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Report of the Secretary-General

Part I: Current situation and activities

(b) Mainstreaming tourism in the global agenda

I. Introduction

1. Positioning tourism's contribution to economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability in the national and international agendas continues to be a major priority for the Organization as a pre-condition for the development and implementation of policies that support the growth and sustainability of the sector.
2. The below report highlights the main actions planned and/or implemented by the Secretariat to address the challenge of mainstreaming tourism in the global and national agendas since the report delivered to the 99th session of the Executive Council.

II. Mainstreaming tourism in the global agenda

3. The **UNWTO/WTTC Open Letter on Travel and Tourism** campaign continues to advance. During the period under review, six new countries have been presented with the Open Letter—Albania, Slovakia, Oman, Spain, Islamic Republic of Iran and Honduras—bringing up the total number of Heads of States and Government who have received the Open Letter since February 2011 to 73 at the end of March 2015. The Open Letter aims to rally support to the sector at the highest level of government.
4. The **sixth T.20 Ministers' Meeting** will be held in the Republic of Turkey on 29-30 September 2015 in line with the G20 Presidency. This will be a unique opportunity to further enhance the cooperation among the G20 countries in the area of tourism and enhance the contribution of the sector to more inclusive economic growth, particularly through the creation of decent jobs. As per the priorities of the G20 Presidency, the sixth T.20 Ministers' Meeting is proposed to discuss how tourism can address the challenges of 'jobless growth', with a particular focus on policies that promote gender equality, youth unemployment, skills adequacy, entrepreneurship, and investment to unlock jobs and growth. To that end, UNWTO and the International Labour Organization (ILO) will be preparing a background document with the participation of T.20 countries.



5. The Secretariat continues to work to **position tourism higher and in a coordinated manner in the United Nations system agenda as well as that of other relevant international and regional organizations**. In this regard, the UNWTO Secretariat has decided to assign a Liaison Officer in Geneva, Switzerland, as of 1 March 2015.
6. Among the activities carried out/planned under this area of work, it is worth highlighting:
- (a) The proposal to designate **2017 as the International Year of Tourism for Development and Peace**: UNWTO is working with Member States to propose to the UN General Assembly the celebration of 2017 as the International Year of Tourism for Development and Peace. Auspiciously, this would come 50 years after the 1967 UN International Tourism Year under the theme "Passport for Peace".
- (b) The **10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP)** adopted at the Rio+20 Conference as a framework for action: Sustainable Tourism is, together with Consumer Information; Sustainable Lifestyles and Education; Sustainable Public Procurement and Sustainable Buildings and Construction; one of the initial five programmes included in the 10YFP. The Sustainable Tourism Programme was launched at the World Travel Market's (WTM) Responsible Tourism Day (5 November 2014, London, UK) with the presence of UNWTO, the lead of the Programme, Morocco, France and the Republic of Korea, the Programme co-leads (see document CE/100/3(l)(e)).
- (c) The **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**: As a result of concerted efforts of the UNWTO Secretariat and the UN New York Liaison Office (NYLO), the current proposal for the SDGs includes several targets related to sustainable tourism under the goals of economic growth, sustainable consumption and production patterns, oceans and SIDS. The next phase of Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGNs) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda commenced in January 2015 and will continue until July 2015 when the Agenda is expected to be agreed upon by the Member States and submitted for adoption by the Summit of Heads of State and Governments to be held in September 2015 (see document CE/100/3(l)(e)).
- (d) **The tourism and security agenda**: UNWTO has strengthened its cooperation with the relevant UN agencies and organizations in this area, including the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), for promoting tourism security. UNWTO had also joined the CTITF's Working Group on Protection of Critical Infrastructure, Vulnerable Targets, Internet and Tourism Security in 2014 (see document CE/100/3(l)(e)).
- (e) **Tourism's contribution to the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS)**: Sustainable tourism is one of the priority areas included in the outcome document of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (also known as the 'Samoa Pathway') with an extensive set of areas for action. UNWTO also played an important role and significantly contributed to several events during the Conference (see document CE/100/3(l)(e));
- (f) The 69th UNGA session **resolution on the "Promotion of sustainable tourism, including ecotourism, for poverty eradication and environment protection"** adopted by consensus and sponsored by a total number of 107 Member States.
- (g) **The UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture - Building a New Partnership** held in Siem Reap, Cambodia on 4-6 February 2015. The Conference brought

together over 900 participants, including over 45 ministers and vice-ministers of tourism and culture, international experts, speakers and guests from 100 countries. The resulting *Siem Reap Declaration on Tourism and Culture* highlights the need to create a new framework for collaboration between tourism and culture, which includes active participation of host communities, visitors, and the public and the private sectors, and sets a series of commitments covering the four key areas discussed at the Conference: tourism and cultural heritage, cultural routes, the linkages between tourism, living cultures and creative industries, and the contribution of cultural tourism to urban development (see document CE/100/3(l)(e)) as well tourismandculture.org).

7. **The 21st session of the UNWTO General Assembly:** The 21st session of the UNWTO General Assembly in Medellín, Colombia, on 12-17 September 2015, to be held on the theme “Tourism: Fostering Inclusive Growth and Social Transformation”, will be a fundamental opportunity to promote the value of the tourism sector in the global agenda in addressing challenges such as connectivity, climate change, development, peace and social inclusion.

III. Actions to be taken by the Executive Council

8. The Executive Council is invited:

(a) To take note of the work of the Secretariat in mainstreaming tourism in the global and national agendas;

(b) To encourage Member States to support tourism’s positioning in the international agenda, especially in the framework of the ongoing UN processes, in particular the current negotiations on the Sustainable Development Goals; and

(c) To support through their representations to the United Nations the proposal of the celebration of 2017 as the International Year of Tourism for Development and Peace to be presented to the forthcoming UN General Assembly.