



Remarks by Minister of Tourism & Aviation, the Hon. Dionisio D'Aguilar  
At Press Conference, January 23, 2020, at Baha Mar.

## **Record Breaking Numbers Minister Press Conference Talking Points**

Today, it is with great pride we report that The Islands of The Bahamas has exceeded a record-breaking seven million visitors in 2019 – our strongest tourism numbers in history. This is a tremendous accomplishment, particularly in light of the challenging year we, as a country just endured. I stand before you with tremendous gratitude and admiration for every single one of my fellow Bahamians who have showed the world the true meaning of resilience.

We have a few historical moments to record for 2019 and they are:

**Highest recorded amount of stopover visitors ever at 1.78 million**

**Highest recorded amount of stopover visitors ever from the United States 1.45 million**

**A whopping 7.216 Million Total Visitor Arrivals**



The impact of Hurricane Dorian has not slowed The Bahamas' tourism growth.

## **HOW WE GOT HERE**

The Ministry attributes this historic success to the hard work and dedication of Bahamians at all levels of the tourism industry who have ensured that The Bahamas is open for business and still rockin'!

This, combined with data-driven, agile marketing, authentic storytelling, and aggressive PR, sales and airlift strategies have lead to 2019 being one for the history books.

Last year was one for the history books. As a nation, we have faced tremendous tragedy brought to us by Hurricane Dorian, the effects of which we will feel in our hearts forever. However, the Bahamian people stood together, remaining strong and resilient, and the world took notice. We are in awe of our country, and deeply grateful for the outpouring of support and assistance from friends, partners, and even strangers from around the globe.

At the Ministry of Tourism and Aviation, our priority is to safeguard The Bahamas' economy through initiatives that will fuel the critical tourism sector. We began our campaign



in the days immediately following Hurricane Dorian and have remained diligently aggressive ever since. Ministry executives have traveled to New York and Miami, to Canada, London, Australia and Paris, speaking at top tourism conferences and meeting with travel partners, media and influencers to spread the message that The Bahamas is open, beautiful and ready to welcome all with open arms. This sentiment has been embraced wholeheartedly, sparking international headlines and content encouraging travel to our islands.

Prior to Hurricane Dorian, tourism was thriving at a record level. Last year, we saw many accomplishments – we hosted 41 media and influencers across several islands to generate compelling stories about The Bahamas. Together with our industry partners, the MOT hosted sales and media missions in many of our key designated marketing areas. We launched a successful marketing campaign with the legendary rock star Lenny Kravitz, graced the cover and pages of Sports Illustrated’s highly anticipated swimsuit issue and witnessed the production of a primetime television show come to life in Nassau and on screens across the U.S. The main goal? Inspire travel to our remarkable country.

## **WHAT’S NEXT**

We look forward to building upon the success of our marketing efforts and continuing the momentum in 2020



With the dedication of the Bahamian people, we will continue to show the world that The Bahamas is *still rockin'* and urge travelers to add the destination to their 2020 travel plans.

The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism and Aviation is dedicated to continuing this momentum into 2020 to show and tell the world just why they should continue to *Fly Away* to The Islands Of The Bahamas. We have an aggressive sales and marketing

plan for 2020. We are particularly excited about the opportunity to capitalize on Super Bowl LIV happening in our key source market, with targeted media activations during and around key Super Bowl events. Media placements include local broadcast TV, billboards, aerial media, geotargeted digital ads, mobile billboards, booths and captivating digital banners at Aventura Mall and Sawgrass Mall.

In addition, we are kicking off the New Year with increased airlift, exciting events and major award nominations. Additional airlift options in Boston, Denver and Houston will bring visitors to The Bahamas during peak travel season this spring. The Bahamas has been nominated as a top destination for romance, luxury, cruising, diving and more in multiple awards so far this year, proving that The Bahamas is better than ever and *Still Rockin'*.

This is indeed a win for all Bahamians and I wish to personally thank each and every Bahamian, including you the media for contributing to this phenomenal success.

