

Opening Speech on November 27th, 2018 at the Albania Tourism Investment Summit

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PRESIDENT

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Your Excellency Prime Minister Edi Rama, Honorable Minister Mr. Klosi and Honorable Guests,

As **Chair** of Foreign Investment Association of Albania, I can only say it's a great **privilege to inaugurate this Summit**, and I am very **happy** that we have been able to conclude on our initiative for an **International Summit for Tourism Investment in Albania**, after intense preparations over the last 6 months.

Firstly, I would like to extend my **thanks to the Minister of Tourism and Environment, Mr Blendi Klosi** for his **cooperation** for the success of this Summit.

Also, I would like to highlight that Government of Albania is putting large **efforts** into **showcasing tourism potential** in Albania in order to **embracing the standards it deserves**. And for this, I would like to **congratulate the Prime Minister of Albania, Mr. RAMA for his vision and will**.

Through this Summit, we have brought together **important stakeholders** in the tourism industry from Albania and abroad. This country has a **large untapped potential** in the **Travel and Tourism sector**, for which we are currently seeing a steady **revenue growth of more than 6%** annually. This compared with a **GDP growth** of around **4%** this year, which is yet **among the highest in Europe**.

This country has a lot of **untapped potential, undiscovered beauty, friendly hospitable people**, while still, for many, carrying a bit of **mystique** as a **different, and yet unexplored** country. As foreign investors, we are **ambassadors for investments from our own countries** and we **see the opportunities** here.

As an example, as a hydropower developer, we are changing the landscape in a mountainous region in central Albania where **new infrastructure**, such as roads and lakes create many opportunities for those that wish to pursue them.

This Event is an excellent opportunity for all of us to discuss the potentials and challenges of tourism development in Albania as a new destination and address perspectives for the start of new projects by approaching some of the **most- known international Operators and Hotel Brands**.

It is a **great pleasure** to notice the presence and high interest from **global hotel Brands and operators** such as **Marriott, Orbis and Accor Hotels Group, Best Western, Wyndham Group, Expedia Group** and

international Consultants. I am **delighted** to welcome all of you that have travelled from all regions of the world to be present at this important meeting.

On the other side, we have brought here **serious local investors**, already established in the field of Tourism who I am sure **would be very open to partner with the Global brands.**

I am very sure that the platform we create today will add significant value to the future of Tourism investments in Albania. I wish you **productive Summit, fruitful discussions** and **enjoyable stay** in Tirana (even if the winter is now over us...) and **may this journey take us to new partnerships and added opportunities.**

Welcome again, Thank you for your attention!