



Siem Reap Declaration on Tourism and Culture – Building a New Partnership Model

The Ministers of Tourism and Culture and heads of delegation of the UNWTO and UNESCO Member States, representatives of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, of regional organizations, academia, private sector, cultural and tourism institutions, and non-governmental organizations, meeting, on the occasion of the *UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture – Building a New Partnership*, held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, on 4-5 February 2015 under the high patronage of H.E. Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, of the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and of the Director-General of UNESCO;

Recalling that:

- Tourism has grown over recent decades to become one of the leading global socio-economic sectors of our times;
- Tourism creates immense opportunities for inclusive economic growth and sustainable development through job creation, regeneration of rural and urban areas, and the appreciation and protection of natural and cultural heritage;
- In 2012, for the first time, over one billion international tourists travelled the world, and in 2014, the World Heritage List reached 1000 sites;
- Culture, reflected in heritage and traditions as much as in contemporary art, languages, cuisine, music, handicrafts, museums and literature, is of immeasurable value to host communities, shapes community identities and fosters respect and tolerance among people, has become a key tourism asset, creating distinctive differences between destinations; and
- Cultural tourism can make a significant contribution to the socio-economic development and empowerment of local communities.

Considering that:

- Safeguarding of culture in its diverse manifestations is a guarantee of sustainable development, as underscored in international standard setting instruments, including:
 - The 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions;
 - The 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage;
 - The 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage;
 - The 1972 UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage;
 - The 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property;
 - The 1954 UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict;

- Sustainable tourism can be a considerable force in safeguarding and fostering the appreciation for tangible and intangible heritage as well as encouraging the development of arts, crafts and other creative activities;
- Article 4 of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, adopted by the UNWTO General Assembly in 1999 and endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2001, underlines that “tourism is a user of the cultural heritage of mankind and contributor to its enhancement”;
- The 2013 United Nations General Assembly Resolution on Culture and Sustainable Development (A/RES/68/223), acknowledges that culture contributes to inclusive economic development;
- The Hangzhou Declaration of May 2013, *Placing Culture at the Heart of Sustainable Development Policies*, reaffirms that culture should be considered as a fundamental enabler of sustainability, being a source of meaning and energy, a wellspring of creativity and innovation and a resource to address challenges and find appropriate solutions;
- The 2014 Florence Declaration on *Culture, Creativity and Sustainable Development, Research, Innovation, Opportunities* calls upon governments, civil society and the private sector to take action in global partnership to promote creative environments, processes and products;
- For many years, UNWTO and UNESCO have been working together to raise awareness and promote the strong interlinks between tourism and culture, while emphasizing the need for mutually beneficial partnership models, namely through the UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme; and
- Building new partnership models for collaboration between tourism and culture falls within the emerging international consensus of the fundamental links between culture and heritage, and merits due consideration under the post 2015 sustainable development agenda.

Recognizing that:

- Despite the immense synergies between tourism and culture, the two sectors often operate within government and administrative structures that are disconnected or poorly coordinated, resulting in less than optimal outcomes for national and regional development policies, planning and development;
- At a time of unprecedented tourism growth, it is important to emphasize the shared responsibility among culture and tourism stakeholders, especially within government and public administrations at all levels, as well as the immense opportunities for both culture and tourism to develop new partnership models;
- Successful outcomes require engaging culture and tourism stakeholders at all levels to address cross-cutting responsibilities in areas such as governance, community engagement, innovation and corporate social responsibility;
- For tourism to achieve social, economic, and environmental sustainability, the natural and cultural assets of any nation or community must be valued and protected;
- Sustainable tourism can be a key driver in the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, while nurturing a sense of pride and self-esteem within communities and



- destinations around the world and that if inappropriately managed and developed it can jeopardize such heritage;
- Tourism development and activities associated with cultural heritage can achieve sustainability through building responsible governance structures, ensuring protection and conservation, promoting investment, fostering poverty reduction, facilitating linkages between tourism sectors and local suppliers of goods and services, showcasing local cultures and supporting human resource development;
- There is need to reinforce and expand the contribution of living cultures and creative industries, such as music, multimedia, crafts, cuisine, architecture and design, towards the achievement of sustainable tourism, because these have an increasing role in creating the distinctive and unique visitor experience of each destination, and tourism investment can bring new consumers, foster innovation and the exchange of experiences that grow the creative industries with expanding markets;
- Cultural routes linking such places offer important opportunities for tourism development, regional integration and economic development, while promoting the revitalization and promotion of cultural and economic links between people and communities; and
- Cultural tourism has the potential to contribute to the cultural development, growth and rejuvenation of urban areas and historic cities.

Reaffirm their commitment to:

1. Build new partnership models between tourism and culture by,

- 1.1. Working towards greater integration of culture and tourism into the post 2015 development agenda;
- 1.2. Reducing barriers and facilitating effective partnership models and governance structures within government at national, regional and local levels, to develop, coordinate and implement tourism and culture policies and practices in a more integrated manner;
- 1.3. Encouraging and facilitating effective partnerships between government, private and community organizations in both tourism and cultural heritage sectors;
- 1.4. Developing cultural tourism policies that recognize, protect and promote the authenticity of culture and cultural heritage and forge effective synergies using a range of appropriate technologies and social media platforms whereby all stakeholders exchange more information, experience and best practice in this area; and
- 1.5. Using tourism and culture as a fundamental tool in development cooperation for developing countries and recovery in areas affected by crisis.

2. Promote and protect cultural heritage by,

- 2.1. Encouraging tourism activities that contribute to increase public awareness and support for the protection and conservation of cultural heritage; in particular, by communicating heritage characteristics and values through the tourism experience chain;
- 2.2. Considering the aspirations of the host communities in determining and managing the use of the tangible and intangible culture;
- 2.3. Ensuring that sufficient revenues derived from tourism activities go toward the management and conservation of cultural and natural heritage and promote the engagement of tourists;



- 2.4. Protecting and sustainably managing World Heritage Sites and encouraging the implementation of the World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme, including the implementation of effective tourism congestion management measures, training and capacity building of site managers and other stakeholders;
 - 2.5. Supporting the fight against trafficking of cultural heritage;
 - 2.6. Promoting examples for responsible and sustainable tourism management at World Heritage Sites and ensuring that the local or host community benefits from tourism;
 - 2.7. Ensuring that ethnic and indigenous people and their cultures are respected and preserved and that tourism development and promotion is done with full participation and through equitable partnerships;
 - 2.8. Implementing effective and appropriate heritage and socio-economic sustainability impact assessment procedures prior to the approval of tourism projects associated with World Heritage Sites and the local communities in the vicinity of such sites; and
 - 2.9. Advancing service quality, the use of technology and visitors' research in order to increase the competitiveness of cultural sites.
- 3. *Link people and foster sustainable development through cultural routes by,***
- 3.1. Where appropriate, encouraging and facilitating international and national initiatives that draw together historically or thematically linked heritage places, including World Heritage Sites, into tourism routes, corridors or circuits;
 - 3.2. Building international or regional networks across culture and tourism government agencies and within other relevant government areas such as foreign affairs, transportation, interior or immigration;
 - 3.3. Cooperating across regional or national borders to encourage, facilitate and build governance and certification models to ensure quality and consistency of the visitor experience along the cultural routes;
 - 3.4. Fostering equity of governance structures, tourism development, public/private partnerships and marketing activities across the entire cultural route; and
 - 3.5. Consulting local communities and engaging them as stakeholders in the formulation and management of tourism along cultural routes.
- 4. *Promote closer linkages between tourism, living cultures and creative industries by,***
- 4.1. Encouraging opportunities for cultural tourism to be a valuable generator of business opportunities and socio-economic development for creative industries and the cultural sector;
 - 4.2. Encouraging and facilitating new forms of cultural tourism, such as creative tourism, and tourism related to special interests such as museums, industrial, underwater or memorial heritage;
 - 4.3. Promoting sustainable value chains within local communities that ensure a consistent quality and creativity in the presentation and/or performance by cultural industries;
 - 4.4. Fostering local training and educational opportunities for ongoing participation and growth in cultural industries; and
 - 4.5. Encouraging public and private investment in physical and institutional infrastructure to sustain local creative industries.



5. Support the contribution of cultural tourism to urban development

- 5.1. Encouraging local cultural traditions, museums and contemporary creative industries to become part of the programmes for urban development and/or regeneration;
- 5.2. Encouraging the regeneration of degraded or redundant industrial areas of historic cities includes the integration of cultural heritage;
- 5.3. Encouraging urban development to be undertaken in association with local communities and provides equitable opportunities for socio-economic development;
- 5.4. Encouraging urban development to be integrated socially and culturally with other urban areas to improve interaction between new and existing residential communities; and
- 5.5. Encouraging cultural programmes and creative industry initiatives aimed at regenerating urban areas to include participation by tourists as well as local people;

and express their sincere appreciation and gratitude to His Majesty Preah Samdech Preah Baromneath Norodom Sihamoni, King of Cambodia, who kindly provided an unforgettable opportunity to experience the rich cultural heritage of the country, as well as the Royal Government of Cambodia and the provincial government of Siem Reap for their warm hospitality, the excellent arrangements for the Conference and their fundamental contribution to advance the links between tourism and culture with the aim of promoting a more sustainable future for all.

Siem Reap, Cambodia, 5 February 2015.