Only the G20 can drive forward a coordinated recovery response to the COVID-19 crisis says WTTC

London, UK, 21 April 2020: The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) calls upon G20 tourism ministers to lead a united and coordinated recovery for the Travel & Tourism sector out of the COVID-19 crisis.

WTTC, which represents the global Travel & Tourism private sector, says only the G20 has the power to influence and drive forward a coordinated recovery effort needed to preserve the sector.

The extraordinary Tourism Ministers meeting due to take place on Friday 24 April is set to discuss how to combat the crisis crippling the entire Travel & Tourism sector.

According to WTTC analysis, 75 million jobs around the world are at risk, with one million jobs on the line daily, significantly impacting major source markets.

Ahead of the meeting, WTTC praised the G20 for freezing the debt of the world’s poorest countries as a major step towards enabling them to bolster their health systems, to save lives and combat COVID-19.

Gloria Guevara, WTTC President & CEO, said: “The G20’s proven record, which powered the recovery following the financial crisis in 2008, and the recent decisive action to freeze debt proves this forum is the best platform with the speed and agility needed, to drive forward the urgent actions required to set the pace and save the global Travel & Tourism sector and enable it to survive and thrive.

“WTTC proposes tourism ministers participating in the meeting, fully jointly commit with the private sector to four key principles to achieve a faster recovery.

“This would involve including the private sector in the coordinated response, ensuring all measures put the traveller at the heart of their actions. This would include a seamless traveller journey with enhanced health security standards enabled through technology, developing joint public-private and G20-wide health protocols as well as ongoing support packages for the tourism sector beyond lifting of lockdown and into the recovery.

“As the premier forum of international cooperation, the G20 is the best proven vehicle to help achieve global economic stability and sustainable growth, which has successfully partnered with the private sector to achieve such objectives. Millions of people around the world depend on their actions.
“Under the leadership of Saudi Arabia as the G20 Chair, a country which recorded the fastest growth in Travel & Tourism GDP in 2019 with four times the global average, this meeting offers the best platform to ensure a coordinated approach for a faster recovery.

“We must remember up to 75 million jobs are at risk, and without swift action from the G20 one in four new jobs around the world and the 10.3% (US$8.9 trillion) contribution to global GDP, will not be generated and the global economy will struggle to recover. We also have to learn from past experiences that when the private sector is involved the recovery has been faster.”

WTTC’s four principles to ensure swift recovery for the Travel & Tourism sector and the global economy following the end of the COVID-19 outbreak, are:

1. A joint public-private coordinated approach across the G20 to re-establish effective operations, remove travel barriers and reopen borders. This would ensure the efficient resumption of flights, movement of people and widespread travel essential to re-build confidence in Travel & Tourism.

2. Enhance the seamless traveller journey experience, combining the latest technology and protocols to increase health standards. Consider the “new normal” for the sector with components of health, security, hygiene and sustainability with a traveller centric approach.

3. Work with the private sector and health experts to define global standards for the new normal, grounded in science which can be easily adopted by businesses of every size across all travel industries and can be implemented across the world.

4. Continue to aid and assist to the Travel & Tourism sector during the recovery phase, throughout the entire travel eco-system. Financial support for workers, businesses and for promotion for a prompt recovery. It is vital the domino effect is fully realised so that businesses large and small can all recover and prosper.

Following these four principles will reduce the recovery timeframe of the global economy and offer reassurance to travellers that the time is right once more to explore and visit.

The economic importance of Travel & Tourism sector to the G20 is demonstrated by the latest WTTC 2020 Economic Impact report, which shows it supported more than 211 million jobs, or 9.5% of the G20’s total workforce.

The G20 includes most of the key source markets to the majority of regions around the world. Travel & Tourism across the G20 represented 76% of global Travel & Tourism GDP in 2019.
The sector also generated US $6,736.4BN to GDP, or 9% to the total G20 economy, growing by 3.7% from the previous year. The comprehensive report shows this growth outperformed the overall G20 GDP growth in 2019 of 2.6% in the same year.

Ends

For more information, visit www.wttc.org

For media enquiries, please contact press.office@wttc.org

Notes to editors
Gloria Guevara, President & CEO of the World Travel & Tourism Council, was also a special advisor with the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, which brings together dedicated experts from many disciplines to educate new generations of global health leaders.

To view the WTTC Crisis Preparedness, Management & Recovery in full, please click here.