

## Shaikha Al Nowais nominated as first female UN Tourism head

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Dhaka: The UN Tourism Executive Council met for a milestone session to build on the legacy of the last eight years. Meeting for its 123rd session, the Council assessed progress made around the priorities of innovation, investments, and education and looked ahead with the nomination of Shaikha Al Nowais as new Secretary-General from 2026. Upon confirmation by the UN Tourism General Assembly, Shaikha Al Nowais will become the first woman to hold the position.

Following protocol, the Council elected Shaikha Al Nowais as the next Secretary-General, to begin in January 2026. Her nomination will be put to the UN Tourism General Assembly for their approval. The nomination represents a landmark first for the sector, as the first woman leader of UN Tourism in its 50-year history.

Shaikha Nasser Al Nowais is an Emirati business leader with over 16 years of experience in global hospitality. As Corporate Vice President at Rotana

Hotels, she has overseen owner relations across the Middle East, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Turkey.

A graduate of Zayed University in Finance, she also chairs the Abu Dhabi Chamber's Tourism Working Group and serves on the boards of the Abu Dhabi Businesswomen Council and Les Roches Hospitality Academy.

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