



Media release

A Positive Balance

The 6th World Tourism Forum Lucerne (WTFL), took place on May 2 and 3 in Lucerne, Switzerland, and, over 550 participants from 80 countries took part in the discussions focused on three main topics of innovation, talent and diversity management.

Lucerne, 4 May 2019 – In light of the recent terrorist attacks in Sri Lanka, the Board of World Tourism Forum Lucerne (WTFL) made a last-minute decision to change the agenda and highlight how with these attacks the terrorists have struck the heart of Sri Lanka's vibrant tourism industry, a sector of critical importance to the country's economy. Martin Barth, President & CEO said, "We want everyone in Sri Lanka to know that the whole of the World of Tourism family stands with Sri Lanka. Hence the change in our agenda. Our resolve will only strengthen with these attacks."

Aradhana Khowala, Member of the Advisory Board and Steering Committee, World Tourism Forum Lucerne, moderated a high-powered panel discussion on the topic of crisis preparedness and resilience building in destinations with Gloria Guevara CEO of WTTC and H.E. Rania Al-Mashat, Minister of Tourism Egypt. A recorded video message from H.E. Harin Fernando, Minister of Telecommunications was also telecast. Khowala said of the panel "Sri Lanka needs our solidarity in this difficult time but they also need to learn from those who have been there before to minimise the damage to the sector in the months ahead. Tourism is worth almost \$4.5 billion to the economy each year accounting for 5% of the country's annual GDP and 10% of total employment which is more than 800,000 jobs."

The WTFL has once again proven to be a unique platform where the world's leading companies from the tourism, travel and hospitality sectors meet to shape a more sustainable future. The World Tourism Forum Lucerne not only successfully organizes these events, but also generates content and creates value based on the themes of talent, innovation, sustainable development and diversity. Over the past ten years, the platform has evolved into a year-round network of leaders and innovators from a variety of backgrounds (business, education, politics, finance and society) who are driving positive change in travel, tourism and hospitality.

Reto Wittwer, Chairman of the Board, WTFL closed the forum with a message to Sri Lanka with all the participants in attendance and added, "If we give into our fears and never leave our homes, we give into the terrorists' goal of crippling tourism in a city which is totally reliant on it thereby undermining its economy."

Video by H.E. Harin Fernando, Minister of Telecommunications:

<https://vimeo.com/334379797>

Video by Reto Wittwer, Chairman of World Tourism Forum Lucerne:

<https://vimeo.com/334149178>



About the World Tourism Forum Lucerne

The World Tourism Forum Lucerne is an exclusive platform where the world's leading tourism, travel and hospitality companies meet to shape a more sustainable future for tourism. It provides decision-makers with in-depth insights into the core themes of the tourism industry and a unique global network. The World Tourism Forum Lucerne is the only platform to integrate start-ups, young executives and students into one program. Over the past ten years, it has evolved into a year-round network of leaders and innovators who are driving positive change in the travel, tourism and hospitality industries. This includes an influential network of leaders from the business, education, politics, finance and community sectors.

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