



CAP/CSA/24/2
April 2012

UNWTO COMMISSION FOR EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
UNWTO COMMISSION FOR SOUTH ASIA
Twenty-fourth Joint Meeting
Chiang Mai, Thailand

4 May 2012

Item 2 of the Provisional Agenda

COMMUNICATION OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT MEETING

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General submits to the Members of the two Commissions the Communication of the Chairman of the Joint meeting (Malaysia).

**Communication of the Chairman of the UNWTO Joint Commission
for East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia**

**24th Joint Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for South Asia
and the UNWTO Commission for East Asia and the Pacific
4 May 2012, Chiang Mai, Thailand**

Opening Remarks

First of all I would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to our host, Ministry of Tourism and Sports of Thailand, for the warm hospitality extended to us. With these excellent arrangements and your support, the 24th Joint Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for South Asia and the UNWTO Commission for East Asia & the Pacific which is held in this beautiful city of Chiang Mai, I have no doubt that this Meeting will be a highly successful one.

Malaysia also wishes to take this opportunity to thank all CAP members for supporting Malaysia to be elected as the Chairman of the Regional Commission for East Asia and Pacific (CAP) for the next 2 years. This is indeed an honour for Malaysia and we will strive to leverage on the strong foundation laid by Thailand. In this regard, Malaysia wishes to record our deepest appreciation to Thailand for the leadership and significant contributions as the Chairman for the past four years.

Tourism Performance - 2011

Tourist arrivals globally increased by 4.4% from 940 million in 2010 to 980 million in 2011. It is noteworthy that Asia and the Pacific region recorded the highest growth of 6.1% from 204.5 million in 2010 to 217.1 million arrivals in 2011. International arrivals from South Asia and South-East Asia grew by 8% and 10.4% respectively, mainly due to the strong intraregional demand. Growth was comparatively weaker in North-East Asia (+3.8%) and Oceania (+0.8%), partly due to the temporary decline in the Japanese outbound market.

With Asia and the Pacific emerging from recent years of global economic downturn as one of the strongest tourism regions, these countries are now showing firm leadership in exploring avenues to rejuvenate national economies.

Strong positive growth is recorded in several countries in the ASEAN region that reported double digit growth: Myanmar (+26%), Thailand (+20%), Cambodia (+20%), Vietnam (+19%) and Singapore (+13%) mainly due to sustained outbound travel demand from China and India.

Malaysia registered a growth of 0.6% in tourist arrivals and remained the 9th most visited country in 2011. The slower growth can partly be attributed to the relatively high base in tourist arrivals and the decline in tourist arrivals from Europe, United States of America and Japan. Despite the challenges faced, tourism performance in Malaysia remained positive as a new record high of international tourist arrivals of 24.7 million was achieved in 2011.

1 billion arrivals

2012 holds a lot of promise and indeed will be a special year for tourism worldwide. This is the year that we together with the tourism fraternity will celebrate the milestone achievement of 1 billion international tourist arrivals in a year. With a projected growth of 3-4%, arrivals will increase from 980 million in 2011 to exceed the 1 billion mark in 2012.

Long-term Prospects

The overall outlook for tourism industry beyond 2012 is certainly very bright. Based on the long-term forecast study report - Tourism Towards 2030 prepared by UNWTO, the Asia Pacific Region will gain most of the tourist arrivals. The Region is projected to increase by 330 million arrivals in two decades, from 204 million in 2010 to 535 million tourist arrivals in 2030. As such, the Region's global market share is expected to expand from 22% in 2010 to 30% in 2030.

The Tourism Towards 2030 report will also serve as a useful reference in our endeavour to formulate the long-term strategic plan for 2030. It will help us to align our targets, strategic directions, strategies and programmes to harness the potential of tourism. With international tourist arrivals projected at 1.8 billion in 2030, it clearly demonstrates that tourism has such immense potential that every nation can benefit from it. We need to work together to increase our role in contributing towards socio-economic wellbeing and environmental sustainability.

Call for Enhanced Collaboration

Let us as CAP and CSA members cooperate through the sharing of best practices and tourism development plans as a means to raise the level of standards in terms of tourism products and services offerings which, in turn, will increase the overall demand for travel and tourism.

This meeting will focus on developing joint tourism programs and projects for mutual benefit. Also the Meeting will build upon the successes of the previous Meetings and foster greater synergy that

would create a renewed interest in each other's destinations. We would also like to discuss and secure a collective stand among our members on recent developments that affect the global tourism industry and assist in finding solutions for the issues.

Among the possible areas of collaboration include human capital development, marketing and promotion, green tourism and community-based tourism. In this regard, CAP will be working closely with UNWTO to provide the technical expertise and ensure the successful implementation and achievement of desired outcomes. The improvements will create a value proposition that develops stronger relationships among our members and encourages expansion in membership.

Concluding Remarks

I look forward to hear CAP and CSA members' suggestions and ideas on programmes and projects that we could explore together under CAP and CSA for the next 2 years. Malaysia looks forward to your continuous support and we will make every effort to promote closer cooperation among CAP and CSA members. The desired outcome is to increase tourism flows both at the intra-regional and inter-regional levels between South Asia and East Asia and the Pacific.

I conclude by thanking once again the organizers of this meeting, our colleagues in UNWTO and also the Ministry of Tourism and Sports of Thailand, for making it possible for us be gathered here in this wonderful city of Chiang Mai. We fully appreciate the facilitation and conducive environment provided for us to discuss issues and to propose solutions and strategies geared towards enhancing the growth of tourism regionally and globally. With that, I look forward to a fruitful and successful meeting.

Chairman

UNWTO COMMISSION FOR EAST ASIA & THE PACIFIC

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