



## UNWTO Commission for the Americas

Fifty-fourth meeting

Quito, Ecuador, 11 September 2012

08:30-13:00

Decisions

CAM/54/DEC/ES  
Madrid, 24 September 2012  
Original: Spanish

### Decisions taken by the UNWTO Commission for the Americas at its fifty-fourth session

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MINUTES OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE UNWTO  
COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS

On 11 September 2012, the Regional Commission for the Americas held its fifty-fourth meeting in the city of Quito, Ecuador, under the chairmanship of Costa Rica, represented by Mr. Hermes Navarro del Valle, Chief of Investment of the Costa Rica Tourism Board. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following Member States of the Commission: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, plus Spain as an observer and 4 Affiliate Members: (see detailed list of participants in Annex 1). Also in attendance in an observer capacity were Full Member Cambodia and the following countries: Barbados, Belize, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago, as well as representatives of the OAS.

**I. Provisional Agenda**

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Communication of the Chairman of the Commission (**Costa Rica**)
3. Preliminary remarks of the Secretary-General
4. Global and regional tourism performance, perspectives for 2012, and preview report on tourism towards 2030
5. Report on the implementation of the Programme of Work 2010-2011
6. Report on the implementation of the Programme of Work 2012-2013
  - 6.1. Global activities:
    - 6.1.1. UNWTO institutional image
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7. Election of the Programme and Budget Committee members
8. Place and date of the fifty-fifth Regional Commission Meeting for the Americas

## **2. Communication of the Chairman of the Commission**

[\(Document CAM/54/2\)](#)

In the communication of the Chairman of the Commission, Costa Rica expressed gratitude, on behalf of all the participants, for the hospitality of the authorities of Ecuador and congratulated the Minister of Tourism of Ecuador on the initiative to further the concept of "Conscious Tourism". In his message the Chairman highlighted the characteristics possessed by tourism from the perspective of pleasure, well-being, and regardless of "borders or nationalities".

## **3. Preliminary remarks of the Secretary-General**

[\(Document CAM/54/3\)](#)

The preliminary remarks of the Secretary-General focused mainly on the following points:

1. Updated information on the results of international tourism in 2011 and the outlook for 2012
2. The mainstreaming of tourism in the global agenda
3. The implementation of the programmes of work for 2010-2011 and 2012-2013
4. Administrative and financial matters

The Secretary-General noted that with the record of 467 million tourists travelling in the first half of 2012, it can be said that international tourism continues to be on track to reach one billion tourists by the end of this year. Although the recovery from the global economic crisis has slowed and despite the major political changes in the Middle East and North Africa, natural disasters such as the earthquake and tsunami that devastated Japan, the overall results were above general expectations: International tourist arrivals grew by almost 5% in 2011 compared to 2010, reaching a total of 990 million arrivals demonstrating tourism's resilience to crises.

Discussing the region, he pointed out that South America was one of the subregions with the fastest growth over the past years, posting 9% growth in the number of international arrivals. As for the Caribbean region, arrivals grew at slower rate, reaching 4%, a percentage similar to that of Central America. Meanwhile, North America slowed its performance compared with the results of 2010 (3% in 2011 compared to 7% in 2010).

Subsequently, he referred to the work that is being carried out by the Secretariat with the objective of positioning tourism in a more prominent place in the political and economic agendas, at both the global and national levels. He stressed that two significant milestones have been reached in two major global meetings: The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio + 20) and the G20 Leaders Summit. The **inclusion for the first time of tourism in the final document of a United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development** was the culmination of a year of efforts on the part of the Member States and the Secretariat of the UNWTO.

For their part, **the G20 leaders recognized the role of tourism "as a tool for job creation, growth and economic development"** and the G20 pledged to work "to develop initiatives to facilitate travel to support job creation, quality work, poverty alleviation and global growth", a milestone in the effort to promote visa facilitation.

The "**Global Leaders for Tourism**" campaign has advanced considerably during 2011 and 2012. The campaign, a joint initiative of the UNWTO and the WTTC, includes the presentation of an Open

Letter to the Heads of State and Government from around the world; it seeks to achieve their recognition of the importance of tourism to meet current global challenges. Between 28 February 2011—the date on which the President of Mexico, Felipe Calderón, received the first Open Letter—and the **end of August 2012**, the campaign was joined by **36 leaders**.

Of the 36 Heads of State and Government who have received the Open Letter, **five are from countries in the Americas**: Mexico, Colombia, Jamaica, Peru and Argentina.

Regarding the implementation of the Programme of Work for the 2010-2011 and the 2012-2013 bienniums, he stressed that the UNWTO was present in 114 events in 2011, among which he mentioned the First International Congress on Ethics and Tourism held in September 2011 in Madrid, Spain, the seventh World Congress on Snow and Mountain Tourism in Andorra, and the fourth edition of the T20 held in Mérida, Mexico, in May.

He stressed that the organization is working on three key areas in 2012, such as travel facilitation including visa-related issues, taxation on travel, and consumer protection.

He reported that work was actively being carried out on energy solutions for hotels, with numerous requests from the Member States to become involved or expressing interest in this initiative, as well as activities of the Affiliate Members and the Knowledge Network as an important part of the programme of Members Affiliates. Some of the activities planned for 2012 include the launch of an interactive virtual portal of the Knowledge Network of the UNWTO and a new 2012 edition of the UNWTO Ulysses Awards (fourth quarter 2012).

Finally, the Secretary-General launched an appeal for the countries, through their specific national agencies, to take the necessary actions with the OECD so that it reviews the case of the UNWTO in order for us to be eligible as an ODA international body (entities that can book contributions to the general budget as Official Development Assistance).

The Chairman of the CAM thanked the Secretary-General for his remarks and invited those present to make their comments. With no further statements forthcoming, the meeting moved on to the next agenda item.

#### **4. Global and regional tourism performance, perspectives for 2012, and preview report on tourism towards 2030**

In relation to the situation of the world and regional tourism, the Regional Director for the Americas gave a presentation on the results of 2011, the trends for 2012 and gave a preview of the findings of the report Tourism Towards 2030 (click [here](#) to see the presentation).

After the presentation by the Regional Director, numerous delegations took the floor. From the extensive exchange that ensued, seven themes emerged which delegations agreed should form part of the future programme of work of the Regional Programme. The topics considered as having the highest priority were the following:

- Domestic tourism
- Tourism satellite account

- The importance of “multi-destination”
- Image branding
- Intraregional movements (flows)
- Energy solutions for hotels
- Accessibility for persons with reduced mobility

## 5. Report on the implementation of the UNWTO Programme of Work 2010-2011 ([Document CAM/54/5](#))

The Executive Director for Competitiveness, External Relations and Partnerships presented this document and reported that it focuses on the **most prominent aspects** of the work carried out by the Organization during the past biennium. The following structure corresponds to that of the document of the programme of work and budget (A/18/15) approved by the eighteenth session of the General Assembly in Astana, Kazakhstan, revolving around two strategic objectives: **improving competitiveness and increasing sustainability**.

With regard to improving competitiveness he mentioned the **New Compendium of Tourism Statistics** which responds to (1) the requests of the Member States of the UNWTO to expand its focus and to include a more complete set of indicators, in particular on domestic tourism, tourism industries and employment; and (2) the need to increase the international comparability of the data in these areas, with the aim of helping countries carry out more efficient and regular monitoring of the economic performance of the tourism sector.

During this period regional training programmes in statistics were carried out for English-speaking Africa (programme completed in August 2010), for the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Georgia (ongoing) and Asia-Pacific (ending March 2012).

**With regard to the measurement of tourism at the subnational level (INRouTe):** The UNWTO has initiated a series of activities related to the measurement of tourism at the subnational level in terms of visitor flows, tourism and territory and economic contribution.

A series of studies has been published on **outbound tourism**: outbound tourism from China to Africa and outbound tourism from Spain to (1) Africa and the Middle East, and (2) the Americas (see Annex 1). These reports are designed to help receiving countries to better understand major generating markets, such as their size, characteristics, needs and what their expectations are.

The UNWTO disseminated its **crisis communication toolkit**, a step-by-step guide that helps destinations prepare crisis communication plans and limit the impact of crises on their tourism sector. In addition, several workshops have been held on risk prevention and crisis management communication, drawing on lessons learned from past events, such as the influenza pandemic (H1N1) of 2009.

The use of georeferences was also an important aspect of the work of the UNWTO during the biennium, which culminated in the adoption of a recommendation of the General Assembly on the subject at its nineteenth session.

In terms of increasing **sustainability**, he mentioned the creation of the **UN Steering Committee on Tourism for Development**, where the UNWTO has taken charge of tourism and sustainable development in an alliance of nine agencies and programmes of the United Nations. Simultaneously, as a founding and permanent member of the **Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)**, the UNWTO

continued to promote the dissemination of the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria.

The UNWTO has partnered with UNEP to develop the **chapter on tourism of the Green Economy Report**. This report, in which tourism is one of the ten key sectors for the transformation to a green economy, is an important step in the establishment of a new global economic model.

The **International Year of Biodiversity, 2010**, served as the stage for various activities, including both research studies and events, notable among which are those related to **World Tourism Day 2010**, in close collaboration with the **UNWTO Consulting Unit on Biodiversity and Tourism**, in Bonn, Germany.

With regard to **tourism and poverty reduction**: The UNWTO carried out **ST-EP projects in 31 countries**. In general terms, it is important to point out the growing participation of **UNWTO Volunteers**. Through partnerships, the UNWTO-Themis Foundation trained young professionals from local communities to provide them with the ability to implement business initiatives.

Furthermore, the UNWTO has continued to work on the preparation of guidelines, especially in collaboration with the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV), and their dissemination through technical workshops and specific events. The Organization also participates actively in the 4th United Nations Conference on **least developed countries (LDC-IV)**.

**Tourism and climate change**: In the major international conferences and high-level political forums (e.g., COP 16 and 17), the UNWTO continued to call for the **integration of tourism in policy and planning processes of adaptation to climate change**.

The UNWTO presented in 2011 the **Hotel Energy Solutions** toolkit, an online application that helps hotels reduce their carbon footprint while at the same time increasing business profits. Along with a series of 10 publications on energy efficiency and renewable energy for the hotel industry, this application is the main output of the Hotel Energy Solutions (HES) project, initiated by UNWTO and funded by the European Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation.

The Secretariat is preparing a **consultant database** in order to more effectively get to know consultants/speakers, simplify the hiring process, increase the transparency of the process and encourage systems based on institutional memory rather than on individual memory.

## **6. Report on the implementation of the UNWTO Programme of Work 2012- 2013** (Document CAM/54/6)

The discussion of this point was divided into two parts, taking into account specific areas, followed by a document that addresses the activities carried out in the region of the Americas

## **6.1 Global activities**

### **6.1.1 UNWTO institutional image ([Document CAM/54/6.1.1](#))**

The Executive Director for Competitiveness, External Relations and Partnerships reported that since early 2010 the Secretariat has carried out an internal process to streamline and systematize the messages and the external position of the organization in order to enhance communication and improve the UNWTO's communication with its Members, in accordance with the orientations contained in the White Paper.

The aim of these efforts have been: (a) positioning tourism as a key driver of economic growth, sustainable development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and (b) positioning the UNWTO as the leading organization in terms of tourism policy and industry knowledge.

According to these guidelines, the ED gave a presentation on the revised corporate image with the clear objective of strengthening the UNWTO brand.

### **6.1.2 Publications: general use of publications, e-library and new publications ([Document CAM/54/6.1.2](#))**

The Executive Director for Competitiveness, External Relations and Partnerships gave a brief report on the actions taken in the area of publications within the UNWTO, highlighting the creation in 2004 of the virtual library allowing extensive and efficient use of publications and other working documents by the authorities of the Member States.

He also reported that the UNWTO is currently assessing the possibility of decentralized and on-demand production of publications closer to their markets. The Organization thus intends to establish this decentralized system, with between 5 and 10 distributors in the different regions, which will publish on demand, following the example of other international organizations and publishers such as the World Bank.

### **6.1.3 Presentation of the UNWTO Technical Products Portfolio ([Document CAM/54/6.1.3](#))**

The Regional Director for the Americas carried out the presentation of this document and briefly summarized the double objective of this instrument for the Members: (1) to familiarize them with the range of products and services, and (2) to standardize the types of products and services and their implementation methodologies.

He also mentioned that there is a second edition of the Technical Portfolio enriched with the inclusion of new high value-added products on topics of interest to members.

### **6.1.4 Progress report on the Global Code of Ethics ([Document CAM/54/6.1.4](#))**

The report was presented to the delegations by the Chairman of the CAM in his capacity as member of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics and focussed primarily on the renovation of the committee by the regions. Joining the Committee is Mr. Antonio Torrejón of Argentina as an alternate member.

He informed the Members that in 2011 the Organization entered into a cooperation agreement with the ONCE Foundation for Cooperation and Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, of Spain, and the European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT). The initiative was undertaken to follow up on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the United Nations of 2007, with the aim of ensuring its implementation at the sectoral level.

Lastly he referred to the preparation of a comprehensive report on the development of universal accessibility, in the interest of 'tourism for all', which will contain detailed information on existing legal and technical regulations on accessibility, both international and regional, with a compilation international best practices.

#### **6.1.5 CNN T.A.S.K. Group Communication Skills Training** ([Document CAM/54/6.1.5](#))

The Regional Director for the Americas said that, as part of the collaboration between UNWTO and CNN, CNN TASK is making available to UNWTO members the possibility of holding communication workshops tailored to local/regional needs. Information on the possible modules of the workshops (including topics such as media relations, branding or social media) is available in the materials distributed, and interested countries were invited to direct their requests to the Regional Programme which, in coordination with the UNWTO Communication Programme and CNN TASK, will send them a concrete proposal.

### **6.2 Regional activities in the Americas** ([Document CAM/54/6.2](#))

The Regional Director discussed what the Regional Programme had carried out and the activities that took place in the region. He highlighted the presentation of the Open Letter to the leaders of Jamaica, Peru and Argentina as part of the global campaign for mainstreaming tourism in the global agenda, joining Mexico and Colombia, which had signed on to the campaign the previous year. Also mentioned was the T20 Ministers meeting in Mexico, followed by the first Regional Summit of the WTTC, the seminars held in Lima, Peru, the Themis Foundation courses in Mexico and Argentina, as well as meetings and visits that were made to the UNWTO headquarters by several delegations.

Subsequently, the following points of the programme of general activities were noted:

- **The Agreement with EOI (Escuela de Organización Industrial) of Spain**, with emphasis on the holding of an "Executive Master's" programme in Tourism. The Regional Director invited the Member States to enrol their officials in this important course and consider the possibility of granting scholarships to support them.
- **Cooperation Agreement between UNWTO and the OAS**, signed on the occasion of the Meeting of the CAM in Asunción, Paraguay, in May 2011 and that includes closer cooperation with that organization in tourism.
- **The holding of the next PRACTICUM which will take place in the UNWTO Headquarters and the Principality of Andorra from 16 to 23 September 2012**, and that on this occasion will include a workshop on Tourism Communications and Social Networks and Media.
- **Training on Tourism and Biodiversity**: the Regional Director reported that on 24 August the UNWTO sent to all Member States an invitation to participate in this training course which will last for twelve days and which will take place in Germany from 21 October to 2 November 2012

in the Rhön Biosphere Reserve recognized by UNESCO. Candidates must submit their applications by 24 September 2012 and their number is limited to thirty participants.

- UNWTO Course on “**Tourism Competitiveness: Tourism Planning and Management**” to be held in the city of Oaxaca, Mexico, from 1 to 5 October 2012.
- **In the context of the forthcoming session of the UNWTO Executive Council (Campeche, Mexico, 23-25 October 2012)**, two events will be held to which the Members are invited to participate:
  - o The meeting of the Knowledge Network for the Americas to be held on 23 October at 5 p.m. at the Instituto Campechano, to which we wish to invite all those who are registered as members
  - o Tourism enterprises are also invited to express their commitment to the principles of the Global Code of Ethics on 24 October at 8 p.m.

### **7. Election of the Programme and Budget Committee members**

[\(Document CAM/54/7\)](#)

The Regional Director presented this document indicating that the PBC will be composed of two members from each Regional Commission. One is elected in the Executive Council from among the members of the region in the Council. In the last Council, Argentina was elected. The other member is elected by the Regional Commission from among its members that are not members of the Council.

Lastly, he reported that as of the day of the meeting of the Regional Commission, only one candidature--from Guatemala--had been received at Headquarters. During the course of the meeting, the Dominican Republic also expressed its interest in the post. With a view to avoiding a vote, the two delegations met and the Dominican Republic decided to withdraw its candidature in favour of Guatemala, whereupon the Commission welcomed such agreement and elected Guatemala as member of the Programme and Budget Committee.

### **8. Place and dates of the fifty-fifth Meeting of the Commission for the Americas**

[\(Document CAM/54/8\)](#)

The Regional Director informed those present that he had received the candidature of Costa Rica to host the next meeting of the Regional Committee.

The representative of the Ministry of Tourism of Costa Rica confirmed that the meeting would be held in San José on 14 and 15 May 2013.

The delegations present welcomed the invitation extended by Costa Rica.

In their parting remarks to the delegates, the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the CAM reiterated, on behalf of all the delegates, their thanks to the authorities of Ecuador for their hospitality and for the impeccable organization of all the events.

### **Declaration**

Recent international experiences have demonstrated that international sporting events are instruments for the promotion of peace and cultural exchanges as well as for strengthening tourism.

In the coming years, South America, and Brazil in particular, will play a leading role in two major events such as the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

In view of this, the countries of the region have a great opportunity to reinforce their tourism promotion actions by developing national as well as multi-destination offerings.

In this regard, the 54<sup>th</sup> Regional Commission for the Americas held in Quito, Ecuador, favourably considered and decided to support the joint bid by Uruguay and Argentina to host the 2030 FIFA World Cup coinciding with the 100th anniversary of the first FIFA World Cup, which took place in Uruguay.

## ANNEX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### I. CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSION

#### COSTA RICA

*Head of delegation*

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**IV. OBSERVERS****BARBADOS**

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<i>Delegates</i>	Ms. Cristine HOSEN Advisor to the Minister

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Sra. Jane Lemarie C.  
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