REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Note by the Secretary-General

In the following document the Secretary-General submits to the General Assembly, in accordance with Articles 19(a) and 20 of the Organization's Statutes, the draft report of the Executive Council to the Assembly, which he prepared at the Council's request. It will be submitted to the Executive Council for information at its eighty-first session on 22 November 2007, immediately preceding the seventeenth session of the General Assembly.
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. According to Article 19(a) of the Organization's Statutes, "The functions of the Council, other than those which are elsewhere assigned to it in these Statutes, shall be:

   "(a) to take all necessary measures, in consultation with the Secretary-General, for the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Assembly and to report thereon to the Assembly".

Moreover, Article 20 of the Statutes provides that:

"Between sessions of the Assembly and in the absence of any contrary provisions in these Statutes, the Council shall take such administrative and technical decisions as may be necessary, within the functions and financial resources of the Organization, and shall report the decisions which have been taken to the Assembly at its following session, for approval".

2. As the two aforementioned statutory provisions indicate, the Executive Council is required to report to the General Assembly on its activities, dealing both with the decisions it has taken in implementation of General Assembly resolutions and with the administrative and technical decisions it has taken between Assembly sessions.

3. At its thirty-fifth session, held at Cancun, Mexico, in May 1989, the Executive Council decided on the form and content of its report to the Assembly and adopted decision 21(XXXV) on this subject, which reads as follows:

   "The Executive Council,

   Noting that it is obliged, pursuant to Articles 19(a) and 20 of the Statutes of the Organization, to present a report on its activities to the General Assembly:

   1. Thanks the Secretary-General for the draft of such a report with whose general plan and content it agrees;

   2. Requests the Secretary-General to complete this report in the light of the decisions taken by the present Council session and to submit it for approval to its thirty-sixth session."

4. Since this document reports on matters covered in decisions already taken by the Council, it is being transmitted for information at the Council's eighty-first session, to be held at Cartagena de Indias on 22 November 2007, immediately before the General Assembly session.
Sessions of the Council

5. Since the sixteenth session of the General Assembly, held at Dakar, Senegal in 2005, the Executive Council has held four ordinary sessions, whose dates and venues were as follows:

- Seventy-seventh session, 1 December 2005 at Dakar, Senegal (with the Republic of Korea in the Chair)
- Seventy-eighth session, 27-28 June 2006 at Quito, Ecuador (with Tunisia in the Chair)
- Seventy-ninth session, 20-21 November 2006 at Algiers, Algeria (with Tunisia in the Chair)
- Eightieth session, 12-13 June 2007 at Hammamet, Tunisia (with Tunisia in the Chair)

The Executive Council will hold its eighty-first session at Cartagena de Indias on 22 November 2007.

6. At these four ordinary sessions already held, the Executive Council adopted a total of 72 decisions, viz.:

- Seventy-seventh session: 5 decisions
- Seventy-eighth session: 20 decisions
- Seventy-ninth session: 20 decisions
- Eightieth session: 27 decisions

Analysis of decisions taken by the Council

7. The decisions taken by the Council may be divided under the following headings: organization of Council sessions, statutory matters and elections, administration and finance, the general programme of work, and affiliate membership. Such decisions include both those necessary for the implementation of recommendations of the Assembly, pursuant to Article 19(a) and those of an administrative and technical nature which the Council is empowered to take between sessions of the Assembly, in accordance with Article 20 of the Statutes.

8. As classified, the decisions taken by the Council at its seventy-seventh, seventy-eighth, seventy-ninth, and eightieth sessions are divided under the five above-mentioned headings as follows:

(a) Organization of Council sessions (agenda, dates of future meetings, votes of thanks)

- CE/DEC/1(LXXVII) - CE/DEC/19(LXXIX)
- CE/DEC/5(LXXVII) - CE/DEC/20(LXXIX)
- CE/DEC/1(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/1(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/19(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/26(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/20(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/27(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/1(LXXIX)
(b) Statutory matters and elections (reports of the Chairman and the Secretary-General, composition of the Organization, future of the Organization, specialized agency status, sessions of the General Assembly and election of officers,

- CE/DEC/2(LXXVII) - CE/DEC/9(LXXIX)
- CE/DEC/3(LXXVII) - CE/DEC/17(LXXIX)
- CE/DEC/4(LXXVII) - CE/DEC/18(LXXIX)
- CE/DEC/2(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/2(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/3(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/3(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/8(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/9(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/9(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/10(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/10(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/11(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/11(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/12(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/2(LXXIX) - CE/DEC/13(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/3(LXXIX) - CE/DEC/14(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/6(LXXIX) - CE/DEC/15(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/7(LXXIX) - CE/DEC/25(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/8(LXXIX)

(c) Administration and finance (financial situation, accounts, contributions and administrative matters)

- CE/DEC/4(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/5(LXXIX)
- CE/DEC/5(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/5(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/6(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/6(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/7(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/7(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/4(LXXIX) - CE/DEC/8(LXXX)

(d) General programme of work (programme of work, Programme Committee, World Tourism Day)

- CE/DEC/12(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/14(LXXIX)
- CE/DEC/13(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/16(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/14(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/16(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/15(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/17(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/16(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/18(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/10(LXXIX) - CE/DEC/19(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/11(LXXIX) - CE/DEC/20(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/12(LXXIX) - CE/DEC/21(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/13(LXXIX) - CE/DEC/23(LXXX)
(e) Affiliate membership

- CE/DEC/17(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/16(LXXIX)
- CE/DEC/18(LXXVIII) - CE/DEC/22(LXXX)
- CE/DEC/15(LXXIX) - CE/DEC/24(LXXX)

9. In the following paragraphs, the Executive Council draws the attention of the Assembly to the salient decisions it took among the 72 enumerated above.

Work and reports of the Committee on Budget and Finance

10. The Council approved the closing of the Organization’s audited administrative accounts for the fifteenth financial period (2004-2005) with a surplus balance of 647,249.52 euros, which the Assembly is to decide how to use, in accordance with the established practice (decision CE/DEC/7(LXXX)).

Work and reports of the Programme Committee

11. With its composition of members appointed in a personal capacity and its external evaluation function, the Programme Committee has continued its work, under the chairmanship of Dr. Angelika Liedler (Austria). The Programme Committee has held three meetings over this period. The Council has successively adopted the principles of planning, the general orientations of the programme, guidelines, as well as the draft programme itself (decisions CE/DEC/13(LXXVIII), CE/DEC/11(LXXIX) and CE/DEC/16(LXXX)) and has regularly reviewed the implementation of the programme in progress (decisions CE/DEC/12(LXVIII), CE/DEC/10(LXXIX) and CE/DEC/4(LXXX)).

ST-EP Programme

12. At its seventy-eighth session, the Council approved the composition of the Foundation’s Executive Committee (decision CE/DEC/16(LXXVIII)). At its next session, it took note of progress in carrying out the programme (decisions CE/DEC/14(LXXIX) and CE/DEC/18(LXXX)).

Working Group on Risk Assessment and Management

13. At its seventy-eighth session, the Council approved a plan of action for work in this area (decision CE/DEC/14(LXXVIII)). At its following two sessions, it took note of the activities conducted. (decisions CE/DEC/13(LXXIX) and CE/DEC/17(LXXX)).
14. In its decision CE/4(LXXIX), the Council welcomed the Secretary-General’s proposal to convene a second conference on this subject at Davos (Switzerland), in October 2007, the conclusions of which were to be presented at the ministerial summit in London. At its eightieth session, the Council endorsed the Secretary-General’s approach and underscored the central role that should be played by UNWTO in this area (CE/DEC/19(LXXX).

Feasibility of a legal instrument to deal with the facilitation of tourist travel

15. During its session in Algiers, the Council approved the Secretary-General’s suggestion to set up a working group for this issue (CE/4(LXXIX), and during its session in Hammamet, it took note of the initial results of this activity (CE/20(LXXX).

Establishment of the World Center of Excellence for Destinations of Montreal

16. The Secretary-General was entrusted by the Council with signing an agreement between UNWTO and CED on the World Center of Excellence for Destinations (CE/DEC/23(LXXX), the creation of which was approved.

Affiliate Members

17. During the period considered, the Sub-Committee for the Review of Applications for Affiliate Membership convened at each of the sessions of the Council to transmit to it its recommendations. The Council thus approved 10, 6, and 29 applications respectively for affiliate membership. The Chairman of the Affiliate Members reported to the Council’s seventy-seventh, seventy-eighth, seventy-ninth and eightieth sessions on activities implemented. At its last session, the Council decided to give this body the title of Committee (CE/DEC/11(LXXX).

Officers of the Executive Council

18. For 2005, Tunisia has been elected as Chairman of the Council, with Ecuador and Portugal occupying the posts of Vice-Chairmen.

19. In 2007, the chairmanship of the Council was entrusted for a second year to Tunisia. Argentina and Hungary occupied the posts of Vice-Chairmen.

Cooperation with the United Nations system

20. At its last three regular sessions, the Executive Council has examined the process for acceptance of the Convention on the privileges and immunities of specialized agencies.
Proposal of amendment to the Statutes

21. In accordance with the request of the Chinese authorities, the proposal of amendment to Article 38 of the Statutes to make Chinese an official language of UNWTO, was included in the agenda of the eightieth session of the Council, which decided to transmit it to the General Assembly (decision CE/DEC/10(LXXX)).

Preparations for the seventeenth session of the General Assembly

22. At its seventy-ninth session, the Executive Council approved the new structure designed for the session (CE/DEC/17(LXXXIX) and took note of the signature of the agreement between Colombia and WTO at its following session (CE/DEC/25(LXXX)).