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ACTIVITIES OF THE WORLD COMMITTEE ON TOURISM ETHICS

Note by the Secretary-General

In this document, the Secretary-General informs the General Assembly, *inter alia*, on the Procedures for consultation and conciliation for the settlement of disputes concerning the application of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism approved by the Executive Council at its seventy-fourth session, as well as the Committee's adoption of the final version of its Rules of Procedure.

ACTIVITIES OF THE WORLD COMMITTEE ON TOURISM ETHICS

1. Through its resolution 469(XV) of 24 October 2003, the General Assembly acknowledged the composition of the newly established World Committee on Tourism Ethics and entrusted the latter with the review of "the draft conciliation mechanism for the settlement of disputes as set out in Part II of the Protocol of Implementation" of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.
2. By that same resolution, the General Assembly also endorsed the proposal of the Secretary-General to convey to the Members of the Committee the candidature of Mr. Diego Cordovez, a former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador, for the position of Chairman of the Committee. On 25 February 2004, on the occasion of their first meeting, the Members of the Committee elected Mr. Cordovez Chairman of the Committee.
3. Since its establishment, the Committee has held three meetings: the first, in Rome, Italy, in February 2004; the second, in Madrid, Spain, in October 2004; and the third, in Tunis, Tunisia, in May 2005. During these meetings, the Committee adopted its Rules of Procedure, established its programme of work, approved consultation and conciliation procedures as well as guidelines for the consideration of disputes, and adopted recommendations for the settlement of the first cases of dispute.

Rules of Procedure and programme of work

4. At its first meeting in Rome, the Committee discussed its future operating modalities and adopted its *Rules of Procedure* (copy of which is attached in Annex 1 of this document).
5. The Committee further established a programme of work, for which it identified a number of issues requiring priority action and an increased amount of awareness-raising activities. These priority areas are: (a) exploitation of human beings, in particular children; (b) sustainable development of tourism; (c) liberty of movements of visitors; (d) ensuring effective right to tourism; (e) fair trade in tourism services; and (f) observing ethical principles as a basis for understanding among people and a contribution to peace.

Consultation and Conciliation Procedures

6. As requested by the General Assembly, the Committee considered Part II of the Draft Protocol of Implementation for the settlement of disputes at its first session in February 2004. In October of that same year, after examining a revised draft proposed by its Chairman, the Committee approved unanimously the *Procedures for Consultation and Conciliation for the Settlement of Disputes concerning the Application of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism*. The full text of the Procedures is included in Annex 2 of this document.

7. This instrument is a flexible and voluntary consultation and conciliation – not arbitration – mechanism in which two or more countries (or even one country and a non-governmental organization or industry business) can refer a dispute to the Committee with a view to reaching a solution to their differences. Particular emphasis should be placed on the voluntary nature of the submission of cases of disputes to the Committee for conciliation, as no party can be obliged to submit a matter against its will.

8.. The Procedures envisage two phases in the dispute-settlement process. In the first instance, the WTO Secretary-General and the technical services of the Organization carry out a fact-finding function among parties in a dispute, the result of which is then submitted to the Committee for its consideration. In the second phase, the Committee considers all the issues involved, for which purpose it may establish a panel of members, and issues recommendations for the settlement of the dispute. Individual stakeholders may also seek the Committee's advice on specific aspects of the implementation of the Code.

9. The Procedures for Consultation and Conciliation for the Settlement of Disputes were approved unanimously by the WTO Executive Council in December 2004, by decision CE/DEC/14(LXXIV). By that same decision the Executive Council further encourages the Committee to start with the implementation of the new mechanism.

10. At its third meeting in May 2005, after receiving the first cases of disputes submitted to it for consultation, and given the nature of some of the complaints, the Committee considered it necessary to complement the consultation and conciliation mechanism with a set of guidelines concerning the admissibility of individual applications in cases of dispute or cases of complaint. Under the terms of the guidelines, which the Committee unanimously adopted on that occasion, applications that are submitted unilaterally will only be considered by the Committee if submitted by parties not directly involved in the dispute in question. The full text of the Guidelines is included in Annex 3 of this document.

11. However, in cases in which a non-application of ethical principles in the field of tourism is observed, the abovementioned guidelines do not preclude the Committee from issuing, on its own initiative, clarifications about the correct implementation of the Code of Ethics or to give advisory opinions for future guidance.

Implementation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism

A. Country Survey on the Implementation of the Code

12. At its first meeting in Rome, the World Committee on Tourism Ethics decided to carry out an extensive survey among WTO Members with a view to assessing the actual degree of implementation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism worldwide and establishing an inventory of the measures taken so far to promote and disseminate this instrument.

13. The outcome of this 12-month survey, carried out between 2004 and 2005 among WTO Members from both the public and the private tourism sector, is designed to lay down the groundwork for the establishment of the Committee's future strategy for promoting the implementation of the Code of Ethics.
14. With a response rate of 61 percent, the findings are based on replies received from 94 Full and Associate Members of the Organization, including two Permanent Observers. It should be noted that the percentage of responses received from the WTO Affiliate Members (6% - i.e. 17 out of over 300) was not considered sufficiently representative of this category of membership and could therefore not be taken into account in the report. The extensive version of the findings of this survey is published as Addendum 1 to this document (A/16/20 Add.1).
15. The survey results indicate that nearly three-quarters of respondents had already incorporated the principles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism into their legislative texts, or had used them as a basis when establishing national laws, regulations or tourism development plans. Several member States provided the exact title and year of the law, regulation or master plan concerned, while others reported the existence or the preparation of national or sectoral codes of ethics.
16. With the adoption of the Code of Ethics in 1999, the WTO General Assembly also urged the member States to publish the Code and make it known as widely as possible. In order for each country to reach the largest possible number of local tourism stakeholders, it was recommended that national tourism administrations (NTAs) or other related bodies arrange for the Code to be translated, where applicable, into their national or local languages.
17. According to the findings of the survey, the Code has been translated in 35 countries whose national languages were other than Arabic, English, French, Russian or Spanish, the five official languages of the Organization. As many as 26 of these translations were made available to the Secretariat of the Committee, where they were registered and then placed on the "Ethics in Tourism" website (http://www.world-tourism.org/code_ethics/eng.html), which is accessible to the public in general.
18. Moreover, with regard to the dissemination of the Code of Ethics to the various "stakeholders in tourism development", national tourism administrations (NTAs) in member countries declared that they had predominantly distributed the Code to tourism industry associations (76% of respondents). Dissemination had also been carried out among tourism education institutes (61%); regional or local tourism authorities (59%); tourism promotion boards (56%); tourism workers' unions, non-governmental organization (53% each) and researchers/academics (51%); the media (46%); tourists and visitors (31%); and, lastly, financing institutions (21%). In exceptional cases, the Code of Ethics was also distributed to the other government departments, or local schools.

19. In addition to the dissemination and the translation of the Code of Ethics, the types of actions most frequently reported by Members were, in decreasing order of occurrence, the organization of meetings, workshops and round-tables; the production of leaflets containing guidelines and best practices; the holding of press conferences; and the running of capacity-building events at universities, or training for tourism police. In a small number of countries, the Code of Ethics has been posted in hotel lobbies, or promoted by means of road shows. As a complementary means of advancing the Code, some respondents also cited the launch of national campaigns on specific aspects covered by the Code, such as the prevention of the sexual exploitation of children in tourism (a phenomenon commonly known as "child sex tourism").

20. Finally, the findings of the survey show that, in line with a WTO recommendation, 52 member States had designated an official from within their national tourism administrations to serve as focal point for the follow-up of the implementation of the Code of Ethics in their respective countries. Three additional countries have assigned a whole department or division of their tourism administration to carry out this function. In three other countries, national committees for the implementation of the Code have been established with representatives from government and the industry.

21. Based on the information collected by means of this survey, the Committee will establish a short- and medium-term strategy to improve the promotion of the Code of Ethics worldwide and strengthen the implementation of its provisions by the tourism sector.

B. Application of the Code to travel advisories

22. The issue of travel advisories is addressed by the Code of Ethics in a balanced manner in paragraph 5 of Article 6 "Obligations of stakeholders in tourism development". This subject has increasingly gained importance for the tourism industry especially after 2001, when the industry started experiencing serious difficulties as a consequence of the different terrorist attacks, health threats and other problems it had to face.

23. It is the duty of governments to protect their citizens and to inform them of the dangers they may encounter during their travel abroad. However, tourist destinations and host communities are not always treated in a fair manner by travel advisories, thus creating real obstacles to their tourism development. The contents of the warnings that are issued are often too vague or not proportionate to the gravity of the situations encountered; and, sometimes, they even fail to be updated or cancelled when the situation improves or comes back to normality.

24. The WTO Executive Council, therefore, included the discussion on travel advisories within the debate on the implementation of the Global Code of Ethics for tourism and the principles related to responsible tourism, which took place at its past two sessions held in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil, and Nessebar, Bulgaria, respectively in December 2004 and June 2005. In Nessebar, the Executive Council decided to

constitute a working group to deal in greater depth with the recommendations on travel advisories. More detailed information on travel advisories can be found in document A/16/22.

C. Implementation parameters for the Code

25. At its first session in Rome in February 2004, the World Committee on Tourism Ethics entrusted the WTO Secretariat with the preparation of implementation parameters to assist in the interpretation of the provisions of the Code of Ethics and in the evaluation of the degree of implementation of the latter. The parameters would also serve as a reference tool for WTO Members for their practical implementation of the Code.

26. A first set of implementation parameters related to articles of the Code having a special focus on such areas as trade, safety & security and quality in tourism, have already been examined by the Committee in 2004. The final part of the study on the parameters is still under revision by the technical services of the WTO Secretariat, and will be ready for consideration of the Committee, at its next meeting in 2006.

27. Once approved by the Committee, the implementation parameters for the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism will be distributed to the WTO membership.

D. Complementary ways of implementing the Code

28. Based on a proposal submitted to it by the WTO Commission for East Asia and the Pacific, the Committee considered the establishment of a tourism award, such as the Indonesian Tri Hita Karama ("three causes of happiness") Tourism Award, as a concrete and valuable example of promoting the understanding and the implementation of the Code.

29. The Committee therefore decided to endorse the Tri Hita Karama Tourism Award as a complementary way of encouraging the implementation of the Code of Ethics and further appealed to other countries and regions to develop similar awards.

E. The Code of Ethics and the tourists and travellers

30. With the aim of popularizing the Global Code of Ethics among tourists and travellers by introducing to them some of the aspects of the Code which are directly related to the ways of responsible planning and practicing of a trip, the Secretariat has proposed to the World Committee on Tourism Ethics a shorter and more user-friendly version of the Code, entitled *The Responsible Tourist and Traveller* (see Annex 4).

31. This simplified and more accessible version of the Code was prepared in cooperation with the Task Force to Protect Children from Sexual Exploitation in Tourism, and was approved by the World Committee on Tourism Ethics in May 2005.

The Responsible Tourist and Traveller will be published as an attractive leaflet and distributed to the travelling public through travel agencies and accommodation establishments. The leaflet will also be placed on the WTO website "Ethics in Tourism" from where it can be downloaded.

Coordination for future activities

32. The Committee encouraged the WTO Regional Representatives to promote more efficiently the Code of Ethics and its implementation among governments and to increase their coordination with the relevant focal points of their respective regions. It also emphasized the need of creating a stronger interface between member States and Committee Members by inviting the latter to participate on a regular basis in Commission meetings. Moreover, WTO Regional Representatives will be invited to report on developments related to the implementation of the Code occurred within their respective regions at the Committee's next session.

33. Based on the inventory of measures already taken by tourism stakeholders, at its next meeting, the Committee will prepare a plan of action for the promotion of the practical application of the Code of Ethics at national and international levels.

Hosting of the permanent headquarters of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics in Italy

34. At its last session in October 2003, the General Assembly accepted the proposal of the Italian Government to host the permanent headquarters of the Committee in Italy. The offer was reiterated to the Executive Council and the World Committee on Tourism Ethics in 2004. The Italian authorities declared their Government's readiness to meet the necessary financial and administrative requirements for the establishment of Committee's headquarters in Rome. They also announced the drafting of a bilateral agreement in this regard, which would be submitted to the Secretary-General for approval.

35. The Executive Council, at its session in Salvador de Bahía, Brazil (December 2004), entrusted the Secretary-General to sign the bilateral agreement with the Italian authorities once it was finalized. At the date of this document, the agreement is still under preparation.

36. It should be noted that the establishment of the Committee's headquarters in Rome does not preclude the possibility of holding Committee meetings either in Madrid or in other Member countries that wish to host them.

Next session of the Committee

37. The Members of the Committee decided to accept the generous invitation conveyed by Mr. Krishnan Nair, Representative of the Committee for South Asia, on behalf of the Indian Government, to hold the fourth meeting of the Committee in Bangalore, India, at a date to be fixed in consultation with the Secretary-General, the Chairman of the Committee and the host country.

ANNEX 1

WORLD COMMITTEE ON TOURISM ETHICS

RULES OF PROCEDURE

Preamble

1. These Rules of Procedure are adopted pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution A/RES/406/XIII whereby the General Assembly adopted the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and entrusted the World Committee on Tourism Ethics with preparing the guidelines for application with a view to specifying how the principles set forth in the Code are to be implemented, and provision (d) of the annex to resolution A/RES/438(XIV) stipulating that the World Committee on Tourism Ethics shall establish its own Rules of Procedure.
2. These Rules are subordinate to the Statutes of the World Tourism Organization. In cases where its stipulations are deficient or unclear, such stipulations shall be interpreted in the light of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly and those of the Executive Council of the Organization.
3. For the purposes of these Rules, the terms "WTO", "Assembly", "Council", "Committee" and "Protocol" shall mean, respectively, the World Tourism Organization, the General Assembly and Executive Council of the WTO, the World Committee on Tourism Ethics, and the Protocol of Implementation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism annexed to resolution A/RES/438(XIV) as modified by resolution A/RES/469(XV).

* * *

Composition of the Committee

Rule 1

1. The Committee shall consist of twelve members and eleven alternates.
2. The members of the Committee and their alternates shall be appointed in accordance with the stipulations of provision (b) of the Protocol. They shall not receive any orders or instructions from those who proposed their nomination or who elected them and shall not be accountable to them.
3. Save for exceptions resulting expressly from these Rules, alternate members shall have the same rights and obligations as full members. Nevertheless, an alternate member may only vote if the full member for whom he/she is the alternate is absent.

4. In the event of a vacancy of a seat, the full member shall be replaced by his/her alternate, it being understood that if the vacancy concerns both the full member and his/her alternate, they shall be replaced in accordance with the provisions applicable to the initial appointment.

Rule 2

1. The Chairperson of the Committee, who should be an eminent person not directly involved in the activities of the WTO but is from a Member State of the Organization, shall be elected by the other members of the Committee, on the proposal of the Secretary-General of WTO, after obtaining the opinion of the Council.
2. If the Chairperson is unable to attend a meeting, the Committee shall elect a session chairperson from among its full members. If such inability is permanent, a new Chairperson shall be elected in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1.

Rule 3

The presence of two-thirds of the Committee's full members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum at its meetings. In the event that a full member is unable to attend, he/she may be replaced by his/her alternate.

Rule 4

1. An observer designated by the Executive Council may participate in meetings of the Committee in an advisory capacity. Such observer has no vote but may take part in discussions in the same way as the members.
2. The Secretary-General shall attend *ex officio* or may arrange to be represented at the meetings of the Committee. The Secretary-General may address the Committee on any point he/she deems appropriate. The Secretary-General may at any time make to the Committee oral or written statements on any matters falling within the competence of the Committee.
3. The Legal Adviser of WTO shall participate, when necessary, and in an advisory capacity, in the Committee meetings and may address the Committee on any point of law he/she deems appropriate.

Meetings of the Committee

Rule 5

1. The Committee shall meet once a year, and for as long as its agenda requires.

2. A second meeting during the same year or, if circumstances so warrant, an extraordinary meeting, may be convened if the Committee so decides, and after consultation with the Secretary-General.

Rule 6

1. The provisional agenda of each meeting shall be drawn up by the Secretary-General in agreement with the Chairperson. It shall include any item the inclusion of which has been requested by the Assembly, by the Council or by the WTO Regional Commissions or, with the authorization of the Council, by the Committee of Affiliate Members. Full Members of the Organization may bring to the Committee's attention matters or situations that they deem worthy of consideration.
2. The provisional agenda of each ordinary meeting, together with the supporting documents, shall be transmitted by the Secretary-General to the members of the Committee and to the observers at least thirty days before the start of the meeting. In the event that an extraordinary meeting is convened, the provisional agenda, together with the supporting documents, shall be transmitted to the members of the Committee as soon as possible and using the most expeditious means.
3. The Committee shall adopt its agenda. If the circumstances so warrant, the Committee may place on its agenda supplementary items proposed by the Executive Council, by the Secretary-General, or by one of its members.

Rule 7

1. The meetings of the Committee shall be private unless the Committee decides otherwise. Nevertheless, the Committee may invite persons whose presence it deems useful to follow its discussions as observers. Members of the WTO staff whose presence is necessary for its proceedings may attend the meetings.
2. The Committee may invite experts or external institutions to contribute to its proceedings.
3. The Committee shall decide on the publicity to be given to its deliberations, whose results it shall communicate to the appropriate recipients.

Rule 8

No one may address the Committee without having previously obtained the permission of the Chairperson.

Rule 9

1. The Committee's working language shall be English. Nevertheless, a second working language may be adopted by the Committee in cases where it is deemed useful for the smooth proceeding of the deliberations of a session of the Committee, within the limits of the available funds.

Rule 10

1. The Committee shall adopt its biennial report, the various decisions it takes (except for those concerning persons), and the recommendations it formulates, preferably by consensus.

2. In the event that all the necessary efforts do not result in a consensus, the decision or recommendation shall be adopted by majority of the members present, with abstentions not being counted in the tally of votes.

3. Voting on decisions concerning persons shall be carried out by secret ballot. In all other cases, the Committee shall vote by a show of hands. In the event of a tie in the voting, the Chairperson shall have the casting vote.

Functions of the Committee*Rule 11*

1. The Committee shall perform the functions of evaluating and monitoring the implementation of the Code. To this end, it shall collect information relative to such implementation and shall draw up an inventory of the efforts made by the different stakeholders in tourism to promote and apply the Code, and of the problems encountered in doing so.

2. The Secretary-General shall transmit to the Committee the pertinent information in his/her possession with the support of the Committee of Affiliate Members.

3. The Secretary-General shall place at the Committee's disposal the personnel necessary for the performance of its functions.

Rule 12

1. The Committee shall summarize the information collected and shall include in its biennial report the conclusions drawn from the analysis of such information. Should the need arise, it shall draw up proposals to amend or supplement the Code and to enhance its dissemination and implementation. Separately from its biennial report, the Committee may draw up any recommendations it deems useful.

2. The Secretary-General shall transmit the report and recommendations of the Committee to the Council and to the Regional Commissions, together with his/her observations, for consideration. The Secretary-General shall transmit to the Assembly the recommendations of the Committee together with his/her own observations and, as the case may be, any comments called for by such documents on the part of the Council and the Regional Commissions.

Final provisions

Rule 13

1. These Rules of Procedure shall enter into force on the date of their adoption by the Committee. Its text shall be transmitted to the Council and to the Assembly for their information.

2. It may be amended by the Committee as necessary. Amendments may be proposed by the Assembly, the Council, or the Secretary-General, or by any full member or alternate member of the Committee. The text of proposals for amendments shall be transmitted to the members of the Committee by the Secretary-General at least thirty days before the Committee meeting at which they are to be considered. CE/74/10.

ANNEX 2

PROCEDURES FOR CONSULTATION AND CONCILIATION
FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES CONCERNING THE APPLICATION OF
THE GLOBAL CODE OF ETHICS FOR TOURISM

1. In the event of a dispute concerning the interpretation or application of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, two or more stakeholders in tourism development¹ may jointly submit the matter of such a dispute (hereinafter “the matter”) to the World Committee on Tourism Ethics (“the Committee”) as the body of the World Tourism Organization competent to settle such questions.
2. The Chairman of the Committee shall acknowledge receipt of the matter in a written communication to the parties and request the Secretary-General to conduct consultations with the parties in order to prepare a report to the Committee, which shall be submitted within a period of thirty days, containing all the relevant facts, a summary of the positions taken by the parties and the Secretary-General’s suggestions concerning the recommendations that the Committee may wish to approve for the resolution of the various issues involved. If in the process of such consultations, the Secretary-General and the parties have reached understandings as to the measures to be taken in order to settle the matter, the contents of such understandings shall be set out in the report of the Secretary-General for the consideration of the Committee. Upon a request by the Secretary-General, the Committee may extend the period for the submission of the report.
3. The Committee shall examine the report of the Secretary-General at a session following its submission and shall consider and approve recommendations to the parties regarding the settlement of the matter. To that end, the Committee may decide to set up a panel of three members who shall prepare draft recommendations for the approval of the Committee. As a general rule, the panel shall prepare the draft recommendations within the same session of the Committee at which the report of the Secretary-General has been submitted, but if the nature of the matter, and other relevant circumstances and reasons, justify a lengthier discussion of the issues involved, the Committee may authorize the panel to submit the draft recommendations at a subsequent session.

¹ For the purpose of the Code, the term “stakeholders in tourism development” includes: national governments; local governments with specific competence in tourism matters; tourism establishments and tourism enterprises, including their associations; institutions engaged in financing tourism projects; tourism employees, tourism professionals and tourism consultants; trade unions of tourism employees; tourism education and training centers; travelers, including business travelers, and visitors to tourism destinations, sites and attractions; local populations and host communities at tourism destinations through their representatives; other juridical and natural persons having stakes in tourism development including non-governmental organizations specializing in tourism and directly involved in tourism projects and the supply of tourism services.

4. A panel set up by the Committee, in preparing draft recommendations, may decide to hold consultations with the parties. Such consultations may also be held by the Committee or the panel at the request of any of the parties at any time during the consideration of the matter. The Committee and a panel set up by the Committee may agree by consensus to adopt specific modalities for the consideration of a matter. Subject to the provisions in paragraph 5 below, the proceedings of the Committee and of a panel set up for the consideration of a matter shall be conducted in strict confidence.
5. In approving its recommendations to the parties the Committee shall decide upon the period within which the recommendations should be implemented by the parties. The Secretary-General shall report thereon to the Committee. Such a report shall be considered by the Committee, which shall issue a press release on the substance of the settlement if its recommendations have been implemented. If one or more of its recommendations have not been implemented, the Committee shall decide on the action to be taken in the light thereof, including the holding of renewed consultations with the parties and the issuance of a press release containing the conclusions reached by the Committee.
6. The Committee may also consider questions submitted by individual stakeholders or Member States concerning specific aspects of the implementation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. If it deems it appropriate, the Committee may issue clarifications or advisory opinions for future guidance.
7. The Committee shall report to the General Assembly on all the matters of implementation and interpretation submitted to it.
8. The expenses incurred in the process of consultations, and any other expenses concerning the work of the Committee and the Secretariat in the consideration of a matter, shall be borne by the Parties unless the circumstances are considered exceptional by the Committee.
9. These procedures shall be reviewed by the Committee three years after their approval by the General Assembly in the light of the experience gained in their practical application. In that context, the Committee shall examine all the relevant modalities used and required. Having completed the review of the procedures, the Committee shall decide if, and in what terms, the application of the procedures shall be delegated to the regional commissions, bearing in mind the need to ensure consistency and coherence in the application and interpretation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

A N N E X 3**GUIDELINES FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF DISPUTES**

1. The World Committee on Tourism Ethics was established by the General Assembly of WTO with the mandate to promote the acceptance and implementation of the Code by the different stakeholders in tourism development.
2. Paragraph 1 of the Procedures for consultation and conciliation for the settlement of disputes stipulates that in the event of a dispute, two or more stakeholders may jointly submit their dispute to the Committee.
3. Disputes not jointly submitted by all the Parties involved shall not be considered by the Committee. However, matters concerning the general application of ethical principles in tourism may be submitted unilaterally to the Committee and may include references to specific disputes insofar as they illustrate the principles in question, and provided that the submitter of the matter is not involved in the disputes cited.
4. The Committee may provide, on its own initiative, a clarification regarding ethical principles included in the Code.

ANNEX 4**THE RESPONSIBLE TOURIST AND TRAVELLER**

Dear traveller,

The "Responsible Tourist and Traveller" is a practical guide to help you make your trip an enriching experience.

The advice is based on the *Global Code of Ethics for Tourism* of the World Tourism Organization.

THE RESPONSIBLE TOURIST AND TRAVELLER

Travel and tourism should be planned and practiced as a means of individual and collective fulfilment. When practiced with an open mind, it is an irreplaceable factor of self education, mutual tolerance and for learning about the legitimate differences between peoples and cultures and their diversity.

Everyone has a role to play creating responsible travel and tourism. Governments, business and communities must do all they can, but as a guest you can support this in many ways to make a difference:

1. Open your mind to other cultures and traditions – it will transform your experience, you will earn respect and be more readily welcomed by local people. Be tolerant and respect diversity – observe social and cultural traditions and practices.
2. Respect human rights. Exploitation in any form conflicts with the fundamental aims of tourism. The sexual exploitation of children is a crime punishable in the destination or at the offender's home country.
3. Help preserve natural environments. Protect wildlife and habitats and do not purchase products made from endangered plants or animals.
4. Respect cultural resources. Activities should be conducted with respect for the artistic, archaeological and cultural heritage.
5. Your trip can contribute to economic and social development. Purchase local handicrafts and products to support the local economy using the principles of fair trade. Bargaining for goods should reflect an understanding of a fair wage.
6. Inform yourself about the destination's current health situation and access to emergency and consular services prior to departure and be assured that your health and personal security will not be compromised. Make sure that your specific requirements (diet, accessibility, medical care) can be fulfilled before you decide to travel this destination.

7. Learn as much as possible about your destination and take time to understand the customs, norms and traditions. Avoid behaviour that could offend the local population.
8. Familiarize yourself with the laws so that you do not commit any act considered criminal by the law of the country visited. Refrain from all trafficking in illicit drugs, arms, antiques, protected species and products or substances that are dangerous or prohibited by national regulations.

