

95 countries honoured at VFS Global's Diplomats for Peace

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[Event held for the first time in India to felicitate efforts of diplomatic community in promoting peace through tourism](#)

INVC NEWS New Delhi, Representatives from 95 countries around the world were felicitated at the unique 'Diplomats for Peace' event held in New Delhi recently, for their countries' contributions towards fostering Peace through Tourism. At the event organised by the International Institute for Peace Through Tourism (IIPT), heads of several diplomatic missions were also recognised for their countries' exemplary work in successfully undertaking various humanitarian and peace initiatives using tourism, in various spheres of political, economic, or environmental change. 'Diplomats for Peace' was held for the first time in India by IIPT, which is recognised and supported by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, and UNWTO, with VFS Global, the world's largest outsourcing and technology services specialist for governments and diplomatic missions, as the presenting partner. High-level diplomats from 95 countries, representatives from the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Tourism, and prominent senior Indian officials were present at the gathering. This is also the first time the diplomatic community was honoured and acknowledged for its role in supporting the concept of promoting peace across the world through the facilitation of tourism. Countries whose representatives were honoured with the 'Diplomats for Peace' award by IIPT, for particularly creating humane, sustainable and peaceful environments, when faced with political or socio-economic conflicts, or climate change, are Bhutan, Cambodia, Canada, Colombia, France, Germany, Japan, India, Mexico, Rwanda, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom. Awardees were selected based on IIPT's specific set of evaluation criteria and judgment. (Please see full list of awardees below.) A total of 15 countries were also honoured with a special 'Messenger of Peace' recognition at the event. Speaking about the event, Ajay Prakash, President, IIPT India, said, "The United Nations declared 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development and a number of events and programmes continue to be conducted across the world. For over 30 years, IIPT has been championing the cause of Peace through Tourism. The connection between Peace and Tourism is twofold - while peace is a prerequisite for tourism, it is equally true that the growth of tourism can foster greater peace. The prime function of diplomacy is the prevention or resolution of conflict and every diplomat, therefore, is essentially an Envoy of Peace." Mr. Zubin Karkaria, Chief Executive Officer, VFS Global Group, said, "We have always believed that travel and tourism plays a strong role in spreading peace and understanding, and building bridges across nations. Being in the business of supporting global travel and tourism through visa service management, developing Peace through Tourism is a topic very close to our hearts at VFS Global. Being a part of this event gives VFS Global the opportunity to honour the exemplary work done by several countries and their diplomats in building bridges to foster world peace."

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