

**FOR DECISION**

Agenda item 8

**Endorsement of the Executive Council's decisions and activities (107th-110th sessions)**

A/23/8

Madrid, 2 August 2019

Original: English

**Executive summary**

As the 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 taken between Assembly sessions. Since the twenty-second session of the General Assembly, the Executive Council has held its 107th, 108th, 109th and 110th ordinary sessions.

The Council endorsed the Management Vision presented by the Secretary-General for 2018-2019, took note of the new organizational structure, examined the financial report for the year ended 31 December 2017 and 2018, and for the period ended 31 March 2019, thanked the Secretary-General for ensuring the financial stability of the Organization within one year of his mandate and recommended the General Assembly to approve them. The Council also endorsed the draft Programme of Work and Budget of the Organization for the period 2020-2021. At its 110th session also welcomed the fact that United States of America is exploring possibilities to re-join the Organization.

It also called upon Member States to do everything in their power to ratify all amendments to the Statutes and the Financing Rules, with particular regard to the aim of the establishing Chinese as an official language of UNWTO. It also elected new members of its subsidiary bodies and approved several amendments to the UNWTO Staff Rules.

**Action by the General Assembly**

**DRAFT RESOLUTION<sup>1</sup>**

*The General Assembly,*

*Having examined* the report,

1. *Takes note* of the information presented concerning the Council's activities, and in particular the decisions of its 107th, 108th, 109th and 110th ordinary sessions;
2. *Takes cognizance* of the major matters considered by the Council such as the implementation of the programme of work for 2018-2019 and the draft programme of work for 2020-2021, the financial situation and human resources of the Organization;
3. *Pays tribute* to the dedication and competence demonstrated by its Chairs, Argentina in 2018 and Zambia in 2019.

<sup>1</sup> This is a draft resolution. For the final decision adopted by the Assembly, please refer to the Resolutions document issued at the end of the session.

4. *Thanks* the Vice-Chairs, Zambia and India in 2018 and Argentina and Thailand in 2019, for the quality of the work they carried out in the exercise of their functions.

## I. Introduction

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1. As the Article 19(a) and Article 20 of the Organization's Statutes 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.
2. This document reports on matters covered in decisions already taken by the Council in the fulfilment of the functions enumerated in the two aforementioned statutory provisions and Rule 29 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council since the twenty-second session of the General Assembly held in Chengdu, China, on 11-16 September 2017.

## II. Sessions of the Council

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3. Since the twenty-second session of the General Assembly, the Executive Council has held four ordinary sessions, whose dates and venues were as follows:
  - 107th session, 16 September 2017 in Chengdu, China
  - 108th session, 23-25 May 2018 in San Sebastián, Spain
  - 109th session, 30 October - 1 November 2018 in Manama, Bahrain
  - 110th session, 16-18 June 2019 in Baku, Azerbaijan
4. In light of the United Nations mandate to promote environmental sustainability, the last two sessions of the Council were paperless meetings.
5. In order to make the Council's proceedings more efficient and purposeful, in the last two sessions, the review and adoption of the decisions were also modified and were immediately taken after the examination of each agenda item.
6. At these four ordinary sessions already held, the Executive Council adopted a total of 57 decisions:
  - 107th session: 9 decisions
  - 108th session: 20 decisions
  - 109th session: 14 decisions
  - 110th session: 14 decisions

## III. Functions entrusted by the General Assembly to the Executive Council

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7. This section covers the follow-up actions carried out by the Executive Council with a view to the implementation of explicit mandates and recommendations issued by the General Assembly.

### Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics

8. The General Assembly at its 22nd session held in Chengdu, China, on 11-16 September 2017, approved the English version of the Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics by resolution 707(XXII) and requested the Secretariat to take all necessary steps for the adoption of the Convention in all the official languages of the Organization.
9. At its 110th session, the Council endorsed the translations of the UNWTO Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics in the official languages of the Organization, expressed its support for the adoption of the Convention and encouraged Member States to actively engage in the achievement of this milestone for UNWTO during the 23rd General Assembly (CE/DEC/10(CX)).

## Chinese as an official language of UNWTO

10. The General Assembly requested the Executive Council to prepare and implement a plan for the gradual introduction of the Chinese language in the Organization, following the practice on the introduction of new languages in the Organization, with the aim of the establishing Chinese as an official language of UNWTO at the 23rd session of the General Assembly subject to its entry into force in accordance with Article 33 of the Statutes A/RES/694(XXII).
11. Noting the mandate entrusted by the General Assembly in 2017, at its 109th session the Council called upon Member States to do everything in their power to ratify all amendments to the Statutes and the Financing Rules that have not yet entered into force, with particular regard to the aim of the establishing Chinese as an official language of UNWTO at the 23rd session of the General Assembly (CE/DEC/9(CVIX)).
12. Also noting the low level of accessions to Annex XVIII of the 1947 Convention, in the same decision the Council requested Member States to ratify it and explicitly notify the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the application of the mentioned annex as well as to include a specific reference thereto in all agreements concluded with the Organization for the execution of technical assistance projects in their territories.

## IV. Regular functions of the Executive Council

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### Election of its Chair and Vice-Chairs

13. At its 107th session, the Council elected Argentina as Chair, Zambia as first Vice-Chair and India as second Vice-Chair of the Executive Council for 2018. The Council also elected Zambia as Chair of the Council for 2019 (CE/DEC/8(CVII)).
14. At its 109th session, the Council elected Argentina as first Vice-Chair and Thailand as second Vice-Chair of the Executive Council for 2019 (CE/DEC/13(CVIX)).

### Subsidiary bodies of the Executive Council

15. At its 107th session, the Executive Council elected new members of its subsidiary bodies.
  - (a) The Executive Council members elected to the Programme and Budget Committee (PBC) were India and Zimbabwe until the 24th session of the General Assembly. Peru was also elected to the PBC upon recommendation of the Regional Commission for the Americas until the 23rd session of the General Assembly. It endorsed Flanders as the representative of the Associate Members and Instituto de Calidad Turística Española (ICTE), Chair of the Board of Affiliate Members until the 23rd session of the General Assembly.
  - (b) The Council elected the following Members to the Committee for the Review of Applications for Affiliate Membership for the period 2017-2019: Tunisia, Mexico, Thailand, Croatia, Egypt and India, and ICTE as representative of the Affiliate Members.
16. Until the 23rd session of the General Assembly:
  - (i) For the Committee of Tourism and Competitiveness (CTC), the Council elected Macao, China, as representative of the Associate Members and ICTE as representative of the Affiliate Members (CE/DEC/5(CVII)).
  - (ii) For the Committee of Tourism and Sustainability (CTS), the Council elected Puerto Rico as representative of the Associate Members and ICTE as representative of the Affiliate Members (CE/DEC/6(CVII)).
  - (iii) For the Committee of Statistics and Tourism Satellite Account (CSTSA), the Council elected Macao, China, as representative of the Associate Members and ICTE as representative of the Affiliate Members (CE/DEC/7(CVII)).

17. Since the 22nd session of the General Assembly, the Council has decided to provisionally admit a total de 102 applicants to affiliate membership, pending ratification by the General Assembly at its twenty-third session:
- 108th session: 45 applicants
  - 109th session: 19 applicants
  - 110th session: 38 applicants

## **V. Secretary-General's reports on the activities of the Organization**

### **Programme of work**

18. With regard to the general programme of work, the Council took note of activities summarized in the Secretary-General's reports (CE/DEC/6(CVIII), CE/DEC/7(CVIII), CE/DEC/3(CVIX) and CE/DEC/2(CX) and took the below decisions.
19. The Council endorsed the priorities presented by the Secretary-General in its Management Vision for 2018-2019 and took note of the new organizational structure (CE/DEC/6(CVIII)).
20. It supported the initiative for creating an online tourism academy, the UNWTO Innovation Hubs Network and endorsed the UNWTO Recommendations of Urban Tourism to be submitted to the General Assembly for approval (CE/DEC/3(CX)).
21. In the same resolution, it encouraged UNWTO Members to support the international consensus process towards the approval by the United Nations of the Statistical Framework of Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism (SF-MST) and decided not to be part of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) for the forthcoming biennium.
22. At its 110th session, the Council also supported the Secretary-General's initiative "UNWTO Agenda for Africa 2030-Tourism for inclusive growth" (CE/DEC/7(CX)).
23. The Council proposed to the General Assembly Mercosur as the host of the official celebrations for the World Tourism Day in 2020 upon recommendation of the Regional Commission for the Americas and invited the Regional Commission for Africa to recommend to the 23rd session of the General Assembly a host for World Tourism Day 2021 (CE/DEC/11(CX)).

### **Administrative and statutory matters**

24. The Council received the Secretary-General's reports on administrative and statutory matters dealing with subjects such as the Organization's financial situation and membership.
25. At its 108th and 110th sessions, the Council examined the UNWTO financial report and audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017 and 2018, respectively. It took note of the favourable opinion of the External Auditors that the UNWTO Financial Statements for the year ended 2017 and 2018 presented a true image of the financial position of the UNWTO and of its performance and recommended the General Assembly to approve the UNWTO Financial Statements for the year ended 2017 and 2018 (CE/DEC/12(CVIII) and CE/DEC/4(CX)).
26. It approved the adjustments made by the Secretary-General to the 2018 budget structure and appropriations (CE/DEC/5(CVIX)) and the Secretary-General's proposal to utilize the 2018 remaining available Regular Budget budgetary cash surplus and the Regular Budget appropriation transfers recommended by the Programme and Budget Committee members through a written consultation in accordance with Financial Regulation 5.3(a) and 5.3(b) (CE/DEC/4(CX)).

27. It approved the Secretary-General's proposal of using the Project Support Cost available balance to return the advance made by the Working Capital Fund (WCF) to the General Fund in 2014 and 2017 and partially to augment the General Fund in order to compensate indirect variable costs to support the Organization and its priorities (CE/DEC/5(CVIX)).
28. It approved the use of the Project Reserve Fund's available balance as a means of increasing proposed RB budgetary income as necessary (CE/DEC/5(CVIX)) and approved the Secretary-General's proposed funding strategy for the UNWTO's after-service employee benefits liabilities (CE/DEC/4(CX)).
29. It took note of the salary scales approved by the United Nations and applied by the Secretary-General in accordance with Staff Rule 33(1) (CE/DEC/11(CVIII) and CE/DEC/5(CX)).
30. It approved the amendments to the Detailed Financial Rules Annex I – Travel guidelines that came into force after the 108th and 110th sessions of the Executive Council (CE/DEC/11(CVIII) and CE/DEC/5(CX)).
31. The Council endorsed the draft general Programme of Work and Budget for 2020-2021 and authorized the Secretary-General to execute the Programme of Work and Budget for 2020-2021 in accordance with the amounts collected based on a budgetary income approved for 2021 (CE/DEC/7(CX)).
32. At its 110th session, the Council also welcomed the fact that the United States of America is exploring possibilities to re-join the Organization (CE/DEC/2(CX)).

#### **Human resources**

33. At its 108th, 109th and 110th sessions, the Council took note of the reports on the Human Resources situation of the Organization (CE/DEC/15(CVIII), CE/DEC/8(CVIX) and CE/DEC/6(CX)).
34. Further, at its 108th session, the Council took note of the decision of the Secretary-General to designate Ms. Marina Diotallevi as Ethics Officer (CE/DEC/15(CVIII)) and requested her to report on the outcomes of the review of the policies on whistleblowing and protection against retaliation, which is currently underway (CE/DEC/6(CX)).
35. The Executive Council encouraged the Member States to send proposals to the Secretariat for the financing of Junior Professional Officers (CE/DEC/15(CVIII), CE/DEC/8(CVIX) and CE/DEC/6(CX)) and to send Officials on Loan to the Secretariat (CE/DEC/8(CVIX) and CE/DEC/6(CX)).
36. Further, it endorsed Staff Regulations 15(g) and 28 for submission to the General Assembly for approval and approved the following amendments: Staff Rule 30 (CE/DEC/15(CVIII)) and Staff Rule 14(3)(b), Staff Rules 24(3)(a), 24(3)(b) and 24(18), Staff Rule 31(2)(a)(i) and paragraphs 21(b) and (c) of Annex 2 of the Staff Regulations and Rules on the Rules of the Joint Appeals Committee (CE/DEC/8(CVIX)). It also approved the amendments to Staff Rules 15(1), 15(6)(c), 17(1)(d), 24(11)(a) and 24(4).

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