



ORGANISATION MONDIALE DU TOURISME  
WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION  
ORGANIZACION MUNDIAL DEL TURISMO  
ВСЕМИРНАЯ ТУРИСТСКАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ

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**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE THIRTY-SECOND  
MEETING OF THE WTO COMMISSION  
FOR THE AMERICAS**

**and**

**CONCLUSIONS OF THE SEMINAR ON TOURISM  
MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS**

**Guayaquil, Ecuador, 28-29 May 1998**

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## SUMMARY RECORD OF THE THIRTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE WTO COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS

The proceedings of the thirty-second meeting of the Commission began with the opening ceremony, officially presided over by **H.E. Fabián Alarcón, Constitutional President of the Republic of Ecuador**. In the course of the proceedings, the following people took the floor: the **Secretary-General of WTO, Mr. Francesco Frangiali**, the **Chairman of the Commission, Mr. Oscar Espinosa Villarreal**, Secretary for Tourism of **Mexico**, the Minister of Tourism of **Ecuador, Mrs. Juana Vallejo Klaere**, and the Constitutional President of Ecuador himself. The Secretary-General thanked the Ecuadorian authorities for their generosity in hosting the meeting of the Commission and the Seminar on Tourism Management of Protected Areas.

Representatives of seventeen States Members of the Commission, seven Affiliate Members, three non-member countries of the Commission and two international organizations attended the meeting, as well as the representatives of three enterprises and organizations as observers. The list of participants is contained in Annex 2.

The Guayaquil Declaration was read out at the opening ceremony, and the first copy was presented to H.E. the President of the Republic, after having being signed by the Ministers and heads of delegation present at the meeting. The text of the Declaration is contained in Annex 1 to this document.

### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The Commission approved the following agenda:

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Communication of the Chairman of the Commission (**Mexico**)
3. Preliminary remarks by the Secretary-General
4. Presentation of the statistical monograph for the region
5. Application to the region of the general programme of work for 1998-1999 and other activities
6. Conference on measurement of the economic impact of tourism, including WTO Tourism Satellite Account
7. Other matters of interest to the Commission:
  - International resources for reconstructing tourism areas affected by the "El Niño" weather pattern
  - World Ecotourism Congress - Travel Mart - Ride Gauloise Ecuador
  - Celebration of World Tourism Day and Third Latin American Forum on Tourism Development in Mexico
  - Agreement to propose enhancing the importance of tourism as a topic for discussion at Latin American Summits
  - Creation of the sustainable tourism area in the Caribbean
  - Forum on internationalization of the Spanish tourism enterprise
8. Place and date of the thirty-third meeting of the Commission

## 2. Communication of the Chairman of the Regional Commission

The Secretary for Tourism of **Mexico** began by thanking the authorities and people of Ecuador for the warm welcome extended to the delegates, as well as for the facilities made available to ensure the success of the meetings.

During his statement, he said that the main purpose of the chairmanship was to strengthen the activities of the Organization for the benefit of the Commission Members from both the public and private sectors. He stressed the paramount importance of convincing governments, businessmen and society as a whole of the key role that tourism plays at present. He also pointed out that it was necessary to enhance the capacity for tourism development and inject renewed vigour into the economic players that operate in the sector.

Speaking of the actions to be taken, he suggested as general criteria that priorities be defined and duplication of effort avoided. He said it was also important for such action to be genuinely feasible in order to make the best possible use of available resources.

Aware, on the one hand, of the importance of tourism and of the improvements in the sector's management that constantly be encouraged and, on the other, considering the aims that the Commission could realistically set for itself, he offered to promote a programme of activities that could be of common interest to the Members of the CAM in the areas of:

- (i) Impact of tourism on the national economy, a topic that should be compatible with the seminar scheduled for November this year in Mexico; and
- (ii) Human resource training. In this area it would be possible to focus especially on educating the educators and carrying out workshops for hotel management. So far as the tailoring of human resource training to the needs of the sector was concerned, reference could be made to the work carried out by the *Consejos de Vinculación Académica* that operate in Mexico.

He allowed the Commission Members a period of one month to enable all of them to make the comments they considered most appropriate on the proposal made. He suggested the formation of a working group that, within a month's time, would propose a specific programme and also support the setting up of an information exchange mechanism to foster cooperation between the Members of the CAM.

Various Commission Members took the floor to underline the importance of the Mexican contribution and their support for this initiative that should be carried out during the term of the current Chairman. The delegations of **Argentina, Panama, Dominican Republic** and **Paraguay** volunteered to join the working group. The representative of the *Camara de Turismo de Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil*, requested that Affiliate Members also be included in the group. The Minister of Tourism of **Uruguay** stressed the desirability of adequate intelligence on the impact

of tourism on the economy and of conveying to all government spheres and society as a whole the message of its growing importance. The Minister of Tourism of **Venezuela** pointed out that priority should be given to preventing duplication of effort, given the research being undertaken by regional organizations and that the advisability should be considered of WTO's focusing on specific topics.

### **3. Preliminary remarks by the Secretary-General**

After greeting the delegates and thanking the Ecuadorian authorities for their generous support as hosts of both meetings, the Secretary-General congratulated them on their achievements in developing tourism in **Ecuador**.

He went on to make a brief presentation on the following subjects:

- **world tourism trends in 1997;**
- **the activities carried out by the Organization; and**
- **the internal situation of WTO.**

First of all, the Secretary-General referred to the previous meeting of the Commission held during the twelfth session of the General Assembly at Istanbul, Turkey in October 1997. He recalled that on that occasion a record was achieved in the number of countries represented, i.e. 124, and the high level of the heads of delegation, since more than 100 delegations had been led by Ministers or Deputy Ministers of Tourism. Representatives of the private sector had also attended in large numbers, as had the media members covering the event.

He went on to speak of what he qualified as the good performance of tourism in 1997. Worldwide 612 million arrivals had been recorded, generating 448 billion US dollars in receipts. In the Americas region, international tourist arrivals had totalled 120 millions (up 2.7 per cent on 1996), generating receipts of 120.5 billion dollars (up 6.9 per cent on 1996).

For the immediate future, pointed out the Secretary-General, account should be taken of events such as the financial crisis in some Asian countries and the prospect of the introduction of the Euro. Referring to the first point, he analyzed the causes and consequences which, in short, were prompting the countries of the Americas to strengthen their promotional activities, since outbound tourism from Asia was expected to decline and its destinations could become more competitive owing to the devaluations that had occurred. The introduction of the euro would be beneficial for tourism from Europe to other extra-regional destinations, although initially this would depend on the exchange rate established for each currency.

Reviewing the state of WTO, he spoke of the implementation of the new general programme of work and the action under way to build an effective and dynamic partnership between the public and private sectors without renouncing the Organization's intergovernmental status. A strategic group had been set up to advise the Secretary-General, in which the Americas region would be represented by eminent persons like Antonio Enríquez Savignac, Caio Luiz de Carvalho, President of Embratur and Bill Norman, President of the Travel Industry Association of America.

The financial results of the Organization revealed a slight surplus of income over expenditure. He emphasized the upward trend in receipts from the sale of publications, which showed a greater diversification of the Organization's resources. Expenditure had increased owing to a clear improvement in the percentage of the programme implemented; operating costs, meanwhile, had been contained. The arrear contributions collected amounted to over 1 million dollars.

Lastly, he announced that the withdrawal of Grenada from full membership had been recently confirmed; by contrast, **Barbados** had expressed keen interest in membership.

#### **4. Presentation of the publication Tourism Market Trends in the Americas: 1997**

The Secretariat, presenting this monograph, drew attention to the structure of the document in which, in addition to presenting the results of world and regional tourism, provided detailed figures on arrivals and receipts in the Americas, its subregions and each of the countries concerned. This information was supplemented by data concerning the importance of international tourism in national economies, together with a compendium of information on positive and negative events in forty-five countries of the region and data on the destinations of tourists from the fifteen most important generating countries for the Americas.

The Secretariat urged countries to supply their statistical data in as much detail as possible so as to be able to provide better and more complete information to the Commission Members.

#### **5. Application in the region of the general programme of work for 1998-1999**

Under this agenda item, the Secretariat presented a summary of the activities carried out under the general programme of work, with special reference to its application in the countries of the CAM.

The first point covered was **cooperation for development**, under which information was given on the six operational missions fielded to in the region since the previous meeting of the CAM (Istanbul, October 1997). It was pointed out that, owing to the change in the funding by UNDP of missions of this kind, they had been carried out with the Secretariat's own funds. Details were given of the programme of visits to the countries of the region by the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General, the Regional Representative and other Secretariat officials.

Members were informed of the launch of courses for diplomats, such a course having been given in **Costa Rica** for diplomatic officials of the six Central American countries, with the cooperation of the Ministry for Foreign and Ecclesiastical Affairs of that country and of the Costa Rican Tourism Institute. Relations were also being strengthened with other public bodies, such as parliaments and local authorities. In this connection, it was reported that four courses had been carried out, in particular aimed at enhancing the technical capacity of municipal specialists in **Chile**, the **Dominican Republic**, **Ecuador** and **El Salvador**.

The Secretariat gave a detailed report on the activities carried out in the areas of **human resource development; environment, planning and financing; statistics, economic analysis and market research; quality of tourism development and communications and documentation**. In each case information was also given on the activities pursued in the Secretariat as well as in the field.

In order to carry out some pilot tests, candidatures were requested for:

- Implementation of the beach cleaning programme;
- Conduct of a workshop aimed at evaluating and demonstrating the application of sustainable development indicators.

The member countries of the CAM were also urged to reply to a questionnaire that MIGA, a body linked to the World Bank, had submitted to assess the situation and requirements of the tourism sector.

The Secretary for Tourism of **Mexico** stressed how important it was for the Members of the CAM to take full advantage of the opportunities afforded, in the areas mentioned, by the research and other work of the Secretariat.

#### **6. Preparations for the Conference on Measurement of the Economic Impact of Tourism, including the WTO Tourism Satellite Account**

Under this item of the agenda, the Secretariat provided preliminary details of the proposed Conference and reported on the activities carried out and planned with a view to establishing a single conceptual and convergent framework for the parties interested in the preparation of tourism satellite accounts.

This point seemed to be of special interest to the Members, given the contribution that could be made to the assessment of tourism in the national economy. With these accounts, essential information would be available to define tourism policies, devise business strategies and enhance social awareness of the importance of tourism in the national economy.

Responding to the request made first by the delegation of **Venezuela** and afterwards by all the Members, the Secretariat will redistribute the document on the Tourism Satellite Account, Draft 3, Revision 1, which is the latest version.

#### **7. Other matters**

##### **✓ International resources for reconstructing tourism areas affected by the "El Niño" weather pattern**

The Minister of Tourism of **Ecuador** took the floor on this point. She recalled what had been included in the Guayaquil Declaration and the fact that many of the countries of the region had been seriously affected by this phenomenon. She considered desirable to set up a commission to investigate the existence of resources for rebuilding the affected tourism areas. The delegations of **Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay and Mexico** offered to serve on that commission.

✓ World Ecotourism Congress. Travel Mart-Ride Gauloise Ecuador

The Minister of Tourism of **Ecuador** briefly mentioned these events and pointed out their importance for projecting a tourism image of both Ecuador and the region itself. She added that the Chamber of Tourism would make available more detailed information to anyone requesting it.

✓ Celebration of World Tourism Day and Third Latin American Forum on Tourism Development

The Secretary for Tourism of **Mexico** informed the Commission of the advances made in preparing the events to commemorate World Tourism Day. This would take place on 25 September 1998 and a national committee had been set up to coordinate the activities. He invited all the Members to participate in this celebration and to cooperate in the way they considered most appropriate for conveying a positive image of the sector to politicians, society as a whole and the media.

✓ Agreement to propose enhancing the importance of tourism at Latin American Summits

The Minister of Tourism of **Ecuador**, seconded by the Secretary for Tourism of **Mexico** and, tacitly, by the other delegates present, agreed to do what was necessary to ensure that the President's Office in each country included in the agendas of these Summits matters related to tourism and that these be accompanied by practical programmes that could readily be carried out as reflected in the Guayaquil Declaration.

✓ Creation of the sustainable tourism area in the Caribbean

The representative of the Association of Caribbean States (AEC) gave a presentation in which he described the structure of AEC's activities, the importance of the Caribbean area and the features that made tourism a basic activity in the region. After emphasizing that sustainable tourism is the only way in which to develop that sector in the Caribbean, he described the principles and strategies that the Association expects to apply to achieve its established aims.

✓ Forum on Internationalization of the Spanish Tourism Enterprise

In view of the inability of the Spanish delegation to attend the meeting, the Secretariat read out a letter from the Director General for Tourism of **Spain**, in which he explained the aims of the Forum, the structure of the event, how to participate in it and the results expected. He invited all the countries in the region that were interested in any type of Spanish participation to be present in that Forum and with well-formulated tourism projects.

✓ Inclusion of Portuguese as an official language of WTO

The head of the delegation of **Brazil** informed the Commission that his country intended to propose to the relevant organs the inclusion of Portuguese as an official language of WTO.

The Commission took note of all these points and thanked each of the speakers for the information given on each proposal.

8. Place and date of the thirty-third meeting of the Commission

Before discussion of this item of the agenda began, the Secretary-General informed the Commission of the calendar of international conferences and other meetings that the Secretariat would be holding up to mid-1999.

The Chief of the delegation of **Brazil** requested, and the Commission agreed, that the number of Commission meetings be increased. The Secretary for Tourism of **Mexico** proposed that the thirty-third meeting of the CAM could take place on the occasion of the Third Latin American Forum, to be held in Mexico in September this year. This proposal was unanimously accepted by the Commission.

The Chief of the delegation of **Brazil** also offered to host the thirty-fourth meeting of the Commission in a city yet to be determined in the spring of 1999. The Commission expressed gratitude for this generous invitation which was accepted unanimously. It noted with appreciation the offer made by the Vice-Minister of Tourism of **Bolivia** to host a Commission meeting in his country on a future occasion.

**SEMINAR ON TOURISM MANAGEMENT  
OF PROTECTED AREAS**

**Guayaquil, Ecuador, 28-29 May 1998**

**SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS**

The international tourism market is reacting with mounting interest to the promotion of nature and cultural products, whose prospects for growth are highly favourable.

The public sector holds the decision making power on the management and handling of protected areas, although there is a recognized trend towards greater involvement of the private sector in the handling of nature and cultural tourism, their participation taking various forms.

To optimize the tourism management linked to the handling of protected areas, it appears that the licensing system has come to the fore as an attractive option for administration and operation, the design of which should be compatible with the specific circumstances of the areas concerned.

A consensus was reached on adopting parameters for planning, environmental impact control, calculation of capacity and limitations of use, and incorporation of local populations. Their practical application is however still far from reaching desirable levels, for very diverse reasons. A pooling of efforts is required to bring theoretical approaches into line with the of planning and management practices applied in the protected areas.

An analysis of the experiences of tourism management of protected areas confirms that it continues to be necessary for any type of intervention, either of operation or investment, always to be subject to planning and sustainable development criteria, since impromptu are still detected.

In spite of the problems that tourism creates in general terms, it does help to enhance the quality of life of local communities, especially in areas with scant economic alternatives.

Steps should be taken to ensure that the benefits derived from tourism are perceived by the communities involved in the activity so as to enhance the interest of local players in the conservation of protected areas.

Education is a highly important vehicle, both for local populations so that they can take on the broadest tasks of production and tourism management, and for visitors so that they come away more satisfied with their experience in protected areas.

It was agreed that it was necessary to ensure that investments be made in facilities and infrastructure for tourism use in the hinterland or places in the immediate vicinity of the protected areas.

The experiments in the tourism handling of protected areas should extend to all tourism activities that entail use of the territory, so that even conventional projects should be subject to sustainability criteria.

Conflicts have come to light between the growing environmental awareness of tourists and the products marketed, since not all of them meet the declared criteria for the sustainable use of natural and cultural resources.

There is a marked tendency to transfer the criteria of conventional tourism consumption to the forms of visit carried out in protected areas. This situation could trivialize the nature and content of interpretation in areas of high ecological value for the sake of greater economic returns.

It was concluded that, in the future, it would be necessary to develop diversified and complementary products by region to ensure their competitiveness and economic sustainability. From this point of view incentives for joint ventures should be provided or the development of nature and cultural products suitable for the pooled efforts of various nations that share a common natural and cultural heritage.

Factors of prime importance for the tourism management of protected areas are research, environmental education, interpretation and training in the various spheres related to tourism use, which should merit resolute support from the sectors involved, the public and private alike.

Tourism management formulas for protected areas should acknowledge the right of native populations to express their opinion on the operations in their territories and to decide whether it is desirable to turn to tourism as a source of economic and social benefit with participation options agreed by consensus.

It is essential to set up efficient mechanisms for the sharing of experiences in tourism management, for which it would be fitting to establish networks of information and cooperation between the national systems of protected areas.

## Annex 1

**GUAYAQUIL DECLARATION**

The Ministers of Tourism and heads of delegation of the member countries belonging to the Americas region, participants in the thirty-second meeting of the World Tourism Organization's Commission for the Americas, to be held at Santiago de Guayaquil, Ecuador on 28 and 29 May 1998,

**Considering that:**

- ✓ tourism is an activity of growing importance for national economies and a decisive factor of the regional integration processes under way,
- ✓ it is essential that the States adopt political decisions and raise the tourism awareness required to ensure that the public and private players that participate in tourism planning, organization and management have an appropriate framework for the sustainable development of tourism, as recognized in the Buenos Aires Declaration of May 1995,
- ✓ the sustainable development of tourism will foster the preservation and conservation of the natural environment and that its direct and positive effects on the social, economic, cultural and educational sectors of the present and future American societies will enhance the quality of life of the American peoples,
- ✓ joint and coordinated action by the tourism authorities is necessary to generate multideestination tourism products that could be marketed and project an image associated with the supply of high-quality products at competitive prices, in accordance with the Declaration of Asuncion, Paraguay of May 1997,
- ✓ joint action is needed to overcome the effects of natural disasters with the preparation of plans and the implementation of actions to mitigate their negative consequences and ensure that the tourism sector can continue to operate.

**DRAWING INSPIRATION FROM THE UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF 10 DECEMBER 1948 AND FROM THE MANILA DECLARATION OF THE WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION OF 10 OCTOBER 1980**

## **DECLARE THEIR INTENTION TO:**

### **Article I**

1. Pledge their official support to the present Declaration by signing it.
2. Promote the necessary action to ensure that tourism is considered a priority element in the policies of the States of the region and that such action is addressed, corroborated and substantiated in programmes of cooperation that have the backing of Presidential Summits, regional and subregional alike.

Ensure, in this connection, that the managers of National Tourism Administrations submit to the Heads of State and Government for consideration the proposal to promote tourism development at the Eighth Meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Latin American Conference to be held at Oporto, Portugal in October 1998, as it has already been included in the agenda of the Latin American-Caribbean-European Union Bi-regional Summit which will take place at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in May 1999.

3. Consider the tourism industry a priority and of strategic importance for the social, economic and cultural development of their countries, avoiding political, economic and social conflicts and situations that restrict tourism.
4. Promote, from State institutions, values that serve to enhance tourism awareness in civil society, private enterprise, the media and the various levels and departments of the Civil Service, besides drawing up legal standards that will foster the promotion of tourism as a tool for optimizing the development and modernization of tourism plant.
5. Taking into account criteria for sustainable tourism development and administrative cohesion, carry out the general plans of public works, education and basic infrastructure that are needed in each country of the region.

### **Article II**

Negotiate with international organizations and national institutions in donor countries the granting of non-refundable financial resources for carrying out studies in the region, in order to determine the magnitude of the damage caused by the El Niño weather phenomenon and other natural disasters, as well as to formulate the plans of action required to restore the tourism plant and infrastructure affected.

Negotiate with national, regional and international lending institutions preferential terms for the granting of financial resources to implement the aforementioned plans of action.

### **Article III**

Promote the formulation of national tourism policies, taking into account sustainability criteria and placing special emphasis on preservation of the natural and cultural environment which constitutes the present and future heritage of mankind.

## Annex 2

**LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES/****LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****PRESIDENTE DE LA COMISIÓN/  
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