

**REMARKS BY MR SYLVESTRE RADEGONDE,
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TOURISM
ON THE OCCASION OF THE SIGNING OF THE
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING IN THE
FIELD OF TOURISM BETWEEN
THE REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES
AND
THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**

MAY 2022

**Excellency, Minister Ahmed Al Khateeb
Senior Government Officials,
Members of the media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good Morning/Good Afternoon,

It is indeed both a great pleasure and an honour to be here today, for the signing of this Memorandum of Understanding to formalise and deepen the partnership between the Republic of Seychelles and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the field of tourism.

In view of the importance of the tourism sector to both our countries, this agreement marks a significant milestone in our ongoing collaboration. As you would be aware, Seychelles is heavily dependent on tourism, which is the main pillar of our economy, contributing to approximately a third of our total GDP. I believe that Saudi Arabia likewise attaches utmost importance to the development of its tourism industry, as the second largest tourist destination in the Middle East and an active advocate for sustainable tourism development.

We are very fortunate to have already made progress in our interactions to date and to have been provided with the opportunity to learn from each other. Even though our tourism offerings may vary and target different niche markets, this agreement is nonetheless the perfect platform for us to formally embark on a mutually-beneficial programme of collaboration.

This programme will encompass such areas as the sharing of tourism-related information and statistics; joint investment and tourism activities; cultural and heritage tourism development; as well as possibilities for training and the sharing of technology and innovation, among others. This, in turn, will enable us to develop a shared vision for our tourism industry, while strengthening the appeal of our respective destinations to visitors and investors alike, leading, I am confident, to immeasurable improvements in our respective industries.

I would like to express, again, my sincere thanks to His Excellency Minister Ahmed Al Khateeb and everyone who has made today's signing of the MoU a reality. With good will, clear ambitions and a strong commitment to working together, I look forward to taking the next steps toward successfully implementing this Agreement. I pledge you, in this regard, my full support and that of my Government.

Thank you.