

WORLD TRAVEL & TOURISM COUNCIL

GLOBAL SUMMIT

RWANDA  2023



GLOBAL SUMMIT REPORT

RWANDA, 1-3 NOVEMBER 2023

OVERVIEW

AGM

At the WTTC AGM, members welcomed Greg O'Hara as the incoming chair following the end of Arnold Donald's tenure. Members were also shown some of the latest findings from WTTC's ESR (Environmental and Social Research). These findings include: transportation constitutes 40% of the sector's overall Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, with purchased electricity in second (20%); low carbon energy use grew from 5.1% of total T&T energy use in 2010 to 6.4% in 2021; 15 countries saw their absolute Travel & Tourism GHG emissions decrease despite experiencing expansions of their tourism economy; and Travel & Tourism's footprint is being decoupled from its GDP growth. Members then talked through the latest events WTTC has been involved in and what those outcomes were, as well as acknowledging the historic MOUs recently signed with the UNWTO and Saudi Arabia. The guest speaker at the AGM was Freddy Mutanguha, Chief Executive Officer of the Kigali Genocide Memorial, who shared his personal story and highlighted how Rwanda has transformed itself into a more inclusive society, protecting both people and planet.



GLOBAL LEADERS' DIALOGUE

Public-Private Sector Roundtable: 1 November 2023

Julia Simpson, President & CEO of World Travel & Tourism Council, Arnold Donald, Chair of WTTC, and Francis Gatere, CEO of Rwanda Development Board, welcomed attendees and panellists to the annual Global Leaders' Dialogue. In their speeches, they highlighted the importance of sustainable investment in the Travel & Tourism sector. Julia Simpson acknowledged the substantial amount of current investment in the sector and the potential for future growth, particularly in Africa. Speakers highlighted the importance of monitoring sustainability efforts through data tracking and advocating for the production of sustainable solutions, such as sustainable fuels for travel. The call to action is clear: to work together towards

sustainable prosperity for the sector and safeguarding the communities and natural resources on which tourism depends.

When asked what panellists knew now about sustainability that they didn't know three years ago, many responses echoed each other. Collaboration to achieve sustainability is crucial, both at the international level and within communities. **Daude Aweis, Somalia Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism**, noted that “the best way to collaborate is internationally. “We must all work together,” he said. Panellists also agreed that sustainability is about empowering people and ensuring their wellbeing. **Guy Antognelli, Monaco Government Tourist and Convention Authority**, echoed this sentiment saying, “we need to take care of our people; sustainability needs focus on how we work together and the human contact element”. Julia Simpson reflected on how sustainability should be regenerative and not merely about reducing harm: “We have an opportunity in our sector to become Guardians of Nature”. **Philda Nani Kereng, Botswana Ministry of Environment and Tourism**, mirrored this sentiment and mentioned the Travel & Tourism sector's responsibility to protect and preserve natural and cultural heritage. But these are not our only responsibilities. As **Rodney Ellis, Harris County, USA**, highlighted: “sustainability requires financial investment and responsible planning”.

When panellists were prompted to summarise what Travel & Tourism should focus on, many answers revolved around investment in people and communities: creating jobs, developing skills, and promoting education. “Sharing what we learn and promoting education is vital”, said **Sébastien Bazin, Accor**. Sustainability and environmental protection were also highlighted, including preserving cultural heritage, conserving resources and using regenerative practices, as mentioned by **Florian Sengtschmid, Azerbaijan Tourism Board**. Panellists agreed the Travel & Tourism sector should also focus on economic growth and innovation, such as fostering entrepreneurship and promoting global connectivity. And lastly, **Istvan Ujhelyi, European Parliament TRAN Committee**, spoke to the importance of upholding human dignity, promoting honesty and transparency, and preserving our national identities. **Manfredi Lefebvre, Abercrombie & Kent Travel Group** discussed how vital it is to preserve our culture in a responsible manner.

In conclusion, the Global Leaders' Dialogue, underscored the critical importance of sustainable investment in the Travel & Tourism sector. WTTC's call to action resonated through discussions on collaboration, emphasising the need for international cooperation and community involvement. The recognition that sustainability is not just about harm reduction but should be regenerative, with a focus on people's wellbeing and the preservation of natural and cultural heritage, echoed throughout the discussion. As the sector navigates toward a sustainable future, the imperative to invest in people, communities, and responsible planning became apparent. Panellists highlighted the multifaceted approach needed, from economic growth and innovation to environmental protection and the promotion of education. The resounding message is clear: by working together and embracing a holistic view of sustainability, the Travel & Tourism sector can become a true Guardian of Nature while fostering prosperity and preserving the essence of diverse identities worldwide.





Opening Ceremony

The Summit began with a lively cultural performance by the **Rwanda National Ballet, Urukereza**. It celebrated Rwanda's culture and heritage through music and dance.

Arnold Donald, Chair of WTTC (2021 – 2023) extended a warm welcome, emphasising the transformative power of travel to foster tolerance, diminish fear, and nurture deeper understanding. He acknowledged the historic significance of holding this year's summit in Rwanda, a nation distinguished not only by its breathtaking natural beauty and wildlife but, more importantly, by its dynamic, warm, and united people. The intentional choice of Africa as the Summit's location marks a historic moment for the Travel & Tourism sector, highlighting the continent's rich diversity: home to 54 countries, numerous languages, and 1.4 billion people.

He expressed gratitude to sponsors, President & CEO Julia Simpson, WTTC staff, and, most importantly, to the Republic of Rwanda, led by His Excellency President Paul Kagame and Rwanda Development Board CEO Francis Gatare. "The Summit theme aligns seamlessly with Rwanda's commitment to carbon-neutrality and conservation, exemplifying a strong message to the world that the heart of Travel & Tourism beats strongly in Africa". Acknowledging Rwanda's impressive achievements in the sector, including a forecasted rise to US\$194 million in 2023 and substantial growth in the next decade, the WTTC Chair concluded by extending gratitude to all attendees for their support in advancing the ongoing efforts of the World Travel & Tourism Council.

Francis Gatare, Rwanda Development Board, spoke to how this Summit provides an excellent opportunity for the world to see Rwanda and the tremendous transformation the country has undergone, as well as its dedication to sustainability. "We understand deeply firsthand the role Travel & Tourism plays in shaping our economy but also fostering global unity".

Julia Simpson, World Travel & Tourism Council, acknowledged the significance of this being the first-ever Global Summit held on the African continent. She highlighted the role of Travel & Tourism in Rwanda where it serves as the largest source of foreign exchange earnings in the country. "The sector is anticipated to represent 8.2% of GDP by the end of 2023, employing over 350,000 people". Looking ahead, the forecast indicates that in ten years, Travel & Tourism will contribute 10% to Rwanda's GDP, creating over 200,000 new jobs. This economic evolution is not unique to Rwanda alone but is indicative of the broader positive trajectory of Africa's tourism sector, which has more than doubled in the past two decades, contributing significantly to the region's economy and job market. She explained that these stats and more are available in **WTTC's new report on Africa**.

Reflecting on her personal experiences in Rwanda, she spoke of being struck by the resilience and forward-thinking spirit of the people of Rwanda. A chance encounter with a young entrepreneur exemplified Rwanda's commitment to progress and innovation. This transformation is a testament to the nation embracing entrepreneurship and its commitment to learning from the past. She explained that Rwanda's success story extends beyond economic growth, with a focus on gender equality evident in the Rwandan parliament which boasts the world's largest percentage of women at 61%, and trailblazing individuals like RwandAir CEO Yvonne Makolo, the first female chair of IATA.

Julia Simpson reminded attendees to consider the essence of the Travel & Tourism sector: building bridges, fostering understanding, and contributing to the soft power that promotes peace on a global scale.



Francis Gatare, Rwanda Development Board



Julia Simpson, World Travel & Tourism Council



Arnold Donald, Chair of WTTC (2021 – 2023)



Presidential Remarks

H.E. Prosper Bazombanza, Vice President of the Republic of Burundi, acknowledged that the Global Summit provides an excellent framework for us all to discuss our priorities and identify mutual support opportunities and prerequisites to public-private partnerships around sustainable development. He said: “We will be able to fine tune strategic key initiatives to continue to mitigate any economic, social, or environmental challenges which the Travel & Tourism sector may face in the future. We can create shared prosperity for the global community”.

Burundi is committed to growing and increasing its Travel & Tourism sector. Burundi has a strong conviction that the Global Summit will contribute to promoting its multiple tourism attractions in regional and global markets. H.E. Bazombanza then invited private business operators to invest in the Travel & Tourism sector.

H.E. Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, expressed gratitude to President Paul Kagame for the warm welcome in Rwanda, emphasising the strong ties between the two nations.

Highlighting the deliberate choice of Africa, specifically Kigali, as the Summit venue, she emphasised the inseparable connection between Africa and tourism. Commendations were offered to Julia Simpson and her team for organising the Summit.

The President then delved into the tourism landscape of Tanzania, citing its rich natural and cultural attractions, including national parks, game reserves, and diverse tribes. She underscored Travel & Tourism’s substantial contribution to Tanzania’s GDP and export earnings, emphasising its potential for economic growth and job creation across Africa.

Addressing critical considerations for African governments, H.E. Samia Suluhu Hassan outlined three key points. First, she stressed the importance of strategic branding and marketing, urging Africa to craft compelling narratives and invest in global marketing campaigns. She cited the positive impact of media in attracting tourists. Linked to this, Africa should ensure wider access to informative resources about local customs, traditions, and cultural practices. “Africa should tell its own story in its own terms and set a positive narrative about our continent. We cannot afford to continue remaining silent in this era of fake news. We should stand up and put the record straight. Africa is not only the future, but it is also now”.

Second, she highlighted the significance of conservation and preservation, positioning Africa as a Guardian of Nature. She advocated for sustainable tourism practices, including minimising environmental footprints, and supporting community-based initiatives.

Lastly, she emphasised the need for research and data analysis to inform decision-making and refine strategies for sustainable growth. She invited collaboration between the public and private sectors, citing examples of successful partnerships, and urged the private sector to join efforts in enhancing the vibrancy of Travel & Tourism in African economies.

In conclusion, she acknowledged the vital role of the private sector, inviting collaboration for mutual benefit and emphasising the openness of Tanzania to such partnerships.

H.E. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda, expressed delight at hosting the first-ever WTTC Global Summit in Africa. He thanked the WTTC for choosing Rwanda, emphasising the significance of the moment for a country that, “despite a troubled past, has built itself into a destination known for natural beauty and sporting events”. He underscored the commitment to conservation and sustainable development, citing the recognition this year of Nyungwe National Park as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and investments in infrastructure for major sporting events like the Basketball Africa League.

While celebrating the global recovery of the Travel & Tourism sector, the President pointed out the persistent challenge of high air travel costs in Africa. He emphasised the importance of implementing the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) and highlighted the significance of free movement of people and trade. At the Summit, he officially announced Rwanda's new policy to remove visa restrictions for all Africans travelling to Rwanda, making it accessible for citizens from every African country.

Looking to the future, the President urged a focus on the continental market, asserting that Africans are the future of global tourism with a rapidly growing middle class. He expressed the need for collaborative efforts with global partners to develop Africa into a premier global travel destination.

The President concluded by inviting Summit attendees to explore Rwanda and extended a warm welcome for future visits, wishing them productive deliberations.

Thami Nkadameng, 2023 Global Summit MC, then welcomed attendees and kicked off the first session with an introduction to the first panel. She said it explores the barriers to increased connectivity in Africa and what “lessons the global community can apply to other regions to ensure travel continues to drive the global economy, as it has for decades”.



H.E. Prosper Bazombanza,
Vice President of the Republic of Burundi



H.E. Samia Suluhu Hassan,
President of the United Republic of Tanzania



Thami Nkadameng, 2023 Global Summit MC

SESSION 1: CONNECT



Panel: Clearing the Pathway

Paul Griffiths, Dubai Airports, highlighted that aircraft are now far more economical to operate, with smaller aircraft able to fly much longer distances more affordably. “This will be the answer to African connectivity and will help African airlines to invest in more economic hubs”. However, he also added that sustainability needs to be treated with as much importance as air safety, warning that “the cost of goods and services may have to go up today to ensure that future generations can live and travel safely on the planet”.

Moderator Larry Madowo, CNN, drew attention to the challenge that when travelling between African countries, people often have to fly via an airport outside of Africa. “I am flying from Nairobi to Casablanca next week. I’m having to fly first to Frankfurt. If you imagine that distance, this is the size of the problem we’re talking about.” According to **Patricia de Lille, South Africa Ministry of Tourism**, the low level of inter-African travel connectivity is depriving the continent of reaching its full potential. “Only 34 countries have signed the Single [African] Air Transport Market agreement from two decades ago and implementation has been minimal. We need to deal with red tape and the issue of visa regimes”. She said that of the five million visitors arriving in South Africa last year, four million were from within the continent, and her government offers visa waivers to 34 African countries. The ministers of transport, tourism and home affairs are working together to ease travel into the country and are looking at the issue of visas for Chinese visitors travelling in groups, she added.

Alfred Mutua, Kenya Ministry of Wildlife & Tourism, said that by the start of 2024, all Africans will be able to visit, stay, and trade in Kenya without needing a visa. The government is also looking to roll out a free visa regime for the whole world. “We need to make it easier to open up travel and should realise there is virtually no security threat from fellow Africans. Visas should be free, because the amount you lose from not charging for visas is small compared with what you will gain by opening up to the world”.



Panel: AI: Threat or Promise?

Panellists discussed technological advancements and the extent to which advancements such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) are enhancing or hindering Travel & Tourism. **Nelson Boyce, Google**, believes in AI's promise more than its threat. It helps an advertiser deliver proper measurement in a cookie-less world using predictive modelling, and "better ensures the customer is getting the right message in the right manner at the right time," he said. He shared the example that Google has added travel extensions to its conversational AI tool Bard so customers can co-ordinate research on maps, flights, and hotels in one conversation.

The panel's moderator, **Peter Greenberg, CBS News**, described how AI can be "a very effective tool to anticipate problems", for example, allowing an airline to use predictive scheduling to figure out how long they can hold a flight so that other passengers don't miss their connections. **Julie Shainock, Microsoft**, agreed with the sentiment that AI can be a useful tool to resolve complex customer service resolution issues. She also shared how AI, such as ChatGPT, can maximise efficiencies and help customers have a smoother journey. "Travel companies have been slower to adopt AI, so we are looking at anything we can do to help them accelerate, help them move away from legacy systems, deliver more personalisation for customers, and smooth out the whole travel process."

Mark Antipof, HBX Group, pointed out that gathering data to know your customer has been around for a long time, but now with AI, this can be done on a massive scale. "It will come down to the customer defining what sort of data they are willing to put into the metaverse. It is all about personalisation and the customer's preferences". Getting the required skillsets to manage AI will be a challenge, as will the issue of whether the customer can trust the information given them via AI. **Yves Iradukunda, Rwanda Ministry of ICT & Innovation**, said that the government is looking at regulations, guidelines, and ethics around AI. He noted that AI tools may come up with cultural biases, and that although AI can help consumers gain more control of the experiences they can have, "we mustn't forget the human element which tourists do want".



(L-R) Satya Anand, Marriott International; Di Bain, Tourism Western Australia, Jerry Inzerillo, Diriyah Company; Anita Mendiratta, Anita Mendiratta & Associates

Hotseat: For the Communal Good

Communities are integral to Travel & Tourism and need to be included in strategies for tourism development. **Jerry Inzerillo, Diriyah Company**, makes the effort to review his impact on the local community in Saudi Arabia by asking them if his organisation is making a positive impact. He shared an experience between a staff member and Ban Ki-Moon which showed that the feedback from the community is positive. The experience highlighted how learning new languages has empowered community members and helps foster pride in their abilities and involvement in the tourism sector. He added, "The more you see service as nobility, the more you attract mentors".

Satya Anand, Marriott International, explained that when Marriott opened a hotel at the Dead Sea in Jordan, there was no tourism infrastructure. They recruited from the local community which had previously not been exposed to hospitality. "When Marriott hires people, it is giving them the opportunity to develop a career with them. It takes people with the right attitude and trains them". In Egypt, it has teamed up with a university to graduate 120 students and in Saudi Arabia, it is looking to fast track the training of people, including at mid-level and supervisory positions.

Di Bain, Tourism Western Australia, said that Travel & Tourism is a new priority for the state government and emphasised the importance of managing it well. It is the government's role to educate operators moving into more remote regions on community needs, especially the Aboriginal community. "It's about expectation management and allowing communities to have their say about whether they want tourism," she said. She added that the government is looking to upskill indigenous people to run more tourism businesses and create their own jobs. "Aboriginal communities do see tourism as purposeful when they are able to share their culture with Dreamtime storytelling," she explained.



Matthew Upchurch, Virtuoso



Rosette Rugamba, Songa Africa

In a Flash: Reconnected

In his keynote, **Matthew Upchurch, Virtuoso** highlighted the significance of sustainability and supporting SMEs. Virtuoso's mission is to make sustainability a greater factor in consumer choice when planning travel, so that those who do good for the world are financially successful. He announced WTTC's initiative Together in Travel – “a network that will allow WTTC to engage with SMEs worldwide as they deserve to be connected to this global narrative, to have pride in what they do, to be inspired by the stories of others, and to be able to have access to the practical tools created by the world's largest tourism businesses”.

Rosette Rugamba, Songa Africa, who has experience in both the public and private sectors, then gave a keynote highlighting luxury travel in Africa and the significance of sustainability. She said, “the private sector needs government to put policies and regulations in place, but first it needs to provide peace and stability”. After seven years working for the Rwandan government, she started her luxury tourism company in 2010, where “every tourism dollar goes to make a difference to local people and protect natural assets”. In 2017, she also opened a luxury lodge, ensuring that half of the staff would come from the local community. Now 100% of her staff are Rwandese. They have planted 1,500 trees at the lodge and have engaged tourists in helping with this. She highlighted that the key is to show authenticity rather than simply copying a luxury template from other countries.

SESSION 2: INVEST



(L-R) Mariana Oleskiv, Ukraine State Agency for Tourism Development; Manfredi Lefebvre d'Ovidio, Heritage Group and Abercrombie & Kent; Greg O'Hara, Certares; Tania Habimana, CNBC Africa

Hotseat: In Pursuit of Prosperity

This session delved into how Travel & Tourism investment was changing and how it can be amplified in the years to come. To kick off the session, moderator **Tania Habimana, CNBC Africa**, asked a question on opportunities at times of crisis – taking the example of Ukraine. Despite the ongoing war, **Mariana Oleskiw, Ukraine State Agency for Tourism Development**, reported the sector's resilience in the Ukraine, primarily buoyed by domestic tourists. When the conflict ends and international tourists return to Ukraine, there is an optimistic outlook that the sector will play a pivotal role in the country's economic recovery. She emphasised that the country needs to prepare a support system for the sector “because it is one of the easiest ways to bring money [foreign currency] into the economy.”

As the Travel & Tourism sector is expected to outperform the wider economy, it is increasingly perceived by many investors as an unparalleled opportunity. **Greg O'Hara, Certares**, emphasised the sector's resilience in 2022 and 2023, highlighting its divergence from trends observed in other discretionary spending categories. Despite initial expectations of a pullback due to cost-of-living crises, travel spending has not only remained resilient but, in many instances, has grown. He added: “People often focus on the bottom line for investors, but we also like to do good.” Investors are increasingly seeking opportunities that contribute to community transformation, and the Travel & Tourism sector aligns well with this objective, he said.

Manfredi Lefebvre d'Ovidio, Heritage Group and Abercrombie & Kent, echoed this, highlighting heightened attention to sustainability and Environmental, Social, & Governance (ESG) in the sector. Policymakers should ensure that development of new tourism offerings involves active community engagement and participation, signalling a commitment to sustainability. He highlighted that sustainability goes beyond just environmental considerations; it means that “the place where the tourists arrive...must be a better place” after they leave. He also mentioned there is an acknowledgment of the need to diversify tourism offerings (which may encourage longer stays) and protect wildlife (which is essential to sustain the appeal of tourism attractions).

Tania Habimana closed the discussion echoing travel's key role as a connector. She said: “travel can be a unifier of people – a connector. We can learn from one another, we can explore new places, and be more connected.”



Hotseat: Meet the Traveller of the Future

The potential for growth within the Travel & Tourism sector is substantial, and to capitalise on this opportunity, businesses must possess a nuanced understanding of diverse traveller preferences. One discernible difference lies along generational lines, as highlighted by **Caroline Moultrie, MMGY**. For instance, Gen Zers emerge as the most frequent holidaymakers, averaging 3.2 vacations annually, followed by Millennials at 2.5 holidays and Boomers at 1.9 vacations per year. Beyond trip frequency, generational disparities extend to the sources of holiday inspiration and information, with individuals aged over 25 typically relying on Google searches, while younger demographics turn to social media. This has led to the rise of travel influencers, and their power to market tourism products shouldn't be discounted. She said: “You've got to get really creative and think about the algorithms that are feeding [consumers].”

In response to these evolving preferences, industry leaders have embarked on transformative journeys to align with the distinctive needs of diverse customer segments. **Bert Fol, Radisson Hotel Group**, provided an illustrative example

saying Radisson Hotel Group has undertaken a significant overhaul of its brand architecture, introducing an array of 10 differentiated offerings spanning from economy to luxury, aligned with a keen understanding of what modern travellers seek when booking accommodations. He added that travellers “are looking for great service, great levels of hospitality, value for money, a good location, but more and more, nowadays, they are looking for sustainability.”

The integration of digital solutions within Travel & Tourism not only opens the door to improved efficiency but also to novel mediums of consumer engagement. **Tom Starr, Amadeus**, shed light on the transformative power of virtual realities, such as the Metaverse, as powerful tools for destination marketing. However, this surge in digitisation brings forth a set of legitimate concerns, such as privacy and cybersecurity. While consumers express a preference for personalised products and experiences, a simultaneous expectation looms large – the safeguarding of their personal data. Tom Starr highlighted this concern and said, “we need to make sure that we are looking after the traveller and making sure that we are protecting the data.”

SESSION 3: COLLABORATE



Panel: What's Your ETA?

This discussion addressed some of the unique challenges facing the aviation industry, and some of the solutions being introduced. **Yvonne Makolo, RwandAir**, pointed out that Africa is vastly underserved, with 1.4 billion people but contributing just 3% of global traffic. The airline is looking at how African countries can be better connected as the number of regional transiting passengers is growing. In Rwanda, a “green” airport for eight million passengers is being built in collaboration with Qatar, due within four years, which will position Rwanda as an alternative regional hub. “Studies have shown the advantages of open skies, but the challenge is how to unlock the bureaucracy in implementing it,” she said. There are still supply chain issues for many airlines, including getting spare parts to fix a technical problem. Other challenges in Africa include visa rules, a lack of infrastructure and high operating costs (including taxes) that lead to high ticket prices.

James Hogan, Knighthood Global, agreed that in Africa the issue is open skies, and the need to eliminate archaic structures and government protectionism. It is time-consuming to adapt old airport infrastructure, but Chinese investment is producing many new airports in Africa, such as in Angola, Zimbabwe, and Equatorial Guinea, but without the aircraft assets in place to use them as yet. However, he is optimistic: “Africa has a dynamic explosion of young people, which creates an opportunity for more pan-African hubs. It’s likely to be the next centre of the aviation world”.

Connectivity, safety, and service are all key elements for a smooth aviation journey, but collaboration with the right partners and stakeholders is particularly important, he emphasised.

In response to a question on staff shortages in aviation, **Gary Renfrow, USA Transportation Security Administration**, admitted that a high turnover of TSA checkpoint staff had been a recent issue, but added that things have improved following a pay rise of more than 30%. He also discussed current initiatives at TSA such as the 2023 ‘one-stop security’ which applies a pre-clearance concept to screening luggage so customs can clear it in advance. He added that CT machines can now rotate an image 360° and characterise hazardous materials within luggage, and the US is working to harmonise with the

UK and other European countries on standards of detection. He also emphasised the importance of simplifying the travel experience. He said: "Multi-modal discussions are needed beyond just airport design to reduce time and make the trip easier for every customer".

A Message from a WTTC Founder

A video message from **David Marriott, Marriott International**, discussing the role of WTTC and a letter written by one of WTTC's founders, JW Marriott Jr, was shared. In the letter, JW Marriott highlights the significance of collaboration, writing: "We should never lose sight that we can achieve more together than we can individually".

J. Willard Marriott, Jr.

November 1, 2023

Dear World Travel & Tourism Council Leaders:

I hope you are having a great summit in beautiful Kigali. Thank you for all you do to support the travel and tourism industry – its recovery, continued vitality, and ability to be a force for good in communities around the world.

Over thirty years ago, we came together to form WTTC. I am proud to be one of the founding members. The mission was, and still is, to educate government leaders about how the industry is driving economies and creating meaningful employment opportunities globally.

Since its founding, the WTTC has championed the travel and tourism industry, which has grown 30% in real terms over the past 20 years to reach a GDP contribution of \$7.7 trillion in 2022.

We should never lose sight that we can achieve more together than we can individually. I am grateful that you are continuing WTTC's founding mission through your advocacy for the industry and our most important asset, our people. I wish you a great and substantive summit.

Best regards,



J.W. Marriott, Jr.
Chairman Emeritus

Bethesda, Maryland 20817



Panel: Room for More

Panelists discussed how the hospitality industry is evolving to meet the demands of the modern traveller and provide immersive guest experiences with the help of socially sustainable staffing choices. **Gloria Fluxà Thienemann, Iberostar Group**, said there is room for improvement among some hospitality businesses; they should capture talent by speaking to the new generation who are looking for organisations with purpose and values and can adapt to the evolving skillsets required. More than 70% of Iberostar staff are Gen Zers or Millennials, she said. She also emphasised that hospitality should invest more in environmental sustainability, “pursuing net zero, better use of energy and water resources, and fostering regenerative destinations that are more resilient to climate change and that can incorporate the views of communities”. Hotels should set sustainability goals “with clear data to be able to generate collective action because others can understand your ambition and support you,” she added.

Sébastien Bazin, Accor, said that some industry leaders need to provide better education to their public-facing staff to enhance their confidence and competence. Diversity is also important: 6-7% of Accor’s staff have a disclosed disability, with just one example being a blind person working at the reception desk of one of its Paris hotels. He also discussed the importance of personalisation. Before 2010, Accor standardised all hotels but since then, the goal has been to design tailored hotels, he said.

Paolo Barletta, Arsenale Spa, agreed that there is a risk of a hotel losing its soul if it standardises everything. He added that Arsenale Spa is creating a campus in the centre of Italy “to open an opportunity for people to enter this industry which is one of the few where you can enter at the bottom and climb to the top”.

Andrea Grisdale, IC Bellagio, expanded on these thoughts, highlighting the importance of good staff retention policies as “they are a company’s most important asset”. She added that community education is also important for the future of the hospitality industry. IC Bellagio educates communities on the power of tourism, and as an inbound tour operator, it “has the chance to discuss exactly what our clients want and expect in advance, and to guide them regarding community-conscious travel. Happy locals will lead to happy travellers who look for authentic local experiences,” she said.

In response to a question from the audience, Sébastien Bazin’s advice to a young person wanting to start a hotel brand was: “Do it at the right scale, starting with around six bedrooms. Be warm, sincere, welcoming, and be clear about what you are offering”.



Hotseat: Striking a Balance

Sport is a unifier and is woven into the fabric of many societies. When destinations combine the love of sport with unique destinations, they can create new and varied experiences for travellers. Rwanda is one such example, where the Rwanda Development Board has sports partnerships with Arsenal Football Club and the Basketball Africa League. Over the past four years, the partnerships have generated over US\$500 million in media valuation, directly impacting the tourism industry. **Setti Solomon, Rwanda Development Board**, said: “We can use that revenue to produce world-class arenas, events, and hotels. Through sports partnerships, we engage youth in activities, and we can show people that Africa is open for business and investment”.

Juliet Slot, Arsenal Football Club, believes that Visit Rwanda is an ideal partner; it is visionary and progressive, and there is a coming together of culture and values, she said. She added that Arsenal supports the fact that Rwanda is now building a football stadium for 44,000 people, and Arsenal’s whole focus is “using the eyes of football to bring the world to Rwanda and explain – through its current and past players – why it’s the most amazing country to visit.” In highlighting the success of the partnership with Rwanda she said: “Football fans are travellers by nature, going to international away games. Now, 75% of the supporter base say they understand that Rwanda is an amazing place to come on holiday”.

Amadou Gallo Fall, Basketball Africa League, explained that the league was launched in Rwanda during the pandemic in 2021, featuring teams from 12 African countries. The partnership has been renewed to host games in Kigali for the next five years while other places in Africa are now replicating the model. “Basketball is a sport that brings with it music, fashion, and technology, so it enhances creative industries within Africa and creates local jobs. There is nothing better than sport to promote a country,” he expressed.



SESSION 4 – PROMOTE

The final day of the Global Summit began with discussions around new and emerging markets. In a video address, **Sandiaga Uno, Indonesia Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy**, explained the goals of this emerging destination. He said the government is committed to investing in and implementing carbon offsetting through intensified collaboration with the private sector to undertake immediate programmes and close existing gaps.



(L-R) Olivier Granet, Kasada Capital; Nikolina Angelkova, a former Minister of Tourism in Bulgaria; Ashish Sanghrajka, Big Five Tours & Expeditions; Fawaz Farooqui, Cruise Saudi; Anita Mendiratta, Anita Mendiratta & Associates

Panel: A New Source: Understanding New and Emerging Markets

One of the world's fastest growing destinations is Saudi Arabia. **Fawaz Farooqui, Cruise Saudi**, noted that visitors to the kingdom tend to be explorers who come to see a country in the early stages of tourism development. He also shared his definition of growth: "When MSC Cruises arrived in Saudi Arabia in 2021, we had a programme with local universities to allow interns to work on the ships for three months. On one ship, I saw the pride on the face of a 19-year-old female intern making the daily announcement in Arabic; that is how I define growth".

Ashish Sanghrajka, Big Five Tours & Expeditions, highlighted the importance of destinations telling their stories as they aim to grow tourism. Big Five Tours was one of the first companies to open in Colombia in 2006 and it worked with them to tell their story. He explained: "Tourism can help many countries get back on their feet: it is a cure for hyperinflation and a way to create middle classes, but they may need to be shown how tourism can be a force for good".

When sourcing new markets to your destination, **Nikolina Angelkova, a former Minister of Tourism in Bulgaria**, advised encouraging other sectors – and other government departments – to collaborate with the tourism sector, “to tell unique stories that distinguish it from other countries, taking a tailor-made approach for each source market and segment”. Destination marketing organisations can also look to new source markets that can help address seasonality. **Olivier Granet, Kasada Capital**, said that in South Africa’s low season (May to July), Kasada Capital “looked to market to Gulf Cooperation Council states, where potential travellers were wanting somewhere to avoid the heat”.



Panel: With Open Arms

For Travel & Tourism to flourish and achieve its sustainable and inclusive goals, the public and private sectors must work with local communities to create destinations that are wonderful to visit and live in. **James Thornton, Intrepid Travel**, shared that Intrepid’s hope is that governments create legislation to make sustainable travel the mainstream and a requirement. “Community-based Travel & Tourism is so important because it has the potential to be the greatest disperser of GDP and jobs in the world. But we need to ensure the wealth created gets into the hands of communities: [for example,] 60% of the price of a trip booked with Intrepid stays in the destination,” he shared. He added that tourism businesses can help governments in times of crisis. When this year’s earthquake in Morocco occurred, 77 office-based staff and 100 tour leaders and crew from Intrepid were on the ground and able to provide immediate information on the situation back to the government.

Daniel Fenton, JLL Hotels & Hospitality agreed that the Travel & Tourism sector can help authorities and argued that the sector should “be at the table when authorities are preparing strategies [and] be part of decision-making. We need to get governments to realise that the private sector can be strategic partners on many fronts”. He described how JLL has been working with WTTC to examine a destination’s tourism readiness and that its recent work with the Rwanda Development Board in this area has demonstrated the importance of an investment strategy that fits with the destination’s goals.

In response, **Rodney Ellis, Harris County, Texas**, said that the public and private sectors should stand in each other’s shoes. Authorities need solid evidence that an investment is going to be worthwhile, such as concrete plans for the long-term usage for new infrastructure. He added: “Tourism businesses do a good job of accentuating the positive and so can help bring the public along, for example in the argument for investment on sustainability”.

Debbie Flynn, Finn Partners, who represents both the public and private sectors, stressed that it is important to ask the host communities what they want from tourism policies. In Belize, for example, policies include ensuring that tourism products involve cultural preservation and make both the traveller and community feel safe. She said that the key to marketing the message to help travellers drive social change is involving the community in the storytelling and introducing the media to them. In addition, “it is important to use media and marketing to encourage an extension of the tourism season and give people reasons to go outside of the peak season, so locals have employment for longer in the year,” she added.



Panel: From the Boardroom to the Stadium

Business travel was worth over US\$946.6 billion and accounted for 19% of travel spending in 2022¹. As this key segment regains momentum, the panel considered the unique selling points of truly competitive destinations in the MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions) industry.

When asked what factors make a great MICE destination, **J.D. O' Hara, Internova Travel Group**, highlighted flight accessibility, minimal visa requirements, hotel options, cost, and the options for experiences because “since COVID-19, there has been an increase in the desire to add a leisure component to a business trip”. In addition, “sustainability is becoming not just a request from MICE clients but an expectation”.

Raki Phillips, Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority, chose connectivity, how memorable a destination will be, and the levels of service as important criteria for a successful MICE destination. MICE is a huge economic driver and the focus has to be on getting the community set up, and if it is a new destination with limited infrastructure, he advised: “focus on a unique, small part of MICE and go after a small event, get the local coffee shops and food stalls rather than multi-nationals in your event venue, and build up gradually”.

Rwanda has hosted more than 50 sporting events in the past three years, generating US\$30 million in revenue. When asked how focusing on sports and events tourism has changed Rwanda as a destination, **Aurore Munyangaju, Rwanda Ministry of Sport**, said that it has grown visitor numbers to Rwanda. After they attend the sporting event, players and fans look to extend their stay to explore the national parks or heritage sites. In terms of ensuring an event is a success, “all stakeholders have to come together to ensure that the experience for the visitor is smooth: at the airport, in the transport between there and the event venue, and in the hotels.”

Victor Williams, NBA Africa, said that for NBA Africa – which seeks venues in 12 countries to host Basketball Africa League games – quality of infrastructure, especially arenas, is the most important factor in choosing a destination. Then it is the quality of the supporting ecosystem (the hotels, event host and logistics partners that can move all the vendors in and out), and whether the destination is likely to generate high fan engagement, with a richness of experience that teams and fans can get beyond the arena. He followed with “governments need to have a concerted strategy to build this ecosystem, with training to deliver high service standards”.

¹ WTTC Economic Impact Research 2023; available at <https://researchhub.wttc.org/product/economic-impact-report-2023-global-trends>

SESSION 5 – PROTECT



Ineza Umohoza Grace, The Green Protector and Loss & Damage Youth Coalition

My story: Climate Activism

Ineza Umohoza Grace, The Green Protector and Loss & Damage Youth Coalition, is passionate about implementing innovative sustainable solutions to reduce the climate change knowledge gap, especially amongst youth, and ensure sustainable development. In 2017, she founded The Green Protector and the Loss & Damage Youth Coalition to encourage youth involvement in environmental protection, focusing on climate policy, action, and education. Through her work she aims to establish a borderless global partnership among youth to collectively address loss and damage resulting from the climate crisis. Their mission envisions a world where the impacts of loss and damage are equitably addressed, with developed countries taking urgent responsibility for their significant contributions to the climate crisis. The objective involves driving action on loss and damage through global advocacy and awareness-raising, advocating for new and sufficient financial resources dedicated to addressing loss and damage, enhancing the capacity of global youth to understand and act on this issue, and promoting sustainable youth participation in decision-making related to loss and damage at both national and international levels. A solo trip to Lake Kivu prompted a re-evaluation, leading her to identify as an “ecofeminist, impact-driven actor advocating for the voiceless in decision-making,” she said. Actively involved in climate change policy, she emphasised that we should “avoid blame and promote responsibility instead.” She added: “I must stress the importance of honouring the rights of the planet and its inhabitants”. She seeks to redefine global solidarity for climate action for generations to come.



(L-R) Giulia Etori; Rosanna Caldarella; Davide Grasso; Elisa Schembri, 2023 Sustainable Hospitality Challenge Winners

Demo: Sustainable Hospitality Challenge

For the first time, WTTC's Global Summit welcomed the winners of the Sustainable Hospitality Challenge. **Paul Griep, The Hotelschool the Hague**, introduced the concept of the Sustainable Hospitality Challenge (SHC): an annual competition to promote innovation and sustainability. Of the winners, he said: "The winners of the 2023 SHC not only showcased their ingenuity but also demonstrated a commitment to shaping the future of sustainable tourism and hospitality through interdisciplinary collaboration".



Making their debut at the 2023 Sustainable Hospitality Challenge, the dynamic team from **Politecnico di Milano**, consisting of **Giulia Ettori, Rosanna Caldarella, Davide Grasso, and Elisa Schembri**, emerged as the challenge champions. Notably, they were the sole team focused entirely on design in the finals, adding to the significance of their victory. Their groundbreaking concept, 'Hòstraka' took centre stage, representing a visionary leap in sustainable innovation within the hospitality industry.

Describing their winning concept, the team mentioned how sustainable innovation in the hospitality sector is driven by thoughtful design strategies, creating immersive experiences that offer distinctive adventures rooted in local natural environments. "Hòstraka, the pioneering floating resort dedicated to sustainable diving and sea experiences, takes the lead in safeguarding our marine ecosystems. It illustrates that sustainable lifestyles can harmoniously coexist with extraordinary marine adventures.

Taking direct inspiration from the ocean, this concept mirrors the impressive resilience of oysters, transforming adversity into gleaming pearls. The goal is to motivate individuals to emulate nature by providing them with the chance to partake in the Sustainable Pearl Experience. This personalised opportunity allows guests to indulge in a lavish stay in their private mobile suite while actively contributing to the collection of microplastics from the sea".



(L-R) Keith Vincent, Wilderness Safaris; Michaella Rugwizangoga, Rwanda Development Board; Hamish Keith, EXO Travel; Anita Mendiratta, Anita Mendiratta & Associates

Hotseat: Saving the Elephant in the Room

The panel kicked off with an acknowledgment of one missing panellist: Mother Nature. **Anita Mendiratta, Anita Mendiratta & Associates**, highlighted: “We must shift the conversation from future considerations to immediate actions”.

In response, **Michaella Rugwizangoga, Rwanda Development Board**, discussed the huge progress Rwanda has made regarding sustainability: “Sustainability has been at the core of what we do for many, many years”. She cited Rwanda’s plastic-free initiative which began in 2008, the country’s plan to move to the use of fully electrical vehicles; and the government’s implementation of deliberate strategies for high-end, low-volume tourism in its national parks.

Keith Vincent, Wilderness Safaris, argued that “for too long, Travel & Tourism has been on the defensive...we must switch this strategy to go on the offensive”. He highlighted the importance of partnerships with governments and communities, shifting from creating employment to generating wealth and opportunities for communities. He also discussed the concept of restoring and restocking, emphasising the need to invest in land restoration and conservation.

Hamish Keith, EXO Travel, shared insights into the journey of EXO Travel in becoming a B Corp, stating, "B Corp is really about making sure that business is for good." He emphasised the rigorous process of B Corp certification and the importance of measuring the impact of business on the environment and society. He also highlighted the benefit of a three-way partnership involving governments, private enterprises, and communities, mentioning examples of successful partnerships in Rwanda.

The panellists then discussed the role of communities in conservation efforts, with Michaella Rugwizangoga highlighting Rwanda’s approach of involving local communities in protecting natural assets. Keith Vincent emphasised the need for trust and accountability in building relationships with local communities, sharing examples of successful partnerships and economic benefits for communities.

The conversation delved into the changing expectations of travellers and the demand for sustainable travel experiences. Hamish Keith noted, "Our travellers want to travel more sustainably," underscoring the importance of integrating sustainability into the core of business practices. He shared examples of changing traveller preferences, such as the shift away from elephant riding in Thailand.

In conclusion, the panellists highlighted the importance of taking concrete steps, fostering partnerships, and actively involving communities in conservation efforts. They underlined the need for businesses to be accountable, adapt to changing traveller preferences, and contribute to the well-being of both nature and local communities.



Panel: Creating Safe Spaces

This discussion centred on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) within the Travel & Tourism sector, exploring how leaders are actively combating discrimination to create workplaces and travel experiences that are inclusive and empowering for all individuals. The conversation delved into effective strategies for embracing diversity and inclusion in the workplace, with a particular emphasis on securing funding for DEIB initiatives.

When asked how they view DEIB, **Nombulelo Guliwe, South African Tourism**, highlighted South Africa's commitment to diversity and inclusion, particularly through initiatives like B-BBEE across all sectors including Travel & Tourism. The response underscores the nation's awareness of its history and the implementation of regulations like employment equity in recruitment practices, demonstrating a deliberate effort to ensure inclusion and contribute to the country's economic development. “We must view our differences not as threats but as opportunities for national growth,” she said.

She highlighted the importance of driving transformation and inclusion and cited South African Tourism's major domestic marketing campaign centred around the empowering message, "It's your country, enjoy it!" This statement is powerful, especially considering historical sentiments where many South Africans felt disconnected from their own country.

John Sage, Accessible Travel Solutions, was asked how destinations and organisations can make travel and experiences more accessible. He noted how it's very encouraging to see that there is more recognition of accessible travel and that it provides one of the largest revenue opportunities in the Travel & Tourism sector right now. 1.3 billion people have a disability, largely equating to 20% of the population. "People forget that disabilities don't solely revolve around wheelchair users like me, but disability can also impact vision, hearing, and allergies. There is a large proportion of the older population, namely retirees, who have the most time and money to travel, and travel in non-peak periods. Yet, they are not being marketed to. This showcases a huge, missed opportunity," he shared.

Billy Kolber, HospitableMe, discussed the **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) report** created in collaboration with WTTC, highlighting the broad nature of DEIB and the need to examine support details for such initiatives, especially in Travel & Tourism industries. The report aims to address the sector's potential limitations when individuals are excluded from participation. They acknowledged the challenges of collecting data in this sphere, citing safety concerns and individuals' hesitancy to disclose aspects of their identity. For instance, Billy Kolber noted that 50% of queer individuals may not be "out" in their workplaces. The report focuses on economic data from five countries – UK, US, South Africa, Rwanda, and Australia – and the EU, specifically addressing gender, race, disability, and sexual orientation. This global perspective allows for the examination of regional differences and the development of future measurement strategies. Additionally, data from 33 WTTC member organisations was streamlined to highlight key findings, providing inspiration and guiding principles. The report also includes a collection of best practices gathered from member organisations. They concluded, "As well as providing useful data and measures we can learn from, this report should serve as inspiration".

Jeffrey Rutledge, AIG Travel, discussed how funding for DEIB is key but also creating a supportive network. For those businesses that are just starting their diversity journey, he suggests focussing on employee resource groups. "At AIG we have 125 employee resource groups across 55 office locations that represent 13 different dimensions of diversity. 30% of our overall population has an employee resource group with whom they can identify". They can then come together to address their specific concerns, questions, and needs, and find community and belonging in the workplace. "The employee resource groups are also invited to challenge conversations in leadership and let us know ways in which we can improve", he said. "Those are the first steps, and then from there, leadership can translate these ideas and feelings into products and services which form the normal course of how we do business. So, it becomes second nature".

Closing Ceremony

Announcing the new Chair of WTTC

To kick off the closing ceremony, **Julia Simpson** conveyed her appreciation to Arnold Donald, stating: "Firstly, I would like to thank Arnold for his enormous contribution to WTTC, his unwavering dedication, and exceptional leadership during his tenure." She welcomed Greg O'Hara as the new Chair, emphasising his wealth of experience and deep understanding of the Travel & Tourism sector: "I believe that under his stewardship, WTTC will reach new heights in a sector that is growing faster than the global economy."

Arnold Donald, reflecting on his term, said: "It has been an honour to serve my fellow WTTC members as Chair." He highlighted the collective efforts of members and the public-private partnerships that are critical for the sector's recovery from COVID-19's economic and human effects. He recognised Julia Simpson's leadership and the WTTC staff's hard work, expressing delight in passing the torch to Greg, "a strong contributing WTTC member and a distinguished global leader in the Travel & Tourism sector."

Greg O'Hara, recognising Arnold Donald as a giant in the sector, said: "It is a great privilege to pick up the reins from Arnold Donald." He expressed eagerness to support the organisation as the sector continues to grow, saying: "I look forward to supporting our members, WTTC, and Julia, as the sector continues to grow from strength to strength."

Closing Speech

In conclusion to the summit, **Julia Simpson**, expressed gratitude for the unprecedented event held in Africa, highlighting the participation of three heads of state. She praised Rwanda's strength and pride in both its nation and the Travel & Tourism sector. Acknowledging the influential leaders present, she shared appreciation for the contribution of young voices in shaping the climate conversation, particularly mentioning Ineza Umuhoza Grace and the team from Politecnico di Milano. Reflecting on the Summit, Julia Simpson emphasised the importance of candid conversations, aligning with the organisation's mandate.

Expressing gratitude to the team and the Rwanda Development Board, she concluded by announcing Tourism Western Australia as the host for the next Global Summit.



Perth 2024

Di Bain, Tourism Western Australia, emphasised the significance of hosting the 24th WTTC Global Summit in Perth. She sees this as a unique opportunity for Western Australia to showcase its growth ambitions and investment potential to WTTC's esteemed members, and the wider world.

She highlighted that the impact of hosting this event extends beyond immediate economic benefits from delegate spending. The Summit is expected to catalyse discussions on inbound trade, product investments, new aviation routes, and the development of high-value tourism products. Encouraging business delegates to prolong their stay, she expressed the hope that they would explore the dreamlike landscapes, partake in world-class experiences, and engage with expert tourism operators firsthand.





SPEAKERS & MODERATORS

(In order of first appearance)

GLOBAL LEADERS DIALOGUE

Public sector

- **Florian Sengtschmid**, Chief Executive Officer, Azerbaijan Tourism Board
- **Pilda Nani Kereng**, Minister of Environment and Tourism, Botswana
- **Istvan Ujhelyi**, Vice-Chair of TRAN Committee, European Parliament
- **Guy Antognelli**, General Manager, Monaco Government Tourist and Convention Authority
- **Eldevina Materula**, Minister of Culture and Tourism, Mozambique
- **Salim M Al Mahruqi**, Minister of Heritage and Tourism, Oman
- **Francis Gatare**, Chief Executive Officer, Rwanda Development Board
- **Daude Aweis**, Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism, Somalia
- **Angellah Jasmine Mbelwa Kairuki**, Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism, Tanzania
- **Mariana Oleskiv**, Chairperson, State Agency Tourism Development, Ukraine
- **Rodney Ellis**, Commissioner for Harris County, Texas, USA
- **Simai Mohammed Said**, Minister of Tourism and Heritage, Zanzibar

Private sector

- **Arnold Donald**, Chair, World Travel & Tourism Council
- **Julia Simpson**, President & Chief Executive Officer, World Travel & Tourism Council
- **Manfredi Lefebvre**, Chairman, Heritage Group, & Co-Chair, Abercrombie & Kent
- **Sébastien Bazin**, Group Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, Accor
- **Greg O'Hara**, Founder & Senior Managing Director, Certares
- **Jerry Inzerillo**, Group Chief Executive Officer, Diriyah Company
- **Gloria Fluxà Thienemann**, Vice-Chairman & Chief Sustainability Officer, Iberostar Group
- **Nikolay Malyarov**, Chief Executive Officer, PressReader International

- **Junaid Gul**, Vice President for Africa & Middle East, Vision-Box

MAIN STAGE

- **Arnold Donald**, Chair, World Travel & Tourism Council
- **Francis Gatare**, Chief Executive Officer, Rwanda Development Board
- **Julia Simpson**, President & Chief Executive Officer, World Travel & Tourism Council
- **H.E. Prosper Bazombanza**, Vice President, Republic of Burundi
- **H.E. Samia Suluhu Hassan**, President, United Republic of Tanzania
- **H.E. Paul Kagame**, President, Republic of Rwanda
- **Patricia de Lille**, Minister of Tourism, South Africa
- **Paul Griffiths**, Chief Executive Officer, Dubai Airports
- **Alfred Mutua**, Minister of Wildlife & Tourism, Kenya
- **Larry Madowo**, International Correspondent, CNN
- **Yves Iradukunda**, Permanent Secretary, Rwanda Ministry of ICT & Innovation
- **Nelson Boyce**, Managing Director: Travel, Google
- **Julie Shainock**, Global Managing Director for Travel, Transport Logistics and Hospitality, Microsoft
- **Mark Antipof**, Chief Growth Officer, HBX Group
- **Peter Greenberg**, Travel Editor, CBS News
- **Jerry Inzerillo**, Group Chief Executive Officer, Diriyah Company
- **Di Bain**, Chair, Tourism Western Australia
- **Satya Anand**, President for Europe, Middle East & Africa, Marriott International
- **Anita Mendiratta**, Founder, Anita Mendiratta & Associates
- **Matthew Upchurch**, President & Chief Executive Officer, Virtuoso
- **Rosette Rugamba**, Founder & Managing Director, Songa Africa
- **Greg O'Hara**, Founder & Senior Managing Director, Certares
- **Manfredi Lefebvre d'Ovidio**, Chairman, Heritage Group, & Co-Chair, Abercrombie & Kent
- **Mariana Oleskiv**, Chairperson, Ukraine State Agency for Tourism Development
- **Tania Habimana**, Anchor, CNBC Africa
- **Bert Fol**, Managing Director: Africa, Radisson Hotel Group
- **Caroline Moultrie**, Managing Director, MMGY
- **Tom Starr**, Global Vice President: Destinations, Amadeus
- **Yvonne Makolo**, Chief Executive Officer, RwandAir
- **James Hogan**, Chairman, Knighthood Global
- **Gary Renfrow**, Assistant Administrator for International Operations, USA Transportation Security Administration
- **David Marriott**, Chairman of the Board, Marriott International (virtual)
- **Sébastien Bazin**, Group Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, Accor
- **Gloria Fluxà Thienemann**, Vice-Chairman & Chief Sustainability Officer, Iberostar Group
- **Andrea Grisdale**, Founder & Chief Executive Officer, IC Bellagio
- **Paolo Barletta**, Chief Executive Officer, Arsenale Spa
- **Amadou Gallo Fall**, President, Basketball Africa League
- **Setti Solomon**, Chief Strategy & Communications Officer, Rwanda Development Board
- **Juliet Slot**, Chief Commercial Officer, Arsenal Football Club
- **Sandiaga Uno**, Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy, Indonesia (virtual)
- **Fawaz Farooqui**, Managing Director, Cruise Saudi
- **Ashish Sanghrajka**, President, Big Five Tours & Expeditions
- **Olivier Granet**, Chief Executive Officer, Kasada Capital
- **Nikolina Angelkova**, Minister of Tourism of Bulgaria (2014-2020)

- **James Thornton**, Chief Executive Officer, Intrepid Travel
- **Rodney Ellis**, Commissioner for Harris County, Texas, USA
- **Daniel Fenton**, Executive Vice President, JLL Hotels & Hospitality
- **Debbie Flynn**, Managing Partner, Global Travel Practice Leader, Finn Partners
- **Aurore Munyangaju**, Minister of Sport, Rwanda
- **J.D. O'Hara**, Chief Executive Officer, Internova Travel Group
- **Raki Phillips**, Chief Executive Officer, Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority
- **Victor Williams**, Chief Executive Officer, NBA Africa
- **Ineza Umuhzo Grace**, Founder, The Green Protector and Loss & Damage Youth Coalition
- **Paul Griep**, The Hotelschool the Hague
- **Giulia Etori**, Politecnico di Milano
- **Rosanna Caldarella**, Politecnico di Milano
- **Davide Grasso**, Politecnico di Milano
- **Elisa Schembri**, Politecnico di Milano
- **Michaela Rugwizangoga**, Chief Tourism Officer, Rwanda Development Board
- **Hamish Keith**, Chief Executive Officer, EXO Travel
- **Keith Vincent**, Chief Executive Officer, Wilderness Safaris
- **Jeffrey Rutledge**, Chief Executive Officer, AIG Travel
- **Nombulelo Guliwe**, Acting Chief Executive Officer, South African Tourism
- **Billy Kolber**, Partner & Head of Strategy, HospitableMe
- **John Sage**, Chief Executive Officer, Accessible Travel Solutions

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