Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda

ENHANCING TOURISM’S RESILIENCE IN THE REGION

(b) CNN TASK GROUP COMMUNICATION SKILLS TRAINING

Note by the Secretary-General

The attached document describes a new capacity building initiative in the field of Tourism communication, jointly developed by UNWTO with the CNN Task Group. It is submitted to the Commission for information and decision on appropriate ways and means of taking full advantage of this initiative.
BACKGROUND

The first decade of the 21st Century has been exceptional for the global the Travel and Tourism sector. Today, in 2012, with one billion people crossing international borders, the Tourism sector is credited by leading international Tourism authorities for generating over US$ 1 trillion per annum in direct revenues and the stimulation of 1 in 12 jobs worldwide.

At present, with dramatic changes sweeping across the world including:

- Economic downturn and recovery,
- Crisis of confidence in traditional investment avenues, economic structures and policies,
- Political revolution and nation rebuilding,
- Citizen mobilisation,
- National image and reputation redefinition and recovery,

the Tourism sector has become a powerful driver of sustainable global understanding, respect, harmony, investment, trade and of course, earnings.

Nowhere is this more the case than in the Middle East region.

CNN, as the world’s leading global network, has for decades been offering a powerful global media platform to its clients. Trusted by Tourism authorities to communicate the offering and aspirations of the destination, CNN has become a valuable partner within the Travel & Tourism sector for understanding and responding to local audiences – their issues, needs and sensitivities - across all global regions and as a force of growth in nation building.

As a reflection of CNN’s commitment to the Travel & Tourism sector, in May of 2007, CNN International launched the CNN T.A.S.K. (Tourism Advertising Solutions and Knowledge) Group, a dedicated, in-House Travel & Tourism Consulting Service created specifically to support the advancement and competitiveness of tourism destinations. The TASK Group offers Clients access to direct, bespoke expertise to help them maximise the impact of their Tourism objectives, strategies, brands, advertising and highest aspirations.

Importantly, T.A.S.K. is:

- Now working with over 65 nations worldwide, across tourism ministries as well as airlines, airports, hotel groups, attractions, bid committees, and other tourism entities
- Working across all regions of the globe
- Fully complimentary, fully confidential
- For Clients and Non-Clients
- Without any media buying conditions
The TASK offering focuses on the following 5 areas of expertise:

1. **TOURISM STRATEGIES:**

   Global expertise in the development of Growth Strategies for Tourism that drive the overall economic development mandate of the Destination (or Business Plan fulfilment of the organisation).

2. **BRAND AND COMMUNICATIONS:**

   Working extensively with Destinations, Events, Properties, Airlines, Airports and Attractions in the development of new and evolved BRANDING.

3. **CRISIS MANAGEMENT & RECOVERY MESSAGING:**

   Providing invaluable immediate and on-going support to destinations facing challenges to Tourism sector stability and growth as a result of crisis.

4. **IMPACT OF CAMPAIGNS:**

   Analysis of media campaigns to ensure strong ROI on media campaigns and the on-going need for media to truly deliver on qualitative and quantitative objectives.

5. **KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER:**

   Building Tourism sector knowledge, insight and respect around the importance of Tourism through: Presentations, Speeches, Panel discussions, Client training programmes, Publishing.

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**T.A.S.K. PARTNERSHIP WITH UNWTO:**

Since its inception, T.A.S.K. has worked with UNWTO, as a partner, with the clear objective of elevating the profile of the critical role that the tourism sector plays in global development. This has occurred in three key environments:

- within the Tourism industry,
- within the Tourism community of leaders and decision makers, and
- with the general public.

Together, over the past five years of partnership, TASK and UNWTO have worked together across a number of initiatives:

- magnifying the UNWTO's key messages and statistics of the Tourism sector,
- elevating the profile, content quality and activation of international UNWTO Events,
- sharing the knowledge and expertise of the CNN TASK Group within UNWTO and wider Tourism community,
- providing skills development in the areas of Branding, Communications and Media, and
• providing on-going promotion of UNWTO and its efforts in Tourism economy growth, development and mainstreaming.

SPECIAL TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR 2012/3

Working alongside the UNWTO, and responding specifically to the knowledge transfer wishes of the Secretary General, T.A.S.K. has created a Communications Training Programme for UNWTO Members specially designed to:

• Addressing critical communications issues facing tourism today, and tomorrow
• Focusing on all aspects of tourism communications
• Offering 5 unique modules, to be undertaken based on the evolving needs of the destination
• Designed to enable direct, practical, interactive insight & skills development
• Critical for effective tourism destination management and competition

Rolling out from Q4/2012, and with the assistance of UNWTO to coordinate regional timings, member states will be able to tap into the expertise of the T.A.S.K. Group, signing up for T.A.S.K. Communications Workshops in:

- BRANDING AND ADVERTISING DEVELOPMENT
- TOURISM COMMUNICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL MEDIA)
- STAKEHOLDER ALIGNMENT AND LEADERSHIP
- CRISIS COMMUNICATION
- MEDIA TRAINING

Communications is vital to the re-simulation of destination image and arrivals, especially within the Middle East region, which is so heavily dependent on the tourism sector for economic stability, competitive identity, and social unity, and yet where the Arab Spring has caused severe challenges to tourism sector activity, arrivals, economy, investment and spirit.

For this reason, the CNN TASK Group is committed to working closely with UNWTO for National Tourism Administrations in the Middle East – North Africa region to provide the direct support needed in the region to boost national images, and destination visitation.

For more information see: http://www.cnnmediainfo.com/task/ and contact: CNNTASK@TURNER.COM