

Saudi Arabia and Spain join forces to redesign tourism post-COVID including through the UNWTO

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1. We have had an excellent working meeting today on the margins of the Future Investment Initiative in Riyadh, where we have identified a number of fields in which Spain and Saudi Arabia can play a leading role to revitalize the tourism sector after the pandemic, for it to become one of the pillars of global economic recovery. The tourism sector needs strong leadership and coordination to bring governments and private sector partners together to work more collaboratively. We need to build a more resilient, sustainable, and inclusive tourism sector that provides prosperity for the long term.

2. Saudi Arabia has and continues to play a leading role in providing international coordination for the sector, starting with its presidency of the G20 in 2020. The Kingdom has built on this with a number of important initiatives including a \$100 million grant to the World Bank for the Tourism Community Initiative, the Best Villages program, in partnership with the UNWTO, and now the Sustainable Tourism Global Center. Saudi Arabia has been working with international partners to build a programme that aims to redesign the future of tourism and address the underlying challenges facing the industry.

3. During the COVID crisis, Spain has been at the forefront of international efforts to restore mobility having been an early adopter of the EU Digital COVID Certificate. Spain is the second-most visited country in the world, having received 83.7 million international visitors in 2019. It is renowned by its destinations and infrastructures and by its world-class tourism corporations. Spain is a world-leader in tourism, a founding member of the UNWTO, and it is now investing in a new complex that will house the headquarters of the organization.

4. Both countries agree to deepen their cooperation on three key issues to develop tourism: first, promoting sustainability, which will be essential to guarantee its future viability as a growth sector and its contribution to a decarbonized global economy, and reinforcing social inclusiveness within host communities. Second, collaborating in digital transformation, building smart and connected destinations, optimizing the flow and exchange of information and insights to accelerate the transformation of the tourism sector. Third, Spain and Saudi Arabia will work together to promote and develop training human resources to strengthen the capabilities of the people working in this sector, from vocational training to post graduate studies and specialization.

5. Tourism is a vital global sector. And today's agreement will ensure that two of the sector's leaders will work even more closely together for the benefit of all those who depend on it.

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