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Communication of the Chair

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Message of the Chair of the 127th Executive Council
H.E. Mr. Gustavo Costa Feliciano, Minister of Tourism of Federative Republic of Brazil

Excellencies,

Madam Secretary-General,

Distinguished Members of the Executive Council,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour to address you today, in Abu Dhabi, at the opening of the 127th session of the Executive Council of UN Tourism.

Allow me, first of all, to express our sincere appreciation to the Government of the United Arab Emirates for hosting us and for the warm hospitality extended to all delegations.

I would also like to thank each and every member of this Council for the trust placed in Brazil to serve as Chair of the Executive Council throughout 2026.

We have sought to honour this responsibility with a spirit of dialogue, balance and cooperation, conscious that the Chair does not speak only for one country, but has the responsibility to facilitate the work of a Council composed of 35 Member States, representing different regions, realities and priorities.

As Chair, Brazil has sought throughout this year to encourage dialogue not only among the members of this Council, but also between regions. We firmly believe that many of the challenges facing tourism today cannot be addressed in isolation.

I would like to highlight the importance of UN Tourism's growing regional presence.

The UN Tourism Regional Office for the Americas, in Rio de Janeiro, is part of this effort to bring the Organization closer to its Members and to strengthen its capacity to respond to regional priorities. The Office was established as the Regional Office for the Americas and has, among its areas of focus, the strengthening of investment promotion.

I would therefore like to reiterate today, before this Council, that the Rio de Janeiro Office is at the service of the entire Americas region. It is not an office for Brazil. It is an office hosted by Brazil for the Americas.

We want it to become an increasingly useful platform for cooperation, investment, knowledge, technical assistance and the development of initiatives that respond to the priorities identified by the countries of our region.

Brazil stands ready to work with the Secretariat and with all Member States of the Americas so that this Office can fulfil its regional mandate and contribute effectively to strengthening UN Tourism's presence on the ground.

Distinguished Colleagues,

This agenda in Abu Dhabi reflects both the progress already achieved and the responsibilities that lie ahead.

We will consider the progress report on the Management Vision for 2026–2029 and the implementation of the General Programme of Work. We will also look ahead to the International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism 2027, an important opportunity to place tourism even more firmly within the global sustainable development agenda.

These may appear to be very different subjects, but they are connected by one fundamental question:

What kind of Organization do we want UN Tourism to be in the years ahead?

For Brazil, the answer is clear.

We need a multilateral Organization that is increasingly close to its Members; financially sound and institutionally strong; capable of transforming knowledge into action; attentive to the needs of every region; and prepared to provide practical responses to the major transformations affecting global tourism.

An Organization that listens.
An Organization that connects.
And, above all, an Organization that delivers.

The International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism in 2027 will provide us with an important platform to demonstrate precisely this capacity.

It should not be merely a year of celebration. It should be a year of mobilization and concrete action, bringing together governments, destinations, the private sector, academia, communities and international organizations around a shared objective: making tourism a stronger instrument for sustainable and resilient development.

The discussions we begin here in Abu Dhabi will therefore help shape not only the Organization's work in the coming months, but also the contribution that tourism can make to the wider international agenda in 2027.

Dear Colleagues,

This session also has a special significance for Brazil.

At the end of our agenda, this Council will elect its Chair and Vice-Chairs for 2027.

As we approach the conclusion of Brazil's term as Chair, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all members of the Executive Council for the confidence, cooperation and constructive spirit you have shown throughout this year.

Brazil has approached this role with the conviction that multilateralism is strengthened when every Member has a voice, when different perspectives are respected and when dialogue is transformed into common ac

The Executive Council is an essential part of that process. Our diversity is not an obstacle to our work. It is one of our greatest strengths.

Throughout 2026, we have demonstrated that countries from different regions, with different tourism models and different levels of development, can come together around shared priorities and build practical solutions.

Let us use these days not only to review documents and adopt decisions, but also to listen to one another, identify common ground and strengthen the capacity of this Organization to serve its Members.

Tourism is ultimately about people. Behind every international arrival, every investment figure and every new tourism product, there are workers, entrepreneurs, families and communities.

Our decisions in this Council must always keep them at the centre.

As Chair of the Executive Council, and on behalf of Brazil, I once again thank all Member States for the trust placed in us throughout 2026.

I also thank the Secretary-General and the entire UN Tourism team for their work and cooperation, as well as our hosts, the United Arab Emirates, for welcoming the Executive Council to Abu Dhabi.

I wish us all a productive and successful session.

Thank you very much.