

FOR DECISION

Agenda item 13

World Tourism Day: information on the activities of 2018 and 2019, adoption of themes and designation of the host countries for 2020 and 2021

A/23/13 rev.1
Madrid, 23 August 2019
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Executive summary

The General Assembly is requested to ratify the recommendation of the 110th session of the UNWTO Executive Council (Baku, Azerbaijan, 16-18 June 2019), to designate MERCOSUR (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay) as the host for the official celebration of World Tourism Day 2020, under the theme "Tourism and Rural Development". This proposal follows the recommendation of the Regional Commission for the Americas.

The recommendation of a host country for World Tourism Day 2021 will be made by the Regional Commission for Africa (10 September 2019, Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation). The General Assembly is requested to ratify the nomination of the host country to emerge out of that meeting, as well as the corresponding theme.

Action by the General Assembly

DRAFT RESOLUTION¹

The General Assembly

1. *Takes note* of the report submitted by the Secretary-General on the observance of World Tourism Day in 2018 and the preparations in place for the celebration of World Tourism Day 2019;
2. *Encourages* Members States to celebrate World Tourism Day 2019 and promote the role of tourism in contributing to supporting better education in support of better quality employment in tourism and the UN decent work agenda;
3. *Expresses its gratitude* to the Governments of Hungary and India for hosting the official celebrations of World Tourism Day 2018 and 2019;
4. *Approves* the theme for World Tourism Day 2020, "Tourism and Rural Development", and designates MERCOSUR to host the official celebrations of World Tourism Day in 2020; and
5. *Approves* the theme for World Tourism Day 2021, "...", and designates ... to host the official celebrations of World Tourism Day in 2021.

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

I. **World Tourism Day: 2018 celebrations and preparations for 2019**

1. The 22nd session of the General Assembly designated Hungary and India as World Tourism Day (WTD) host countries for 2018 and 2019 and adopted the following themes for the official celebrations:
 - World Tourism Day 2018: Tourism and the Digital Transformation
 - World Tourism Day 2019: Tourism and Jobs: A Better Future for All

A. **World Tourism Day 2018**

2. Organized by UNWTO and the Government of Hungary, the official WTD 2018 celebrations took place in the city of Budapest. Key amongst the conference conclusions was that political support is central to putting tourism at the centre of the global innovation and digital agenda. The event harboured this sentiment, attracting the participation of ministers from several countries and high-level political representatives at all levels of government, from local to national, as well as tourism's main entrepreneurs, investors and innovators.
3. During the official celebration, the 20 semi-finalists of the 1st UNWTO Tourism Startup Competition gave pitches to investors and tourism leaders of their innovative projects with potential to disrupt the sector. They were selected from over 3,000 applicants from 133 countries. The competition was launched by UNWTO and Spanish tourism leader Globalia to find projects that harness innovation and can change the way we travel.
4. WTD 2018 introduced a new seminar-based format, and crucial insights into the actors and initiatives leading the digital transformation of the tourism sector. This refreshed format is an acknowledgement of the effort required for participants to attend an event of this nature. It is furthermore consistent with the overall efforts around innovating how UNWTO delivers value to its members and the tourism sector.
5. The renewal of WTD with its strong focus on the relevance for participants is reflected in the programme featured on the [WTD site](#). This is consistent with UNWTO's concern for providing concrete and actionable objectives to take away, while adding value to the hosting of these events and the associated efforts for their success.

B. **World Tourism Day 2019**

6. Preparations for the official celebrations of World Tourism Day 2019 in India are well under way. Celebrations will include an expert panel on "Maximizing Tourism's Potential to Create More and Better Jobs", in line with this year's special focus on education, skills and jobs. Experts on employment, economic development and tourism, will debate how to develop human capital skills in tourism to adapt to a changing working environment, against the backdrop of the UN's decent work agenda and the centenary of the International Labour Organization (ILO) celebrated throughout 2019.
7. For the first time, the Affiliate Members will join the official WTD celebrations, and hold a dedicated workshop on "Tourism and Jobs of the Future".
8. The composition of the WTD expert panel and the Affiliate Members workshop will advance the new hands-on focus initiated on the occasion of WTD 2018, focused on offering concrete takeaways to the participants of the celebrations, while adding value to hosting this observance.
9. Members are encouraged to join the events in India and celebrate WTD 2019 under the theme "Tourism and Jobs: A Better Future for All" widely in their countries. WTD is the only tourism related international UN day. It is a unique opportunity for the tourism sector to raise its voice and to speak as one, highlighting the contribution of tourism sector to 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and beyond.

10. Members are encouraged to use the WTD materials and are welcome to promote their events on the WTD official site.

II. WTD themes and host countries for 2020 and 2021

11. WTD Themes: The General Assembly at its 15th session decided that UNWTO, as a United Nations specialized agency, should in the future take into account, as far as possible, when choosing the World Tourism Day themes, those adopted for the international years and days declared by the UN.
12. WTD host countries: By resolution 470(XV), the General Assembly designated Malaysia and Qatar as host countries of World Tourism Day in 2004 and 2005. By the same resolution, the General Assembly endorsed the proposal of the Executive Council and decided that the following geographic order would apply to World Tourism Day celebrations beginning in 2006: Europe; South Asia; Americas; Africa, East Asia and the Pacific and Middle East.
13. Upon recommendation of the Regional Commission for the Americas (La Antigua, Guatemala, 16 May 2019), the 110th Executive Council agreed to propose MERCOSUR (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay) as the host for the official celebration of World Tourism Day 2020. This will be the first ever joint hosting of WTD and a reflection of the renewed relevance of accommodating this observance day.
14. 2020 will be the “International Year of Plant Health” (A/RES/73/252), which is not relevant in the context of World Tourism Day.
15. Taking note of the growing relevance of rural development on the political agenda around the world—and its connected interaction with internal migration and population, infrastructure development, overall pressure on urban areas, among others—tourism is well positioned to make a meaningful contribution to generating opportunities along the economic and social value chain in non-urban environments. Against this backdrop, the proposed theme for World Tourism Day 2020 to the General Assembly is: “Tourism and Rural Development”.
16. The theme for 2021 has not yet been made public. Furthermore, the recommendation of a host country for World Tourism Day 2021 will be made by the Regional Commission for Africa (10 September 2019, Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation). The General Assembly is requested to ratify the nomination of the host country by the Commission and the corresponding theme.

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