UNWTO Commission for the Middle East
Thirty-sixth meeting
Madrid, Spain, 27-28 November 2012

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DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE UNWTO COMMISSION FOR THE MIDDLE EAST AT ITS THIRTY-SIXTH MEETING
Madrid, Spain 27-28 November 2012

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## 1. AGENDA

1. Adoption of the agenda  
2. Communication of the Chairman  
3. Preliminary remarks by the Secretary-General  
4. Markets performance and prospects:  
   - 4.a Snapshot analysis of the impact of the political environment on tourism in the region  
   - 4.b Country briefs: public-private sector perspectives  
   - 4.c Preview of *Tourism Towards 2030* forecasts for the region  
   - 4.d Research programme on emerging markets: Chinese Outbound Travel to the MENA Region  
5. Enhancing tourism’s resilience in the region:  
   - 5.a Customizing the use of UNWTO’s Crisis Communication Toolbox  
   - 5.b CNN Task Group Communication Skills Training  
6. Progress report on the implementation of the Organization’s general programme of work 2012-2013  
   - 6.a Global perspective  
   - 6.b Regional activities  
7. Promotion of a special *Sustainable Tourism-Eliminating Poverty* programme (ST-EP) for the region  
9. Representation of the Commission on the Programme and Budget Committee  
10. Place and date of the thirty-seventh meeting of the Commission
2. DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE COMMISSION

CME/DEC/1(XXXVI)

Adoption of the agenda

Agenda item 1
(document CME/36/Prov.Ag.)

The Commission,

Adopts the agenda of its thirty-sixth meeting, as contained in page 2 of this compendium.

CME/DEC/2(XXXVI)

Communication of the Chairman

Agenda item 2

The Commission,

Having heard the communication of its Chairman, as presented by Mr. Bahaa Mayah, Senior Advisor to the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Iraq, on behalf of the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, H. E. Dr. Liwaa Abdelsaheb Smaysim,

1. Shares his assessment of the situation of tourism in the region and of the importance of the present meeting in this context;

2. Concurs with his suggestion that priority should be given by the Commission to issues related to visa facilitation, particularly for intraregional travel as well as to the promotion of tourism investments;

3. Welcomes the decision of the United Arab Emirates to join the Organization, and

4. Thanks him warmly for his communication.
CME/DEC/3(XXXVI)

Preliminary remarks by the Secretary-General

Agenda item 3
(document CME/36/3)

The Commission,

Having considered the preliminary remarks by the Secretary-General,

1. Notes with interest his analysis of the current situation and short term prospects of international tourism, worldwide and in the region and thanks him for the comprehensive overview given of the programme of work and the administrative and financial situation of the Organization;

2. Commends the Secretariat for the work done in advocating tourism’s contribution to economic growth and sustainable development, with a view to mainstreaming the sector in international and national political and economic agendas and obtaining the necessary policy support for its sustained growth;

3. Invites its Members who have not yet done so to make full use of the Global Leaders for Tourism initiative;

4. Welcomes the priority afforded by the Organization to visa facilitation, taxation and consumer protection issues and decides to address these issues, within the regional context, as part of its programme of work for 2013;

5. Welcomes the initiative to organize capacity building schemes within the Secretariat for officials of National Tourism Administrations of Member States and experts on loan and entrusts the Secretariat with disseminating among its Members the necessary guidelines for the use of this initiative;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to include the promotion of tourism investment in the region among the priorities of the Organization’s programme of work, and

7. Commends the Secretariat on its efforts to mobilize extra-budgetary resources for technical cooperation activities, as well as for other programmes and invites its Members to support these efforts in the region.

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Markets performance and prospects

4.a Snapshot analysis of the impact of the political environment on tourism in the region
4.b Country briefs: public-private sector perspectives
4.c Preview of Tourism Towards 2030 forecasts for the region
4.d Research programme on emerging markets: Chinese Outbound Travel to the MENA Region

Agenda item 4
(documents CME/36/4(a), CME/36/4(b), CME/36/4(c) and CME/36/4(d))

The Commission,

Having considered the snapshot report on the impact of the political environment on tourism in the Middle East and North Africa (August 2012 edition),

Having heard the reports made by its Members on the measures taken to promote and facilitate tourism, as well as on their short-term forecasts for the sector,

Having overviewed long-term prospects for Tourism development, globally and in the region, towards the year 2030,

Having considered the main findings of the study on the Chinese outbound market to the region,

1. Notes with satisfaction the clear signs of recovery and positive performances shown by major destinations in the region, despite the impact of current events on Tourism and that of the economic situation in the Euro zone on destinations in the region that depend on the European Tourism generating market;

2. Notes with interest the information provided by its Members on response measures, taken by both the public and private sectors, including fiscal and monetary policies, travel facilitation and marketing and entrusts the Secretariat with disseminating the country-briefs among the Commission’s Members;

3. Notes the encouraging prospects for Tourism’s growth in the region, provided by UNWTO’s forecasts for the short, medium and long terms;

4. Concurs with the conclusions and recommendations of the Snapshot report, concerning the performance of the main sectors of the industry (Aviation, Accommodation and Distribution), the different segments, products and source markets, as well as those concerning ongoing and planned investments ;

5. Adopts the short and medium term strategic guidelines provided in the report and requests the Secretariat to provide the necessary assistance to Members in their implementation ;

6. Commends the Secretariat on this report and entrusts it with updating it, on a regular basis in 2013 ;
7. **Notes with interest** the findings the study of the Chinese outbound market to the region carried-out by UNWTO, concerning the growth potential of this market and the factors that are constraining it, as well as the recommendations for a collaborative strategy to increase the region’s share of tourism flows from this fast growing market, in the light of UNWTO’s forecasts towards 2030;

8. Invites its Members to ensure the broadest dissemination of the abovementioned studies and reports, through their national travel and tourism professional associations;

9. **Requests** the Secretariat to continue to provide it with intelligence on emerging outbound markets and promising market segments and to organize a round table on the promotion and facilitation of tourism flows between China and the Middle East-North Africa region in 2013, and

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CME/DEC/5(XXXVI)

**Enhancing tourism’s resilience in the region**

5.a. Customizing the use of UNWTO’s Crisis Communication Toolbox

5.b. CNN Task Group Communication Skills Training

Agenda item 5

(documents CME/36/5(a) and CME/36/5(b))

The Commission,

Having considered the guidelines for optimizing the use of the practical handbook on crisis communications, recently published by UNWTO, as part of its Risk and Crisis Management Programme,

Having considered the new capacity building initiative in the field of Tourism communication, jointly developed by UNWTO and the CNN Task Group,

Having heard the presentations made orally of these initiatives,

1. **Notes with interest** that several Members have recently concluded licence agreements for a customized use of the Toolbox that is adapted to different types of crisis situations and **encourages** other Members to do the same;

2. **Welcomes** the special training programme on communication skills, created jointly by the UNWTO and the CNN Task Group;

3. **Invites** its Members who wish to take advantage of this programme in the field of branding, tourism communication and social media, stakeholders mobilization, crisis management and media training, as well as of the expertise, knowledge transfer and advisory services offered in the areas of growth strategies, brand and communications, crisis management, recovery messaging and media campaign impact analysis, to contact the Secretariat, and

4. **Requests** the Secretariat to consider Tourism communication as a priority area for capacity building activities to be carried-out in the region during 2013.

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Progress report on the implementation of the Organization’s general
programme of work 2012-2013

6.a Global perspective
6.b Regional activities

and Preparation of the draft General Programme of Work for 2014-2015

Agenda items 6 and 8
(documents CME/36/6(a), CME/36/6(b) and CME/36/8)

The Commission,

Having considered the progress reports submitted by the Secretariat on the implementation of the Organization’s general programme of work for the period November 2011-October 2012, globally and in the Middle East region, as presented by the Executive Director for Programme and Coordination and the Regional Director for the Middle East,

1. Notes with satisfaction the considerable progress made in implementing the programme during this period and the positive results achieved so far;

2. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretariat for the significant number of activities undertaken in the region, in support of its Members;

3. Expresses its gratitude to the Governments of Egypt, Jordan, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, as well as to the Euro-Arab Institute Foundation for Education and Training (INSTEA) for hosting conferences and sponsoring capacity building activities, implemented during 2012 for the region;

4. Approves the preliminary proposals for capacity building activities and conferences to be implemented in the region during 2013, contained in document CME/36/6(b);

5. Notes with interest that the following international conferences have been scheduled for 2013 in the region:

   - International conference on Exploring new Horizons for Cultural Tourism (Manama, 29-30 April 2013)
   - First conference of South American and Arab Ministers of Tourism (Petra, 12-13 June 2013)
   - International conference on Enhancing the contribution of Tourism to the sustainable development of host communities (Sana’a, October-November 2013)

6. Accepts with gratitude the offer of the Ministry of Tourism of Egypt to support UNWTO’s capacity building activities in the field of Statistics and Tourism Satellite Account;

7. Agrees that the promotion of tourism investment in the region should be included among the priorities of the Organization’s programme of work and entrusts the Secretariat with preparing a comprehensive project proposal to address this issue, that would include a capacity building workshop in 2013, a regional Investment Forum in 2014, as well as a mechanism to monitor and follow-up on investment promotion activities and with submitting this proposal to the forthcoming meeting of the Commission;
8. **Invites** Members who wish to host capacity building workshops on any of the subjects listed in document CME/36/6(b) to contact the Secretariat;

9. **Also invites** its Members to communicate to the Secretariat their priority technical assistance requirements, for inclusion in the Organization’s Regional Programme for the Middle East for 2013, as soon as possible and preferably before the end of 2012;

10. **Urges** its Members who have not yet completed the questionnaire on the Organization’s General Programme of Work for 2014-2015, to do so as soon as possible, and

11. **Entrusts** the Secretariat, in consultation with its Chairman and the region’s representatives on the Programme and Budget Committee (PBC), with consolidating common priority issues of interest identified, so that they may be considered by the Commission and the PBC, subsequently at their forthcoming meetings, during the second quarter of 2013.

CME/DEC/7(XXXVI)

**Promotion of a special Sustainable Tourism-Eliminating Poverty programme (ST-EP) for the region**

Agenda item 7

(document CME/36/7)

The Commission,

Having considered the report on the proceedings of the regional seminar on Sustainable Tourism for the Elimination of Poverty (ST-EP) that was held in Granada, Spain from 19 to 21 September 2012, in conjunction with the special Practicum internship programme for Arab countries,

Having heard the presentation made by the Secretariat of the abovementioned proceedings and of the resulting conclusions and recommendations,

**Aware** of the possibilities afforded by the ST-EP approach to help create jobs, derive income and stimulate investments in communities located in Tourism destinations in the region, with an attractive natural and cultural heritage;

1. **Commends** the Secretariat on the initiative of organising this important awareness raising and capacity building activity and **expresses** its appreciation of its outcomes;

2. **Notes with interest** the proposals for a variety of ST-EP interventions in several countries in the region and for exploring possibilities for obtaining donor support for these interventions, that resulted from the seminar, and

3. **Requests** the Secretariat to follow-up on the abovementioned proposed interventions and to continue to promote the ST-EP programme in the region.
CME/DEC/8(XXXVI)

**Representation of the Commission on the Programme and Budget Committee**

Agenda item 9  
(document CME/36/9)

The Commission,

**Having considered** the background information on the terms of reference and composition of the Programme and Budget Committee, contained in document CME/36/9,

1. **Decides** to appoint Lebanon as the second representative of the region on the said Committee, and

2. **Entrusts** its Chairman with establishing a regular reporting mechanism between the PBC and the Commission, in consultation with its representatives on the said Committee (Saudi Arabia and Lebanon) and the Secretariat.

CME/DEC/9(XXXVI)

**Place and date of the thirty-seventh meeting of the Commission**

Agenda item 10

The Commission,

1. **Accepts with gratitude** the invitation of H.E. Sheikha Mai Bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, Minister of Culture of Bahrain, to host the thirty-seventh meeting of the Commission, together with an international Conference on *Exploring new Horizons for Cultural Tourism* from 28 to 30 April 2013, in her country, as part of the events marking the designation of Manama as the *Capital of Arab Tourism* for 2013, and

2. **Entrusts the Secretariat** with finalizing the necessary arrangements for the holding of these meetings, in consultation with its Chairman and the host country.
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