DECLARATION OF THE TWELFTH DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE (DDD12)

The role of the African Diaspora: African ambassadors and contributors to tourism growth

ACCRA ACTION PLAN ON AFRICAN TOURISM

We, representatives of African Diaspora Development Organisations (ODDAs), private sector organisations, civil society organisations, governments and international development agencies at the TWELFTH DIASPORA DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE (DDD12), organised by ADEPT, the Ghana Tourism Authority, the Ghana Diaspora Affairs Office of the Presidency, AFFORD and MDF West Africa on 18 December 2019 in Accra, Ghana:

1. WE REAFFIRM, our commitment to the AU policy towards the diaspora as the sixth region of Africa; the AU Agenda 2063 and the MDGs specifically target those who, well developed, are from the diaspora and other tourism policies, strategies and plans that will be implemented, namely: economic growth, decent jobs (especially for youth), skills development (Skills revolution), environmentally sustainable, development that is not affected by climate change, climate-resilient economies and the African cultural renaissance.
2. **REAFFIRMATION**, from ADEPT and its partners to their commitment to implement the directives relating to the Diaspora in relation to the Valletta Action Plan adopted in November 2015, in particular the areas noted in Section 1: The benefits of migration development and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement.

3. **WE REGRET**, that although tourism contributes up to 10 percent of GDP in many other economies - in Africa, its contribution is as low as 3%. With the resulting impacts on the multiple fields, tourism increases spending, employment and infrastructure development. Therefore, we recognize that this highlights the urgent need for the immediate future. A lot can be done in Africa to improve the role of tourism as an engine of economic development, this, while avoiding the many examples of tourism such as sex and non-ecologically sustainable tourism.

4. **WE COMMEND**, the Government of Ghana for its Year of Return Initiative - a high-level standard for diaspora engagement and awareness, which has successfully exploited the neglected diaspora tourism market. At the same time, found a response to its different segments of the tourism market and their (i.e., the diaspora) (e.g. memorial, heritage, cultural, festival, eco, business, development, etc.) and the use of the diaspora as high-level ambassadors for outreach and marketing, resulting in the target of 500,000 visitors being more than doubled.

5. **WE URGE**, to pursue such initiatives at the continental level that will strengthen the diaspora tourism market, including the adoption by the AU-CIDO of a ten-year return programme. The creation of a continental diaspora and heritage tourism platform where best practices can be shared and that would work with stakeholders and diaspora organisations as ambassadors to the diaspora and potential non-diaspora tourists. At the national level, we urge the improvements concerning, the usability of business programmes aimed at facilitating the entry of the diaspora into the hotel sector, creating national programmes where the diaspora can share their skills and knowledge in the service and hotel sectors, as well as in the improvement of museums and other cultural industries,
which are key drivers of tourism.

6. **WE URGE**, governments to reduce the financial and bureaucratic costs of obtaining visas and encourage regional economic communities to follow the SADC single visa system or the emerging West African intervention project of ECOWAS to develop a unique and multi-destination brand, which will facilitate greater mobility.

7. **WE ENDORSE and SUPPORT** the initiative of ADEPT, AFFORD and their various partners to provide structured technical and vocational education training (TVET) to support the tourism and hotel sectors, particularly in countries where the tourism sector and tourists from the diaspora are underdeveloped.

This declaration was adopted on December 18, 2019 in Accra, Ghana.