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## **The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) Charts Path from Crisis Response to Competitive Resilience at Global Tourism Resilience Day Forum**

*CHTA Presents Integrated Framework for Digital, Human, and Physical Resilience Before World Tourism Leaders*

**Fort Lauderdale, Fla. – February 20, 2026** – The [Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association](#) (CHTA), alongside its public sector partner, the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), took center stage at the Global Tourism Resilience Day Forum, in Nairobi, Kenya, presenting a forward-looking framework that positions the Caribbean not merely as a region that survives crises but one that is systematically and collaboratively building the infrastructure to emerge stronger.

CHTA President Sanovnik Destang and Immediate Past President Nicola Madden-Greig anchored their remarks in a single, defining proposition: resilience is no longer reactive; it is institutional, collaborative and increasingly digital. It was a message that resonated with Forum organizer Minister Edmund Bartlett, Jamaica’s Minister of Tourism and founder of the Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre, who framed it simply: “Resilience is the new currency of tourism.”

### **Three Pillars of Modern Tourism Resilience**

Destang outlined a three-pillar model of modern resilience: physical infrastructure, digital infrastructure, and human resilience, arguing that digital maturity now determines the speed, inclusiveness, and competitiveness of recovery.

Drawing on regional responses to COVID-19 and Hurricane Melissa, Destang demonstrated how digital tools function across all phases of a crisis: forecasting demand and modeling risk scenarios before a storm; enabling real-time guest communication, satellite connectivity, and cloud-based operations during it; and powering dynamic pricing, CRM re-engagement, and digital repositioning campaigns in recovery.

“Digital systems are no longer just marketing tools. They are business continuity infrastructure,” said Destang. “Destinations that are digitally mature reopen faster, restore demand quicker, and protect brand confidence more effectively.”

### **A 25-Year Foundation of Crisis Coordination**

Madden-Greig reinforced that the Caribbean's resilience framework is not theoretical; it is institutional. For more than 25 years, CHTA has partnered with the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) and national tourism associations across the region to build crisis management protocols, health safety readiness, and recovery training into the industry's DNA. That foundation has been stress-tested in some of the most challenging environments in global tourism.

During the pandemic, the results spoke for themselves. Coordinated health safety protocols, regional health safety stamps, and the joint training of over 10,000 hotel and tourism business supervisors, managers, and owners by CHTA, CTO, and the Caribbean Public Health Agency, combined with targeted airlift protection measures, contributed to the Caribbean recording some of the lowest per capita hospitalization and death rates globally, and Caribbean tourism rebounded faster than in many competing destinations.

Hurricane Melissa presented a different kind of test, hitting Jamaica with infrastructure loss, staff displacement, utility failures, and a sharp occupancy decline simultaneously. For a destination where tourism represents roughly 40% of GDP, the stakes could not have been higher.

A Tourism Recovery Task Force activated immediately, coordinating across government agencies and the private sector with the speed and transparency that international partners — airlines, tour operators, and travel advisors — needed to maintain confidence in the destination. A publicly accessible digital dashboard provided real-time visibility into airport, hotel, and attraction status, while satellite connectivity kept properties online, accepting bookings and processing payments where traditional telecom infrastructure had failed. The result was a masterclass in coordinated recovery, one that stabilized traveler confidence, protected the destination's commercial relationships, and offered a replicable model for how public-private partnership and digital infrastructure can shorten the distance between crisis and comeback.

"Each crisis must make us stronger, more coordinated, and more technologically prepared for the next," said Madden-Greig. "The future of Caribbean tourism resilience will not be built from scratch. It will be built from this foundation — one that is increasingly digital, collaborative, and regionally integrated."

### **AI as an Accelerator, Not Replacement**

CHTA's Technology Task Force and AI Guide for Caribbean Tourism, now in Version 2.0, were highlighted as practical expressions of a structured approach to responsible AI adoption. Applications already in use across the region include AI-driven guest engagement, predictive maintenance, revenue optimization, and energy management systems.

"AI is not replacing Caribbean hospitality," said Destang. "It is amplifying efficiency, foresight, and competitiveness."

### **Building Inclusive, Regionally Integrated Resilience**

Both speakers emphasized that resilience must flow beyond hotels into the wider economy. Digital platforms like Jamaica's Agri-Linkages Exchange (ALEX) system, which connects hotels directly with local farmers, represent a model for strengthening regional supply chains. Drawing from research recently unveiled by the CARICOM Private Sector Organization, greater intra-Caribbean sourcing could generate an estimated US\$1.3 billion in savings to businesses while reducing exposure to external supply chain shocks and expanding SME participation in the tourism economy.

"The Caribbean has long been known as a leader in hospitality," Destang concluded. "Now we have an opportunity to lead in something even more important: resilient, intelligent, technology-enabled tourism."

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## **About the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA)**

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) is the leading organization representing the interests of the Caribbean hospitality and tourism industry for more than 60 years. With 32 National Hotel Associations as well as 1,000 diverse members spanning hotels, resorts, tourism providers, and allied partners across the region and beyond, CHTA serves as a powerful voice, resource, and connector for the Caribbean's most vital industry. Through ongoing advocacy, professional development, industry insights, and market intelligence, CHTA helps its members thrive in today's competitive global marketplace. Organizations worldwide with interest in the Caribbean that want to increase their presence and connectivity in the Caribbean Hospitality and tourism industry are invited to join this dynamic community. To learn more about membership benefits and upcoming virtual and in-person events, please visit [www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com](http://www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com)