

## **“Closing borders risks jobs”, World Travel & Tourism Council warns US Administration**

“The United States (US) is in danger of taking the same path it took after the 9/11 terror attacks, which led to a decade of economic stagnation in the Travel & Tourism sector”, said David Scowsill, President & CEO, World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), while speaking in Las Vegas today, 14 February 2017.

“Strict visa policies and inward-looking sentiment led to a \$600 billion loss in tourism revenues in the decade post 9/11, as previously reported by the US Travel Association, with a noted 9% drop in international arrivals in the period of 2001 – 2009.

The Trump Administration is in danger of steering the country in the same direction, which could have a huge impact on the country’s Travel & Tourism sector, which generates over 8% of the country’s GDP and supports nearly 10% of total employment in the US”, warned Scowsill.

Airlines, hotels and travel agencies are all reporting drops in international bookings to the US, following the Executive Order banning visitors from seven countries to enter the country. This is the unintended consequence of the ban announcement, with business and leisure customers from around the world holding back on their travel plans.

Scowsill spoke directly at the Administration during his speech, offering five pieces of advice to the President’s advisors:

- Recognise that travel is a key generator of American jobs and economic growth.
- Keep tourism out of politics. Blanket bans on citizens from specific countries will not make the American people safer.
- Remember the decade of lost economic growth. Travellers have a choice and they will go elsewhere.
- Use the technology available to share information. That will ensure that only the right people arrive at borders in the first place.
- Consult with the industry in advance of change. This will make the implementation of policies more orderly, fairer and less damaging.

“For the President who has promised to create jobs and to make America great again, Travel & Tourism seems the most obvious answer. After all, the livelihood of millions of Americans depends on people being able to use planes, trains and automobiles to spend their tourist dollars.

Travel & Tourism thrives by breaking down barriers, not building them; by making it easier for people to travel, not applying blanket bans. Our sector bridges divides between cultures, fosters understanding across religious and geographic boundaries. It is a massive generator of jobs and economic growth.” Scowsill concluded.

**-END-**

### **About WTTC:**

The World Travel & Tourism Council is the global authority on the economic and social contribution of Travel & Tourism. It promotes sustainable growth for the sector, working with governments and international institutions to create jobs, to drive exports and to generate prosperity. WTTC’s annual Global Summit brings together over 900 delegates to discuss the opportunities, challenges and issues facing the industry, while its Tourism for Tomorrow Awards recognise the industry’s power to be a positive force in sustainability.

The sector is a key driver for investment and economic growth globally. Travel & Tourism contributes US\$7.2 trillion or 9.8% of global GDP, once all direct, indirect and induced impacts are taken into account. The sector also accounts for 284 million jobs, 9.5% of total employment, or one in eleven of all jobs on the planet.

For 25 years, WTTC has been the voice of this industry globally. Members are the Chairs, Presidents and Chief Executives of the world's leading, private sector Travel & Tourism businesses. These Members bring specialist knowledge to guide government policy and decision-making, raising awareness of the importance of the industry as an economic generator of prosperity.

Annebeth Wijtenburg

Communications Manager

World Travel & Tourism Council

[annebeth.wijtenburg@wttc.org](mailto:annebeth.wijtenburg@wttc.org)

+44 7875 51 0505