

WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION
SOUTH ASIA REGIONAL TRAVEL COMMISSION

Provisional Summary Records of the 1st Meeting
held in Kathmandu, Nepal, 16th to 21st March 1976

Issued by the WTO Secretariat for South Asia,
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SUMMARY RECORDS OF THE 1st MEETING OF THE
SOUTH ASIA REGIONAL TRAVEL COMMISSION OF THE
WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION

Kathmandu, Nepal, 16th to 21st March 1976.

CHAIRMAN

Mr. Bhagwan S. Gidwani, - Additional Director-General of
Tourism & Joint Secretary,
Ministry of Tourism & Civil
Aviation, India.

FULL MEMBERS

Afghanistan (Vice-Chairman)

Mr. Zalmai Roashan - Director, Publicity
Afghan Tourist Organization.

Bangladesh

Mr. Shahabuddin Ahmed - Director, Public Relations
Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation.

Mr. G.M.M.E. Karim - Deputy Chief, Tourism Cell
Ministry of ~~Aviation & Tourism~~.
Communications

India

Mr. M. S. Sethi - Deputy Director-General,
Government of India
Department of Tourism.

Iran

Mr. H. Feiz-Bakhsh - Director-General,
Tourism Development & Promotion,
Ministry of Information & Tourism.

Nepal (Vice-Chairman)

Mr. Tej B. Prasai - Director-General,
HMG Department of Tourism.

Mr. Y. R. Satyal - Deputy-Director,
HMG Department of Tourism.

Mr. P. M. Singh - Co-Project Manager,
Hotel Management & Tourism
Training Centre.

Mr. J. M. S. Amatya - Section Officer, Publicity Section,
HMG Department of Tourism.

Pakistan

Mr. S. Imran Shah - Joint Secretary,
Ministry of Commerce & Tourism.

Sri Lanka

Mr. Lucien Rajakarunanayake - Ceylon Tourist Board.

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

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| Mr. J. F. Tarachand | - Commercial Manager,
Indian Airlines Corporation. |
| Mr. Lionel Perera | - Manager, Sri Lanka
Railway Tourist Service. |

OBSERVERS

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| Mr. K. D. Kale | - Secretary, India Tourism
Development Corporation. |
| Mr. M. Ayaz Ghaznavi | - Passenger Sales Manager,
Pakistan International Airlines. |
| Mr. Ejaz Ahmad | - Tourist Promotion Officer,
Pakistan International Airlines. |
| Mr. D. B. Rana | - General Manager,
Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation. |
| Mr. Binaya Sharma | - Acting Marketing Director,
Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation. |
| Mr. Ram Shanker Shrestha | - Vice-President, Hotel Association,
Nepal. |
| Mr. R. M. Singh | - President - Nepal Association of
Travel Agents. |
| Mr. Prabhakar S J B Rana | - Chairman - PATA (Nepal) Chapter |
| Mrs. Ambika Shrestha | - President - Trekking Agents
Association of Nepal. |

COMMISSION'S REPRESENTATIVE
ON THE TCPC.

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| Mr. Rajesh Rawat | - Regional Director for Europe,
Government of India
Department of Tourism. |
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WTO

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| Mr. J. M. Handy | - Regional Secretary for South Asia. |
| Mr. R. Theivendra | - Research/Technical Officer
Secretariat for South Asia. |

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INAUGURAL SESSIONS

THE CHAIRMAN welcomed all those present, and stated that this was the first meeting of the SARTC within the framework of the WTO. It was significant that this meeting was being held in Kathmandu, since Nepal had been traditionally known for the warmth of her hospitality and the charm of her people. He thanked His Majesty's Government of Nepal for inviting the Commission and agreeing to host the meeting.

THE CHAIRMAN referred to the transformation of the IUOTO into the WTO, and indicated that the WTO is to play a central and decisive role in the development of international tourism. He congratulated the Director-General of Tourism - Mr. Prasai - on Nepal's election as one of the two Vice-Chairmen of the SARTC. This was in recognition of the great role which Nepal plays in the sphere of tourism.

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THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that 7 of the 8 Member States belonging to the Commission were present at the meeting. He was particularly glad to find representatives of Affiliate Members and observers from the travel trade also attending the meeting. It was an honour to have the Hon. Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Dr. Harkar Bahadur Gurung present on this occasion, in spite of numerous other demands on his time. He then called upon Dr. Gurung to formally inaugurate the Kathmandu Sessions of the SARTC.

DR. HARKAR BAHADUR GURUNG (Minister of State for Commerce & Industry) welcomed the foreign delegates to Nepal, and thanked the SARTC for accepting the offer of Kathmandu as the venue for this meeting. He outlined the tourist attractions of Nepal and traced the development of tourism in recent years. A Tourism Master Plan had been formulated jointly by His Majesty's Government of Nepal and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany. A PATA Task Force had examined the development of the Pokhara area, while the UNDP had provided assistance in the setting up of a Hotel Management & Tourism Training Centre. Tourism infrastructure was being developed under the Fifth 5-year Plan, and the Government had offered various incentives to the private sector for development of the hotel and other related industries. He also outlined the role played by the Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation in the promotion of tourism to the country. As a result of all these measures, the number of tourists had increased by more than 8 times between 1962 and 1972, and tourism had emerged as the biggest foreign exchange earner during the fiscal year 1973/1974.

DR. GURUNG drew attention to the tourism potential in the region, and pointed out that it has to compete with other better developed regions to attract tourists. It was essential therefore, that the member countries pool their limited resources and try to promote and develop services on a regional basis. He referred in this context to the celebration of SATY during 1975, and urged that the joint measures initiated during this year be continued. He hoped that this meeting will build and strengthen bridges of mutual understanding and co-operation for a common purpose - the joint promotion of tourism to this region as a whole. He then inaugurated the Kathmandu Sessions of the SARTC.

MR. IMRAN SHAH (Pakistan) proposed a vote of thanks to Dr. Gurung, and to His Majesty's Government of Nepal for hosting this meeting.

The joint film "Passage of Dawn" was then screened.

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

THE CHAIRMAN tabled for consideration the Provisional Agenda containing 12 items, which had been circulated among the Members in advance by the Secretariat.

MR. IMRAN SHAH (Pakistan) proposed and MR. ROASHAN (Afghanistan) seconded the adoption of the following Agenda:-

1. Adoption of the Agenda.
2. Adoption of the Minutes of the SARTC meeting held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, (16th to 20th December 1975).
3. Communication of the Chairman.
4. Communication of the Secretary-General of WTO.
5. Regional Secretary's report to the Commission.
6. SARTC Accounts and Subscriptions.
7. Draft General Programme of Work of the WTO for 1976-77.
8. Joint Promotional Programme for 1976.
9. Review of South Asia Tourism Year - 1975.
10. Review of the development of tourism in member countries.
11. Any other business.
12. Place and date of next meeting.

II. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE SARTC MEETING HELD IN COLOMBO, SRI LANKA (16TH - 20TH DECEMBER 1975)

THE CHAIRMAN inquired whether there were any comments on the Draft Minutes of the last meeting, which had been circulated in advance by the Secretariat.

MR. IMRAN SHAH (Pakistan) proposed and MR. ROASHAN (Afghanistan) seconded the adoption of the Minutes.

III. COMMUNICATION OF THE CHAIRMAN

THE CHAIRMAN thanked the members for electing India as the Chairman of the Commission, and stated that they considered it an honour to have been elected to this office. He complimented the outgoing Chairman, Mr. Roedad Khan of Pakistan, for having guided the affairs of the Commission so ably during the past two years. He proposed that a cable be sent to the Government of Pakistan expressing the Commission's appreciation of the services rendered by Mr. Roedad Khan, which was unanimously accepted by all the members.

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THE CHAIRMAN urged the members to continue their efforts of regional co-operation initiated during SATY. He was of the opinion that the experience gained during this year would be invaluable in considering proposals for joint promotion in 1976. Another important item on the Agenda was the Draft General Programme of Work of the WTO for 1976/77, which is to be finalized at the forthcoming meeting of the WTO Executive Council. They were fortunate in this regard to have the presence of Mr. Rawat, who was the Commission's Representative on the TCPG of the IUOTO, at this meeting. The Commission should give clear directions to its representatives on the Executive Council - Bangladesh and Pakistan - on the priorities to be adopted in the Programme of Work. He hoped that the requirements of this region and the interests of all developing countries will be given due consideration in finalizing the Programme of Work.

THE CHAIRMAN referred to the question of the Chairmen of Regional Commissions attending Executive Council meetings. This had been the practice under the IUOTO, and it was left to the Executive Council to decide whether this practice should be continued under the WTO. Particularly in the absence of the Chairman at Executive Council meetings, it was the responsibility of the Commission's representatives to convey the Commission's views and report back after the meetings.

THE CHAIRMAN stated that he had been informed that one of the observers at this meeting - Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation - had indicated its interest in joining WTO as an Affiliate Member. He welcomed this decision, and requested the relevant authorities in Nepal to forward and recommend this application to the Secretary-General of the WTO.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that the Executive Council should be requested to invite the Chairmen of Regional Commissions to attend its meetings. If the Chairman was unable to attend, one of the Vice-Chairmen should be authorized to represent him at such meetings.

COMMUNICATION OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF WTO

THE CHAIRMAN requested the Regional Secretary to present the Secretary-General's communication, in his absence.

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THE REGIONAL SECRETARY stated that he did not have a formal communication on this occasion, but would like to report on two matters since the last meeting.

- 1) WTO Headquarters had been shifted to Madrid from the beginning of January.
- 2) The Executive Council meeting will be held in Acapulco, Mexico, during the last week of April.

V. REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT TO THE COMMISSION

THE CHAIRMAN tabled Working Paper SARTC/1/76/5 which had been circulated in advance, and invited the Regional Secretary to present his report.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY stated that the report covered the period November 1975 - February 1976. He did not wish to repeat what was in the report, but he was available for clarification on any matter that may arise from the report. He referred to the new procedure that had to be followed under the WTO for invitations to this meeting, and stated that the delegates of Member States had brought credentials as required.

MR. SETHI (India) tabled a copy of the Indian Hotel Tariffs for the period October 1975 - September 1976, in relation to Section 6h of the Regional Secretary's report. He also referred to a Cost/Benefit Study of Tourism undertaken in India, in relation to Section 7 of the report.

VI. SARTC ACCOUNTS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

THE CHAIRMAN tabled Working Paper SARTC/1/76/6 which had been circulated in advance, and requested the Regional Secretary to introduce it.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY explained that Annexure I was the Balance Sheet as at 31.12.75, and Annexure II the Administrative Accounts for 1975. Annexure III indicated the present SARTC subscriptions and the amounts payable as WTO contributions. A 10% increase in present subscriptions and three alternatives as a percentage of WTO contributions had also been indicated, for consideration as the basis for future SARTC subscriptions. Comments on the accounts and subscriptions, as well as details of expenditure on promotional activities were contained in the Working Paper. He would like to draw the attention of the members to the following matters:-

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- 1) Balance SARTC funds of Indian Rs.16,458/28 had still to be transferred to the Secretariat from Afghanistan.
- 2) Contributions from the IUOTO and the host country, and membership subscriptions had been sufficient to cover the normal administrative expenses of the Secretariat.
- 3) There had been a deficit of Rs.29,986/35 on promotional activities, of which Rs.25,036/63 was the difference in the exchange value between the time of receipts and the time of payments.
- 4) Afghanistan was the only member country from whom arrears of subscriptions were due from 1973.
- 5) Members will have to decide on the basis for subscriptions from 1976.

MR. SETHI (India) suggested that the annual subscriptions should cover not only administrative expenses, but also expenditure on promotional activities.

MR. IMRAN SHAH (Pakistan) pointed out that a promotional programme may vary from year to year.

MR. ROASHAN (Afghanistan) stated that all the member countries may not join in all the measures of a promotional programme.

MR. PRASAI (Nepal) suggested keeping the subscriptions separate from the promotional budget.

MR. AHMED (Bangladesh) pointed out that the assessment of their WTO contribution had been based on wrong figures, and this had been brought to the notice of the Secretary-General.

MR. FEIZ BAKHSI (Iran) suggested a 10% increase in the subscriptions for 1976.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that Full Members will pay 1.25% and Affiliate Members 25% of their WTO contribution as SARTC subscriptions from 1976.

VII. DRAFT GENERAL PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE WTO FOR 1976/77

THE CHAIRMAN requested the Regional Secretary to explain this item in the absence of a Working Paper.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY stated that this item had been included in the Agenda as a result of discussions on this subject at the

last meeting. Members had been keen on going through the WTO Programme of Work before the Executive Council meeting, and this Commission meeting had been fixed specially for that purpose. The Secretary-General had submitted a Draft Programme, including the budget required, to the General Assembly for approval. An Administrative Committee had examined this and made certain recommendations as guidelines, indicating priority activities on a reduced budget. The General Assembly had restored part of the reduction in the budget, and a revised Programme is to be submitted to the Executive Council for approval. Mr. Rawat had outlined details of this Programme at the last meeting, on the basis of information available to him. The Secretariat had requested a copy of the revised Programme from the Secretariat-General, but this had not been received so far. Members could perhaps discuss the requirements of the Commission in this regard, and indicate guidelines to its representatives on the Executive Council.

MR. AHMED (Bangladesh) wanted to know why the Programme of Work was not available, and commented that there seemed to be a lack of communication between the WTO and the SARTC.

MR. KARIM (Bangladesh) inquired whether this item could be discussed without having the Programme of Work. He suggested that WTO be requested to defer finalization of the Programme, until the Regional Commissions had been provided with an opportunity to examine it and make their comments.

MR. KALE (India Tourism Development Corporation) sought clarification on the functions of the WTO and its Regional Commissions, and as to whether the Programme of Work had to be discussed in the Regional Commissions before it was finalized.

MR. RAWAT (Commission's Representative on the TCPC) pointed out that the General Assembly, at which all the members of the Commission were represented, had already adopted certain priorities and it was within this framework that the programme could be revised. He had no doubt that the Commission's representatives on the Executive Council would receive the revised Programme of Work, as part of the documents for that meeting. At the last Commission meeting, two studies of particular interest to the region had been discussed, and it was decided that member countries would send their comments on these two studies to the Secretariat by the 31st of January 1976. It was

still open to the Commission to discuss its requirements and indicate these to the Executive Council.

THE CHAIRMAN agreed that if the Commission could identify the requirements of the region, it may still be possible to request the WTO to include these in its Programme of Work. If the WTO was unable to do so, he inquired whether it could provide the necessary funds for the Commission to undertake this work.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY pointed out that the WTO could not provide funds for a regional Programme of Work, which is the responsibility of the member countries concerned. Since the WTO budget had been reduced, some of its own activities had to be curtailed. In this context, it was unlikely that any new items could be introduced at this stage in the WTO Programme. The decision at the last meeting was to request a revision of the IUOTO Regional Pilot Study, and to this end members were requested to inform the Secretariat on what lines it should be revised.

MR. AHMED (Bangladesh) stated that the Pilot Study could not have included Bangladesh, since they were not a separate country at that time. They had requested a copy of this study from the Secretariat-General, but had been informed that it was not available. He inquired as to who would decide on the Terms of Reference, if the study is to be revised.

MR. ROASHAN (Afghanistan) stated that they did not have a copy of the study either, and hence did not know what it was about. He requested that copies be made available to the member countries, so that they can provide the guidelines for its revision.

MR. FEIZ-BAKHSR (Iran) pointed out that studies carried out by foreign experts who were not acquainted with the problems of the region were of not much use, and hence it would be better to request the WTO for something else more useful.

MR. IMRAN SHAH (Pakistan) stated that a study carried out by local experts very often did not have sufficient authority or merit recognition, however valuable it may be. He suggested that WTO be requested to provide Scholarships for the training of tourism personnel.

MR. SETHI (India) suggested that it may be possible to obtain UNDP funds through the WTO to finance such scholarships.

MR. RAWAT (Commission's Representative on the TCPC) outlined the background to the IUOTO Pilot Study, and pointed out that it had been distributed to all members at the General Assembly in Caracas in 1973. A number of Commission members had commented on this study when it was discussed at the General Assembly, pointing out some of the inaccuracies in it. Since the study contained a lot of useful information however, it was decided to revise it in the light of the observations made at the General Assembly.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY agreed with the views expressed by Mr. Rawat, and stated that the Pilot Study contained an excellent inventory of the tourist attractions and facilities available in the region. It had also suggested various fields for joint action by member countries, including multinational planning. There should be no difficulty in revising this study, by updating the information and including those member countries which had not been covered earlier. The Secretariat-General had written to the member countries for suggestions in revising the study after the Caracas General Assembly, and the Commission had indicated that it would like the consultant to visit the region before finalizing the revision. He also drew the attention of the members to the decision at the last meeting, requesting the Secretary-General to extend the Study on the Imbalance of Tourism between Europe and Latin America to cover South Asia.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that WTO should be requested to include the following items in its Programme of Work for 1976/77:-

- (1) Revision of the Regional Pilot Study on South Asia, in accordance with guidelines to be provided by the Commission.
- (2) Extension of the Study on the Imbalance of Tourism between Europe and Latin America to cover South Asia.
- (3) Provision of Scholarships for training tourism personnel.

VIII. JOINT PROMOTIONAL PROGRAMME FOR 1976

THE CHAIRMAN tabled Working Paper SARTC/1/76/8 which had been circulated in advance, and requested the Regional Secretary to introduce it.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY stated that the Working Paper indicated the decisions taken at the last meeting, the action initiated on these decisions, and the measures on which decisions had -

still to be made. He suggested considering each measure separately although they were integral parts of a coordinated programme, which should be implemented in full to obtain maximum results.

(1) Logo and Caption

MR. SETHI (India) indicated that they had produced 150 bromides from the specimen sent by the Secretariat, and distributed these among travel agents and others in the travel trade for use.

THE COMMISSION REITERATED its earlier decision that members should widely use the logo and caption.

(2) Joint Promotion

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY stated that in addition to the information in the Working Paper, he had since heard from the Sri Lanka Director for North America, and the Indian Directors at London, San Francisco and Milan. It appeared that except for India, other member countries had not authorized their overseas representatives to initiate action in this regard, as decided at the last meeting.

MR. AHMED (Bangladesh) pointed out that they did not have overseas tourist offices, and had to depend on their Missions and the offices of their National Carrier abroad. They did not have a separate promotional budget, and hence it would be helpful if the Secretariat informed them of the proposed programme for joint promotions. They could then decide whether to participate or not, depending on the availability of funds.

MR. FRASAI (Nepal) stated that they were in the same position as Bangladesh, and inquired whether a regional image could not be promoted by those member countries having overseas tourist offices.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that this was already being done to some extent, but the matter under consideration was special joint promotions, in which some of the members who did not have overseas offices may wish to participate.

MR. RAWAT (Commission's Representative on the TCPC) provided instances as to how the Indian Tourist Offices in Europe were promoting the region through advertisements, publicity material, promotional evenings and tour operator's programmes.

THE COMMISSION REITERATED its earlier decision that member countries should authorize their overseas representatives to explore the possibility of organizing joint promotions.

(3) Invitations to hold Travel Trade Conventions

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY stated that the Working Paper contained further details of the Indian Regional Director for North America's proposal, to offer member countries as Convention sites for annual meetings of ASTA Regional Chapters. Members will have to decide whether the principle of inviting these or any other travel trade associations is acceptable, and if so indicate the facilities they are willing to offer.

MR. SETHI (India) stated that they agreed in principle with this proposal, and apart from the country in which the Convention is held, others would also benefit from pre- and post-Convention tours. He suggested that travel trade organizations within the region be urged to invite such Conventions.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that:

- (a) the proposal to invite ASTA Regional Chapters should be accepted,
- (b) the possibilities of inviting other such travel trade associations should be explored,
- (c) member countries will indicate to the Secretariat their preferences in the choice of Conventions, and the facilities they are willing to offer, including the cost of pre- and post-Convention tours.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY tabled a letter from the Travel Agents' Association of Sri Lanka, soliciting support for the request made to Airlines serving the region, to offer a 75% rebate for delegates attending the UFTAA Congress at Colombo in October.

MR. TARACHAND (Indian Airlines) and MR. GHAZNAVI (PIA) indicated that this request will be referred to their Head Offices.

MR. PRASAI (Nepal) stated that he had been authorized by RNAC to announce that they were willing to offer a 50% discount on their services to Nepal on pre- or post-Convention tours.

(4) Regional Familiarization Tours for Travel Writers

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY stated that the Working Paper indicated the position regarding the travel writers to whom invitations had been renewed to visit the region this year. The Secretariat was awaiting replies from some of the travel writers and some of the member countries, to finalize the arrangements in respect of those who had already accepted the invitations.

THE COMMISSION REITERATED its earlier decisions that:

- (a) arrangements should be finalized for those travel writers who had agreed to visit the region, and
- (b) member countries should expedite their replies to the Secretariat.

5) Joint Publicity Material

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY pointed out that the decision at the last meeting was to drop the proposals for language versions of the brochure, and production of a poster. With regard to obtaining prints of the film, in addition to the information in the Working Paper, Sri Lanka had indicated that they would require 4 copies. This meant that there were now orders for 31 copies from 5 member countries. Although the decision at the last meeting was that the Secretariat would be informed of the requirements by 31st January, replies are still due from 3 member countries. Members will have to decide on the procedure for ordering and payment, since the Secretariat could not incur losses as in the case of the brochure, due to exchange differences. He suggested that someone in New York be nominated to receive the payments, place the order and take delivery of the copies, since the prints will be produced in New York.

MR. AHMED (Bangladesh) and MR. ROASHAN (Afghanistan) indicated that they would each require 3 copies of the film in 16mm.

THE CHAIRMAN suggested that the Regional Secretary should go to New York, discuss details with the producer and inform the members about the procedure for payment and delivery.

MR. FEIZ-BAKHSR (Iran) inquired whether payments could be made direct to the producer, and the copies handed over to accredited representatives of the member countries in New York.

MR. GHAZNAVI (PIA) stated that they could carry Pakistan's copies, if these were delivered at the Airport.

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MR. SETHI (India) pointed out that in the case of member countries who could not take delivery in New York, it should be possible to send the copies on a "freight to pay" basis.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that:

- (a) the Secretariat will inform the member countries regarding the procedure for payment and delivery, and
- (b) member countries will remit the amounts due from them within a maximum period of 90 days from the date of intimation by the Secretariat.

(6) Coordination of Promotional Activities

THE COMMISSION REITERATED its earlier decisions that:-

- (a) member countries should stock and distribute the tourist literature of other member countries, and
- (b) promotional activities of Government and trade organizations in the region should be coordinated as far as possible.

(7) Special Events in the Region

THE COMMISSION REITERATED its earlier decision that member countries should explore the possibilities of organizing special events on a bilateral or multilateral basis.

(8) Joint Folder

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY stated that the decision at the last meeting was to examine this proposal further. Specifications and the cost of production were indicated in the Working Paper. Members will have to decide whether this proposal is to be implemented.

MR. AHMED (Bangladesh) suggested that a common format be designed, so that member countries could then print their own requirements locally.

MR. FEIZ-BAKHSI (Iran) was of the opinion that there would be problems regarding the design and the material to be included.

MR. SETHI (India) pointed out that the lifespan of such a folder would be very short, and the information in it will be outdated by the time it is produced.

MR. ROASHAN (Afghanistan) agreed with the views expressed by Mr. Sethi.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that the proposal to produce a joint folder should be dropped.

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(9) Slide Presentation

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY pointed out that a decision on this proposal had been deferred for this meeting. The cost of producing three different types of presentations were indicated in the Working Paper. Members will have to decide whether a slide presentation should be produced and if so, what type.

MR. ROASHAN (Afghanistan) stated that ASTA IDA Area V had produced a similar presentation, and it should be possible to make use of this for SARTC promotions.

MR. RAWAT (Commission's Representative on the TCPC) pointed out that the ASTA presentation was not in multivision, and covered only 3 countries in the region.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that the proposal to produce a slide presentation should be dropped.

(10) Newsletter, News and Feature Releases

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY stated that a decision on this proposal had been deferred for this meeting. The cost of production and mailing were indicated in the Working Paper. Members will have to decide whether this proposal is to be implemented.

MR. AHMED (Bangladesh) indicated that they were in favour of this proposal, since it will be useful to disseminate news of the region. He suggested that member countries send their press releases regularly to the Secretariat.

MR. RAJAKARUNANAYAKE (Sri Lanka) stated that considering the cost a newsletter did not seem worthwhile, since its impact was likely to be limited. They were in favour however, of issuing releases.

MR. ROASHAN (Afghanistan) agreed that the cost for a newsletter was prohibitive.

MR. RAWAT (Commission's Representative on the TCPC) pointed out that the WTO Information Letters carried news items on activities of member countries. If the primary purpose of the newsletter was to act as a promotional tool, then it may be useful.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY suggested the issue of an Information Bulletin as during SATY, instead of the newsletter. This could be on a reduced mailing list of about 500, in which case the mailing cost is not likely to exceed US\$50 per issue. He inquired whether Mr. Rajakarunanayake could indicate roughly the cost of producing such a news bulletin.

MR. RAJAKARUNAYAKE (Sri Lanka) stated that the printing cost of 500 copies in black and white of 4 pages would be approximately US\$25.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that:-

- (a) a regular Information Bulletin and occasional News and Feature Releases should be issued by the Secretariat, and
- (b) the cost of implementing this proposal should be met from the promotional budget to be allocated to the Secretariat.

(11) Advertising

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY pointed out that a decision on this proposal had been deferred for this meeting. The Working Paper indicated the minimum budget required for a trade advertising campaign, and the cost of producing and issuing special supplements. Members will have to decide whether this proposal is to be implemented.

MR. SETHI (India) stated that they were already committed to PATA on a joint Marketing Programme, in addition to their own advertising campaigns. It was unlikely therefore, that they would be able to find the necessary funds for the minimum budget required for this proposal. It may be possible however, to find advertising support for the supplements from the private sector within the region.

THE CHAIRMAN suggested that the supplements could be considered as one of the measures for joint promotion, by the overseas representatives of member countries in the generating markets.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that:-

- (a) the proposal for a trade advertising campaign should be dropped, and
- (b) the overseas representatives of member countries should consider the possibility of issuing special supplements as one of the measures for joint promotion.

(12) Special Interest Tours

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY stated that the decision at the last meeting was to examine this proposal further. Details of the proposal were indicated in the Working Paper.

MR. SETHI (India) pointed out that some special interest tours were already being offered on a sub-regional basis. He was of the opinion that the initiative for additional tours should come from the travel agents in the region.

THE CHAIRMAN suggested that travel agents from other member countries should be invited to the annual Conventions of national travel agents associations, as in the case of TAAI.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that the travel agents associations of member countries should be urged to consider the possibility of offering special interest tours on a sub-regional basis.

(13) Travel Trade Functions

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY stated that the decision at the last meeting was to consider this proposal at this meeting. The Working Paper indicated the responses from members to a Questionnaire sent by the Secretariat, seeking information on participation in 5 major travel trade functions held annually. Members will have to decide whether they wish to participate jointly at these travel trade functions, and if so, in what manner.

MR. PRASAI (Nepal) indicated that RNAC had been participating for the last two years at the ITB in Berlin, and they would be interested in joint participation.

MR. SETHI (India) stated that if the Secretariat could indicate the costs involved, then member countries will be able to decide on participation.

MR. IMRAN SHAH (Pakistan) indicated that Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan already had an agreement for joint promotion.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY pointed out that some member countries were already participating in some of these functions on an individual basis. Costs would depend on the manner of participation, but there was no doubt that joint participation will be cheaper than individual participation.

THE CHAIRMAN suggested that it may be worthwhile examining the possibilities of joint participation in the ITB at Berlin, and in PATA at Hong Kong, next year.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED THAT:

- (a) the Secretariat will indicate to the members the possible forms of participation, including costs in the ITB at Berlin, and in PATA at Hong Kong next year, and
- (b) a final decision on joint participation at these two functions will be taken thereafter.

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IX. REVIEW OF SOUTH ASIA TOURISM YEAR-1975

THE CHAIRMAN tabled Working Paper SARTC/1/76/9 and requested the Regional Secretary to explain it.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY stated that the Review was based on information available at the Secretariat at the end of February 1976. Member countries had been requested to keep the Secretariat informed regularly of the measures they were implementing, in terms of an earlier decision of the Commission. The response to this had been poor however, with the result that the Review may not include some of the activities in member countries, of which the Secretariat was not aware. It had been suggested that the Review should be printed with the inclusion of photographs, and the Working Paper indicated the cost of producing 500 copies. He suggested that member countries be given a deadline, to provide additional information for inclusion in the Review.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that:

- (a) member countries should supply the Secretariat any additional information for inclusion in the Review, within a period of 15 days, and
- (b) the cost of printing and mailing the Review should be met from the promotional budget to be allocated to the Secretariat.

X. REVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN MEMBER COUNTRIES

THE CHAIRMAN tabled Working Paper SARTC/1/76/10 which had been circulated in advance, and inquired whether there were any comments. He urged the member countries to supply to the Secretariat in time, the necessary information and statistical data required for the review.

XI. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

THE CHAIRMAN inquired whether there were any matters to be raised under this item. He requested the Regional Secretary to inform the members about the promotional budget required to implement the measures adopted.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY indicated that in terms of the decisions made, the following expenditure had been authorized:-

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|---|-------------------|
| 1) Publication of the Review of SATY 1975
(excluding mailing cost) | - US\$ 800 |
| 2) Issue of a regular News Bulletin | - US\$1000 |
| 3) Issue of News/Feature Releases | - <u>US\$ 700</u> |
| | <u>US\$2500</u> |

He pointed out that provision should be made for mailing the SATY Review, and for any ad-hoc measures that may arise.

THE CHAIRMAN suggested that a total promotional budget of US\$4000 be provided to the Secretariat.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that:

- (1) a promotional budget of US\$4,000 should be provided to the Secretariat, and this amount will be divided equally between the 8 member countries, and
- (2) each member country should pay its share of US\$500/- to the Secretariat within 30 days of receipt of intimation from the Secretariat.

THE CHAIRMAN suggested that the Commission consider the desirability of declaring a "South Asia Tourism Decade", so as to ensure continuity of the activities initiated during SATY.

MR. PRASAI (Nepal) suggested that the "Decade" should be from 1976, if it is to be a logical sequel to SATY. The emphasis could be on a different field of activity or a particular member country each year.

MR. AHMED (Bangladesh) agreed that the "Decade" should be from 1976, but the details of a programme could be worked out later.

MR. IMRAN SHAH (Pakistan) pointed out that a formal declaration of a "Decade" was not necessary to continue the activities initiated during SATY. He suggested that member countries agree on an annual programme, which could be reviewed before deciding on the next years programme.

MR. SETHI (India) stated that the declaration of a "Decade" was in keeping with the philosophy and concept of tourism. As they had noticed during SATY, such declarations provided the much needed impetus to increase tourist consciousness and improve facilities within their own countries. He suggested the establishment of a data bank, as one of the measures to be implemented during the "Decade".

MR. PRABHAKAR RANA (Chairman-PATA Nepal Chapter) inquired whether the adoption of such slogans alone would help the growth of tourism. He was of the opinion that basic problems facing the tourist industry within member countries should be solved first. The limited resources available in the region should be spent on promotion, rather than wasted on ceremonies and festivals.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY suggested that the Commission adopt a resolution to continue the activities initiated during SATY, and requesting the member countries to consider the desirability of declaring a "South Asia Tourism Decade". This would ensure continuity, as well as enable the members to examine the full implications of declaring such a "Decade".

MR. RAJAKARUNANAYAKE (Sri Lanka) stated that they agreed with the suggestion made by the Regional Secretary, since they shared in both the enthusiasm and doubts expressed by members on this proposal. He suggested that the efforts initiated during SATY should not only be continued, but also intensified.

MR. KALE (India Tourism Development Corporation) stated that any measure to develop tourism in the region should be supported, and hence they were in favour of the proposal to declare a "Decade".

MR. FEIZ-RAKHSI (Iran) expressed the view that the Commission could not lose anything by adopting this measure, but on the other hand might gain something.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that:

- (1) a "South Asia Tourism Decade" should be declared from 1976,
- (2) the Secretary-General and Executive Council of the WTC be informed of this decision, and
- (3) a programme for this "Decade" will be worked out at subsequent meetings of the Commission.

MR. AHMED (Bangladesh) suggested that a rapporteur should be appointed at future meetings, so that a report on the proceedings would be available to the members at the meeting itself.

MR. RAWAT (Commission's Representative on the TCPC) suggested that a summary of the decisions be given to the members at the end of the meeting, rather than a report on the proceedings.

THE CHAIRMAN suggested that this matter be left to the Regional Secretary, to work out the mechanics of what was practicable.

XII. PLACE AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

MR. AHMED (Bangladesh) stated that they had already indicated at the last meeting their interest to host the next meeting this year. He confirmed the invitation from Bangladesh to host the next meeting in November. The exact dates will be finalized in consultation with the Regional Secretary.

MR. IMRAN SHAH (Pakistan) supported the offer from Bangladesh.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Bangladesh for their kind invitation, and stated that India had offered to host a meeting at any time if there were no other offers.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that:

- (1) the invitation from Bangladesh to host the next meeting in November should be accepted, subject to the finalization of arrangements between the Government of Bangladesh and the Regional Secretary, and
- (2) the offer from India to host a meeting should be noted for decision at a later date.

CLOSING SESSIONS

MR. AHMED (Bangladesh) proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman on behalf of all the members. He also thanked Nepal for the excellent arrangements and facilities provided for this meeting, and welcomed all the members to the next meeting in Bangladesh.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked the members, observers, host country and Conference Secretariat staff for their co-operation in the conduct of the meeting. He then declared the Kathmandu Sessions of the SARTC closed.

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