



Tourism for Everyone  
Dubai Accessible Tourism  
International Summit

## Press Release

# Dubai to host first Accessible Tourism International Summit

**Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum: “We are on a course to make all cities friendly for tourists with disabilities”**

**Discussion needed about the challenges faced by over one billion People with Disabilities around the world**

**88% of People with Disabilities go on vacations each year - and avoid cities unqualified by them**

**50 million People with Disabilities in the Middle East are looking forward to visit accessible cities**

**Dubai, June 26, 2019:** Under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Chairman of Dubai Airports and Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group, Dubai will be hosting the first Accessible Tourism International Summit from November 5 to 6<sup>th</sup> at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre (DICEC).

Supported by the Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing as Destination Partner, the first edition of the summit will be held under the theme of “making all cities friendly for tourists with disabilities” and aims at highlighting the challenges faced by about one billion People with Disabilities during their travel as visitors or tourists to cities around the world. The summit will also discuss the necessity to strengthen the legislations, laws, infrastructure and services catering to the needs of tourists with disabilities and their aspirations to explore the world with ease.

The summit represents an additional initiative with which the UAE is moving forward on its course to become among the best in the world in providing People with Disabilities with the services and facilities that empower them



with the opportunity to be self-dependent, serve their communities and explore their diverse capacities.

"The UAE has done a great deal on its course to achieve its vision of becoming a friendly country for People with Disabilities. This summit falls within this framework and aims to share insights, experiences and best practices and translate these into a concrete practice bound to enable over one billion people to reach their destination with ease," said His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Patron of the summit.

He added: "The summit aims to highlight the needs of this segment during their travel and commuting from one place to another; hence, it aims to respond to these needs by making the places and facilities used or visited by tourists, including hotels, resorts, airports, transport and communication means, shopping malls, beaches, parks and museums accessible and friendly to the requirements of People with Disabilities. We believe this is a great task."

Dubai is working hard to achieve its vision of becoming a friendly city for People with Disabilities by 2020, with all concerned entities in the Emirate working to achieve this goal by implementing the relevant laws and regulations in place and adapting smart solutions to provide the best services for this segment, especially with Dubai targeting 25 million tourists in 2025.

The initiative comes as the World Health Organization estimates that the number of people needing assistive devices ranging from wheelchairs to communication technologies will double to two billion by 2050.

Being organised by Nadd Al Shiba PR & Event Management, the summit will be held annually with the participation of a host of public and private sector international officials and specialists, whose key speeches will address the experience and success stories of their countries in providing dedicated employees, disabled friendly infrastructure and diversified facilities and services catering to the needs of all segments of People with Disabilities across a wide range of sectors, including hospitality, transport, health, insurance and communication. The summit will also address the challenges faced by tourists with disabilities around the world and explore the solutions, legislation and type of services they need from the moment they



decide to travel till they reach their destination, spend their vacations and return home, as this is bound to render their travel a memorable and trouble free experience.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that the number of people who will need of assistance ranging from manual wheelchairs to advanced technologies and smart devices will double from one about billion today to about two billion by 2050.

According to *Lonely Planet*, 50% of People with Disabilities would travel more if suitable facilities were available to them wherever they travelled. Studies show that around 88% of people with a disability take a holiday each year. At least 54% of people with access requirements avoid going to new places if they cannot find them accessible to them.

A whopping 50 million people with special needs in the Middle East are looking to visit cities and tourist destinations that provide appropriate services to them as per their needs.

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### **Photo Caption**

1. His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Chairman of Dubai Airports and Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group
2. Accessible cities attract People with Disabilities

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