Executive Council Endorses UNWTO Plan of Work in Samarkand

Samarkand, Uzbekistan, 18 October 2023 – The Executive Council of the World Tourism Organization has analysed and approved its vision to transform the sector. Meeting for its 119th session, Members were also presented with the Organization’s Programme of Work for the past months, with a focus on core priorities as well as a longer-term leadership vision for transforming the sector.

Key Council Meeting

The Council met on the eve of the 25th UNWTO General Assembly, held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. In line with his obligations, Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili presented his report to Members, outlining the progress made since the Executive Council met in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, five months previously. This included an overview of the latest round of Regional Commission meetings, their key outputs and achievements and associated thematic sessions, including work to rethink tourism communications, grow new pillars like wellbeing tourism and support investments into the sector.

Programme of Work Endorsed

As well as assessing progress to date, the meeting also gave Members a chance to learn more about the UNWTO Programme of Work for 2024 and 2025. This is based on a 2022 consultation with all Members on their needs and is distilled into clear strategic objectives and programmatic priorities. Members endorsed the Programme of Work and other key activities put before them. These included plans for directing funding towards flagship programmes and for establishing new Regional and Thematic offices for UNWTO. In this regard, Members were updated on progress to establish a new Regional Office in Marrakesh, the Kingdom of Morocco, endorsed the plans presented by Uzbekistan to establish a Thematic Office for Tourism on the Silk Road in the country, and advanced plans for a further Regional Office in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Members of the Executive Council also decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the mandate of the Task Force on Redesigning Tourism for the Future, with new members joining from every global region.
Vision for Leadership

In Samarkand, the host of the Executive Council as well as the subsequent General Assembly, proposed that Secretary-General Pololikashvili be permitted to stand for a third term in office in light of both his accomplishments so far and his longer-term vision for both tourism and for UNWTO. Following the established protocol, the Executive Council agreed that the matter be placed on the agenda for the General Assembly, to be voted on by all Member States.

Members thanked Secretary-General for the publication of his landmark vision for the sector, published to coincide with the General Assembly. “The Journey to 2030: A Vision for a Sector Transformed” sets out clear priorities for the sector in the year ahead and action plans for achieving them.

Statutory Obligations Fulfilled

The Executive Council fulfilled its statutory obligations, including by electing Egypt to serve as the Organization’s External Auditor for 2024 and 2025. Members also endorsed the recommendations of Members for the hosts of World Tourism Day for the same years. In 2024, World Tourism Day will be held around the theme of “Tourism and Peace”, with Georgia to be put forward as host. Then in 2025, Malaysia will be considered as host for that year’s celebrations, to be held around the theme of Tourism and Sustainable Development.

Related Links

Executive Council - 119th Session