th session of the Executive Council the Management Vision consisting of the following five key priorities: 1) Innovation and digital transformation; 2) Investments and entrepreneurship; 3) Education and employment; 4) Safe, secure and seamless travel; 5) Social, cultural and environmental sustainability. If re-elected to this position, I will ensure that the Organization continues advancing the above-mentioned priorities and we will build up further initiatives and activities on the progress and achievements we have had from 2018 until now:

- 1) **Innovation:** Innovation became one of the core priorities of the UNWTO. My main goal was to create a global tourism ecosystem and help UNWTO Member States to promote innovation through practical solutions such as: 7 **UNWTO Tourism Startup Competitions** where we prioritized the Sustainable Development Goals, 6 **Specific Challenges** gathering over 7000 applications from more than 150 countries, the development of more than 15 **UNWTO Tourism Tech Adventures** forums that helped UNWTO to build a global community of startups, supporting finalists with investment funding of more than EUR45 million and pilot projects with Member States.

Today, **UNWTO has its own innovation network** composed of more than 7000 members, including 6000 startups, 451 companies, 285 governmental institutions, 236 investors, 182 education centres, 42 incubators/accelerators, among other stakeholders. UNWTO was included for the first time at **UNIN: United Nations Innovation Network**.

- 2) **Digital Transformation:** Creation of the **UNWTO Tourism Online Academy** powered by IE University as the global platform to foster free high-quality education from top universities with over 7000 students. Creation of the **UNWTO Acceleration Programme** to train government officials and entrepreneurs on digital skills. Launch of the first employment support platform for tourism: the **UNWTO Jobs Factory** powered by Eightfold.ai. Human capital matchmaking and talent development are among the services for Member States, the corporate sector and civil society.

- 3) **Investments:** Creation of the first UNWTO investments network with more than 200 active investors. Launch of **Multilateral Investment Cooperation** starting with a partnership with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) training over 800 people, among government officials, consultants, investors and hotel/brand managers from 118 countries in investment readiness for green finance mechanisms. Development of 3 editions of the **Intelligence Tourism Investment Report** by the Financial Times (2018, 2019 and 2020). First **UNWTO Investment Guidelines: Enabling Frameworks for Tourism Investment**.



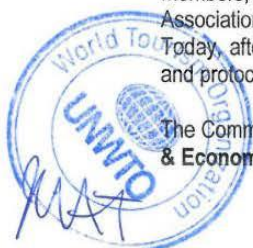


- 4) **UNWTO Academy:** Almost 1000 government officials and tourism professionals trained through **onsite courses** and creating opportunities through **international centres associated to the UNWTO Academy** in countries such as Portugal and Saudi Arabia. **UNWTO.TedQual Certification** has helped to audit 156 Education and Training programmes worldwide. **The UNWTO.Quest Certification** was granted to 2 Destination Management Organization in Uruguay and Argentina and we are currently in the process of auditing 2 in Mallorca and British Columbia, Canada.
- 5) **Sustainability:** The development of a Transport CO2 emissions report has been key to support the **UN climate action** agenda. We have expanded the **International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO)** network by including new destinations: South Tyrol, Italy; Panama; Navarre, Spain; Buenos Aires, Argentina; South West Australia and Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala. In process, Barcelona and the Canary Islands, Spain. In 2020, UNWTO launched the **Global Tourism Plastics Initiative** as part of the activities of the One Planet Sustainable Tourism Program.
- 6) **Ethics, Culture and Social Responsibility:** Adoption of the **UNWTO Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics** (23rd GA/2019) and the release of the **Global Report on Women in Tourism, 2nd Edition (2019)** to support gender equality and the launch of the **Accessible Tourism Destination** recognition (2019).
- 7) **Market trends and competitiveness:** Creation of the **UNWTO Tourism Data Dashboard**, a tool built through partnerships with leading data providers, combining traditional statistics and big data in order to provide a unique insights and trends. UNWTO has placed tourism firmly in the Urban Agenda through the **UNWTO Mayors Forum** and policy guidance (UNWTO recommendations of Urban Tourism). We are advancing the contribution of tourism to **rural development** through knowledge creation, policy guidance and training on rural tourism, gastronomy and wine tourism.
- 8) **Institutional Relations, Partnerships and the Regional Cooperation:** working actively with regional organizations has been a priority. I have helped to position UNWTO as the main global tourism interlocutor with the European Union, created a specialized agenda for Africa to empower education, innovation, job creation and financial cooperation, established the first **UNWTO Regional Office for the Middle East** and strengthened cooperation with multilateral institutions as European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Bank, African Development Bank, Interamerican Development Bank among others.
- 9) **Reforms:**
  - Structural and organizational reforms to comply with JIU recommendations, reducing the top-level structure by half and improving transparency in human resources selection processes and non-staff schemes
  - Alignment with UN standards on internal oversight (2018 audit and conclusion of an agreement with UN OIOS) and on travel policies
  - Adoption of the United Nations Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework, inclusion of United Nations training on Ethics and Integrity as mandatory for all personnel and review of financial and conflict of interest disclosure policies
  - Increased environmental responsibility: Paperless meetings and complete offset of greenhouse gas emissions.
- 10) **Financial Sustainability of the Organization:** The UNWTO Regular budget was significantly improved resulting in a cash surplus in the years 2019 and 2018 (EUR 1,932,645 and EUR 2,423,635 respectively), also by correcting the 2017 Regular Budget budgetary cash deficit (EUR -511,201.98).

#### 11) Major UNWTO activities in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

- **Global Tourism Crisis Committee:** In order to ensure a coordinated and effective response to the pandemic, I took the lead to initiate the creation of the Global Tourism Crisis Committee. It is comprised of the UNWTO, representatives of its Member States (Chairs of the UNWTO Executive Council and six Regional Commissions as well as some States nominated by the Commission Chairs), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank (WB), and the private sector – the UNWTO Affiliate Members, Airports Council International (ACI), Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), the International Air Transport Association (IATA), and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC).  
Today, after six crisis committee meetings, we have decided to create a technical committee to create global standards and protocols to restart tourism again.

The Committee adopted two strategic guidance documents: **UNWTO Recommendations for Actions – Supporting Jobs & Economies through Travel and Tourism**, providing more than 100 practical actions in 23 areas for the three key crisis





phases: **mitigation, recovery and building for the future**; and **UNWTO Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism**, providing high-level guidance for reopening tourism operations.

- **UNWTO online monitoring system on country and international policy response to mitigate the effects of COVID-19:** It provides the information on the policies in place in over 170 countries, as well as support by international and regional organizations that are relevant for tourism.
- **Monitoring COVID-19 Related Travel Restrictions – A Global Review for Tourism:** The UNWTO is regularly monitoring travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. It provides an overview and analysis on the implementation of travel restrictions by governments as one of the means to address the global health crisis of COVID-19. So far 7 reports have been issued.
- **UNWTO Tourism Recovery Tracker:** The most comprehensive tourism dashboard to date and available for free, it covers key tourism performance indicators by month, regions and sub-regions allowing for a real-time comparison of the sector recovery across the world and industries.
- **UNWTO Healing Solutions for Tourism Challenge:** The initiative was launched to support recovery efforts with more than 1000 applications. The top 9 are working actively with Member States to create a safe travel model and restart tourism.
- **UNWTO COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Technical Assistance Package:** The package was created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Out of 39 ongoing projects, 17 have adopted COVID-19 tourism recovery components; a Cooperation Framework Agreement was signed with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) offering COVID-relief activities to 13 countries, with a budget of 2 million euros; and ongoing partnerships are currently being discussed with Member States and numerous international partners.

### III. Key Objectives of the Vision 2022-2025

#### 1. Strong Coordination, Effective Policy Guidance and New Partnerships

In the unprecedented crisis and against a backdrop of heightened uncertainty, multilateralism is key. UNWTO needs to continue leading and coordinating the international efforts to help the sector's recovery and to restore confidence through the progressive adoption of common approaches, measures and regulatory frameworks to address the challenges ahead as a united sector and ensuring a coherent response and recovery, leaving nobody behind. New models of tourism development will ensure long-term sustainable tourism growth for the socio-economic benefits of the people of the world.

- **Advocacy and Coordination:** Advocate for the inclusion of tourism in national, regional and international agendas as a major driver of recovery of the world economy and ensure consistent coordination between Governments of States, the private sector and the International Organizations as one strong voice to overcome the health crisis as well as the economic and social constraints.
- **New Models, Standards and Recommendations:** Initiate and develop new models of tourism destinations, international standards, policy recommendations and guidelines to ensure the sector's sustainable growth and resilience. Carry out market research and prepare thematic studies on various policy considerations of the tourism sector.
- **Partnerships:** Strengthen cooperation with the institutions of the United Nations and other international organizations aiming at jointly developing roadmaps of tourism development.

#### 2. Diversification of Services to Members and expand membership

The development of new, effective and tailor-made services for Members will be the key priority for the second mandate. At the same time Organization will continue attracting new Members to enlarge and enrich our global family.

##### **Services:**

**New Online Services to Members:** The UNWTO will significantly increase the volume of online training courses and capacity building programmes for the tourism industry of the Member States, for public and private sector stakeholders alike. Such courses will be tailor-made for the specific needs of Members.





- **Increase Resource Mobilization for Technical Assistance Projects:** The UNWTO will increase the resource mobilization efforts to help a wide range of States implement technical assistance projects for the sustainable and competitive tourism growth.
- **Develop New Models and Harmonize Regulatory Frameworks:** Offer to Members conceptually new governance and business models of the industry and regulatory frameworks important to re-think and re-orient the policy approaches.
- **Develop National Tourism Intelligence Systems:** UNWTO will support Member States to develop national tourism intelligence systems and related skills development that maximize traditional and big data to support tourism planning and management.

#### New Members:

- **Attract new Member States:** The UNWTO will continue actively working towards attracting non-member States. Priority will be given to **Anglo-Saxon, Nordic and Baltic States** from Europe, the Americas and East Asia and the Pacific as well as the **Small Island Developing States** (SIDS) from the Caribbean and Pacific. New memberships will strengthen the Organization and empower the global tourism agenda.
- **Attract new Affiliate Members:** Through the reform of affiliate members' governance structures, the Organization will attract more strategic collaboration and partnerships, expand affiliate membership to new big and mega companies that will bring valuable knowledge and opportunities and build up stronger synergies between the Member States and the Affiliates.

### 3. Modernization of the Organization

In order to improve service delivery to Members, it is essential to continue the process of modernizing the Organization and improving its effectiveness, by better focusing its structure and activities around strategy and objectives, by prioritizing limited resources and eliminating inefficiencies, as well as ensuring an agile, accountable and responsive workforce.

- **Measuring performance and external outcomes** through a strategic balance scorecard, key performance indicators and a performance management system to achieve a **working culture of excellence**.
- **Strengthening compliance, ethics and internal oversight functions** through the implementation of a 3-year plan audit with UN OIOS focusing on improving governance structure, the use of resources, and service delivery
- **Achieving a zero-paper organization** through the implementation of a comprehensive ERP system, while simplifying and streamlining business processes to reduce bureaucracy and move **from a process-oriented to a results-oriented organization**.
- **Improving internal coordination** through the establishment of transversal specific and objective driven taskforces and the improvement of internal coordination mechanisms to eliminate duplications, ensure alignment of priorities and activities and foster a **culture of cooperation**.

## IV. New Initiatives, Projects and Activities

By maintaining 5 key priorities on innovation and digital transformation, investments and entrepreneurship, education and employment, safe, secure and seamless travel and social, cultural and environmental sustainability, if elected, I will further implement concrete projects and activities to ensure the resilient tourism sector in the long run:

### 1. Innovation and digital transformation

- **Scale and support 10,000 startups and innovators from the UNWTO Innovation Network** by connecting them to the global tourism entrepreneurship ecosystem (startups, governments, institutions, academia, corporates, investors, hubs) in order to develop pilot projects and spread the most innovative solutions for the sector.
- Create more curated **UNWTO Tourism Tech Adventures Forums** to connect startups and innovators with investors, **raising over USD 100 million in funding** and attracting more investments in tourism innovation.
- **Support to Member States on creating Specific Regional Innovation Challenges** to provide technology-driven solutions to tourism most demanding issues as sustainability, smart cities, deep technologies, gastronomy, sports among others.



- Help Member States to develop **their innovation programmes and new technologies** to empower their national tourism ecosystem.

## 2. Green and sustainable investments

- **Continuous work on the UNWTO Investment Framework** for encouraging the multilateral banking sector to prioritize investments in tourism: green hospitality business models, renewable energies, responsible tourism tour-operators, thus fostering the sector's value chain to create purpose-driven companies in tourism.
- Creation of a second phase of the UNWTO investments programme with the International Finance Corporation (IFC): **Investment Readiness for Green Finance Mechanisms to train 50,000 companies** focused on green business for tourism.
- Strengthening the **UNWTO Investment Forums** to connect private-sector investors (private equity firms, developers, family offices, among others) with tourism ministries in order to open the doors for **high-impact investment projects**.
- Creation of the first **rural tourism investment** programme to empower high-level public-private investments.
- Creation of a "tourism for tomorrow alliance fund" to support high-level impact investments in rural and emerging destinations, promote entrepreneurship and startups and strengthen digital education.

## 3. Cutting-edge education for tourism players

A highly digitalized world demands modern and impactful education. In this regard, I will lead the **brand-new hybrid education model** to scale up training and skills development in tourism:

- **UNWTO Tourism Online Academy** as a priority, attracting the greatest number of courses in the 5 UNWTO official languages **to train 500,000 people in the upcoming 4 years**.
- Creation of the **UNWTO Tourism Education Faculty**, an innovative programme focused on train the next tourism professors and trainers in the most relevant tourism domains in order to generate a cascade effect for on-the-ground training in Member States.
- Creating a new **Tourism Education Quality Assurance Programme** to strength education in destinations based on innovation and sustainability.
- Creation of the **UNWTO Tourism Universities and Schools Global Network** with common high-quality standards in terms of curriculum structure, including the most compelling skills for the sector's innovation and development.
- Empowerment of the **UNWTO Education Committee** in order to bring strategic leadership from Member States and top world class universities to advice on the education strategy to scale up the way people are gaining added value skills in tourism.

## 4. Added value jobs

Providing quality jobs depends on quality education. Moving forward through technology-based recruitment.

- Creation of the **UNWTO Jobs Factory** as the global tourism employment marketplace managed through artificial intelligence to matchmake talent with offers and bridge the gap among recruiters and jobseekers.
- **Connection of the UNWTO Jobs Factory with the UNWTO Tourism Online Academy** to enable the best students to apply for better jobs in the sector.
- Creation of the **UNWTO Jobs of the Future Observatory** to monitor the impact of digitalization in tourism employment and identify gaps, which will be addressed by the UNWTO Jobs Factory and the UNWTO Tourism Online Academy.

## 5. Sustainable growth and ethics

- Support our Member States through technical assistance to **create successful public policies** focused on sustainable tourism.
- Creation of the first **CO2 emissions calculator app** in order to help tourists to mitigate their carbon footprint after their leisure or business trips.





- Build partnerships with the private sector to develop **social inclusion, gender equality and environmental programmes** to accelerate the United Nations 2030 Agenda.
- Creation of the first global guidelines on how to **redefine the tourism business model** through sustainability and innovation with other United Nations agencies.

#### 6. Fostering Market Intelligence and advancing competitiveness

- Advance data analytics and data-driven tourism planning and management by supporting the creation of Tourism Intelligence Systems in UNWTO Members States National Tourism Administrations and Organizations.
- Foster rural development through tourism with the creation of the **UNWTO Rural Tourism Excellence Programme** to assess and promote rural destinations, guidance and training programmes on Rural Tourism, Gastronomy and Wine Tourism.
- Advance competitiveness in destination marketing for National Tourism Organizations.
- Place African Gastronomy as a pillar of Brand Africa and tourism value added and jobs in the continent.
- Promote **the League of Sustainable Tourism Cities** to advance sustainability and inclusion in urban tourism in line with Agenda 2030 through a network of cities and a special platform for the exchange of policies and case studies.

#### 7. Harmonize models of Regulatory Frameworks

- Development of an International Code for the Protection of tourists to harmonize tourism consumer protection standards in the post COVID19 world, effectively responding to tourists needs for legal certainty and trust, while fostering a fairer and more balanced share of responsibilities among all tourism stakeholders.
- Development of a tourism legislation database, while continuously monitoring and gathering measures taken by Governments in order to produce recommendations on best practices and other tools to harmonize the response to the crisis.
- Promote the entry into force of the Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics, a unique international legally binding instrument to ensure that global tourism is fair, inclusive, responsible and sustainable and to enhance the role of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics.
- Strengthen the mandate of UNWTO technical committees on statistics, sustainability, competitiveness and education to produce new common definitions, guidelines, standards and norms.

