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Hospitality, Travel & Tourism

POSITION PAPER

*Sector Priorities Arising from the 1st Sector
Committee Meeting of 2026*

May 2026

1. Executive Summary

- The UKGCC Hospitality, Travel and Tourism Sector Committee convened to assess current market conditions, review outstanding sector priorities and identify issues requiring coordinated advocacy. Members reported a market that is uneven and increasingly difficult to predict. While air travel on the Accra- London route appears comparatively positive, accommodation, events and MICE-related businesses raised concerns around seasonality, weak forward visibility, high operating costs, limited conference infrastructure and the need for a clearer national destination marketing strategy.
- The sector's key message is that Ghana's hospitality and tourism ecosystem has strong potential, but its competitiveness is constrained by high costs, inadequate large-scale event infrastructure and insufficient destination packaging. Members recommended that UKGCC continue to engage policymakers on these issues while establishing a private-sector-led destination marketing working group to develop practical proposals.

2. Background

- UKGCC's Hospitality, Travel and Tourism Sector Committee provides a closed member platform for sector intelligence, peer discussion and advocacy. The 26th May 2026 meeting brought together representatives from airlines, hotels, serviced apartments, events, sustainability and the UKGCC Secretariat.
- The discussion built on previous sector advocacy work, including UKGCC's earlier position papers on the hospitality, travel and tourism sector.

3. Key Sector Observations

Observation	Implication for the Sector
Demand remains uneven and highly seasonal.	Businesses are exposed to sharp peaks and troughs, with December still important but no longer sufficient as the sector's main demand driver.
Forward booking visibility remains limited.	Late booking behaviour affects airlines, hotels and serviced apartments, making pricing, staffing and planning more difficult.
Operating costs remain a major competitiveness issue.	High utilities, taxes, import costs and related charges increase room rates and service prices, while margins remain under pressure.
Ghana lacks a adequate MICE infrastructure for major international events.	Large conferences may be diverted to competing destinations, reducing business for hotels, transport, catering, events, tourism and creative economy businesses.
Accommodation supply is expanding rapidly in Accra.	New hotels and serviced apartments may intensify competition and create pricing pressure if demand does not grow at the same pace.
Sustainability is becoming a commercial differentiator.	Hotels and hospitality companies can benefit from practical waste, ESG and reporting solutions that are locally implemented and measurable.

4. Priority Issues for Advocacy

4.1 Destination Marketing and Year-Round Demand

Members agreed that Ghana needs a more coherent destination marketing strategy that moves beyond seasonal December demand. The strategy should identify Ghana's strongest tourism assets, package experiences across regions and support a year-round calendar of cultural, corporate, leisure and heritage-led activity. A working group is being formed to lead the strategy. The working group aims to:

- Develop a clearer Ghana destination proposition, including distinctive messaging, priority visitor segments and marketable routes or experiences.
- Create a coordinated calendar of events and festivals that supports demand across the year, not only in December.
- Promote multi-stop itineraries that connect Accra with heritage, nature, coastal, cultural and regional attractions.
- Link airlines, accommodation providers, event organisers, tour operators and government agencies into a practical destination marketing framework.

4.2 MICE Infrastructure and Convention Capacity

Members raised strong concern that Ghana risks losing major conferences and events to competing African destinations because of limited large-scale conference capacity and venue closures. The sector requires infrastructure that can support plenary sessions, breakout rooms, catering, exhibitions, delegate movement and event logistics at international standards.

- Prioritise development of a world-class convention centre capable of attracting major international conferences and exhibitions.
- Engage government on the timing, sequencing and communication of venue renovations to reduce disruption to the events value chain.
- Recognise MICE as a cross-sector economic driver that supports hotels, airlines, transport, catering, tourism, creative industries and local artisans.

4.3 Cost of Doing Business and Sector Competitiveness

- Members highlighted that the high cost of doing business directly affects Ghana's competitiveness as a destination. Utilities, VAT, import duties, taxes and the cost of imported materials place pressure on operators and contribute to perceptions that accommodation and hospitality services in Accra are expensive relative to the quality delivered.
- Engage relevant ministries and agencies on the cumulative cost burden facing hotels, serviced apartments, event companies and tourism businesses.
- Advocate for a review of sector-sensitive taxes, duties and charges that affect pricing and destination competitiveness.
- Support a policy conversation on how reducing operating costs can improve value for visitors while protecting business margins and jobs.

4.4 Market Intelligence, Supply Growth and Standards

- The sector discussed the rapid growth in hotels and serviced apartments, particularly in Accra. Members noted that additional supply can be positive if demand grows, but that unmanaged oversupply may drive price competition, weaken profitability and damage destination reputation.
- Encourage better market intelligence on accommodation supply, demand trends, occupancy patterns and visitor segments.
- Support dialogue on service standards, customer experience and value for money across formal and informal accommodation providers.
- Monitor the impact of serviced apartments and short-term rentals on hotels, destination pricing and consumer perception.

4.5 Sustainability and Waste Management

- The meeting identified sustainability as both a reputational and operational opportunity. Agri Mercarb, a Ghanaian sustainability-focused enterprise specialising in the conversion of organic waste into agricultural inputs through black soldier fly technology, presented a pilot model for the hospitality sector. The initiative would support hotels to improve waste segregation, reduce landfill disposal and generate measurable sustainability metrics for reporting and stakeholder engagement.
- The pilot aims to:
 - Encourage hotels and hospitality operators to participate in practical waste audit and recovery pilots.
 - Support locally implemented ESG solutions that produce measurable quarterly data.
 - Position sustainability as part of Ghana's destination value proposition, particularly for environmentally conscious travellers and corporate clients.

5. Summary

- Hospitality, travel and tourism should be treated as a strategic export and employment sector rather than only a consumption sector.
- Ghana requires a credible year-round destination marketing plan that is implemented with private sector participation.
- A world-class convention centre and reliable event infrastructure are essential to compete for major international conferences.
- The cumulative cost of utilities, taxes and import duties affects destination pricing, margins, service quality and Ghana's competitiveness.
- Policy decisions relating to public venues should consider the full value chain impact on hotels, events, transport, catering, tourism, creative industries and local suppliers.

6. Conclusion

- The meeting confirmed that Ghana's hospitality, travel and tourism sector has significant growth potential, but requires a more coordinated policy and market development approach.
- UKGCC will move forward with the establishment of a Destination Marketing Working Group to develop actionable proposals for the sector. Businesses, industry experts and stakeholders interested in contributing to this effort are encouraged to engage with the Chamber. Through its sector committees, advocacy platform, government engagements and business network, UKGCC remains committed to creating opportunities for collaboration and growth across Ghana's hospitality, travel and tourism ecosystem.



















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