

## 52nd UN TOURISM REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE MIDDLE EAST CONFERENCE: “PROMOTING TOURISM THROUGH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE”

February 11, 2026, Grand Hyatt Kuwait

### Agenda

Masters of Ceremony: [Abdullah Dashti](#), TV and Radio Presenter, KTV1, Kuwait Sport, Kuwait FM

12.00 – 12.15

#### Welcome Remarks

- H.E. Mr. Omar Saud Al Omar, Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology, Acting Minister of Information and Culture, State of Kuwait
- H.E. Shaikha Alnuwais, Secretary General, UN Tourism

12.15 – 12.30

#### Where innovation meets impact: Artificial Intelligence and the future of tourism

**Speaker:** Natalia Bayona, Executive Director, UN Tourism

A general outlook is provided on the impact of Artificial Intelligence in tourism, while presenting UN Tourism’s agenda on AI. The address highlights the status of the Riyadh Declaration outcomes and key findings from the AI survey in the Middle East including the conclusions of the High-Level Policy Debate held during the last General Assembly.

12.30 – 12.50

#### The Future of Travel Is Intelligent: Lessons from Booking.com’s AI Journey.

**Speaker:** Carlo Olejniczak, Vice President and Managing Director EMEA, Booking.com

A representative from Booking.com delivers an onsite inspirational keynote to show the potential of Artificial Intelligence tools for tourism.

12.50 – 13.35

#### Panel Discussion: A private sector perspective on the potential of Artificial Intelligence for Tourism

**Moderator:** Antonio López de Ávila, Innovation, Education and Investments Director, UN Tourism

##### Speakers:

- Mohammed Elbeheiry, Founder and CEO, Eyego.ai
- Larissa Abi Nakhle, Co-founder & Head of Partnerships, Zaka.ai
- Alfonso Sasselli, Head Industry Partnerships & Business Development Middle East, Amadeus IT Group
- Abdulrahman Alsadoun, Chairman & CEO, Wavesapp

This panel brings leading private-sector voices together to explore how Artificial Intelligence is reshaping tourism innovation, customer engagement, and business models. Speakers will share real-world use cases, emerging opportunities, and the challenges of scaling AI solutions across the tourism value chain. The session will also mark the official launch of the “Unlocking AI for Tourism” workshop, co-designed by UN Tourism and Amadeus, highlighting a new collaborative initiative to support public authorities in harnessing AI for tourism development (Initial Session: 15.00 – 16.00).

13.50 – 14.00

#### Closing Remarks

**Speaker:** Antonio López de Ávila, Innovation, Education, Investments, UN Tourism

14.00 – 15.00

Free time

15-00 – 16.00

**Unlocking Artificial Intelligence for Tourism: Workshop co-designed by UN Tourism and Amadeus IT Group [Hybrid]****Facilitators:**

- Guillaume Firmin, Head of Foresight & Co-innovation, Amadeus IT Group
- Paula de Blas, Senior Project Specialist, Innovation, Education & Investments, UN Tourism

**Participants:** Member States from the Middle East to be confirmed

Following the commitments from the Riyadh declaration, UN Tourism and Amadeus IT Group are launching this interactive, co-designed workshop, bringing together public authorities from tourism ministries of the Middle East region, to explore how artificial intelligence can create value across the entire tourism ecosystem.

Facilitated by Guillaume Firmin and Paula de Blas, the session uses Design Thinking methodology to help participants identify areas for Artificial Intelligence implementation within their sphere of influence. It will also support Member States creating an action plan and translating AI opportunities into practical, policy-relevant actions for sustainable and competitive tourism development.