

FOR DECISION

Agenda item 18(a)
**Report of the Chair of the Affiliate
Members**

A/24/18(a)
Madrid, 28 August 2021
Original: English

Executive summary

This report presents an analysis of the current situation and the initiatives carried out by the Board Members and Affiliate Members since the 23rd General Assembly in Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, in September 2019, up to the date of this report (August 2021).

The Chair of the Affiliate Members invites the General Assembly to acknowledge the proposals and initiatives included in this report to improve the cooperation between the Member States and the Affiliate Members for the recovery of the global tourism industry. These different initiatives contribute to the practical application of public-private collaboration by way of encouraging interaction and networking, as well as the exchange of knowledge and innovative initiatives, with the ultimate goal of achieving the strategic objective established by the Secretary-General of consolidating the Affiliate Membership as an essential asset of the Organization.

Action by the General Assembly

DRAFT RESOLUTION¹

The General Assembly,

Having examined the Report of the Chair of the Affiliate Members,

1. *Thanks* the Chair of the Board for her report and congratulates the Members of the Board and the Affiliate Members for their activities;
2. *Stresses* the importance of the holding of the 43rd plenary meeting of the Affiliate Members in the context of the 24th General Assembly and notes the contributions proposed for the Programme of Work 2022;
3. *Welcomes* the initiatives of Affiliate Members aimed at the recovery of the tourism industry;
4. *Supports* the Reform of the UNWTO Affiliate Membership Legal Framework; and
5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to strengthen the cooperation of Affiliate Members with Member States.

¹ 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.

I. Expanding and reinforcing the Affiliate Membership

1. The evolution of the Affiliate Membership has been encouraging despite the context, and the Affiliate Members Department has been receiving the interest of new organizations to be part of UNWTO as Affiliate Members.
2. The Committee for the Review of Applications for Affiliate Membership has held several meetings and decided to admit to affiliate membership a considerable number of entities at each meeting:
 - (1) Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, 10 September 2019: 27 members
 - (2) Tbilisi, Georgia, 15 September, 2020: 29 members
 - (3) Virtual format, 14 January 2021: 7 members
 - (4) Madrid, Spain, 30 November - 3 December 2021

II. Building better value for Affiliate Members

3. The Affiliate Members Department has kept the Chair of the Affiliate Members, the Board and the entire network of Affiliate Members permanently informed and updated, through the dedicated platform AM Connected, sharing with them the latest updates from UNWTO as well as ways for Affiliate Members to further engage with the Organization.
4. There has been an increased presence of relevant AMs in the main UNWTO activities, including statutory meetings such as regional commissions.
5. The Affiliate Members Department has been regularly holding bilateral and multilateral meetings with the Affiliate Members, on different themes and in regional formats (including meetings of the Board, Working Groups, etc.)
6. Memorandums of Understanding have been signed with a wide variety of Affiliate Members in order to strengthen collaboration and partnerships.
7. A survey was launched in February 2021 to assess the level of satisfaction of the Affiliate Members with the services offered. The results of the survey were presented at the 54th Meeting of the Board of the Affiliate Members and showed that Affiliate Members are overall satisfied with the benefits provided by UNWTO Affiliate Membership, signalling that Affiliate Members could better take advantage of Affiliate Membership through better communication between the Affiliate Members Department and the Affiliate Members network.

III. Modernizing the management of the Affiliate Membership network: Reform of the Legal Framework of the Affiliate Members

8. Launching of the process of an Integral Reform of the Legal Framework of Affiliate Members, to be ratified by the 24th UNWTO General Assembly, including the creation of the Committee on Matters Related to Affiliate Membership and ensuring a modern and adapted framework for the Affiliate Membership. The Working Group for the Reform of the UNWTO Affiliate Membership Legal Framework, chaired by Spain, enjoys the participation and support of 14 Member States.
9. The Affiliate Membership has been duly represented in the meetings of the Working Group for the Reform of the UNWTO Affiliate Membership Legal Framework through the Chair of the Board of the Affiliate Members in the following meetings of the Working Group:
 - (1) 1st Meeting – 2 December 2020
 - (2) 2nd Meeting – 14 January 2021
 - (3) 3rd Meeting – 16 March 2021
 - (4) 4th Meeting – 22 April 2021
 - (5) 5th Meeting – 1 June 2021
 - (6) 6th Meeting – 24 June 2021

10. The Board of the Affiliate Members has been in permanent contact with the Secretariat of the Working Group for the Reform of the UNWTO Affiliate Membership Legal Framework and welcomes the reform as a means to modernize the Affiliate Membership, creating a mechanism to improve the integration of the Affiliate Members in the Organization and creating better synergies for cooperation between Member States and Affiliate Members.
11. The Board of the Affiliate Members has been duly informed on the progress of the reform and such item has been included in the agenda of the meetings held from the 51st meeting of the Board of the Affiliate Members onwards.

IV. Meetings of the Board of Affiliate Members

12. Since the 23rd General Assembly in Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, in September 2019, the Board of the Affiliate Members has held the following meetings in order to discuss the topics related to the Affiliate Membership, such as the involvement of Affiliate Members in UNWTO's initiatives, the implementation of the Programmes of Work of the Affiliate Members, or the Reform of the Legal Framework of Affiliate Members.

- (1) 49nd Meeting – 12 September 2019
- (2) 50nd Meeting – 24 January 2020
- (3) 51st Meeting – 12 January 2021
- (4) 52nd Meeting – 18 February 2021
- (5) 53rd Meeting – 20 April 2021
- (6) 54th Meeting – 21 May 2021

V. Participation of the Members of the Board in UNWTO statutory meetings

13. The Board meeting held in FITUR 2020 underlined the importance of fostering the connection with Member States and highlighted the importance of the Statutory Meetings (Regional Commissions and Executive Council) as the perfect opportunity to have representatives of Affiliate Members deliver messages from the AMs to the Member States.
14. Institutional representatives of the Board have participated in the following Regional Commissions:
 - (1) The Chair, Ms. Ana Larrañaga, represented the AMs at the 65th Meeting of the UNWTO Regional Commission for Europe, held virtually on 25 June 2020.
 - (2) Mr. Jens Thraenhardt, the 2nd Vice-Chair of the Board, represented the Affiliate Members at the 32nd Joint Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for East Asia and the Pacific and the UNWTO Commission for South Asia, held virtually on 30 June 2020.
 - (3) The 1st Vice-Chair of the Board, Prof. Donald Hawkins, participated as representative of the AMs at the 46th UNWTO Regional Commission for the Middle East, which was held virtually on 6 July 2020.
 - (4) The 1st Vice-Chair of the Board, Prof. Donald Hawkins, participated as representative of the AMs at the 66th UNWTO Regional Commission for the Americas, which was held virtually on 24 June 2021.
15. The Board of the Affiliate Members discussed during its latest meeting the participation of Members of the Board in some of the upcoming Regional Commissions.
16. Participation of the Chair of the Board of the Affiliate Members, Ms. Ana Larrañaga, representing the Affiliate Members, at the 112th session of the Executive Council, Tbilisi, Georgia, 15-17 September 2020.
17. Participation of the Chair of the Board of the Affiliate Members, Ms. Ana Larrañaga, representing the Affiliate Members, at the 113th session of the Executive Council, Madrid, Spain, 18-19 January 2021.

VI. Participation of Affiliate Members in the Global Tourism Crisis Committee

18. The Secretary-General's call on 26 March 2020 to count on the institutional participation of the Affiliate Membership on the Global Tourism Crisis Committee, created as the appropriate framework to urgently identify the necessary measures to mitigate the effects of the crisis on the most vulnerable people and companies and push all Governments for coordinated implementation under the leadership of UNWTO, offered to the Chair of the Board the possibility to bring to the attention of the Committee, during the meetings held, the most valuable initiatives implemented by the Affiliate Members. These contributions were reflected in the UNWTO Recommendations published in April 2020 and in the UNWTO Guidelines to Restart Tourism released at the end of May 2020. The Chair underlined the importance of the participation and contributions of the Affiliate Members to this important coordination mechanism, sharing their initiatives and measures, as well as their concerns and needs.

VII. Participation of Affiliate Members in the Committee for the Development of an International Code for the Protection of Tourists

19. Incorporation of the Affiliate Members' voice in the Committee for the Development of an International Code for the Protection of Tourists through the participation as an observer of Prof. Don Hawkins, first Vice-Chair of the Board of Affiliate Members and Professor Emeritus of Management, Tourism Studies and International Affairs of the George Washington (GW) University, in the second meeting of the Committee held virtually on 26 November 2020 and subsequent meetings.
20. Calls for contributions have been duly circulated among the Affiliate Members so that they can send their views and comments on the different chapters in process of elaboration of the International Code for the Protection of Tourists. These contributions have been channelled through Prof. Don Hawkins.

VIII. 42nd UNWTO Plenary Session of the Affiliate Members

21. One of the most important meetings of the Affiliate Members was the 42nd Plenary Session, held in Madrid on 5 and 6 November 2020. It was one of the first events held by UNWTO in a hybrid format, in which more than 200 Affiliate Members from all over the world participated in a face-to-face and virtual format.
22. The plenary session focused both on the immediate priorities for the vital revival of tourism and on the longer-term task of ensuring that the sector remains a fundamental pillar of sustainable development. One of the most important themes of the session was the presentation of the proposed Programme of Work for 2021. The process of drawing up and developing the Programme is largely in line with new business models, public-private cooperation and the increase of value of membership. The Affiliate Members submitted numerous proposals to the Affiliate Members Department to be incorporated into the Programme of Work, not only in the areas we want to develop, but also in the areas where we have the capacity and experience to support the activities of UNWTO and its Member States. This approach is truly in line with the objective of improving opportunities for cooperation between Member States and Affiliate Members.
23. The best initiatives of the Affiliate Members received the valuable "Awards to outstanding initiatives shared with the UNWTO by our Affiliate Members" at a gala organized in the framework of the plenary session.

IX. Incorporating substantial contributions from Affiliate Members to strengthen the capacity of the Organization

24. The Affiliate Members have the chance to align their own initiatives with UNWTO's priorities and submit their proposals for specific projects and activities through the calls for contributions for the Programme of Work of the Affiliate Members Department.

25. Call for Proposals for the Programme of Work 2021 (POW 2021), launched in October 2020, prior to the [42nd UNWTO Plenary Session of the Affiliate Members](#). Currently, those projects and activities, already included in the PoW 2021, are being designed and implemented.
26. Call for Proposals for the Programme of Work 2022 (POW 2022), which serves as the basis for the draft Programme of Work 2022, to be presented at 43rd UNWTO Plenary Session of Affiliate Members, in Madrid, Spain, in the framework of the 24th General Assembly.

X. Organizing dedicated activities aimed to offer Affiliate Members opportunities to showcase their relevant projects and products

27. [The UNWTO Affiliate Members Corner: Unleashing the Power of the Private Sector, FITUR 2020, 23 January 2020.](#)
28. [The UNWTO Affiliate Members Corner: Recovering Tourism. Rebuilding Trust. Reinforcing Partnership, 42nd UNWTO Plenary Session of Affiliate Members, 6 November 2020.](#)
29. [The UNWTO Affiliate Members Corner: Tourism Recovery, FITUR 2021, 21 May 2021.](#)
30. Virtual Corner of the Affiliate Members, a dedicated space in the UNWTO webpage showcasing initiatives implemented by Affiliate Members.

XI. Implementing joint projects and organizing events with Affiliate Members

31. [World Sports Tourism Congress](#), 25-26 November 2021, Lloret de Mar (Spain): organized in collaboration with the AM Catalan Tourism Board.
32. 43rd Affiliate Members Plenary Session, Madrid, Spain.
33. Global Report on Cultural Affinity and Screen Tourism: the Affiliate Members Department is working with NETFLIX in a joint publication outlining the value of the audio-visual industry as a driver for tourism.
34. [Publication “Accessibility and Inclusive Tourism Development in Nature Areas - Compendium of Best Practices”](#) developed as part of the activities of the Working Group on Accessible Tourism, launched at FITUR 2021.
35. [UNWTO/IATA Destination Tracker](#): a dashboard on COVID-19 travel restrictions and health related travel Requirements. The Affiliate Members Department worked with the AM International Air Transport Association (IATA), on the development of a dashboard on travel restrictions and status of the destinations related to the COVID-19, launched at the end of April.
36. [I International Astrotourism Conference in Évora](#), Portugal, 8-11 September, organized by Affiliate Member Starlight Foundation.

XII. Participation of the Affiliate Members at FITUR 2021

37. One of the milestones marking the restart of tourism was the return of large-scale tourism events such as FITUR 2021, which took place from 19 to 23 of May in Madrid, Spain.
38. FITUR 2021 served as a great occasion to meet many of the Affiliate Members in person and the Affiliate Members Department organized the following activities:

- (1) [Expert Meeting on Accessible Tourism – Good Practices on Accessible Tourism In Nature Areas: The](#) event offered the opportunity to launch the publication [“Accessibility and Inclusive Tourism Development in Nature](#)

[Areas - Compendium of Best Practices](#)”, which is now available in the UNWTO E-Library. This publication is the result of the work carried out in the last months by the Working Group on Accessible Tourism, coordinated by the Affiliate Members Department and chaired by the Spanish Network for Accessible Tourism (RedEstable).

- (2) [UNWTO Affiliate Members Corner](#): The Affiliate Members Corner has become a meeting point for Affiliate Members to share their ideas and latest projects, and the most recent edition was focused on the much-needed “Recovery of Tourism”. A selection of 16 Affiliate Members of UNWTO presented their latest initiatives to restart tourism.
- (3) [UNWTO/Netflix Panel of Experts on Screen Tourism and Cultural Affinity](#): The event started with the presentation of the Global Report on Cultural Affinity and Screen Tourism, a joint project between the two organizations that will be soon published. In particular, this study looks into screen tourism and expands this concept to include its connection with cultural affinity and the growing affection that people develop towards a particular country or local culture when displayed on the screen.
- (4) UNWTO Affiliate Members Board Meeting: the Board of the Affiliate Members had its 54th Meeting in a hybrid format.
- (5) UNWTO Stand at FITUR: As part of its activities at FITUR, the UNWTO offered to its Affiliate Members a space to meet, network, and hold B2B sessions. The stand, which was located at FITUR Next, was organized and coordinated by the Affiliate Members Department with the support of the other Departments of the Organization.

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