Guyana President Irfaan Ali to Keynote CTO's State of the Tourism Industry Conference in October

Head of state to address Caribbean tourism's smart, sustainable and inclusive future at regional conference in Georgetown


His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali

BRIDGETOWN, BARBADOS, September 4, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, president of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, will deliver the keynote address at the Caribbean Tourism Organization's (CTO) State of the Tourism Industry Conference (SOTIC) 2026, placing the future of Caribbean tourism within the wider regional conversation on economic transformation, resilience, innovation and inclusive growth.

Set for Georgetown, Guyana, Oct. 5–9, SOTIC 2026 will be held under the theme "Tourism Futures: Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive." President Ali's keynote will help frame the conference conversation around how Caribbean destinations can harness innovation and technology, strengthen environmental and economic resilience, and ensure that tourism growth creates meaningful opportunities for communities across the region.

His address comes as Caribbean tourism leaders confront a rapidly changing global environment shaped by new technologies, evolving traveler expectations, climate pressures and increasing competition. Against that backdrop, SOTIC will examine how the region can remain competitive while pursuing a model of tourism development that delivers stronger economic, social and environmental returns.

"President Ali's participation brings an important dimension to SOTIC at a time when we are asking fundamental questions about what the future of Caribbean tourism should look like," said Dona Regis-Prosper, secretary-general and CEO of CTO. "He brings the perspective not only of a

regional head of government but also of a leader who understands sustainable tourism and its connection to national development. As we explore a future that is smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive, his voice will help set the stage for the bold thinking and collaborative action our region needs."

Guyana provides a particularly relevant setting for this year's discussions. The country has placed sustainable tourism, biodiversity conservation and community participation at the center of its tourism development strategy while pursuing broader economic diversification and investment in the sector.

Susan Rodrigues, Guyana's minister of tourism, industry and commerce, said hosting SOTIC and welcoming regional and international tourism leaders to Georgetown presents an opportunity to advance the Caribbean tourism conversation while showcasing Guyana's evolving visitor economy.

"We are honored to welcome President Ali to deliver the keynote address and to host the Caribbean tourism community here in Guyana," said Minister Rodrigues. "The conference theme speaks directly to the kind of tourism future we are working to build — one that embraces innovation, protects what makes our destinations distinctive and ensures that the benefits of tourism reach our people and communities. Guyana is proud to provide the setting for this important regional dialogue."

President Ali, who was first sworn in as Guyana's ninth executive president in August 2020 and began a second term in September 2025, brings significant experience in economic planning and national development to the conference. Before becoming president, he served in the National Assembly and held ministerial responsibility for Housing and Water as well as Tourism, Industry and Commerce.

He holds a doctorate in urban and regional planning from the University of the West Indies along with graduate and professional qualifications in manpower planning, international business, finance and international commercial law.

SOTIC is CTO's principal forum for bringing together tourism ministers, commissioners and directors of tourism, private-sector executives, regional and international partners, academics, media, young people, and other industry stakeholders to examine the issues shaping Caribbean tourism.

The 2026 program will place particular emphasis on data, tourism intelligence, innovation, emerging technology, climate resilience and regenerative tourism, destination competitiveness, inclusive growth, and the role of the region's next generation of tourism leaders. Guyana will host SOTIC for the first time.

CTO business meetings will take place Oct. 5–6, followed by the main SOTIC conference Oct. 7–8

including the Regional Tourism Youth Congress on Oct. 8. Destination Media Briefings will conclude the week on Oct. 9.

For more information and to register for SOTIC 2026, visit sotic.onecaribbean.org.

About the Caribbean Tourism Organization
The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), headquartered in Barbados, is the Caribbean's tourism development agency, comprising membership of the region's finest countries and territories, including Dutch-, English- and French-speaking, as well as a range of private-sector allied members. CTO's vision is to position the Caribbean as the most desirable, year-round, warm-weather destination, and its purpose is Leading Sustainable Tourism — One Sea, One Voice, One Caribbean.

Among the benefits to its members, the organization provides specialized support and technical assistance in sustainable tourism development, marketing, communications, advocacy, human resource development, event planning and execution, and research and information technology.

CTO's headquarters is located at Baobab Tower, Warrens, St. Michael, Barbados BB 22026.

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For more information about the Caribbean Tourism Organization, visit www.OneCaribbean.org and follow the CTO on Facebook, X, Instagram and LinkedIn to be part of the conversation.

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