Seventy-third session
Hyderabad, India, 8-9 July 2004
Provisional agenda item 14(a)

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

(a) Report of the Chairman

Note by the Secretary-General

In the following document, the Chairman of the Affiliate Members reports on the activities carried out by the Affiliate Members Committee since the 15th General Assembly.
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I. AN OVERVIEW OF WORLD EVENTS AFTER 9/11

The brutal terrorist attacks of September 11 produced consequences rapidly felt all over the world in the field of tourism. The combined effect of terrorism and the economic slowdown went beyond all traditional response scenarios and tested the capabilities of governments and businesses as well as organizations such as the WTO and its Affiliate Members.

The tourism industry showed its extreme resilience but the nightmare was not over. Transport companies suffered considerably due to the combination of the reduction of international air travelling following an economic slowdown, and the consequences of terrorist threats and conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, together with the introduction of defensive measures at US borders. These conditions coexisted shortly afterwards with new plagues like SARS and the avian flu that affected most severely destinations mainly in Asia, but also in Canada and in the United States as well as in Europe.

The WTO held its General Assembly in Beijing and continued to respond to the crisis through the functions assigned to it by its Statutes which is to serve as a forum for international debate, a research centre and a catalyst for the exchange of tourism know-how. It rapidly deployed the means to carry out these tasks, while preparing to undertake technical cooperation projects in developing countries. One important contribution from the WTO Affiliate Members was the seminar organized during the General Assembly, “Changing Market Behaviour: Impacts for Companies and Destinations”, where member state delegations were invited together with Affiliate Members to identify ways in which industry, destinations, media and governments can cooperate in reducing volatility and restoring growth.

The WTO Affiliate Members met for their first board meeting in Madrid, on 28 January 2004. During the meeting, the Chairman recalled that regardless of its nature, the primary mission of an organization is to define its identity and role(s).

The current WTO Affiliate Members come from all the different sectors of the tourist industry: private, education, public, semi-public, destinations, social, unions, etc., a varied group that reflects the international tourist industry.
The diversity represented in the diverging interests of the Affiliate Members must be both harmonized and harnessed for the benefit of a common goal: the development of the tourist industry worldwide in terms of access, equity and continuity. Such actions will promote economic and social growth and provide ground for the fight against poverty in all countries, but more specifically in developing countries.

Harnessing these differences in the pursuit of the common goal requires a working arrangement that is efficient and flexible enough to allow each member to contribute distinctly, but without distinction to the benefit of all the others.

In this way only will the WTO Affiliate Members be able to fulfil their primary mission: to act as the critical bridge between WTO Member States and the Affiliate Members. Cooperation will thus be fostered and partnerships will be built for the benefit of tourist industry worldwide. The extent to which the partnerships will be effective are directly proportional, on the one hand, to the number and representation of the Affiliate Members, and on the other hand, to the recognition of the distinct character of the WTO Affiliate Members and the fundamental principle that only States have the right to vote and make political decisions.

Recognizing the two differences will legitimize both the industry and governments in their capacity to represent the world of tourism in its entirety.

For these reasons was it decided to put into place, at the very beginning of my term, a new operational structure for the WTO Affiliate Members. This new structure will bring together three councils within the Committee of the Affiliate Members (CAM): the Business Council, the Education Council and the future Destination Council. Though, according to the WTO Statutes, the Affiliate Members have one chairman, one programme of work and speak with one voice.

Finally, during the WTO Affiliate Members board meeting, the Chairman tabled down its vision, strategy and priorities.

Six (6) priorities were presented:

- Membership
- Tourism and developing countries
- Tourism and airport security measures implementation
- Cooperation and partnerships in tourism
- Economic impact and measurement of tourism
- Creation of the WTO Destination Council
I. 1 **Membership**

The first priority should be membership. Realistically, without members the Committee of Affiliate Members (CAM) need not define its mission, vision and action plan or make its accomplishments known because it simply would not exist!

Therefore, in cooperation with the Secretariat of the WTO CAM and the support of the Secretary-General, a strategic global plan of action is already under way and should be completed by the end of 2004. The plan includes a survey of the evolution of the WTO and its recognition as a specialized agency of the UN. It takes into consideration the new global context, which the tourist industry is part of. Observations will be made and solutions will be put forward which will lead to marketing proposals that target both current and new clientele. The study is being undertaken by Tourisme Montréal and *Université du Québec à Montréal* (CIFORT).

I. 2 **Tourism and development**

It is a well-known fact that developing countries do not benefit to the fullest from their tourist potential. Yet, spin-offs from tourism would support economic growth, job creation and poverty reduction in these countries. For example, Africa has 4.1% of all international arrivals but receives only 2.5% of international revenues (source: Tourism Highlights 2003 Edition).

WTO will always have the support of the Affiliate Members in looking at the possibility of creating specific technical and financial assistance programs to help developing countries make tourism a priority to promote job creation and poverty alleviation, in collaboration with international cooperation agencies and development banks.

I. 3 **Tourism and airport security measures implementation**

Based on an initial dialogue with Canadian airport authorities and consultation with Affiliate Member IATA, there should be room for organizing a world conference on airport security to convey the point of view of the tourism industry.

In the context of international terrorism, authorities in charge must adopt measures that will protect the lives of all citizens around the world. Authorities at the WTO subscribe fully to the security measures in place at airports and have no intention of reducing the extent to which they are put into practice.
Nonetheless, it must be pointed out that these measures dissuade potential tourists from travelling by plane. In addition, applying security measures at various checkpoints throughout airports has, in several cases, created long passenger line-ups, thus creating areas that are vulnerable to terrorist attacks.

In an attempt to deal with the difficulties inherent in applying these necessary measures, we will explore the possibility of organizing an international meeting between those in charge of security at major international airports and officials from the tourist industry. The purpose of the meeting would be to make the industry’s viewpoint known to those in charge of security and to offer the industry’s cooperation and assistance in applying security measures. For example, some categories of members (travel agents, tour operators, etc.) could inform passengers of the importance of security measures and of how to prepare for and abide by them. This would reduce the amount of time spent checking passengers at security checkpoints. Other means of applying security measures could also be considered to prevent long passenger line-ups in any given area, thereby making passengers less vulnerable to terrorist attacks.

1.4 Cooperation and development

Through the use of concrete examples, the Committee of the Affiliate Members has expended a great deal of energy over the past few years in order to demonstrate the benefits inherent in cooperation and partnerships between the public, semi-public and private sectors. At the last general assembly in Beijing, a work entitled “Cooperation and Partnership in Tourism: A Global Perspective” was released. The work is a study of the different types of cooperation and partnership that have been formed throughout the world.

It is imperative to continue to pursue this avenue and undertake one or several actions with this goal in mind over the next years.

1.5 The economic importance of the tourism industry

Over the time, the tourist industry has gradually gained credibility as an important player in the world economy, largely due to its efforts to develop and refine a set of macroeconomic measurements designed to take into account economic activity now known worldwide as the Tourism Satellite Account.

Affiliate Members collaborate with government authorities to create awareness of the importance of tourism in the economy. Achieving this goal requires a set of tools designed to take into account the true measure of tourist activity and thus the
close cooperation of the Industry as a sector when calculating the gross domestic product in the country where the tourist activity occurs. In several developed countries, tourism heads the list of activities that create major sources of revenue. These countries include France, Spain, United States, Italy, China, United Kingdom, Canada, etc. Unfortunately, the importance of tourist activity is still mainly known to experts only. The population is often unaware of it, as are certain political leaders judging by the scarcity of financial and technical programs designated for the tourist industry, compared to the primary sector and some categories of the tertiary sector.

I. 6  **The creation of a Destination Council**

The Affiliate Members who represent Destination Management Organizations should gather together and create a Destination Council to coordinate the actions in a more efficient manner in line with the work successfully done by the working group Destination Management Task Force.

The creation of such a council is, as well, a good source of new members. Agencies that promote and manage destinations, be they local, regional or national, should be targeted as potential new members of WTO CAM, in providing them with a structure in which their distinct character will be recognized and where they can most benefit from the industry.

II. **OTHER INITIATIVES**

With a view to promoting dialogue among governments and public-private cooperation, the WTO CAM adopted—during its meeting—the following actions:

(a) The Business Council of the Affiliate Members keeps in high regard the **Leadership Forum of Advisers**, and is preparing its holding in the Americas in the third week of September 2004. The situation represents a challenge for this Forum, which based on past experiences, tries to make predictions on which the WTO and the business world can base their future policies. This is an especially difficult task at this time of change, which is precisely why a meeting of the Forum is more necessary than ever.

(b) The Education Council of the WTO Affiliate Members is preparing with George Washington University, Chairman of the Education Council, the holding of the **Tourism Policy Forum** in Washington, United States, on 19-21 October 2004

(c) The Business Council of the Affiliate Members is preparing, in collaboration with Reed Exhibitions, ICCA and other relevant BC members a study on Business Tourism and MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions), to be completed in 2005
III. NEW ACTIVITIES BY THE COMMITTEE OF AFFILIATE MEMBERS WITH REGARD TO ITS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

III. 1 New information technologies

The study "2001 E-Business for Tourism: Practical Guidelines for Tourism Destinations and Businesses", enjoyed strong demand. Already available in English, French and Spanish, the WTO has sold translation rights for Norwegian, Portuguese, Italian and Turkish. New information and communication technologies are still developing rapidly and are, in many respects, shaping the business structure of the tourism industry, in particular for distribution systems and for business relations (B2B). Up-to-date information on e-business is therefore vital to the tourism sector and accordingly WTOBC is already now planning an update of the most important figures and latest e-business developments to be attached to the study: "E-business in Tourism" (to be published 2005).

(a) Dissemination of the impact of the application of new technologies in the tourism sector and the dissemination of practical guidelines

- The CAM Secretariat assisted the Regional WTO Representation for the Middle East in the preparation of the seminar on “E-Tourism - The route to competitive success”, held in Damascus, Syria, on 27-28 April.

- A second seminar will be held in Bogotá, Colombia, on “New Technologies Applied to Tourism” in cooperation with the Affiliate Member Hotel Association of Colombia, COTELCO, on 27-28 May.

(b) Further development of guidelines, tools to improve implementation and development of e-business in the tourism sector

- A Benchmarking Scheme for Consumer Websites for Destinations has been planned to be developed in relation with the work of the Task Force on Destination Management. The study on the Benchmarking Scheme for Destinations Websites will be launched by October 2004.
IV. **NEW RESEARCH STUDIES**

IV. 1 *The Handbook on Cooperation and Partnership in Tourism published in 2003*

This 2003 publication “Cooperation and Partnerships in Tourism: A Global Perspective” published in French and English, is now being translated into Spanish (deadline June 2004).

IV. 2 **Manual on Congestion Management at Sites**

The Business Council in association with the WTO Sustainable Development of Tourism Department will produce this study. It will provide concrete guidance on the management issues linked to the problems of congestion at cultural and natural sites, as well as in important historic parts of cities. This publication including successful case studies has been widely demanded by DMCs and Business Council members.

V. **OTHER IMPORTANT CONCERNS**

The CAM Board has made the firm decision to use the new structure: Business Council, Education Council and Destination Council (hitherto, the Destination Management Task Force Group), to further improve relations within the different affiliated circles: Education, Destinations and Business. As well, the CAM Board works closely with the Departments of Human Resources Development, Sustainable Tourism Development and Quality and Trade as well as with all the other Technical Directions and Regional Representatives of WTO in areas where Destinations, Industry, and Education should produce synergies to the benefit of the whole sector.

VI - **MEMBERSHIP**

The brochure, the information booth at international marketing events, and the revised version of the website have all proven to be valuable instruments in raising the profile of the WTO Committee of Affiliated Members. More open and regular communication with members--supplying them with minutes of Board or Council Meetings and asking for their active participation in issues like the reports on the market situation--serves to improve relations with members.

Effort has been directed at improving the Affiliate Members private section Web solution, redesigning it and developing an extranet solution for members only
being applied now and in use Summer 2004. A precedent of this private section is the Members2Members solution already in use.

VII - PARTICIPATION OF THE WTO AFFILIATE MEMBERS COMMITTEE AND COUNCILS AT DIFFERENT SEMINARS, PRESENTATIONS AND MEETINGS

- **WTO Affiliate Members seminar**: "Changing Market Behaviour: Impacts for Companies and Destinations" in connection with the WTO General Assembly, Beijing, 21 October 2003

- **Tourism Industry Association of Canada’s (TIAC) 2003 National Conference on Tourism: Navigating the Perfect Storm**: Panellist in the CEO Panel, entitled Eggs & Issues, offering the international perspective. Introduced the launch of joint WTO-CTC study "Cooperation and Partnerships in Tourism: A Global Perspective". 26-28 October 2003, Montreal, Canada

- **National Assembly, Montreal**: Congratulations to Tourisme Montréal and to Mr. Vallerand on the Chairmanship of the Board of Affiliate Members of WTO.Montreal, Canada, 3 November 2003

- **25th Anniversary of RTAs (Regional Tourism Associations)**, Montreal, Canada, 3 November 2003

- **AQFER (Quebec Tourism Training Association)**, 3 November 2003

- **The 12th International Technology, Meetings, Incentives Conference (ITMIC)** organized by Connected International Meeting Professionals Association (CIMPA). Estoril, Portugal, 5-8 November 2003

- **WTOBC Board working meeting** in connection with WTM, London, November 10, 2003

- **WTOBC Seminar: 1st World Tourism Associations Seminar**, organized jointly with WTO Affiliate Members IH&RA, IRU, IFTO, SETE (Greece) and TTF Australia, and hosted by SETE. Rhodes, Greece, 24-25 November 2003


- **WTO Regional Seminar on Tourism Partnerships in Destination Development and Management**, organized in cooperation with the Regional Commission for Asia, Guilin, China, 2-4 December 2003
• **IH&RA 40th Annual Congress:** Investing in People-Changing Patterns in Hotel & Restaurant Careers and in the Global Industry, Panellist. Cairo, Egypt, 9 December 2003

• **ENTER 2004:** Conference organized by the International Federation for IT and Travel & Tourism. Presentation: "World Tourism: Trends and Challenges". Cairo, Egypt, 26 January 2004

• **FITUR 2004:** CAM Board meeting at Headquarters followed by the Workshop on "Congestion Management". 28 January -1 February 2004. First meeting of the newly elected board of the Affiliate Members, Madrid, Spain, 28 January 2004

• **ITB:** “3rd Meeting of the WTO Destination Management Task Force Group” followed by WTO Business Council meeting. Berlin, Germany, 13 March 2004

• **WTO/IFITT Benchmarking Scheme for Destination Websites.** Participation in the 4th working group meeting. Berlin, 12-16 March 2004

• **Seminar on the future of Danish Tourism.** Presentation: “World Tourism: Global Growth and Trends”. Outlook for tourism in Denmark. Roskilde, Denmark 16 March 2004

• **International Day of La Francophonie, Université de Montréal.** Montreal, Canada, 17 March 2004

• **WTO Regional Seminar:** “E-tourism: The Route to Competitive Success”, organized in cooperation with the Regional Representative for the Middle East. Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, 27-28 April 2004

• **Africa Travel Association (ATA), 29th Congress.** Presentation: “Tourism as a Motor of Economic, Social and Sustainable Development”. Douala, Cameroon, 6 May 2004