ORGANISATION MONDIALE DU TOURISME
WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION
ORGANIZACIÓN MUNDIAL DEL TURISMO
ВСЕМИРНАЯ ТУРИСТСКАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ
منظمة السياحة العالمية

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MINUTES OF THE FORTY-THIRD MEETING OF THE WTO COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS

Santiago, Chile, 25-26 May 2005

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSION

The forty-third meeting of the WTO Commission for the Americas, which was held in Santiago, Chile, on 26 May, was presided by the Chairman of the CAM, Mr. Rodrigo Castro, Minister of Tourism of **Costa Rica**. The meeting was attended by participants from 18 Member countries of the Americas, Spain and South Africa as observers, and three Affiliate Members. The list of participants is attached as an annex to this document.

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Chairman of the Commission, **Costa Rica,** inaugurated the meeting by presenting the agenda. The agenda, following a statement by the delegate of **Colombia** Mr. Gustavo Toro, was unanimously adopted.

The agenda was thus adopted as follows:

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Communication by the Chairman of the Commission (Costa Rica)
3. Preliminary remarks by the Secretary-General
4. Preparations for the sixteenth session of the General Assembly (Dakar, Senegal, 25 November-2 December 2005)
5. Implementation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism
6. Application to the region of the general programme of work of the Organization for 2004-2005
7. Draft general programme of work for 2006-2007
8. Regional programme of the Commission for the Americas 2004-2005. Current situation. New initiatives 2005-2006.
9. Presentation of the 2004 edition of "Tourism Market Trends in the Americas"
10. Place and date of the forty-fourth and forty-fifth meetings of the Commission

2. COMMUNICATION OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSION

The Chairman of the Commission, under this item, thanked the Government of **Chile** for its invitation, the welcome it gave, and for the happy coincidence of the holding of the 4th Chilean Tourism Summit at the same time as the Seminar of the Commission.

He spoke about the Seminar, which he described as very good, pointing out the level of attendance, the high qualifications of the participants, and the excellence of the speakers.

He also discussed various other matters: first of all the positive results of world tourism and the Americas region in 2004; secondly, the need to continue the efforts of the countries on the subject of the tourism satellite account to gain a better understanding of the reality of tourism in each country, for international comparability and as a tool to convince top government authorities of the importance of tourism.

He also talked about the growth of cruise tourism in the region and in certain subregions in particular, and said that there was a still a long way to go to improve the air connections in the region, especially in Central America, the Caribbean and South America.

Lastly, and in accordance with the proposal put forward by **Colombia** and made known to all the member countries, regarding its wish to host the 17th WTO General Assembly in 2007, he proposed that the CAM explicitly support this candidature.

The attendees approved the Colombian proposal unanimously and by acclamation, and requested that this wish be reflected in a decision of the Commission and that it be conveyed to the Executive Council prior to its 75th session in Bulgaria, on 13-14 June. Numerous delegates of the countries present took the floor to support Colombia's candidature, and all the countries undertook to carry out actions with a view to the holding of the Assembly in Cartagena de Indias in 2007. The delegation of **Colombia** in turn expressed its gratitude for the CAM's decision.

3. PRELIMINARY REMARKS BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (Document CAM/43/3)

Under this item, Mr. Francesco Frangialli presented the document in a much more extensive form that that which formed part of the documentation of the CAM.

First of all, he discussed the tourism results in the world and in the regions in 2004, and the similarity in the performance of revenues and tourist arrivals at the world level.

He also spoke about tourism as an effective tool in the fight against poverty, the ST-EP initiative, its current situation, that of the Foundation, the contributions of various countries with specific funds, and the actions that are being carried out, including the future seminars in the region; one in Guayaquil, **Ecuador** on 27-28 June 2005 and another in **Nicaragua** on 29-30 August 2005, the former for Andean countries and the latter for the countries of Central America.

He also referred to the amendment of Articles 6 and 7 of the Statutes, as a result of the deliberations and conclusions of the ad hoc group.

Lastly, he mentioned the admission of a new member in the region, the **Bahamas**, and of other members in other regions of the world, the United Kingdom, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea, Belarus.

The Chairman of the CAM then took the floor, and remarked that the report of the SG had been a veritable stock-taking and pointed out that we have recently had to live through complex years, but that despite this, tourism, recognized as a vulnerable but resilient activity, had recovered as shown by the 2004 figures.

He underlined as important developments of the recent past: the WTO's incorporation into the U.N. as a specialized agency of that world body, the development of the ST-EP initiative; the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, the establishment of its Committee, its first meetings; and the Phuket Action Plan as an example of the rapid response of the WTO to an event like the tsunami.

He also cited as positive the admission of new countries, and expressed the wish that other countries of the region that were not yet members would join.

This sums up the Chairman's comments on the Report of the Secretary-General.

4. PREPARATIONS FOR THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (document CAM/43/9)

This item corresponds to document CAM/43/9. The Chairman gave the floor to the Secretary-General, who reported the latest information of the WTO relative to the signing of the hosting agreement and the arrangements being made by the host country Senegal in order to ensure that it can receive the General Assembly in the best possible conditions.

In accordance with the document, the Regional Representative referred to the structure of the Assembly, the meeting of the CAM to be held prior to the start of the General Assembly on Saturday, 26 November, and the fact that the main aim of that meeting would be to define the memberships of the countries of the region for numerous posts, which will become vacant due to the expiration of the respective mandates.

Under this item, various delegations referred to the statutes of the ST-EP Foundation, which are to be taken up at the Assembly. The delegate of **Brazil** referred to the work of the ad hoc group of which Brazil is a member. It was requested that the latest document of this working group, which is in English, to be distributed to all the countries of the region so they can make their comments regarding it. To this end the Secretariat was requested to translate it into Spanish as soon as possible and to send it to the countries and that the countries, in turn, send in their comments to the WTO and to the Deputy Minister of **Brazil**, Mr. Marcio Favila, who is part of the abovementioned working group, all prior to the 75th meeting of the Executive Council in Bulgaria.

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL CODE OF ETHICS FOR TOURISM APPLICATION TO THE REGION OF THE GENERAL PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2004-2005 (document CAM/43/5)

This item corresponds to the document CAM/43/6, which was presented by the Regional Representative. The Secretary-General made comments regarding the application of the Code and the meeting of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics, which was held in Tunis on 16-17 May.

Various delegations subsequently took the floor regarding this matter. The Minister of **Ecuador,** offered her country as the venue of the Regional Seminar for the Americas of the national focal points for the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, an offer that was unanimously approved, with the setting of the place and date to de agreed upon between the Government of Ecuador and the WTO Secretariat.

6. APPLICATION TO THE REGION OF THE GENERAL PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR 2004-2005 AND DRAFT GENERAL PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2006-2007 (documents CAM/43/6 and CAM/43/7)

These items were presented by the Regional Representative, who began by giving a general report and proceeded with a more detailed discussion of documents CAM/43/6 and CAM/43/7. The Chairman addressed the participants to ask them if they had had sufficient time to read the documentation; after an exchange of opinions, it was decided to take a brief recess so that the delegations could review the documents.

Once this was done, the consideration of these two agenda items was taken up once again. Many delegations participated in the discussion, pointing out the volume and richness of the contents of both documents demonstrating the activities of the Organization in the region, for which they congratulated the Secretariat and the Regional Representation.

The participants made statements regarding certain subjects; the delegation of **Uruguay** requested that the list of registered participants in the encounter on ST-EP held in the context of ITB Berlin last March be distributed.

The delegation of Bolivia stated that the country would, in conjunction with the WTO, carry out on 11-14 July a Seminar on sustainability indicators, pointing out that this was not included in the list of activities to be carried out in the region. The delegate of **Mexico** requested that documents be sent out earlier in advance of the meeting of the Commission, in order to be able to deal in greater detail with their content, and underlined the advisability of holding **a one-day meeting of the CAM** which was supported by various delegations, and the Secretariat was asked to take note of this for the next meeting, set for May 2006. The delegate of **Mexico** also referred to the continuation of the holding of the course on Tourism Policy that the country has been carrying out with the WTO, and for which the Mexican government has financed 15 grants, which will proceed in the same way this year, 2005.

He also underlined that it was important for the Conference *The Tourism Satellite Account (TSA): Understanding Tourism and Designing Strategies* which will be held in Iguazu, **Argentina/Brazil/Paraguay**, on 3-6 October 2005, to be attended by delegations that are as complete as possible, that is, on the part of public entities that have competencies and are involved in the elaboration of the Tourism Satellite Account, as well as the private sector. Various delegations expressed their full agreement with this suggestion by the Mexican delegate.

He also discussed the subject of technical cooperation, pointing out that the Secretariat should make a greater effort with regard to the requests by countries of the region, by being more active vis-à-vis project funding agencies such as the IDB, bilateral cooperation, UNDP. Various countries spoke about this subject in support of the Mexican proposal.

The Regional Representative distinguished between technical cooperation and technical assistance, clarifying that as is known by all the countries of the region, since April 2004 the WTO has had a technical cooperation service taking on the functions previously carried out by the Regional Representations.

The delegate of **Mexico** also said that in certain events that the WTO attends or that are held under its aegis, the country should be consulted, as there have been cases of representatives of countries regarding which the NTA was not consulted.

He also referred to a recent publication of the WTTC on Tourism Competitiveness Indicators, and underlined the need for the WTO to include in a future programme of the Organization an item on the elaboration of Tourism Competitiveness Indicators. **This proposal was unanimously adopted and was transformed into a decision of the CAM.**

The delegate of **Mexico** in particular requested that the inclusion of his last proposal in the Programme of Work of the Organization not be forgotten, taking into account past experiences of non-inclusion of subjects decided by the Regional Commission.

Moreover, and to conclude he referred to the subject of tourism destinations, which is dealt with by various departments of the WTO, Human Resources, Affiliate Members and Destination Management, underlining the advisability of unifying actions under a single department, or better coordinating activities.

The delegate of **Colombia**, Mr. Gustavo Toro, informed that Colombia already has the Satellite Account, and proceeded to report its results.

He gave an account of the visit by the Secretary-General to his country and its results, his presence at the ANATO fair and mentioned how positive the presence of the Secretary General, Mr. Francesco Frangialli, was, accompanied by the Regional Representative, Mr. Carlos Gutiérrez.

Another point that he referred to was that concerning travel advisories and their repercussion on Colombian tourism. Various countries commented on this subject and WTO action in this area, to the extent possible, was called for. The delegates of **Mexico** and **Brazil** pointed out that at the last session of the Executive Council, in Salvador de Bahia, the subject was dealt with in document CE/74/9 and that a decision was taken to include it in the next session of the Executive Council, and that there were different positions among the countries of the Council regarding the role the WTO should have in this matter.

The Commission **decided** to request the representatives of the Americas region in the Council to push for the consideration of the issue in the forthcoming sessions of the Executive Council.

The Deputy Minister of **Peru** reported on the development of the Tourism Satellite Account by his country and also spoke about the importance of the collaboration of the WTO on the subject of municipal management of tourism and destination management, above all in the case of local communities whose population consists in large part of indigenous people.

Various delegates, especially those from Central America, spoke about natural disasters and their influence on tourism, stating that the tsunami was an example for a different region and that in the case of the Americas, such disasters took the form of the hurricanes that had struck the Caribbean and Central America, as well as the earthquakes in Central and South America.

The delegate of the **Dominican Republic** referred to the policy followed by his country in the area of safety and security and in response to travel advisories issued by the main tourism generating countries.

The delegate of **Uruguay** referred in particular to the integration processes in the region and their influence on tourism, stating that these processes can improve offerings and create new products or reinforce existing ones.

He also referred to the Municipalization of Tourism and Local Development, and proposed it as the CAM's theme for 2006, which was accepted by all the members of the CAM and adopted as a decision.

The Chairman of the Commission congratulated the countries that already produced the TSA, and expressed the importance of including the private sector, and also that it was important to get local governments involved in tourism planning and management. The delegate of **Colombia** Gustavo Toro, asked for information on the proposal of his country regarding the subject of hotels, CE/74/13, and was informed of the fact that it was taken up at the Executive Council in Bahia, and of the decision adopted, which was CE/75/13.

He expressed the need for the WTO's cooperation in the area of business development.

The Deputy Minister of **Brazil**, stated that various United Nations agencies such as UNESCO, UNEP, UNCTAD, the FAO deal with tourism issues, and asked that the CAM adopt a **decision** entrusting to the Secretary-General actions aimed at improved coordination among United Nations agencies in the area of tourism, and the establishment of an inter-agency Committee. The Brazilian proposal was approved unanimously, thus becoming a **decision of the CAM**.

He also referred to the World Tourism Forum for Peace and Sustainable Development and to the second annual encounter, in Rio de Janeiro on 24-26 October 2005.

He referred to the meeting of Ministers, in principle, of South America, which is planned to be held in the context of the Forum.

The development of 5 central themes on the part of the WTO on the first day of the encounter, and the presentation by Brazil of an Action Plan to combat child-juvenile sex tourism to be tackled by the Ministers of the Americas, which has the support of UNICEF.

These comments concluded the consideration of these two items of the agenda.

7. REGIONAL PROGRAMME OF THE COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS 2004-2005. CURRENT SITUATION. NEW INITIATIVES 2005-2006.

Under this item, the Regional Representative referred to the decisions adopted by CAM 42, which referred specifically to requesting the inclusion in the Programme of Work of WTO of the World Forum, whose first encounter was held in Salvador de Bahia on 1-6 December 2004.

At the aforementioned Forum, the WTO actively collaborated through the Regional Representation, the Secretariat and numerous member countries that acted as exhibitors and rapporteurs of the different events of said encounter.

In the context of the Forum, the 74th session of the Executive Council of the Organization was held and was attended by 24 member countries.

He also referred to the work on Promotional Budgets of National Tourism Administrations that the Commission had requested from the Secretariat, regarding which the Regional Representative reported that it was in the process of being prepared and that it would be completed by around September of this year.

He said that as soon as it was published it would be sent to the member countries. It was also announced that the Spanish-language edition of the Guidebook for Documentation Centres had been published, as requested by the 42nd CAM.

Regarding the World Forum held in Salvador de Bahia, the delegate of **Brazil** took the floor and underlined the Forum's importance, the numerous countries present, the involvement of public bodies and the NGO, and also thanked the WTO for its important presence and collaboration in the event.

8. PRESENTATION OF THE 2004 EDITION OF "TOURISM MARKET TRENDS IN THE AMERICAS"

Under this item, the Regional Representative presented to the delegates the publication ***Tourism Market Trends 2004 Americas***, as well as a CD containing the Tourism Market Trends for Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe, and the presentation of the Regional Representative entitled ***Overview of International Tourism and Tourism in the Americas in 2004, and Outlook for 2005***.

At the request of the Market Intelligence Department, a questionnaire for the WTO Panel of Experts was distributed.

9. PLACE AND DATE OF THE FORTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

Under this item, the Regional Representative stated that the 44th meeting of the CAM, as announced in another item of the agenda, would be held in Dakar, Senegal, on the morning of 26 November 2005, and that for the 45th meeting of the Commission, there was an offer by **Uruguay** for the city of Montevideo to host the meeting.

The delegate of **Uruguay,** Benjamín Liberoff, then took the floor to confirm the offer of the government of his country to host the 45th meeting in the city of Montevideo, and the proposal was approved unanimously by acclamation, leaving it up to the WTO Secretariat in liaison with the Uruguayan Government to fix the dates of the meeting and its corresponding Seminar.

Lastly, the Chairman of the CAM thanked the Chilean Government, the Director of SERNATUR Mr. Oscar Santelices, his collaborators, the Regional Representative and the WTO staff, and all the delegates at the CAM meeting for their participation, which made it possible to hold an excellent Seminar and a fruitful meeting of the Commission for the Americas.

This concluded the 43rd meeting of the Commission for the Americas.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON MICE TOURISM AND BUSINESS TOURISM

Santiago, Chile, 25-26 May 2005

1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of the forty-third meeting of the WTO Commission for the Americas, held in the city of Santiago, Chile, and coinciding with the 4th Chilean National Tourism Summit 2005 on 25-26 May 2005, the "International Seminar on MICE Tourism and Business Tourism" was held. The meeting was attended by eighteen Member States from the Americas, Spain and South Africa as observers, three Affiliate Members and four representatives of National Organizations (International Congress & Convention Association, the *Asociación Argentina de Organizadores y Proveedores de Exposiciones y Congresos*, Destination Management Chile, and *Organización Gestión del Destino Turístico Santa Cruz*). The total number of participants was approximately 380 persons.

The official inauguration was presided by the WTO Secretary-General, Mr. Francesco Frangialli, who began by thanking the host country, and in particular the National Tourism Director of Chile, Óscar Santelices, for its initiative in welcoming the WTO and for prompting the consideration of the theme to be discussed during the Seminar.

He recalled the fact that it was precisely in Santiago, Chile, that the Organization adopted the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

Mr. Frangialli gave a very succinct characterization of the MICE and Business Tourism segment, and said that the purpose of the Seminar was to study this segment in the context of the realities of the Americas, mentioning the introductory paper prepared by the WTO, which would be presented after.

He also pointed out the participation in the Seminar of highly qualified speakers, which meant an excellent opportunity to make a fruitful contribution to the development of a subject that is of singular importance for tourism in the region.

The Chairmanship of the Regional Commission, and thus also the presidency of the Seminar was entrusted to Mr. Rodrigo Castro, Minister of Tourism of Costa Rica. In his inaugural address, Mr. Castro, aside from briefly referring to the theme of the Seminar, discussed the substantial tourism development going on in Costa Rica.

Mr. Jorge Rodríguez Grossi, Minister of Economy and Energy of Chile then took the floor and welcomed the participants, expressing the importance accorded to tourism in his country.