



Executive Council

Ninety-ninth session
Samarkand, Uzbekistan, 1-4 October 2014
Provisional agenda item 3(e)

CE/99/3(e)
Madrid, 1 August 2014
Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General

Part I. Current situation and activities

(e) UNWTO activities in the United Nations system

I. Introduction

1. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has continued forging strong links with the United Nations (UN) and other UN system entities at the UN General Assembly (UNGA), Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and their subsidiary bodies' meetings, and in various inter-agency mechanisms and networks with tourism sector relevance. The aim is to ensure that tourism's growing potential is fully recognized at the international level as a multidisciplinary sector, contributing to economic growth, sustainable development and poverty reduction.

A. Participating in UN system substantive issues and activities

2. UNWTO was represented at the highest level at a Special Thematic Debate of the UN General Assembly on "Culture and sustainable development in the post-2015 development agenda" in New York on 5 May. A keynote speech was delivered on the nexus between tourism and culture as an immense opportunity to contribute to inclusive economic growth, social development and stability and heritage preservation.

3. On 23-24 May, UNWTO was represented at a Zhongkun Group Workshop of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on "Strengthening South-South collaboration on World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism" in Hongcun Village, China. The workshop emphasized the need for World Heritage (WH) stakeholders to work together to achieve the goals of sustainable tourism at and around WH sites. In particular, the importance of stakeholder engagement with local communities was identified as key to defining priorities and to promoting positive interactions between tourists and residents and provides local community benefits.

4. The seminar entitled, "Saving and preserving World Heritage Cities: Venice and Dubrovnik", hosted at the ECOSOC Chamber in New York on 28 May saw representation from UNWTO. The seminar took place in the framework of the first edition of the Integration Summit of the Economic and Social Council, chaired by the Permanent Representative of Croatia in collaboration with UN Habitat and UNESCO. The event focused on experiences with the promotion and sustainable management of



massive tourist flows to two historic cities, Venice and Dubrovnik (both of which are UNESCO WH Sites).

5. In Mexico City on 15-16 April, UNWTO jointly organized together with Mexico, South Africa and the UN Steering Committee on Tourism for Development (SCTD) the Focus Session on "Tourism as an Engine for Growth and Development" held at the First High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation. UNWTO made the case for tourism's higher prioritization in the development agenda, while higher support to tourism in international aid flows so as to maximize the growing contribution of the sector to socioeconomic development was reiterated throughout. The potential developmental impact of tourism fits well into the ongoing international debate on Financing for Development, whereby UNWTO is actively engaged on a number of fronts.

6. An inter-agency meeting jointly organized by the Secretariats of the SCTD and the Global Partnership on Sustainable Tourism (GPST) was hosted by UNESCO in Paris, France, on 11 June 2014. The meeting discussed options for a coordinated and strategic approach for higher support to sustainable tourism in international aid flows as a means of maximizing the growing contribution of the sector to socioeconomic development and further discussed strategic avenues for joint project delivery and resource mobilization.

7. The project entitled "Sustainable Local Economic Development in the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua through the Tourism Sector" is being developed by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in close collaboration with UNWTO on the technical aspects and funded by the European Commission. The project's main objective is to provide economic alternatives to the communities and individuals in the Caribbean regions of Nicaragua through sustainable development of the tourism sector, focusing on competitiveness of tourism small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and those from related sectors. This will ultimately increase social and territorial cohesion and will help reduce poverty. The project shall be executed under the Joint Administration modality (according to Article 53.1 c) of the Financial Regulation 1605/2002), through an agreement with the UNDP based on the long-term Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) between the European Union and the United Nations.

8. UNWTO recently joined the Working Group of High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the UN Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) on "New United Nations Urban Agenda". As an initial activity, the group will be developing a policy paper on "Urbanization and Sustainable Development" as a coherent UN system input to Habitat III Conference.

9. During the week of 23-27 June, UNWTO participated in meetings of the Final Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the 3rd International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) held in New York. This PrepCom event included, among other issues, a number of side events which serve as contributions to the overall SIDS process; debate on the ongoing preparations for the Conference and the negotiations on the zero draft of the outcome document. The latest zero draft, now being called the "Samoa Pathway", features a substantive section on sustainable tourism.

10. For the first time, UNWTO was invited to participate on 12-13 June, as well as the pre-conference events on 11 June, in the UNGA's biennial review of implementation of its Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which was originally adopted in 2006. The occasion also marked the joining of UNWTO, by invitation, as a member of the Committee on Protection of Critical Tourism Infrastructure under the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), which is entrusted with the task of implementation of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy under guidance of the General Assembly. The main highlight of UNWTO's participation on this occasion was addressing the UN General Assembly on 13 June – quite unprecedented as it was the first time ever that the Head of a specialized agency was given this privilege. On 11 June, UNWTO was also the keynote speaker at an open briefing on the Protection of Critical Tourism Infrastructure jointly organized by the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee

and CTITF, where UNWTO's views and work in the area of travel security were presented to the Member States and other participants. UNWTO took part in a panel of an event on "Violence and Sustainable Tourism: the experience of Central America", on 12 June, jointly organized by the Permanent Missions of Spain and Honduras. It was highlighted that violent crime in Central America, particularly in the "northern triangle" of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, has negatively impacted local communities and key economic activities such as tourism. A joint presentation of the book "Tourism and Peace" was organized by the Permanent Mission of Austria on 13 June in the United Nations premises. With contributions from scientists, practitioners and politicians around the world, this International Handbook on Tourism and Peace provides an overview of the most important areas of tourism as a potential tool for peace-building efforts.

11. UNWTO has been represented, through its New York Liaison Office, and actively participates in the Open-ended Working Group (OWG) of Member States established by UNGA to develop sustainable development goals (SDGs) in follow up to Rio+20 Conference Outcome. The OWG, Co-chaired by distinguished delegates of Hungary and Kenya, held thirteen rounds of formal sessions and a series of informal meetings and consultations, the latest round of which took place on 9-11 July and 14-18 July. In the end, the intensive negotiations by OWG concluded, on 20 July, by adopting a set of proposals for SDGs containing 17 Goals and their related Targets. The compromise proposals of the Co-Chairs were adopted by OWG by acclamation, which are to be forwarded to the General Assembly for its consideration. The inclusion of sustainable tourism has been a most significant achievement, as, after 17 months of consultations and negotiations, sustainable tourism has been adopted, unanimously, as Target 8.9 under Goal 8 on economic growth; Target 12.b under Goal 12 on sustainable consumption and production patterns and Target 14.7 under Goal 14 on Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources.

12. The UN General Assembly adopted by consensus, on 23 April, a resolution on the "Second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries", by which a 10-year review of the Almaty Declaration and Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDC) would be convened from 3 to 5 November 2014 to be held in Vienna, Austria. The resolution also provided for the holding of two preparatory sessions, respectively, on 12 and 13 June, and 2 and 3 October, in the run-up to the Conference, which UNWTO is following and further participating. It encouraged the active participation at the highest possible level of all Member States, in particular landlocked and transit developing countries as well as donor countries and organizations of the UN system.

13. UNWTO participated in the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), Annual Ministerial Review (AMR), and Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) which were held under the auspices of ECOSOC in NY from 30 June to 11 July 2014. Key themes addressed in the moderated dialogues of the HLPF included working towards a sustainable universal development agenda, means of implementation for development, sustainable consumption and production, intergenerational solidarity, assisting countries in special situations, integrated policy making, reviewing progress and implementation mechanisms, recognizing the regional imperative, and charting the pathway for the future of the HLPF. The theme of the AMR was, "Addressing on-going and emerging challenges for meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015 and for sustaining development gains in the future." The sessions focused on topics including the implementation of a post-2015 development agenda in line with the mandate of Rio+20, appreciating regional priorities and realities, international cooperation, reducing inequalities, and making poverty eradication irreversible. The 2014 DCF had four main objectives: to assess how global partnerships for development could work in practice, to examine what the post-2015 development agenda means for development cooperation, to identify ways to increase accountability and monitoring of development cooperation on the national and global levels, and to advance South-South Cooperation. The DCF engaged all key actors in development cooperation for an inclusive and comprehensive dialogue. Sessions covered several topics related to these four objectives, including the

role of Official Development Assistance (ODA), how global partnerships can advance gender equality and empower women, key steps for a post-2015 monitoring and accountability framework, and how to maximize the impact of development cooperation.

14. On 30 June, UNWTO was present during the UN General Assembly's decision to convene High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS in 2016. Acting without a vote, the Assembly adopted a decision entitled "Global Partnerships" on implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS. The UNGA also agreed that consultations should be held during its upcoming seventieth session to determine the modalities and organizational arrangements for the high-level event.

15. Following the successful launch during the 3rd UNWTO Silk Road Ministers' Meeting held March at ITB Berlin 2013, the UNESCO/UNWTO Silk Road Heritage Corridors Tourism Strategy Project is now underway. UNWTO and UNESCO, together with heritage and tourism experts from the five participating countries (China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) are currently implementing Phase 1 of its Roadmap for Development, a guideline document which sets out the objectives and steps for maximizing tourism development for the heritage corridors, while safeguarding the Silk Road's unique natural and cultural resources. Phase 1 is focused on "Situation analysis and needs assessment". A special report is currently being produced and will be published in October.

16. **UNESCO World Heritage Committee** recently inscribed (June 2014) the Silk Road Heritage Corridor crossing China, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to the UNESCO World Heritage List. The Organization will aim to further strengthen the capacity building component of the route by organizing *The Enhancing Silk Road Interpretation and Quality Guides Training Initiative* in Almaty, Republic of Kazakhstan in late September 2014. Jointly organized by UNWTO, UNESCO and the World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA), this innovative course is to provide specialized training on site interpretation and presentation to tourist guides working along the Silk Road, as well as provide effective heritage management guidance to involved stakeholders. This course is key to establishing the Silk Road as an example of sustainable and internationally competitive tourism development. The initiative builds upon WFTGA's expertise in delivering professional tourist guide training courses worldwide, and aligns with UNWTO and UNESCO's interest in developing common tourism and heritage conservation standards along the Silk Road.

17. As an important outcome of the Rio+20 Conference, the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP) was established and sustainable tourism was among five initial programmes to be developed. UNWTO, with the support of its Executive Council (EC decision CE/DEC/7(XCVIII), par. 4), continues to follow closely the current and ongoing discussions on identifying a "lead actor" to develop the tourism programme.

B. Participating in UN meetings

18. The Conference of European Statisticians (Paris, France, 9-11 April 2014) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) had the participation of UNWTO. The event provides a platform for the coordination of international statistical work and focused on migration statistics and how to communicate statistics.

19. From 14-17 April 2014, UNWTO participated in the Aviation Data Analysis Panel (ADAP) of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Montreal, Canada, to underline cooperation between UNWTO and ICAO in the area of statistics.

20. The 12th Global Forum on Tourism Statistics (Prague, 15-16 May 2014) and a Workshop on the use of Mobile Positioning Data for Tourism Statistics (Prague, 14 May 2014) had UNWTO representation. The Forum jointly organized by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and

Development (OECD) and the Statistical Office of the European Union (EUROSTAT) addressed, among other topics, (a) new technologies as data sources and collection methods: evolution or revolution?; (b) business registers: the cornerstone of a high quality system of tourism statistics?; (c) measuring the tourism economy and labour market; and (d) quality of tourism: competitiveness, sustainability, seasonality.

21. The European Conference on Quality in Official Statistics (Q2014) organized by Statistics Austria and Eurostat (Vienna, Austria, 3-5 June 2014), which included the participation of UNWTO, offered participants a platform for high-level discussions on many diverse quality issues: the challenges on governance of international statistical systems and innovative aspects of statistics production. Some main topics of the Conference covered a broad spectrum like the organization of an international statistical system, quality aspects of policy relevant indicators as well as quality assurance in the implementation of statistical systems.

22. On 16-17 April 2014, UNWTO participated and presented lessons learned on strengthening cross-border collaboration at the meeting of World Health Organization (WHO) on 4th Public Health and International Travel and Transport – Ports, Airports and Grounds Crossings Network (PAGnet) that took place in Lyon, France. The meeting aimed to foster collaboration, information and knowledge sharing within the public health community, airports and ground crossings.

23. A Focal point meeting of the ISDR Inter-Agency Group on Disaster Risk Reduction (ISDR) was held (10 June 2014) whereby UNWTO participated through teleconference and, subsequently, submitted a sector brief on tourism and disaster risk reduction in preparation for the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) 1st PrepCom in July. The sector brief highlighted the importance of addressing disaster risk in the tourism sector.

24. UNWTO participated and presented the preliminary 2014 Visa Openness Report at ICAO Regional Seminar on MRTD (Machine Readable Travel Document) and Traveller Identification Management on 25-27 June 2014 in Madrid, Spain.

C. CEB and its subsidiary structure working groups

25. The First Regular Session of the UN Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held its meeting, with UNWTO in attendance, from 8-9 May at the headquarters of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in Rome, Italy. The session reviewed, among various issues, the ongoing work along three pillars: HLCP, High Level Committee on Management (HLCM) and UN Development Group (UNDG) – financing for sustainable development; United Nations Environment Assembly (23-27 June 2014 in Nairobi, Kenya) and Climate Change Summit (September 2014).

26. The 20th UN Security Network (IASMN) held from 24-27 June included the participation of UNWTO. This was the first time UNWTO was present at this forum where mandatory security policies and features to be deployed in the implementation of UN activities are discussed and approved. It was recalled the growing importance that security is commanding within the UN, in consideration of the threats the UN is now exposed in the global environment. In this regard, UNWTO hosted earlier on 13 June the Security Management Team for Spain which encompasses representatives of all UN entities having an office in Spain which UNWTO chairs, as it is the Senior UN Agency in Spain.

27. From 16-17 June, UNWTO attended meetings of the CEB's High Level Committee on Management (HLCM) Finance and Budget Network (FBN) in Vienna, Austria. Some of the main issues discussed included the update on the latest development with the new Indirect Management Delegation Agreement of the European Union; the UN system-wide IPSAS project – beyond 2015; harmonization of

rules and regulations, policies and procedures at the country, regional and headquarters level in the functional area of finance.

28. UNWTO participated in the CEB/HLCM/FBN Task Force on Accounting Standards through a videoconference meeting, 9 April. The issues discussed were the feedback from organizations on IPSAS implementation and sustaining IPSAS compliance; Co-ordination of Accounting Diversity; Institutionalization of system-wide IPSAS project beyond 2015.

29. The UN Human Resources Network (29th session) and the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) (79th session) both saw participation from UNWTO. Topics such as the mandatory age for separation for staff having entered the Organization before 1 January 2014 and After Service Health Insurance were discussed. Most importantly, the HR network and the ICSC continued the review of the common system compensation package with the aim to ensure that the compensation package is fit for purpose, simple and flexible in its application and links pay to performance.

II. Actions to be taken by the Executive Council

30. The Executive Council is requested:

(a) To take note of the Secretariat's ongoing participation in substantive issues of the UN system and to support the continuation of such participation and involvement in those issues as well as in the CEB subsidiary structure working groups;

(b) To take note of the activities of the Organization in the area of advocacy through joint activities, particularly in promoting tourism as an engine for development and to further support this endeavour;

(c) To support the Secretariat in continuing its discussions with relevant stakeholders on tourism security issues;

(d) To encourage the Secretariat to continue its active participation in the Open Working Group discussions and subsequent activities and processes leading to the formulation of Sustainable Development Goals as part of the post-2015 Development Agenda; and

(e) To note the Secretariat's active participation in the Third Conference on Small Island Developing States (Apia, Samoa, September 2014) and in the preparations for the Second Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries (Vienna, Austria, November 2014) and to continue supporting the Organization in these processes.