Executive summary

During the present session, the Council is called upon to fix the place and date of the 121st session of the Executive Council scheduled in the first semester of 2024.

In accordance with the Guidelines on the selection of venues of Executive Council sessions adopted by decision 11(XCIV), the 121st session of the Executive Council must be held at the Headquarters of the Organization.

However, as of the date of the publication of this document, the UNWTO Secretariat has received the candidature of the Czech Republic to host the 121st session of the Council.

In addition, the Commonwealth of the Bahamas has presented its candidature to host the 122nd session of the Council in the second semester of 2024.
The Executive Council,

1. **Decides** to hold its 121st session of the Executive Council in ... during the first semester of 2024, on dates to be agreed upon between the Secretariat and the host country, taking into consideration the Guidelines on the selection of venues of Executive Council sessions adopted by its decision 11(XCIV);

2. **Welcomes** the proposal of Bahamas to host the 122nd session of the Executive Council;

3. **Recalls** that, in accordance with the above mentioned Guidelines, the 121st session of the Executive Council will decide on the venues of the 122nd, 123rd and 124th sessions of the Council; and

4. **Invites** the Member States to submit their candidatures to host the forthcoming sessions of the Executive Council to the Secretary-General, at the latest, 90 days before the 121st session of the Executive Council.

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¹This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Council, please refer to the Decisions document issued at the end of the session.
I. Introduction

1. The statutory framework concerning the place and dates of Executive Council ordinary sessions is established in the Statutes and the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council, under the provisions reproduced below:

**Article 8(2) of the Statutes:**

"Meetings of the Assembly and the Council shall be held at the Headquarters of the Organization unless the respective organs decide otherwise."

**Article 16 of the Statutes:**

"The Council shall meet at least twice a year."

**Rule 3(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council:**

"The Council shall meet at least twice a year. It shall fix at each session the date of the next session. The letters of convocation for ordinary sessions shall be sent to the Members of the Council by the Secretary-General at least forty days before the opening of the session."

**Rule 3(3) of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council:**

"Without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 4 of this Rule, the sessions of the Council shall be held at the Organization’s headquarters unless the Council decides otherwise."

2. Despite the wording of Article 8(2) of the Statutes, in practice the Assembly and the Council do not meet at the Headquarters of the Organization. Through decision 11(XCIV), adopted at its 94th session held in October 2012, the Council considered “that, for the selection of venues of the Governing Bodies of the Organization, there is a need to balance the statutory requirements with the practice of geographical rotation of meetings that has greatly contributed to promote the role of tourism and of UNWTO around the world", and adopted the guidelines for the selection of venues of sessions of the Executive Council and General Assembly sessions (hereinafter “the Guidelines”)

3. In this regard, the Council endorsed the proposal of the Secretary-General “to try to hold at least one meeting of the Executive Council at the Headquarters of the Organization in non-Assembly years", a decision which is further developed in the Guidelines:

"14. (a) The next Executive Council meeting following the one held immediately after the General Assembly must be held at the Headquarters of the Organization. It decides the places of the meetings of the Council up to the next General Assembly. (...)"

4. Pursuant to the above, the 121st session of the Executive Council must be held at the Headquarters of the Organization unless decided otherwise in accordance with the procedure for the selection of venues of the Executive Council sessions set out in the Guidelines, at which the Council will fix the venues of its 122nd, 123rd and 124th sessions.

II. Procedure for fixing the place of Executive Council sessions

5. Pursuant to the Guidelines, for a candidature to be eligible, the State concerned must fulfil the following requirements before the Executive Council adopts a decision concerning the place of its next session:

(a) Inform the Secretary-General ninety days before the session that is required to decide on the venue, indicating the ordinal number of the Executive Council meeting that the State wishes to host,
(b) Receive the sponsorship of at least 25% of the Full Members of the Council, and
(c) Undertake in writing to observe the standard conditions laid out in the model agreement.

6. The standard requirements and conditions laid out in the model agreement shall be the subject of an agreement between the government of the host State and the Organization.

7. Just like the model agreement for General Assembly sessions, adopted by the General Assembly resolution 631(XX), the model agreement for Executive Council sessions is based on the legal framework governing the holding of UNWTO meetings away from Headquarters, which is primarily determined by Article 32 of the Statutes, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies and its Annex XVIII, as well as relevant resolutions by the General Assembly, and is aligned with the policy of the United Nations in this regard.

8. Failure to apply any of the standards and principles included in the template agreement may expose delegates of Members of the Council and other participants to, inter alia, difficulties in issuing visas or refusal of entry into the host country, documentation and media materials destined for the meeting being refused free entry or being searched, customs duties being requested, and non-respect by national authorities of official immunity from legal process (e.g., arrest and detention, commenced lawsuits). It may also expose the Organization to legal and financial liability.

9. Any State willing to host a session of the Executive Council should, before submitting its candidature, become familiar with the standard requirements set out in the model agreement.

10. As indicated in the Secretary-General’s report on the selection of venue for the 25th session of the General Assembly, the Secretariat often encounters some reluctance to apply the conditions required by the Governing Bodies for the host of their sessions as well as pressure to deviate from the policy established and from the consistent policy of the United Nations in this regard. As a result, lengthy negotiations are undertaken to ensure that the Governing Bodies’ instructions are respected by States having been elected to host their sessions.

11. Should the host country not be in a position to provide the necessary conditions for the hosting of the Executive Council, the Secretary-General, in line with his delegated authority pursuant to paragraph (k) of the Guidelines, will adopt any measure as necessary to ensure the proper holding of the session.

III. Candidatures to host the 121st session of the Executive Council

12. Without prejudice to the provisions on the venue of the Executive Council meeting following the one held immediately after the General Assembly in accordance with the Guidelines, the Secretariat has received a letter from the Czech Republic, dated 19 July 2023, submitting its candidature to host the 121st session of the Council “in the spring of 2024” (Annex I).

13. Additionally, the Commonwealth of the Bahamas has presented its candidature to host the 122nd session of the Council (Annex II).

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3 CE/94/3(III)(d) Annex 2
4 A/29/5(I)(i)
5 Resolutions 136(V), 489(XVI) and 662(XXI).
6 A/24/19
Ivan Jančárek
Ambassador

Madrid, 20 July 2023
No.: 2356/2023-MADR

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

It is my pleasure to express you my sincere greetings and to hand you over the letter of the Deputy Minister of Regional Development of the Czech Republic, Mr. Jan Fluxa, expressing the interest of my country to host the UNWTO Executive Council in Prague in the spring of 2024.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili
Secretary General
UNWTO
Madrid
Dear Secretary-General, Zurab,

On behalf of the Ministry of Regional Development of the Czech Republic, I would like to officially express our interest to host the UNWTO Executive Council meeting in Prague in the spring of 2024.

As a new member of the UNWTO Executive Council, we want to focus on rebuilding the tourism industry sustainably after the COVID-19 pandemic and making tourism more resilient to any future unforeseen crises.

Following the successful Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU and the European Tourism Forum, which was held in Prague in November 2022, among other events, we are confident that we will manage to organise a top-level meeting that will allow us all to reflect together on the presence and future of UNWTO, as well as on promoting the values and objectives of UNWTO and the United Nations.

Dear Secretary-General, I will be greatly honoured if you consider our interest to host the 2024 UNWTO Executive Council meeting in Prague.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili
Secretary-General
United Nations World Tourism Organization
Calle Poeta Joan Maragall 42, Madrid
Kingdom of Spain
29th August 2023

Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili  
Secretary General  
United Nations World Tourism Organisation  
Poeta Joan Maragall 42  
28020 Madrid, Spain

Dear Secretary General,

Re: Hosting of the 122nd Executive Council Meeting

Following on from my verbal expression of interest, please accept this formal offer from the Government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas to demonstrate its commitment to the World Tourism Organization by hosting the 122nd Meeting of its Executive Council, at Nassau. In this regard, we confirm that we are prepared to observe the standard conditions laid out in the Model Agreement for Executive Council sessions.

The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism, Investments and Aviation is honoured to extend this invitation, and the Ministry avails itself of this opportunity to extend to yourself, Secretary General, and the Members of the Executive Council, the assurances of its highest consideration.

Hon. A. Chester Cooper  
Deputy Prime Minister and  
Minister of Tourism, Investments and Aviation

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