



## **Communication of the Chair for the 70th Meeting of the UN Tourism Regional Commission for the Americas (CAM) in Lima, Peru**

Excellencies, distinguished ministers, tourism authorities, representatives of international organizations, colleagues and friends,

When the Dominican Republic assumed the chairmanship of the UN Tourism Regional Commission for the Americas, we did so with the firm conviction that our region had not only the potential, but also the responsibility to lead a new stage of transformation for world tourism. Since then, we have worked with determination, strategic vision and a deep sense of regional unity to advance an agenda that reflects the values of inclusion, sustainability, cooperation and shared development.

One of the fundamental pillars of our work has been the strengthening of the legal governance of tourism. In this regard, we are proud to have strengthened the Tourism Law Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, an unprecedented initiative that has made it possible to consolidate a technical and academic space for the regulatory analysis of the sector. This observatory not only promotes legal certainty for investments and the protection of the rights of tourists and service providers but also strengthens the institutional capacities of Member States. As part of this effort, we recently held the First Congress of the Observatory in Punta Cana, an event that brought together jurists, academics, and authorities to discuss the legal challenges of tourism in our region. We also congratulate the Republic of Uruguay for hosting the Observatory and we also acknowledge the technical and financial support of the Inter-American

Development Bank (IDB), a key partner in the development of this regional platform for legal and regulatory matters.

In terms of connectivity, we understood from the beginning that no tourism development is possible without an efficient and articulated air infrastructure. For this reason, together with the Regional Director of UN Tourism, Mr. Gustavo Santos, we established a strategic alliance with the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which led to the creation of a space for permanent dialogue between airlines and the region's highest tourism authorities. This platform has made it possible to jointly address operational challenges, identify opportunities for new routes and strengthen public-private cooperation for the benefit of our destinations. I take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to IATA for its commitment, shared vision and continued support for building a stronger, more efficient and sustainable connectivity ecosystem for the Americas.

Another institutional milestone of great importance was the opening of the first UN Tourism Regional Office in Brazil. This office represents a key step towards the decentralization of technical cooperation and the strengthening of the organization's operational presence on the continent, facilitating member countries' access to specialized assistance and development programmes.

One of the most moving moments of our tenure was the **First UN Tourism Bi-regional Africa-America Summit**. The event was not only historic, being the first of its kind, but also deeply symbolic.

Because when Africa and America look into each other's eyes, it is not just an encounter between two regions: two memories are reunited, two intertwined histories, two peoples who share blood, culture and destiny.

The **Punta Cana Declaration** was not just a document. It was an act of dignity, of mutual recognition, of commitment to a shared future.

And now, we proudly celebrate the holding of the second edition of this summit in Zambia, and it has already been confirmed that the third will take place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

In this context, we have proposed the formalization of the Bi-regional Summit as a permanent event of UN Tourism, as well as the creation of a technical follow-up unit and a Marketplace for Africa-America interregional cooperation, which facilitates the exchange of experiences, investments and joint projects.

In the area of tourism investment, we have actively supported the development of new investment guides for Member States, with the aim of attracting responsible capital aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. These tools allow countries to present their business opportunities, regulatory frameworks and competitive advantages in a structured way, thus contributing to greater transparency and confidence for investors. In this effort, we would like to give special recognition to the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), whose technical and financial support has been fundamental both in the preparation of these guides and in the construction of a regional brand that projects tourism in the Americas with identity, coherence and vision of the future.

One of the most significant achievements from the political point of view has been the inclusion of tourism as an agenda item at the **10th Summit of the Americas** for the first time in the history of this hemispheric forum. In addition, tourism will be addressed as one of the central topics of the **American Business Dialogue**, in two presentations where the role of tourism as a driver of economic development, social cohesion and post-pandemic recovery will be highlighted. This recognition represents a strategic advance in the consolidation of tourism as a State policy in the region.

But perhaps the most symbolic and hopeful achievement is yet to come: **the selection of the Americas as the venue for the 27th UN Tourism General Assembly in 2027**, with the Dominican Republic as its epicentre. This event will be a celebration of our diversity, our leadership capacity, and our commitment to unity.

We have promoted a vision of inclusive, community-based and responsible tourism, which prioritizes the participation of local communities, respect for cultural identity and environmental sustainability. This vision was reaffirmed at the 69th Regional Meeting held in Varadero, Cuba, where the spirit of unity and solidarity that characterizes our region was demonstrated.

Today we can proudly say that the Americas region has demonstrated exemplary political maturity, an extraordinary capacity for consensus, and a firm commitment to act as one voice on the international stage. We have built a true regional family based on mutual trust, solidarity, cooperation, and a commitment to tourism that is more humane and transformative.

On this path of shared achievements, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to the Secretary-General of UN Tourism, Zurab Pololikashvili, for his continued support, visionary leadership and commitment to the institutional strengthening of our region. His support has been key to the success of many of these initiatives, and his confidence in the potential of the Americas has been a source of inspiration for all of us. Thank you, Secretary-General, for believing in our region, for accompanying us at every step and for promoting a global vision of tourism that puts people at the centre.

On behalf of the Government of the Dominican Republic, I am deeply grateful for the trust placed in our country to lead this stage. We reiterate our commitment to continue working for a sustainable region that is more integrated, innovative and resilient, convinced that tourism is and will

continue to be a powerful tool for the development of our peoples.

Thank you very much.