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WORLD TOURISM DAY:
INFORMATION ON THE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED IN 2004 AND 2005
ADOPTION OF THEMES AND DESIGNATION OF HOST COUNTRIES
FOR 2006 AND 2007

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General informs the General Assembly of the various activities carried out to celebrate the World Tourism Day in 2004 and 2005 and reports on the themes and on the host countries proposed for the 2006 and 2007 celebrations, selected by the Executive Council at its seventy-fifth session, for recommendation to the Assembly.

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I. WORLD TOURISM DAY 2004 AND 2005

1. By resolution 470(XV) adopted at its fifteenth session at Beijing, China, on 24 October 2003, the General Assembly approved, on the recommendation of the Executive Council, the themes for World Tourism Day in 2004 and 2005.
2. In the same resolution, the Assembly also designated the host country for World Tourism Day for each of these two years.

• WORLD TOURISM DAY 2004

3. The twenty-fifth World Tourism Day was widely observed throughout the world under the theme: Sport and tourism: two living forces for mutual understanding, Culture and the development of society. The theme coincided with the XXVIII Olympic Games Athens 2004.
4. A joint message from the WTO Secretary-General and the IOC President Dr. Jacques Rogge stated that "sport and tourism share common goals: building bridges of understanding between different cultures, lifestyles and traditions; promoting peace and goodwill among nations; motivating and inspiring young people and providing entertainment and enjoyment to relieve the pressures of daily life to large sections of the population".
5. **Malaysia** was the host country for World Tourism Day and prepared a one-month long impressive programme, including an international conference on sports and tourism.
6. On the occasion of this twenty-fifth World Tourism Day, messages were issued by His Holiness Pope John Paul II, by the President of Algeria H. E. Abdelaziz Bouteflika and by the Greek Minister of Tourism Mr Dimitri Avramopoulos, to name but a few.
7. A commemorative booklet with the message of the Secretary-General and those of leading figures who expressed their support for World Tourism Day 2004 was published by the WTO Secretariat.
8. Moreover, a summary of the information received on World Tourism Day celebrations in different countries was published in the third issue (2004) of *WTO News* and disseminated through the WTO website.

- **WORLD TOURISM DAY 2005**

9. As previously mentioned, the fifteenth session of the General Assembly also chose as the theme for World Tourism Day in 2005: Travel and Transport: From the imaginary of Jules Verne to 21st century reality.
10. At the same session, the Assembly designated **Qatar** as the host country for WTD this year.
11. Celebrations will begin on Sunday, 25 September, with a series of workshops on the importance of tourism with the participation of schoolchildren in Doha and will run through Tuesday 27 September.
12. The Message from the Secretary-General to mark World Tourism Day 2005, annexed to this document, was circulated at the beginning of July. It is also made available on the WTO website.
13. The information communicated to the Secretariat on observance of the twenty-fourth World Tourism Day will be published in the forthcoming issues of the WTO News and in a special brochure commemorating WTD 2005.

II. WORLD TOURISM DAY: PROPOSED THEMES FOR 2006 AND 2007

14. According to the established practice, in April 2005, the Secretary-General wrote to all Full and Associate Members requesting them to propose themes for World Tourism Day 2006 and 2007. A similar request has been made by the Secretariat of the Business Council to the Affiliate Members of the Organization.
15. In the same way as for the 2004 and 2005 editions of World Tourism Day, the Secretary-General has suggested two possible themes for the next two years, taking into account the subjects already covered over the past ten years.
16. For **2006**, the Secretary-General has proposed that the theme of World Tourism Day be "Tourism enriches".
17. Such a proposal can be justified by the implementation of the Tourism Enriches campaign, launched by the WTO at the First World Conference on Tourism Communications on 28-29 January 2004 in Madrid, Spain.
18. Among the outcomes of the Conference was a request by the WTO Members to launch an awareness campaign, stressing the importance of tourism as a powerful economic and cultural instrument, which enriches individuals, families and communities throughout the world.
19. World Tourism Day 2006 will be thus a highlight of the Tourism Enriches worldwide awareness campaign, with the launching of new communication tools and reaffirmation of importance of tourism as one of the leading activities of the humankind.

20. Incontestably, the question of the role of women in tourism represents one of the crucial concerns of the United Nations and is destined to take on major importance in the coming years.

21. The promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women, the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education at all levels by 2015 is the third of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, to which the WTO has fully committed its support in the field of tourism.

22. Based on this fact, the Secretary-General has suggested that the role of women in tourism could be considered as the rallying theme of World Tourism Day in 2007.

23. There is reason to think that with its new status as a specialized agency, the WTO will be led, in the future, to take into account more systematically, when choosing themes for World Tourism Day, those themes adopted for international years and world days declared under the aegis of the United Nations.

24. In view of the above, the Secretary-General proposed to the Executive Council at its seventy-fifth session (Nessebar, Bulgaria, **13-14 June 2005**), the following themes for the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth editions of World Tourism Day, so that it can formulate its recommendation to the sixteenth session of the General Assembly.

2006 Tourism enriches

2007 Tourism opens doors for women

25. The Executive Council, on the one hand, examined the themes for World Tourism Day suggested by the Secretary-General for 2006 and 2007, approved them by decision 20(LXXV) in the context of a general consultation and decided to propose the mentioned themes to the General Assembly.

III. DESIGNATION OF THE HOST COUNTRY FOR WORLD TOURISM DAY 2004 AND 2005

26. By resolution 376(XII), the General Assembly has endorsed the proposal of the Executive Council to designate a host country each year as the Organization's partner in observing World Tourism Day.

27. At its sixty-sixth session held in Seoul, Republic of Korea on 24 September 2001, the Executive Council decided that the host country of World Tourism Day should be chosen by turn among the members of the six Regional Commissions, in such a way as to ensure a fair geographic rotation.

28. By decision 3(LXVI), the Council recommended to the General Assembly that it choose the host country of World Tourism Day, starting in 2004, from among the member States belonging to regions that have not yet hosted the official celebration of this annual event, based on the proposal of the corresponding Regional Commissions. Moreover, the same Council requested that, in the future, the dates of the General Assembly should not coincide with the celebration of World Tourism Day.

29. The Assembly, by resolution 439(XIV), ratified this recommendation of the Executive Council and requested it to decide the order of rotation in which Regional Commission should nominate host countries in subsequent years, beginning in 2004.

30. At its seventieth session the Executive Council, taking the above information into account decided (DEC/14(LXX)) that the Regional Commission for **East Asia and the Pacific** should designate the host country for **2004** from amongst its members and the Regional Commission for the **Middle East** will do the same for **2005**. Neither Region previously hosted World Tourism Day. This decision was fully implemented.

31. The geographical order to be followed after 2005 should respect the previous order in which Regions hosted World Tourism Day. Consequently, the order after 2005 should be as follows: **2006: Europe; 2007: South Asia; 2008: Américas** and **2009: Africa**. The full cycle will be repeated in subsequent years.

32. Following the above decision, the Executive Council at its seventy-fifth session acknowledged that the Commission for Europe has designated Portugal to host WTD 2006 and entrusted the Regional Commission for South Asia with submitting its proposal regarding the host State for World Tourism Day 2007 at the seventy-sixth session of the Council, which will submit it, along with the previous one, for information to the sixteenth session of the Assembly.

ANNEX

MESSAGE FROM THE WTO SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR WORLD TOURISM DAY 2005

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT: FROM THE IMAGINARY OF JULES VERNE TO 21ST CENTURY REALITY

"Transport of the mails, transport of the human voice, transport of flickering pictures - in this century, as in others, our highest accomplishments still have the single aim of bringing people together."

Antoine de Saint Exupéry
Wind, Sand, and Stars, 1939

Transport has always been the lifeblood of the travel industry – and what better time to celebrate this vital relationship than in the year that marks the centenary of the death of one of the world's great authors and travel visionaries.

Most of Jules Verne's fantasies have yet to come to fruition. But by the time he died in 1905 his words had fired the imagination of avid readers and potential travellers right around the globe.

In Verne's day international travel was still, in many cases, an adventure. Today, while ever more people go on holiday or travel to do business, play sports, attend meetings, visit friends and relatives, or simply in search of excitement, we have come to expect, as far as transport is concerned, standards of efficiency, comfort, and safety that to a large extent determine the quality of our final experience.

Perhaps it is no coincidence that the two transport inventions that are now recognized as the main instigators of modern tourism - the car and the airplane – both made their appearance on the world stage shortly before Verne's death.

Passenger transport has come a long way since the first economical air services began 70 years ago – through early jet airliners to the Boeing 747 Jumbo, to Concorde and soon the arrival of the biggest airliner ever, the double-decker Airbus A380.

Over the last century, international travel has become such a normal part of everyday life that transport capacity is now a critical factor in the development or expansion of any destination.

A lack of adequate infrastructure – especially of airports and roads – is a major obstacle to tourism growth. For some destinations, small islands and landlocked countries for example, good air access is essential to bring in tourists.

The rapid development of the industry in recent years is closely related with that of another modern phenomenon, the incredible leap forward in communications. At a time when we are bombarded with ever more information from both traditional and electronic sources, we are also travelling more and more.

Higher disposable incomes also mean that far more people can afford to travel. In 1950 it was twenty million, last year 760 million, and by 2020 it is expected that the number of international travellers will exceed 1.6 billion a year.

How much further can we go? What are the final frontiers in this quest for travel? Will humankind only be satisfied when journeys into space become readily available and affordable?

Exploits that were once no more than the brainchild of science-fiction writers such as Jules Verne are growing ever nearer reality with the advances in transport that have and will continue to be made. But through all this it is important that we do not forget the fundamental objectives of travel.

Travel enables us to enrich our lives with new experiences, to enjoy and to be educated, to learn respect for foreign cultures, to establish friendships, and above all to contribute to international cooperation and peace throughout the world.