UNWTO COMMISSION FOR EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
UNWTO COMMISSION FOR SOUTH ASIA
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Nara, Japan
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Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda

REPORT ON
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENERAL PROGRAMME OF WORK

Note by the Secretary-General
The Secretary-General submits to the Joint Meeting of the two Commissions for Asia and the Pacific the document on the activities carried out in the framework of the General Programme of Work.

Introduction

1. This report presents a summary of the activities carried out by the Organization from July 2015 to March 2016.

2. The present document covers the closing of the Programme of Work 2014-2015 (document A/20/5(I)(c)) and the starting of the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-2017 (document A/21/8(I)(b)), both structured along the same strategic objectives: (a) Competitiveness and Quality and (b) Sustainability and Ethics. It is important to highlight that some areas of work already dealt with during 2014 and 2015 have gained particular relevance in 2016, notably (a) Promoting safe and seamless travel, (b) Enhancing the role of technology in tourism and (c) Linking growth and sustainability and promoting tourism as a tool for development. During the first quarter 2016, the Secretariat has already started to focus on these priorities.

Competitiveness and quality

A. Sharing knowledge and experiences and building capacity

3. The UNWTO Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness (CTC) held several meetings with its new composition, both online and in person. The CTC decided to submit some definitions (developed by consensus) to the Executive Council for endorsement. The new Chair, Peru, proposed a new initiative to the CTC members, as well as a recommendation regarding the CTC rules.

4. The UNWTO Regional Conference on Enhancing Brand Africa – Fostering Tourism Development concluded with a call for stronger regional cooperation and increased partnerships as means to build a stronger brand value for Africa (Accra, Ghana 17-19 August 2015).

5. The 1st UNWTO East Africa Tourism Development Forum gathered tourism ministers and representatives from East Africa and the Vanilla Islands to explore areas of further regional cooperation (Mombasa, Kenya, 20-22 August 2015).

6. The 21st session of the UNWTO General Assembly took place in Medellín, Colombia (11-17 September). In addition to meetings of the Executive Council and its subsidiary organs, as well as of six Regional Commissions, it included several UNWTO side events related to competitiveness and tourism:

   UNWTO Forum on Talent Development in Tourism: Investing in Youth / Knowledge Network meeting;

   UNWTO/ICAO High-Level Forum on Tourism and Air Transport for Development.
7. Under the theme “One billion tourists, one billion opportunities”, World Tourism Day 2015 emphasized the impact of the sector on economic growth, job creation and development. More information.

8. The UNWTO Themis regional course in Mexico on “Tourism Destination Management: design of innovative tourism experiences” focused on the improvement of the quality, sustainability and competitiveness of the local tourism destinations (Pachuca, Hidalgo, Mexico, 21–25 September 2015).

9. The 4th Global Tourism Economy Forum took place with UNWTO support under the theme “Belt and Road Initiative: Unleashing the New Dynamics of Cultural Tourism” (Macau, China, 12–14 October 2015).

10. The 1st International Seminar on Multi-destination Tourism Routes aimed to bring together experts and tourism stakeholders from the public and private sectors to debate the challenges and opportunities in advancing regional tourism integration. Tourism routes can also play a fundamental role in promoting regional development and integration (14-16 October 2015, Asunción, Paraguay).

11. The 2nd Euro-Asian Mountain Resorts Conference was held under the title “Paving the Way towards a Bright Future for Mountain Destinations”. The Conference focused mainly on areas such as accessibility, “social and demographic challenges, seasonality issues, and management and marketing linkages with the neighbouring cities (Ulsan, Republic of Korea, 14-16 October 2015).

12. The 2015 UNWTO/WTM Ministers’ Summit at World Travel Market London put a spotlight on destination branding and how it has become an increasingly complex challenge (WTM London, United Kingdom, 3 November 2015). Other UNWTO Events at WTM were the UNWTO Affiliate Members Board, the Presentation of the 1st UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism, the UNWTO-PATA session on “How do young Asian travellers step out of the crowd?” and the #Social Silk Road Seminar 2015.

13. Building stronger partnerships between tourism destinations and the media was the topic of the 4th UNWTO International Conference on Tourism and the Media (Tunisia, 12-13 November 2015).

14. The Congress on Tourism and Security: A forum for facilitating tourism security in Central America and the Dominican Republic was jointly organized by the Ministry of Tourism of El Salvador and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), with support from the UNWTO, and resulted in the San Salvador Declaration on Tourism, Development and Security for All 2015 (San Salvador, El Salvador, 15-17 November 2015).

15. The 4th International Conference on Sub-National Measurement and Economic Analysis of Tourism: Towards a Set of UNWTO Guidelines – MOVE 2015 was dedicated to advancing policy-oriented measurement and analysis of tourism in order to provide operational guidance to entities involved with sub-national tourism destinations (San Juan, Puerto Rico, 18-20 November 2015).

16. The 9th UNWTO/PATA Forum on Tourism Trends and Outlook addressed the theme of “Tourism and the Experience Economy” (Guilin, China, 19-21 October 2015).
17. The **UNWTO Practicum on Crisis Communications in Tourism** provided participants with knowledge, skills, and a forum for discussion on the various crisis communication tools to mitigate the impact of crisis situations and accelerate recovery (Spain and Andorra, 22-29 November 2015).

18. The key highlights of the **China International Tourism Forum** were a series of actions that China intends to take as a continuation of its post-earthquake support in the recovery process of Nepal (Kunming, China, 30 November 2015).

19. UNWTO and the Statistical Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) organized the **Regional Workshop on Tourism Satellite Accounts** (Almaty, Kazakhstan, 30 November - 3 December 2015).

20. The **UNWTO Conference on Talent Development and Education in Tourism** debated the current challenges of education in tourism, the tourism labour market, talent development and tourism and labour policy development (University of Deusto, Bilbao, Spain, 1-2 December 2015).

21. During the **UNWTO Regional Conference and Executive Training Workshop on eMarketing in Tourism**, participants from the MENA region were provided with knowledge, skills, tools and a forum for discussion about current key issues and practices in eMarketing strategy (Doha, Qatar, 13-15 December 2015).

22. The **4th Global Summit on City Tourism** addressed the following issues: new market preference patterns in city tourism, connectivity as a major factor for competitiveness in city destinations, accessible cultural heritage, walkable urban space, quality visitor experience and the impact of the meetings industry and mega-events (Marrakesh, Morocco, 14-15 December 2015).

23. UNWTO held several events related to competitiveness at FITUR (Madrid, Spain, 19-22 January 2016):

   (a) **12th UNWTO Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism**: A total of 17 projects from Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe were selected as finalists from a total of 109 candidacies. The projects were presented at the **UNWTO Awards Forum** on 18 January and the winners in the four categories - public policy and governance, research and technology, enterprises and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) - were announced on 20 January 2016 at the **UNWTO Awards Ceremony and Gala Dinner** at FITUR in Madrid, Spain.

   **Accessible Tourism as an Effective Business Strategy**: The event highlighted cases illustrating that, aside from being a right for all, tourism that is open to persons with disabilities, the elderly and families with young children offers substantial economic opportunities for enterprises.

   **VII Tourism Investment and Business Forum for Africa - INVESTOUR 2016**: The main objective of the forum was to promote the development of sustainable tourism in Africa, while encouraging international exchanges on investment and business opportunities.

   During the **UNWTO & Casa Árabe Ministerial Round Table on Tourism Development Policies and Strategies in the MENA Region: Sustaining Growth through Shocks**, the
discussion focused on current trends and short-term prospects of tourism in the region in the context of a turbulent regional scenario.

**UNWTO Seminar on the Future of Tourism: Innovation, Governance and Critical Paths:** Held in collaboration with the Ulysses Foundation, this seminar discussed qualitative scenarios on the future of tourism up to the year 2040 and beyond.

**UNWTO/ICF Workshop on air connectivity:** During this session, experts from ICF Aviation Advisory (formerly SH&E) discussed techniques and methodologies that will enable destinations to talk to airlines in their own analytical language in order to provide holistic proposals that include business cases, incentive packages and stakeholder commitment.

**2nd UNWTO Conference on Shopping Tourism:** The Conference presented insights from leading shopping tourism stakeholders, offering insight from both the public and private sectors, representing different levels of the value chain.

24. **High Level Meeting on Tourism and Security:** Ministers of Tourism and High Level officials from 86 countries gathered in Madrid to discuss the development of closer collaboration mechanisms between tourism and security administrations to ensure a safe, secure and seamless travel framework (UNWTO HQ, Madrid, Spain).

25. **UNWTO Committee on Statistics and Tourism Satellite Account (CSTSA) – 16th meeting (Tbilisi, Georgia, 26-27 January 2016).**

26. The **UNWTO Panel at the SATTE Tourism Fair 2016** focused on the relevance of thematic tourism routes in fostering regional collaboration and prosperity, and on the tourism potential of South and South-East Asia (New Delhi, India; 29 January 2016).

27. During the **9th World Congress on Snow and Mountain Tourism**, leading international experts exchanged knowledge and experience on the necessity for product diversification through developing sport and adventure tourism, which also helps mitigate seasonality issues and enhance performance (Sant Julià de Lòria, Andorra, 2-4 March 2016).

28. UNWTO held several events related to competitiveness at ITB (Berlin, Germany, 9-13 March 2016):
   (a) **ITC/UNWTO Joint Activities at ITB Berlin 2016: Placing the Kayah State of Myanmar on the tourism map.**
   (b) **6th Silk Road Ministers Meeting:** This edition focused on the importance of public-private sector partnerships (PPPs) for Silk Road tourism development.
   (c) The **5th Silk Road Tour Operators Forum** helped operators gain a clearer understanding of who they are marketing to, and enable them to be more strategic when selecting agents and distribution channels (10 March 2016, ITB Berlin, Germany).

29. The **UNWTO Seminar on Modern Trends of Branding in Tourism: Russian and International Practices** gathered regional and local DMOs from the Russian Federation and other local and international tourism industry stakeholders. It aimed at discussing key trends, challenges and opportunities of destination branding (21 March 2016, Moscow, Russia).
30. The **UNWTO Symposium on “The Potential Outbound Chinese Market for Latin American Destinations”** at WTM Latin America aimed at understanding the opportunities, challenges and lessons learnt regarding the introduction of the outbound Chinese market in the Latin American destinations (29 March 2016, Sao Paulo, Brazil).

31. **10th UNWTO Asia-Pacific Executive Training Programme on Tourism Policy and Strategy.** Since 2006, the UNWTO has convened the Asia/Pacific Executive Training Program on Tourism Policy and Strategy. This year's programme focused on Human Capital Development in Tourism. (29 March - 2 April 2016 Seoul, Republic of Korea).

B. Data, research and guidance

32. Five issues of the **UNWTO World Tourism Barometer and Statistical Annex** were published during the period covered by this report. They included updated analysis of results for international tourism based on arrivals and receipts data reported by destinations around the world, as well on international tourism expenditure data for source markets around the world.

33. **Compendium of Tourism Statistics and Yearbook of Tourism Statistics, Data 2010 – 2014, 2016 Editions:** Statistical information on tourism’s multiple facets is pivotal in advancing knowledge of the sector, monitoring progress, promoting results-focused management, and highlighting strategic issues for policy decisions. The 2016 editions present data for 200 countries and territories from 2010 to 2014, with methodological notes in English, French and Spanish.

34. **Statistics and TSA Issue Paper Series:**

   (a) **Tourism Statistics and TSA Compilation Methods in Asian Countries:** The main objective of the paper is to clarify how the TSA is compiled in different Asian countries. In this research, a questionnaire survey was conducted in order to clarify the development status of TSA, tourism statistics, SNA and Input-Output tables, targeting 11 Asian countries.

   (b) **Computable General Equilibrium Modelling for Tourism Policy: Inputs and Outputs:** This report identifies several features of the economy that determine the size of the economic impacts from any given shock to tourism demand that make CGE model a particularly suitable technique for economic impact analysis.

35. Through a wide range of case studies, the **UNWTO Affiliate Members Global Report, Volume 11, on Public-Private Partnerships: Tourism Development** provides a solid evidence base for the importance of effective PPPs in tourism, illustrating how partnerships across different destinations and market segments can be used as development tools.

36. The **Affiliate Members Report Volume 13: Global Report on The Power of Youth Travel**, prepared once again in collaboration with WYSE Travel Confederation, explores the dynamics of youth travel and provides a set of best examples of public-private initiatives that can help destinations to fully harness the immense opportunities youth travel has to offer.

37. **UNWTO Affiliate Members Volume 14: Global Report on The Transformative Power of Tourism: A paradigm shift towards a more responsible traveller** is aimed at highlighting tourism as a transformative medium for promoting sustainable practices and
more conscious living on the planet. It provides the most recent academic and industry-based research on these market trends.

38. The **UNWTO Visa Openness Report 2015** continues the analysis of visa policies and the progress made in visa facilitation over the past seven years, supporting destinations with evidence-based policy making and helping to prioritize activities within their facilitation policies.

39. The ETC/UNWTO study on **The Decision-making Process of Meetings, Congresses, Conventions and Incentives Organizers** is aimed at DMOs, NTOs and NTAs. It offers wide-ranging overview of the MCCI segments, as well as a comprehensive analysis of planners’ needs and expectations with respect to destination and venues choice. It also includes several best-practice examples of national convention bureaux in Europe, North America, South America and Asia.

40. **UNWTO Mediterranean Tourism Trends, 2015 edition** was prepared on the occasion of the 2nd Conference on Destination Management in the Mediterranean, held in Budva, Montenegro, on 22-24 June 2015.

41. The second edition of the **UNWTO/GTERC Annual Report on Asia Tourism Trends** includes an analysis of the recent tourism trends of Asia, as well as the links between Asian and Latin American markets, with a particular focus on the countries of the Pacific Alliance as new frontiers for further development and promotion of tourism.

42. The **ETC-UNWTO working paper Exploring Health Tourism** is the first attempt of both organizations at identifying a consistent terminology to define and describe the intricate system of travelling for health. In its initial phase, it aims at forming a basis for discussion.

43. Three issues of the **UNWTO/PATA Tourism Updates – Global Trends Shaping Tourism in Asia and the Pacific** were produced during the period covered by the present report. They aimed to synergize the work of both organizations in the region.

44. The **Practical handbook for the integral management of tourist destinations - Concepts, implementation and tools for destination authorities, institutions and managers** outlines an integrated and pragmatic approach to the quality of destinations, and the components that go into it.

45. **Uzbekistan Tourism Insight: Findings from the Uzbekistan International Visitor Survey 2014**: a pilot report providing market intelligence on international traveller demographics, behaviour, planning styles and perception of Uzbekistan as a Silk Road tourism destination.

46. **The Report on Mekong River-based Tourism Product Development** provides a strategic framework and action plan for improving the quality of river-based tourism along the Mekong.

47. Translation: **A Closer Look at Tourism: Sub-national Measurement and Analysis - Towards a Set of UNWTO Guidelines**: 

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Sustainability and ethics

A. Sharing knowledge and experiences and building capacity

48. The **UNWTO Committee on Tourism and Sustainability** (CTS) held several meetings, online and in person. Information on the CTS activities is reported in [Annex II](#).

49. The United Nations (UN) General Assembly approved the adoption of 2017 as the **International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development**. All other activities carried out with the UN system are reported in [Annex IV](#), including (a) the participation in United Nations networks, including the Chief Executives Board subsidiary bodies’ meetings, (b) the activities in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in the framework of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), (c) the 10YFP Sustainable Tourism Programme and (d) UNWTO contribution to the global response to the Zika virus and similar global risks.

50. [Annex VI](#) summarizes the activities in relation with the **UNWTO Convention on the Protection of Tourists and Tourism Service Providers**. The Secretariat, together with the ad hoc Working Group, is continuing the elaboration of a final text to be submitted to the 22nd session of the General Assembly for approval.

51. The **International Seminar on Environmental and Social Tourism Indicators for Measuring Tourism Development** provided practitioners with the insights into ways of identifying indicators for monitoring sustainable performances and development (Modul University, Vienna, Austria, 10-11 September 2015).

52. The 21st UNWTO General Assembly included the following side events related to sustainability and ethics:

   (a) Ministerial Lunch on Tourism, a Tool for Peace and Social Inclusion

   (b) Event on Financing Tourism for Development

   (c) Meeting of the Working Group on Official Development Assistance

53. UNWTO supported the first-ever **Russian Gastronomy Week** in Spain, a cultural and gastronomic celebration of Russian heritage that was organized by the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Madrid, the Federal Agency of Tourism of the Russian Federation (Rosturism) and the International Centre of Wine and Gastronomy (ICWAG) (Madrid, Spain, 1-6 October 2015).

54. The **4th Annual Conference of UNWTO Sustainable Tourism Observatories: Global Tourism: Responding to a Changing World** took place in Zhengzhou, China (14-16 October 2015).

55. The **International Conference on Developing Sustainable and Inclusive Buddhist Heritage and Pilgrimage Circuits in South Asia’s Buddhist Heartland** reviewed the current situation with regard to the conservation, planning, development, marketing and impact of cross border Buddhist tourism in South Asia (Dhaka, Bangladesh, 27-29 October 2015).
56. One of the aims of the 1st Regional Seminar on the Contribution of Islamic Culture and its Impact on the Asian Tourism Market was to build bridges between the Muslim and non-Muslim populations and promote a culture of peace, stability and understanding between peoples (Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, 16 – 17 November).

57. The accuracy and reliability of online consumer reviews was the main focus of the 16th meeting of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics. The Committee also discussed the issue of child protection in tourism and all-inclusive holidays (Paris, France, 16-17 November 2015).

58. The Workshop on Mekong River-based Tourism Development took place in the framework of UNWTO cooperation with ASEAN (Da Nang, Viet Nam, 19 November 2015).

59. One of the aims of the 1st meeting of the UNSD-UNWTO Working Group on Measuring Sustainable Tourism (San Juan, Puerto Rico, 20 November 2015) was to agree on a work plan to develop a statistical framework for sustainable tourism.

60. In the framework of FITUR (Madrid, Spain, 19-22 January 2016), UNWTO organized the following events in relation with sustainability and ethics:

(a) Core Working Group meeting on the Phoenicians’ Route: a consultative meeting of a core working group for the development of a programme of cultural tourism itineraries along the Phoenicians’ Route.

The Spanish Companies Driving Responsible Tourism event examined where the companies of the sector are in terms of their CSR policies and strategies and how they are addressing the main challenges of the future, based on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The neZEH 2016 International Conference “Nearly Zero Energy Hotels, the Potential for Change” (within the framework of FITUR Green 2016) presented what the Nearly Zero Energy Hotels (neZEH) initiative is doing to help the accommodation industry to overcome the main challenges faced in the transition to nearly zero energy – such as the new tool to engage the tourism sector in energy efficiency which prototype was unveiled during the event - and explored contemporary business and economic growth solutions.

61. The neZEH High Level Event “Nearly Zero Energy Hotels for Achieving Low Carbon Growth in Europe” and final event of the project, was hosted by Maria Grapini, Member at the European Parliament (17 March 2016, Brussels, Belgium). During this half-day session participants debated the supportive measures that regional, national and European policy makers can endorse to commit to zero energy growth in the tourism sector, by reducing legislative barriers and introducing supporting measures.

62. 31st meeting of the World Tourism Network on Child Protection: The special focus of this year’s meeting was on Responsible Business Strategies and Child Protection in Tourism, highlighting the good practices championed by the tourism sector (ITB, Berlin, Germany, March 2016).

B. Data, research and guidance

63. The Report of the UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture: Building a New Partnership, held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, in February 2015, gathers
the presentations, discussions and conclusions of this key event that brought together over 600 delegates including over 40 ministers and vice-ministers of tourism and/or culture from around the world.

64. **Module V of the Manual on Accessible Tourism for All: principles, tools and best practices**, co-produced with the ONCE Foundation and ENAT, provides an overview of case studies and good practices which have proven a successful implementation of universal accessibility in different spheres of tourism, such as promotion, market research, travel agencies, transportation, accommodation, training & capacity building and destination management.

65. The **UNWTO Recommendations on Accessible Information in Tourism** highlight the importance of providing access to relevant, accurate and regularly updated information about the actual accessibility of tourism facilities and services to all stakeholders, including to persons with disabilities and special needs. The publication of a reader-friendly brochure is a follow up to the UNWTO General Assembly resolution A/RES/669(XXI) of 2015.

66. The **Affiliate Members Regional Report, Volume 4, Tourism in Africa: A Tool for Development** takes a closer look at the links between tourism product development and its direct application in Africa. It further discusses the prospects and challenges of tourism development for African nations, describes a specific approach for developing unique tourism products and presents case studies of specific projects.

67. The **Affiliate Members Global Report, Volume 12, on Cultural Routes and Itineraries** is a joint publication with an Affiliate Member, the Agencia de Turismo de Las Islas Baleares (ATB). The report highlights current trends in cultural tourism providing insight on how cultural routes and itineraries contribute to tourism development.

68. **Tourism in the Aid for Trade Agenda – Maximizing the Opportunities for Financing with the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Least Developed Countries**.

69. **Sustainable Cruise Tourism Development Strategies – Tackling the Challenges in Itinerary Design in South-East Asia**: Produced in cooperation with the UNWTO Regional Support Office of Asia and the Pacific (RSOAP), this study seeks to spread awareness of sustainable development in cruise tourism, catalyse collaboration across the region and stimulate the strategic implementation of best practices and innovations.

70. **Tourism Stories – My Story, My Community, Our Future**: This book shows how one person’s work has the ability to creatively unlock community value chains, proudly inspire the empowerment of women and revitalize history and traditions of the past to set the foundations for the future.

71. **Case Studies of Traditional Cultural Accommodations in the Republic of Korea, Japan and China**: Cultural accommodations are emerging as a form of tourism product with a great potential to attract tourists combining traditional lodging services with authentic cultural experiences based on the traditional way of life of the host community.

72. **Tourism and culture partnership in Peru: Models for collaboration between tourism, culture and community**: This document undertakes an analysis of the importance of cooperation in three essential areas for the sustainable development of tourist destinations: tourism, culture and community. Starting from a general reference framework, this study
looks deeper into the question by examining the case of Peru, an internationally recognized example of a country attending closely to cultural tourism and tourism management of cultural heritage.