

## **Video Message of HC for the SEPC's Hospitality and Tourism Conclave, 2022**

I am happy that the Services Export Promotion Council of India is organizing the Hospitality and Tourism Conclave 2022 on 9 September 2022 in New Delhi.

The COVID-19 pandemic had disrupted the normal course of life around the world and the hospitality sector has been one of the badly affected ones. With the pandemic, hopefully, receding, it is time to revitalize the tourism sector. People are raring to travel and free themselves.

India has immense potential for tourism as she is endowed with such diversity and beauty, ranging from the tallest of the mountains to the most beautiful beaches and from vast deserts to gorgeous wetlands. India also offers such variety to suit the taste of every tourist. From leisure to history, from religion to sports, from serene to the hectic, one can choose from the wonderful basket of sites to visit and enjoy. Therefore, the theme selected for the Conclave – Building Brand India as a Tourism Destination is very apt and timely.

India is a favorite destination for Nigerians. Brand India is already a household name in Nigeria. Not all may be tourists, but many look forward to visiting India for medical treatment or educational reasons. India has the expertise and is simultaneously affordable. The High Commission in Abuja and the Consulate General in Lagos have been at the forefront to facilitate the legitimate movement of people from Nigeria to India, and would continue to do so.

It is time for the leading travel companies in India to look at Africa in general and Nigeria in particular, as a major market that can bring in high end tourism into India. Establishing proper network, identifying the correct agency in Nigeria for them to partner with for this promotion, working out special packages for visitors from Nigeria that can cover from end-to-end, etc. as some of the measures that are to be taken urgently.

There is also a significant number of Nigerians in India and our tour companies should tap their potential to travel within the country and provide them with attractive options, that can be mutually beneficial.

I am sure that this Conclave will provide an opportunity to the sector to delve into these issues and come out with business proposals and models that would serve the interests of all concerned.

I appreciate the organizers for their efforts in bringing the Conclave together and wish them every success in this endeavor.

(G. Balasubramanian)  
High Commissioner  
7 September 2022