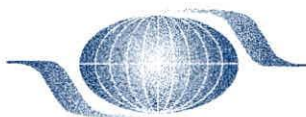


WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



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MEMBERSHIP OF THE ORGANIZATION

(a) New membership

I. Full Members

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General reports to the General Assembly in this document on the changes in membership submitted since its fifteenth session. He submits applications for membership to the Assembly for approval in accordance with Article 5 of the Statutes and rules 49 and 50 of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure. The applications for affiliate membership in accordance with Article 7 of the Statutes will be reported in Part II of this document.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE ORGANIZATION

(a) New membership

I. Full Members

1. The purpose of this document is to inform the General Assembly of changes in the Organization's membership since its fifteenth session and also of applications for full membership, which the Assembly is required to examine in accordance with Article 5 of the Statutes and rules 49 and 50 of its Rules of Procedure.

I. MEMBERSHIPS SINCE THE FIFTEENTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2. It is recalled that the admission of **Oman** as a Full Member of WTO took effect on 9 July 2004, following approval by the Council in accordance with the mandate it had received from the Assembly.

3. Likewise, on 23 September 2004, **Australia**, in accordance with Article 5.2 of the Statutes, rejoined the Organization, upon receipt of the formal letter whereby it accepted the Statutes of the Organization.

4. The Council took note of these two admissions at its sessions in Hyderabad in July 2004 and in Salvador de Bahia in November 2004.

5. The Members of the Council will recall that the fifteenth session of the General Assembly (Beijing, October 2003) approved the admission of **Latvia**, noting that such membership would take effect starting 1 January 2005.

6. On 19 May, H.E. Mr. Yury Sivakov, Minister of Sports and Tourism of **Belarus** sent a communication to the Secretary-General informing him that the President of the Republic has signed the text of the law adopted by the House of Representatives and approved by the Council of the Republic, relative to the ratification of the Statutes of WTO.

7. The membership of this State, a Member of the United Nations, came into effect on 14 June 2005, following its approval by the Council at Nessebar, Bulgaria, in accordance with the mandate it had received from the fifteenth session of the Assembly.

II. CANDIDATURES FOR MEMBERSHIP

8. In a letter dated 27 August 2004, the Minister for Culture and Tourism of **Papua New Guinea**, H.E. David Basua, transmitted to the Secretariat his Government's formal acceptance of the Statutes of the Organization and the obligations of membership. This candidature is subject to ratification by the General Assembly at its next session, pursuant to Article 5.3 of the Statutes. This State is a member of the Organization of the United Nations.
9. The Prime Minister of **Timor-Leste** has also sent to the Secretariat a communication dated 14 February 2005, whereby his Government formally accepted the Statutes of the Organization and the obligations of membership. This candidature is also subject to ratification by the General Assembly at its next session, pursuant to Article 5.3 of the Statutes. This State is a member of the Organization of the United Nations.
10. On 17 May 2005, the Permanent Representative of **The Bahamas** to the United Nations sent to the Secretary-General a communication from H.E. Mr. Frederick Audley Mitchell, Minister of Foreign Affairs of this country, whereby his Government adopts the Statutes of the Organization and accepts the obligations of membership.
11. The Bahamas, a former Member of IUOTO and the WTO until 1979, can rejoin the institution without any further formalities. The Bahamian authorities, however, have indicated that they wish such membership to take effect on 25 November 2005, the date of the opening of the sixteenth session of the General Assembly. This State is a member of the Organization of the United Nations.
12. At the first National Tourism Conference, held in London on 16 March 2005, H.E. Mr. Richard Caborn, then Minister for Sport and Tourism of the **United Kingdom**, announced that his country would be joining the Organization shortly.
13. In his letter of 31 May 2005, H.E. Mr. James Purnell, Minister for Creative Industries and Tourism, confirmed the statement made by his predecessor and said that he saw no problem on the part of the United Kingdom in assuming the obligations of membership. The formalization of this membership could come about by the date of the session of the Assembly. Upon such formalization it may rejoin the Organization under Article 5.2 of the Statutes, given the fact that the United Kingdom was a member of the International Union of Official Tourist Organizations (IUOTO) at the date of the adoption of the Statutes of WTO. This State is a Member of the Organization of the United Nations.
14. Barring further candidatures, and taking into account that of the United Kingdom, the total number of Member States of the Organization will thus increase to 150 at the date of the General Assembly. This total brings to 30 the number of seats on the Executive Council, pursuant to Article 14.1 of the Statutes of the Organization and Rule 1.1 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council.

III. APPLICATIONS IN PROGRESS

15. On 24 November 2004, H.E. Mr. Saqr Ghobash, Undersecretary for the Ministry of Information of the **United Arab Emirates** informed the Secretary-General of the Emirates' interest in joining the Organization. The Secretariat is following up on this declaration of intent. Any developments between now and the General Assembly will be brought to the attention of the Members in an addendum to this document.

IV. CONTACTS WITH NON-MEMBER STATES

16. The Secretariat is in contact with several non-member States that have expressed an interest in the activities of the Organization. It is actively taking steps to encourage these countries to join the WTO.

17. The Commission for the Americas, at its meeting held in Paraguay in May 2003, adopted, at Mexico's proposal, a decision by which it requested the Secretariat to redouble its efforts to encourage the prompt entry of the United States of America into the Organization, and to extend these efforts to increase membership among other countries of the region that are not yet members.

18. Furthermore, the Secretary-General has received from the Council a specific mandate to approach countries that belong to the United Nations, but are not members of WTO, in particular the United States of America, which ranks as one of the top countries in terms of the size of its tourism economy, in order to encourage them to join WTO, in view of the conversion of the Organization into a specialized agency.