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**Meetings Mean Business in Costa Rica: Central American Nation Supports First Ever  
“Global Meetings Industry Day”**

**SAN JOSE, Costa Rica – April 14, 2016** – Last year, Costa Rica received over one million North American visitors who arrived in the country by air, and over 13 percent of these directly associated to business related travel. In recognition of the key role that the meetings industry has on the country, today, Costa Rica joins hundreds of other nations around the world to support the first ever Global Meetings Industry Day (GMID). GMID aims to showcase the impact that business meetings, conferences, conventions, trade shows and exhibitions have on business and communities.

“The meetings industry is of utmost importance to Costa Rica,” said Mauricio Ventura, Minister of Tourism. “According to the World Tourism Organization, the meetings industry offers substantial benefits to the local economy and serves as an incentive for international competition.”

Costa Rica’s natural beauty, ease of access from major U.S. hubs, numerous lodging options, quality services and venues make it an affordable and attractive option for meeting planners. The country’s ongoing commitment to sustainability also sets the destination apart, as more companies continue to move towards adopting and supporting more sustainable practices in their business endeavors.

The country’s first International Convention Center, which is expected to be completed by 2018, will take the country’s meetings and conventions offerings to new heights. Offering over 40,000 square feet of eco-friendly exhibition space, the new complex is designed to become a smart event space for small or large functions and gatherings.

With daily direct flights to Costa Rica’s two international airports, Juan Santamaría International Airport (SJO) in San José and Daniel Oduber International Airport (LIR) in Guanacaste, visitors can spend less time traveling and more time getting down to business.

Numerous hotels and resorts are also offered to accommodate a variety of budgets, while also meeting the needs of today’s savvy business travelers. Many of these, offering flexible meetings and events space to accommodate everything from executive industry events and special interest groups to team-building retreats and corporate meetings with first-class service. Meeting

professionals also have over 170 meeting rooms to choose from for hosting meetings both large and small, coupled with state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment, as well as secure Internet access.

For more information on all the meetings offerings in Costa Rica, please visit [www.visitcostarica.com](http://www.visitcostarica.com).

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### **About Costa Rica**

Costa Rica is located in Central America between Nicaragua to the north and Panama to the south; it is bordered on the east by the Caribbean Sea and the west by the Pacific Ocean. With an abundance of unique wildlife, landscapes and climates this small country proudly shelters approximately five percent of the known biodiversity in the world. In order to protect and preserve its wealth of natural resources, Costa Rica has become a global leader in sustainable practices with protected areas comprising 26 percent of its land mass. With a peaceful spirit, emphasis on education and an economy based on tourism, technology and exportation, Costa Rica offers one of the highest standards of living in Latin America. Visitors to Costa Rica enjoy a highly organized tourism infrastructure among a tropical paradise of lush rainforests, mystical volcanoes and cloud forests and beaches that meet mountains filled with monkeys and macaws. Offering a broad terrain of activities and accommodations, visitors to Costa Rica will find a range of hotel options ranging from small beachside bed & breakfasts to authentic intimate boutique mountain lodges to major international business hotel brands and everything in between. Costa Rica's accommodations offer something appealing for everyone's desires. The phrase "Pura Vida" can be heard echoing throughout Costa Rica from coast to coast. Used as a greeting or expression of happiness, the phrase literally translates to "pure life," however its true meaning is "full of life," which accurately describes the adventure and wonder that await visitors.

### **About Instituto Costarricense de Turismo (ICT)**

Established in 1955, the Costa Rica Tourism Board spearheads the vital task of regulating and promoting Costa Rica's extensive of tourism offerings. The ICT and its partners in the private sector work tirelessly to garner recognition, standardize practices, provide insightful research data and foster cultural development for the country's coast to coast one-of-a-kind tourism products and resources.