

Oranjestad, 17 April 2013 – With tourism accounting for 45 per cent of the foreign income of developing countries, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today called on the industry to play its full role in facing the three interdependent challenges of promoting sustained economic growth, ensuring social development and safeguarding the global environment.

“At last year’s Rio+20 (United Nations) conference on sustainable development (in Brazil), world leaders recognized that tourism can make significant contributions in all three areas,” he said in a message to the Global Summit of the World Travel and Tourism Council in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, delivered by UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Secretary-General Taleb Rifai. “But realizing this great potential requires common efforts and strong commitments,” he added, urging the over 1,000 international delegates to join the UN family by working with UNWTO, the specialized agency for tourism. “Together, we can make the global movement of people called tourism change millions of lives and help us build the world we want.”

Noting that tourism employs millions of people across the world, generates commerce and trade and lifts communities out of poverty, Mr. Ban stressed that the industry “can and must play a role in our shared efforts to build a more sustainable world.

“Each time you plan a new hotel, buy a fleet of airplanes or make other big investments, I urge you to take greater account of the local and global environment. Greening the industry is crucial to its future, and the planet’s” he said.

“Last year we reached an historic mark: more than one billion tourists crossed international borders. We must ensure that these movements are a transformative force – a force that builds peace, stimulates the economy, preserves the environment and promotes universal values.”

Source:

www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44610&Cr=touris&Cr1#.UW7EaaLvsXc