

JUSCANZ Statement Regarding Africa Report

For the 64th Session of the Trade and Development Board
September 15, 2017

Ms. President,
Deputy Secretary General
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

I will deliver this statement on behalf of JUSCANZ.

Let me first thank our panelists for their interesting presentations.

We thank the Secretariat for this year's report entitled *The Economic Development in Africa Report 2017: Tourism for Transformative and Inclusive Growth*. We take note of the report's main findings and encourage policy makers to consider the report's many recommendations that will help boost tourism in Africa. Indeed, knowing that tourism industry supports 1 out of 14 jobs, addressing the challenges remains critical for Africa's prosperity. Hence, there are several report recommendations we would highlight.

First, we appreciate in particular that Chapter 3 focuses on tourism and *inclusive* growth and emphasizes tourism's benefit for young people and women. As explained in the report, benefiting from inclusive growth is not automatic and when badly managed tourism might have disastrous consequences on economic inclusiveness. Governments must adopt enabling policies that help improve skills, boost education through tourism and hospitality schools, and create a decent work environment – particularly for the most vulnerable workers and local communities. As noted in the report, the female participation rate in the tourism industry is often high in the informal sector and additional efforts to engage women in tourism and related economic activity would help create new and better economic opportunities and favour a transition to the formal sector.

Also stated in the report is the importance of including tourism in national development plans. Like all industries, tourism requires specific actions and support in

order for it to flourish and to remain durable. Such plans can help foster inclusive growth and identify key supporting industries. Indeed, since tourism is a crosscutting issue and covers several sectors, the synergistic benefits of creating linkages between tourism and other industries including utilities, services, and infrastructure is undeniable. Investments in ancillary industries will have a multiplicatively positive outcome.

National tourism plans may also help identify and develop niche tourist industries. The particular benefits of niche tourist industries such as ecotourism, medical tourism, and cultural tourism should not be underestimated since they might enhance the country's competitiveness and contribute to economic diversification and long term sustainable development. Therefore, countries in a position to leverage niche tourist industries should do so.

Chapter 4's headline recommendations on regional integration are also notable. The report explains the vast potential for intra-Africa tourism. Specific travel facilitation actions on the part of national governments such as streamlined visa requirements, open-skies agreements, currency convertibility, and pro-tourism policies would certainly make Africa more accessible to continent-based tourists. In addition, such changes would also encourage foreign travelers to visit Africa and send a positive signal about the local business and investment climate.

Finally we would like to conclude by highlighting the importance of data on tourism. Such data could be collected as part of broader macroeconomic data collection efforts. High-quality disaggregated data is essential for establishing benchmarks and tracking the effects of tourism national policies and the process towards the SDGs (8, 12 and 14). We therefore encourage all countries to work in this area.

Thank you for your attention.