



# PRIVATE SECTOR COMMITMENT TO THE UNWTO GLOBAL CODE OF ETHICS FOR TOURISM

*"UNWTO is guided by the belief that tourism can make a meaningful contribution to people's lives and our planet. This conviction is at the very heart of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, a roadmap for tourism development. I call on all to read, circulate and adopt the Code for the benefit of tourists, tour operators, host communities and their environments worldwide."*

Taleb Rifai, UNWTO Secretary-General

A fundamental frame of reference for responsible and sustainable tourism, the **UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism** is a comprehensive set of principles designed to guide players in tourism development. Addressed to governments, the private sector, communities and tourists alike, it aims to help maximize tourism's benefits while minimizing its potentially negative impact on the environment, cultural heritage and societies across the globe.

The Code was adopted in 1999 by the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization and **acknowledged by the United Nations General Assembly** two years later. Although not legally binding, the Code features a **voluntary implementation** mechanism through its recognition of the role of the **World Committee on Tourism Ethics (WCTE)**, an independent and impartial body, to which stakeholders may refer matters concerning the application and interpretation of the document.

The Code's **10 principles** cover the economic, social, cultural and environmental components of tourism: from its contribution to mutual respect and understanding between peoples and societies, to tourism as a vehicle for individual and collective fulfilment, a factor of sustainable development, a contributor to enhance cultural heritage, and a beneficial activity for host countries and communities, as well as the obligations of stakeholders in tourism development, the right to tourism, the liberty of tourist movements, and the rights of the workers and entrepreneurs.

Full Text of the Global Code of Ethics at <http://ethics.unwto.org>

## THE GLOBAL CODE OF ETHICS AND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Summary of the Code's provisions most clearly related to the **private sector** and **Corporate Social Responsibility**:

**ARTICLE 2:** A vehicle for individual and collective fulfilment, tourism should promote tolerance, gender equality, and human rights, while **combating the exploitation of human beings**, particularly children.

**ARTICLE 3:** To achieve sustainable economic growth while satisfying the needs of present and future generations, it is essential that tourism stakeholders **safeguard the natural environment**. Tourism activities and infrastructure should be designed so as to protect natural heritage, preserve resources, and avoid waste production. Ideally, key actors, especially professionals, should agree to the imposition of limitations or constraints on their activities in highly sensitive areas.

**ARTICLE 5:** The planning and operation of tourism accommodation / resorts should **integrate locals** into the destination's economic and social fabric, giving priority to local manpower wherever skills are equal. Studies must be carried out by investors and tourism professionals on the environmental **impact of their development projects**, delivering transparent information on future programmes and their possible repercussions, and fostering dialogue with the populations concerned.

**ARTICLE 6:** Tourism professionals have an obligation to **provide tourists with objective and honest information** on their destinations and the conditions of travel, hospitality and stays. It is imperative that they show concern, in co-operation with public authorities, for their clients' security, safety and repatriation (in the event of the enterprise's bankruptcy), ensuring suitable insurance and assistance systems and paying fair compensation when unable to observe their contractual obligations. As far as possible, tourism professionals should **contribute to the cultural and spiritual fulfilment**, notably by allowing them to practise their religions freely.

**ARTICLE 9:** Multinational tourism enterprises must neither exploit their dominant positions in destinations, nor artificially impose cultural and social models on host communities. In exchange for the freedom to invest and trade, they should become involved in local development and avoid the excessive repatriation of their profits or induced imports. The fundamental **rights of salaried and self-employed workers** must be guaranteed. Furthermore, as partnership and balanced relations between enterprises of generating and receiving countries contribute to sustainable development, these ties warrant express encouragement.

**I hereby commit that my company / organization shall endeavour to  
adhere to the principles of the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism  
and to inform the World Committee on Tourism Ethics on measures taken to  
promote and implement these principles.**

Signed in Sofia, Bulgaria on 29<sup>th</sup> of May 2014