



Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre – Eastern Africa, Kenyatta University

CS and CAS visit to GTRCMC-EA, KU,

Date: 21st January 2021, 10.00am to 12noon

Venue: Kenyatta University

Message from Hon. Bartlett, Minister of Tourism, Jamaica.

Three years ago, I conceptualized the Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre (GTRCMC) at the UNWTO's Global Conference on Sustainable Development held in Montego Bay, Jamaica, in November 2017. The proposed establishment of the Resilience Center reflected a call to action for global tourism stakeholders to collaboratively, centrally, and institutionally respond to the wide range of traditional and non-traditional threats that have been increasingly destabilizing global tourism. The mandate of the Centre was to create policies, toolkits, and guidelines designed to enhance the capacity of vulnerable tourist destinations across the globe to mitigate disaster risks as well as to manage recovery efforts in the aftermath of crises.

To expand the global reach of the Resilience Centre, the decision was taken by the Centre's Board to establish four Satellite Centres to serve different regions and sub-regions of the world. Two of those Satellite Centres have already been opened in Kenya at the Kenyatta University and Nepal with plans afoot to establish others in Hong Kong, Japan, and Seychelles. I am particularly excited about the establishment of this Satellite Centre at Kenyatta University. It will be a critical asset in enhancing tourism resilience and sustainability among East African destinations. Owing to the establishment of this focal point for developing, coordinating, and supporting resilience-building and response efforts, tourism in



East Africa is now in a better position to bounce back quickly after disruptive events.

As the world currently grapples with the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to note that this crisis is unlikely to be the last of its kind in both scope and impact. For many years, I have been warning that threats such as pandemics and epidemics, climate change impacts, and cyber-security issues will become the new normal in a rapidly-evolving and increasingly interconnected world. As these threats become more common, tourism resilience will take on greater prominence to ensure that global tourism can adapt and respond to the uncertainties of its internal and external environment. Ultimately, this Centre will become a key catalyst for sustainable tourism development.

As we look to the future, the GTRCMC will continue to strengthen collaboration with its network of local, regional, and international partners to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on destinations as well as to identify effective strategies for their recovery and to enhance their preparedness and responsiveness to future shocks. In the immediate and foreseeable period, the Centre will be required to play a pivotal role in supporting global crisis management, mitigation, and recovery efforts in the tourism sector. It is a responsibility that the Centre takes very seriously, and we intend to strengthen existing partnerships and build new ones with the ultimate goal of ensuring a more agile, adaptive, and resilient tourism industry in the post-COVID period. Our immediate plans include rolling out various innovations, toolkits, and information resources to assist destinations globally to navigate this difficult period.

I anticipate that this forum will provide a useful exchange of knowledge on matters such as best practices in building tourism resilience; frameworks for the standardization, harmonization, and collaboration of tourism resilience strategies across the region; the viability of new tourism models that are less tied to external



markets; the use of innovation and technology in mitigation and response efforts; the importance of research, training, and funding initiatives; and the role of deepened public-private partnerships among other relevant matters. As the co-chair of GTRCMC, I am excited to share in this experience and I am optimistic about the journey ahead.