



UN Tourism Celebrates World Tourism Day 2025 in Melaka, Malaysia: A Milestone for Sustainable Transformation

Melaka, Malaysia, 27 September 2025 - UN Tourism celebrated World Tourism Day 2025 in the historic city of Melaka, Malaysia, under the theme “Tourism and Sustainable Transformation.” This global Day of Recognition for the sector and its vital importance marked a pivotal moment in advancing tourism as a catalyst for positive change, resilience, and sustainable development worldwide.

The celebrations, hosted with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture of Malaysia, brought together global leaders, policymakers, industry experts, and local communities to share innovative ideas and chart a sustainable future for the tourism sector. The celebrations aligned with the 7th edition of the World Tourism Conference (WTC), showcasing Malaysia’s rich cultural heritage, breathtaking landscapes, and commitment to sustainable tourism.

A Global Call for Sustainable Action

This year’s theme, “Tourism and Sustainable Transformation,” underscored tourism’s potential to drive social progress, economic growth, and environmental stewardship. The event highlighted the need for good governance, strategic planning, and inclusive policies to ensure tourism benefits all while preserving cultural and natural heritage. Malaysia’s Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, H.E. Dato Sri Tiong King Sing, welcomed participants from around the world to Melaka at the opening of World Tourism Day 2025 and the 7th World Tourism Conference.

In his official message, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres emphasized, “Tourism is a powerful driver of transformation. It creates jobs, fuels local economies, and builds bridges across cultures. Yet, it must be sustainable to protect the very places and communities it celebrates. Let’s harness tourism as a force for resilience, sustainability, and shared progress.”

UN Tourism Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili added, “World Tourism Day 2025 in Melaka has shown the world that tourism can be a force for good when guided by sustainability and inclusivity. By working together, we can transform tourism into a tool for empowerment, cultural preservation, and environmental protection.”

Highlights of World Tourism Day 2025

Affirming this commitment, the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, The Right Honourable Dato' Sri Haji Fadillah bin Yusof, on behalf of the Prime Minister of Malaysia, today officiated the opening of World Tourism Day 2025 and the 7th World Tourism Conference in Melaka.

Highlighting tourism's role as a unifying force, the Deputy Prime Minister stressed that growth must be inclusive and resilient, underpinned by sustainability, innovation, and global cooperation. He outlined Malaysia's initiatives – from expanding high-value tourism segments and digital nomad hubs, to investments in sustainable aviation fuel and community-led ecotourism – as examples of balancing economic progress with social and environmental responsibility. He also announced that Malaysia will join the UN Tourism International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO) with a pilot project in Mersing, Johor.

The celebrations in Melaka featured a series of activities, including high-level panel discussions and cultural showcases focused on sustainable tourism practices and innovative strategies geared towards the resilience of the tourism industry. The focus was placed on building sustainable transformation through:

- **Investing in Education and Skills:** Programmes to empower women, youth, and marginalized communities through tourism-related training and employment opportunities.
- **Accelerating innovation and digital transformation:** Identifying tourism game-changers, including entrepreneurs, innovators and start-ups and supporting them to transform ideas into action and scale-up. Investing in digital education and closing the 'digital gap' through empowering rural communities, youth and post-conflict societies.
- **Supporting Local Economies:** Promoting micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises to ensure tourism benefits reach local communities.
- **Cultural Exchange:** Showcasing Malaysia's vibrant heritage through performances, culinary experiences, and exhibitions, reinforcing tourism's role in preserving traditions.

World Tourism Conference 2025: A Framework for Collaboration

Held in the framework of World Tourism Day, the 7th edition of the World Tourism Conference (WTC) in Melaka served as a platform for fostering stronger bonds and innovative ideas for the global tourism industry.

The conference brought together stakeholders to discuss strategies for sustainable tourism development, focusing on resilience, inclusivity, and environmental stewardship. Key sessions explored topics such as digital transformation in tourism, community-based tourism models, and climate-neutral travel solutions, aligning with the theme "Tourism and Sustainable Transformation."

Looking Ahead

To conclude the official celebrations, Malaysia handed over the hosting of World Tourism Day to El Salvador. World Tourism Day 2026, will be held around the theme of “Digital Agenda and Artificial Intelligence to redesign tourism” and address the role of tourism in embracing digital transformation and the integration of artificial intelligence (AI).