Porto Declaration
Tourism and the Future of Cities

We, representatives of the cities of Athens, Braga, Brussels, Bruges, Budapest, Dubrovnik, Florence, Madrid, Podgorica, Porto, Prague, Rome, Samarkand, São Vicente, Skiathos, Tirana and Venice; of the Ministry of State, Economy and Digital Transition of Portugal, UN-Habitat, the European Committee of the Regions, the Unión Ciudades Capitales Iberoamericanas, Expedia Group, CLIA Europe, Must Travel & Tech and Airbnb meeting in Porto, Portugal, on July 9, 2021 on the occasion of the UNWTO Mayors Forum for Sustainable Urban Tourism,

Recalling that,

1. Urban areas are powerhouses of socio-economic growth, democracy and development, functioning as catalysts for inclusion and innovation;

2. Worldwide urbanization has led to an increasing number of people living in cities and feeling more connected with urban lifestyle which has translated to more people visiting cities looking for diversity, intercultural dialogue, innovation and exchange of knowledge;

3. Urban tourism constitutes an essential driver to the socio-economic development of many cities and their surroundings rural areas and contributes significantly to innovation and the conservation and promotion of natural and cultural resources;

4. The growth of urban tourism has created opportunities for development but also challenges for cities to manage environmental and socio-cultural impacts and the relationship between visitors and host communities, mobility, security, and flows of people.

5. The COVID19 crisis has put the tourism sector at a near standstill, with a particular impact on urban tourism and small businesses; at the same time measures to contain the pandemic such as remote work and the accelerated use of communication technologies reinforced tourism-related trends such as mobile life and lifestyle migration.

6. The crisis presents an opportunity for urban destinations to rethink and reshape tourism under the principles of inclusiveness, resilience and sustainability in line with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda;

7. Collaboration and solidarity between cities are now more crucial than ever to support the recovery of tourism and contribute to create a long-term common vision for sustainable urban tourism.

8. The principles of the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism call to maximize the sector's benefits while minimizing its potentially negative impact on the environment, cultural heritage, and societies across the globe.

Agree to work towards

1. Fostering the inclusion of sustainable tourism in the cities' agenda for recovery as a driver of employment and wealth creation, intercultural exchange, social inclusion and cultural preservation;

2. Ensuring that urban tourism policies are aligned with the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda, namely Goal 11 on "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable", making the SDGs the framework to integrate residents, businesses and visitors in the continuum of sustainable urban development;

3. Establishing governance models that ensure the full integration and alignment of tourism with the wider urban policy for inclusive sustainable development that commits to principles of leaving no one and no place behind and to the prevention of growing spatial inequalities;

4. Fostering collaboration and strategic partnership mechanisms among all relevant stakeholders, including national, regional, and city authorities, private sector, local communities, and visitors; encouraging local discussion by utilizing platforms for residents, working groups and local entrepreneurial ecosystems to increase the integration of local communities in urban tourism planning and value chain.

5. Encouraging coordination between national and city governments to better manage urban tourism specially on issues related to housing, the safeguard of small and traditional businesses and flow management.

6. Highlighting the importance of education, training and skills advancement in the tourism sector to enhance the socio-economic development of communities and create a highly qualified workforce that underpins the competitiveness of the sector, enhances and protects jobs in the tourism sector;

7. Promoting the integration and sharing of big data and technology developments in urban governance, enhanced collection and management of relevant data, and increased access to and use of digital infrastructure in building back better for citizens and visitors alike through the recovery of urban tourism, taking evidence-based decisions on carrying capacity, mobility, diversification, conservation of natural and cultural resources, and residents' attitudes towards tourism;

8. Investing in sustainable transport and communications infrastructure to improve mobility and connectivity in ways that prioritize safety, social equity, and accessibility while minimizing environmental impacts for future generations.

9. Promoting innovative tourism products and experiences and maximize the use of digital tools and platforms to diversify demand in time and space, incentivize longer stays, promote responsible travel and attract the visitor profile that fits the city's vision and strategy for a sustainable future;

10. Building bridges between cities and their rural areas to jointly address the challenges faced by the tourism community and explore the synergies of urban-rural cooperation;

11. Fostering sustainable practices that promote more efficient use of resources and a reduction of emissions and waste within the framework of the circular economy;

12. Encouraging all actors in multi-level governance and all relevant stakeholders involved in the tourism sector from around the world to join in common effort to develop sustainable urban tourism and cities for all – residents and visitors.

13. Accelerating the dual transformation of cities into greener and more digital urban destinations and thus more resilient to face any future disruptions and crises and implement the concept of smart urban tourism destinations by integrating the five pillars of a 'smart destination' - governance, innovation, technology, accessibility and sustainability - in their policies and strategies; and

14. For the purpose of advancing the above, developing, with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and other relevant stakeholders, a League of Cities for Sustainable Urban Tourism.

We express our gratitude to the Ministry of State, Economy and Digital Transition of Portugal and the Porto Municipality for their kind hospitality and their leadership in hosting the UNWTO Mayors Forum for Sustainable Urban Tourism under the theme 'Tourism and the Future of Cities.'

Porto, Portugal, 9 July 2020.