

WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION

COMMISSION FOR
SOUTH ASIA



WTO/CSA/5/78/SR

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORDS

OF THE 5TH MEETING

TEHRAN, IRAN, 29TH MAY - 3RD JUNE 1978

Participants

CHAIRMAN

Mr. G.B.N. Pradhan

Secretary
HMG Ministry of Tourism
Nepal

MEMBER STATES

AFGHANISTAN (VICE CHAIRMAN)

Mr. Ali M. Hijab

Member
Afghan Tourist Organization

BANGLADESH

Group.Capt.(Retd.)A.T.M.A. Quddus

Chairman
Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation

Mr. Masud Ahmed

Economic Counsellor
Bangladesh Embassy, Tehran

INDIA

Miss. A. Mehta

Additional Director-General
Government of India
Department of Tourism

Mr. J. V. Bajpai

Regional Director-West Asia
Government of India Tourist
Office, Kuwait

Mr. A. K. Banerjee

Tourism Promotion Manager
Tehran

IRAN (VICE CHAIRMAN)

Dr. Ahmad Binazir

Director-General, International
Relations Department, Ministry
of Information & Tourism

Mr. Keyvan Sanjari

Deputy Director-General
International Relations Dept.
Ministry of Information & Tourism

Mr. Farhang Moin

Senior Officer, International
Relations Department, Ministry
of Information & Tourism

Mr. Abolghasem Ketabdari

Senior Officer, International
Relations Department, Ministry
of Information & Tourism

NEPAL

Mr. I. R. Pandey

Charge d'Affaires
Royal Nepalese Embassy, Tehran

Mr. Y. R. Satyal

Deputy Director
HMG Department of Tourism

PAKISTAN

Mr. M. Jameelur Rehman Khan

Joint Secretary
Ministry of Culture & Tourism

Mr. Mahmud Alam Kureishy

Assistant Chief
Ministry of Culture & Tourism

HOLY SEE (OBSERVER)

Father Giuliano Costato

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

GEORGE STEUARTS TRAVEL INTERNATIONAL LTD. (SRI LANKA)

Mr. Lafeer Kariapper

Travel Consultant

NEPAL ASSOCIATION OF TRAVEL AGENTS

Mr. M. Harsha

Hon. Secretary General

PAKISTAN INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES

Mr. Ejaz Ahmad

Assistant Manager - Tours
Promotion

Mr. Zamir Alam Ansari

Assistant Manager - Tours
Promotion

PAKISTAN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr. Shaikh Gul Pirbux

Deputy Managing Director

SRI LANKA RAILWAY TOURIST SERVICE

Mr. A. H. M. Azwer

Tour Consultant

CANDIDATE AFFILIATE MEMBER

TRAVEL WALJIS LTD. (PAKISTAN)

Mr. Siraj Valliani

Managing Director

OBSERVERS FROM IRAN

HIGHER COLLEGE OF TOURISM & INFORMATION SERVICES

Mr. C. J. Linney

Director

IRAN AIR

Dr. A. Asghar Azizi	Deputy Director
Mr. F. Saadat	Coordinator for Asia/Africa
Mr. A. Dalili	Director, Charter & Group Sales Department

TRAINING CENTRE FOR TOURIST SERVICES

Miss. N. Najafi	Officer
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WTO SECRETARIAT

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

INAUGURAL SESSION

DR. AHMAD BINAZIR (Director-General, International Relations Department, Ministry of Information & Tourism) welcomed all those present and wished the delegates from other countries a pleasant stay in Iran. He stated that the purpose of this meeting was to consider various measures for closer collaboration among the member countries of the Commission for South Asia. He thanked all those who had assisted in making the arrangements for the meeting, and particularly the organizations hosting social functions.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked the Imperial Government of Iran for agreeing to host the meeting and providing an opportunity for the delegates to see something of the beauty and culture of Iran. He pointed out that although this Commission was the smallest within WTO, it was perhaps the most varied in the tourist attractions its member countries had to offer. A little more effort was needed, both individually and collectively to promote the region and realize its full potential. He stated that it was an honour to have the Deputy Minister of Information & Tourism - His Excellency Dr. Fattolah Saadat, present on this occasion, and invited him to inaugurate the 5th meeting of the Commission.

HIS EXCELLENCY DR. FATTOLAH SAADAT (Deputy Minister of Information & Tourism) apologized for the absence of the Minister who was to have inaugurated this meeting, since he had to be at a Cabinet meeting. He then read out the Minister's address for this occasion which stated that it was a privilege for Iran to host this meeting. The growth of tourism in recent years and the developments in different sectors of the industry in Iran were outlined. The address also referred to the benefits of tourism and hoped that the deliberations at the meeting will be constructive and mutually beneficial, to consolidate the efforts of the member countries to increase the region's share of international tourism. Dr. Saadat then inaugurated the 5th meeting of the Commission on behalf of the Minister.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL proposed a Vote of Thanks to the Deputy Minister and to the Imperial Government of Iran on behalf of the Organization. He conveyed ~~the~~ Secretary-General's wishes for a successful meeting and referred to the active role played by Iran in the Organization's activities. He pointed out the significance of holding this meeting in Iran, which attracted the largest number of tourists among the countries in the region.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Adoption of the Agenda.
2. Adoption of the Summary Records of the 4th Session held in Rawalpindi, Pakistan (20 - 25 September 1977).
3. Communication of the Chairman.
4. Communication of the Secretary-General.
5. Report of the Commission's Representative on the Executive Council.
6. Report of the Commission's Representative on the Committee on Budget & Finance (CBF).
7. Regional Secretary's Report to the Commission.
8. Commission Accounts.
9. Report on the Commission's Programme of Work for 1978/79.
10. Ways of using the Studies, Reports and Handbooks prepared by WTO under the 1976/1977 programme.
11. Proposals for the establishment of the Draft General Programme of Work of the Organization for the period 1980/1981.
12. Review of the development of tourism in member countries.
13. Any other business.
14. Place and date of next Session.

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The delegates of Pakistan and Nepal proposed and seconded the adoption of the Provisional Agenda, which had been circulated in advance by the Secretariat.

THE COMMISSION ADOPTED the Agenda consisting of 14 items.

II. ADOPTION OF THE SUMMARY RECORDS OF THE 4TH SESSION HELD IN RAWALPINDI, PAKISTAN (20-25 SEPTEMBER 1977)

The delegates of Bangladesh and Iran proposed and seconded the adoption of the Provisional Summary Records (WTO/CSA/4/77/SR) of the 4th meeting which had been circulated in advance by the Secretariat.

THE COMMISSION ADOPTED the Summary Records of the 4th meeting.

III. COMMUNICATION OF THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman stated that he was glad to find all Member States belonging to the Commission, except Sri Lanka, present at the meeting. Sri Lanka had also informed that they would be participating and their delegation was expected to arrive later. Five Affiliate Members were represented this time compared to three at the last meeting, but this was still poor considering that there are 13 Affiliate Members in the region. He welcomed the presence of the Deputy Secretary-General - Mr. Rawat, a representative of the Holy See, a Candidate Affiliate Member and observers from Iran.

The Chairman referred to the terminology used by the Secretariat-General regarding Regional Commissions. Some documents referred to the Commission for "East Asia and the Pacific", while others referred to "Asia and the Pacific" for the same Commission. He drew the attention of members to Agenda items 10 and 11 in particular, which had been included at the request of the Secretary-General. He sought the cooperation and assistance of members in the conduct of the meeting, and to arrive at fruitful decisions.

THE COMMISSION TOOK NOTE of the Communication of the Chairman.

IV. COMMUNICATION OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Deputy Secretary-General introduced the Communication of the Secretary-General (WTO/CSA/5/78/4) which had been circulated in advance by the Secretariat. The last General Assembly decided on a uniform terminology for Regional Commissions, and Resolution 6(II) indicated "Commission for Asia and the Pacific".

In discussion the following points were made:

1. The term "Asia" implies the whole of Asia (as in ESCAP), and hence, it is incorrect to use it for a Commission covering only a part of Asia. Since there is already a Commission for "South Asia", and to avoid confusion, it would be desirable for the other Commission to be called "East Asia and the Pacific" (Pakistan, India).
2. The General Assembly Resolution on uniform terminology was moved by one of the Member States belonging to the Commission for South Asia - Sri Lanka, which did not specify descriptions of the geographical areas covered by Regional Commissions (Regional Secretary).

3. The terminology adopted by different international organizations varies, but if the members felt strongly about this matter, they can move a resolution at the next General Assembly to change the terminology after consulting the other Commission involved (Deputy Secretary-General).

THE COMMISSION DECIDED to consult the Commission for East Asia and the Pacific, and if necessary, move a resolution at the next General Assembly regarding the terminology of the two Commissions.

Members sought clarification on the following matters arising from the Communication of the Secretary-General:

1. Decisions at the meeting of the UNEP referred to in paragraph 14 (India).
2. Reasons for charging Affiliate Members for WTO publications referred to in paragraph 49 (PTDC).
3. Non-receipt of the 1978 Edition of "Regional Breakdown of World Travel Statistics" referred to in paragraph 31 (Pakistan).
4. Possibility of producing annually a consolidated handbook of WTO publications, since these are now received at different times during the year (Pakistan).
5. Whether documents of the WTO/IATA Conference referred to in paragraphs 35 to 37 will be sent to members, particularly to those who could not attend the Conference (Iran).
6. Whether WTO publications are sent to Foreign Affairs Ministry or NTA (Iran).

The Deputy Secretary-General clarifying the points raised explained that:

- (1) The UNEP meeting had been primarily concerned with the problem of pollution of the seas, especially the Mediterranean. It considered proposals for the Mediterranean Action Plan, including the establishment of a Working Group of 17 States to examine the effects of tourism. There were proposals for similar action in other parts of the world too, but so far the Organization had been approached only in respect of the Mediterranean.
- (2) The annual contribution of Affiliate Members had been fixed at US\$500 in 1975 only to cover the cost of services provided. Although costs had increased the contribution was kept at the same level in 1977 on the advice of the Committee of Affiliate Members. All members got one copy of the publications free while even Full Members have to pay for additional copies. On the advice of the Committee on Budget & Finance, it was decided to charge Affiliate Members only for the four publications referred to in paragraph 49. Subsequently, the Executive Council decided to grant a reduction of 30% on these publications.

- (3) The date on which the 1978 Edition of "Regional Breakdown of World Travel Statistics" was sent will be checked.
- (4) Publications are issued as they are ready, and it will not be practical to combine all of them into one consolidated edition even annually.
- (5) Resolutions adopted at the Mexico Conference will be sent to all members.
- (6) Member States were requested to nominate an official address to which correspondence and publications should be sent. Many countries had nominated the Foreign Affairs Ministry, and hence, publications were sent to them in these countries.

THE COMMISSION TOOK NOTE of the Communication of the Secretary-General and the clarifications by the Deputy Secretary-General.

V. REPORT OF THE COMMISSION'S REPRESENTATIVE
ON THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The delegate of Bangladesh (Commission's Representative on the Executive Council) presented a report on the 7th and 8th Sessions of the Executive Council, which was distributed at the meeting. He drew attention in particular to paragraphs 14 and 16 regarding nomination of Commission representatives on two Working Parties established by the Executive Council.

In discussion the following points were made:

1. The proposal to establish a vocational training fund referred to in paragraph 10 is of interest to developing countries (India).
2. Expert working groups should be set up to study the subjects covered by the two working parties and to brief the Commission's representatives on these Working Parties (India, Pakistan).
3. The working groups can decide on the region's representatives on the Working Parties (Pakistan, Nepal).
4. There is some urgency in the nomination of representatives on the Working Parties, and unless the working groups are going to meet soon it might be better for the Commission to nominate its representatives at this meeting (Deputy Secretary-General).

THE COMMISSION TOOK NOTE of the report of its Representative on the Executive Council, and DECIDED ~~that~~:

- (1) Pakistan will be its Representative on the Working Party to prepare the Tourism Bill of Rights and Tourist Code.
- (2) India will be its representative on the Joint WTO/IATA Working Party on Air Fares.
- (3) Pakistan and India to obtain the views of the other member countries in the region, if necessary by summoning a meeting, before the Working Parties commence their work.

VI. REPORT OF THE COMMISSION'S REPRESENTATIVE
ON THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGET & FINANCE (CBF)

The delegate of India presented a report on the Committee's meeting in April 1978, which was distributed at the meeting. She pointed out that India had been allowed to attend this meeting only as an observer and sought clarification of India's position on this Committee.

The Regional Secretary explained that the Commission had decided to nominate India and Sri Lanka as its representatives on the CBF and TCPC respectively, in place of Bangladesh and Pakistan, at its 3rd meeting held in Torremolinos in May 1977 during the General Assembly.

The Deputy Secretary-General pointed out that these two Committees had been established by the Executive Council, which decided on their composition. The Executive Council will no doubt take into consideration the wishes of the Commission on its representation on these Committees. He also stated that most of the recommendations of the CBF had been adopted by the Executive Council at its Session immediately after the CBF meeting.

THE COMMISSION TOOK NOTE of the Report of the delegate of India, clarifications by the Deputy Secretary-General and the Regional Secretary, and DECIDED:

(1) To seek clarification from the Secretary-General regarding the position of India and Sri Lanka on the CBF and TCPC respectively.

(2) Bangladesh being the Commission's Representative on the Executive Council, to inform the Executive Council about the Commission's decision at its 3rd meeting held in Torremolinos on 30 May 1977 to nominate India and Sri Lanka on these two Committees.

VII. REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT TO THE COMMISSION

The Regional Secretary presented his report (WTO/CSA/5/78/7) which had been circulated in advance.

In discussion the following points were made:

1. Dates for the proposed Regional Seminar and Joint Commission Meeting should not clash with those of ASTA (India, Pakistan).
2. Seminar papers to be circulated in advance so that participants may have sufficient time to study them (India).
3. Possible items to be included in the Agenda for the Joint Commission Meeting (Pakistan).
4. Offer to host International Seminar in Islamabad in February 1979, subject to confirmation by the Government (Pakistan).

5. Possible subjects for the International Seminar (India, Pakistan).
6. The International Seminar should deal with a subject that will be of practical value to the members rather than only of academic interest (Iran).
7. A deadline may be fixed for further suggestions of possible subjects for the International Seminar by Member States as well as Affiliate Members (Deputy Secretary-General).
8. An outline of the topics to be covered to be sent along with suggestions of subjects for the International Seminar, and the Secretariat-General to decide on the most appropriate subject (India).

THE COMMISSION TOOK NOTE of the Regional Secretary's report and DECIDED:

- (1) To suggest holding the Regional Seminar on "Promotion of Inter- and Intra-regional Tourism" and Joint Meeting with the Commission for East Asia and the Pacific in September, to avoid clashing with ASTA and other travel trade conventions in October.
- (2) To request Seminar papers to be circulated in advance, so that participants may have sufficient time to study them.
- (3) To recommend inclusion of the following items in the provisional agenda for the Joint Commission Meeting:
 - Progress in implementation of decisions at the 1st Joint Meeting, including the recommendations of the Seminar on "Promotion of the Tourist Product".
 - Consideration of the conclusions of the Seminar on "Promotion of Inter- and Intra-regional Tourism, and the adoption of its recommendations.
 - Consideration of specific measures for the promotion of inter-regional tourism (i) production of joint publicity material; (ii) relaxation of frontier formalities; (iii) offer of reduced air fares and package tours.
- (4) To endorse Pakistan's offer to host the International Seminar to be held in Asia, in February 1979.
- (5) Member States to suggest subjects for the International Seminar, including an outline of the topics to be covered, to the Regional Secretariat by 15 July 1978.
- (6) Member States to use their good offices in persuading Bhutan, Burma and Maldives to join the Organization, and in enrolling more Affiliate Members from the region.

VIII.COMMISSION ACCOUNTS

The Regional Secretary submitted the Accounts of the Commission for 1977 (WTO/CSA/5/78/8) which had been circulated in advance.

He stated that members had not been billed for contributions in 1978 in view of the new Agreement between the Organization and the Government of Sri Lanka to cover the administrative expenses of the Secretariat, and the balance funds lying to the credit of the Commission at the end of 1977.

Members sought clarification on the following points:

1. Position regarding utilization of the Commission funds available (India).
2. Whether the Commission funds cannot be invested to earn interest instead of keeping them in a Current Account (PTDC).
3. Particulars of the Secretariat's expenses met by the host country (India).

The Deputy Secretary-General pointed out that there was provision for Commission funds to be held in trust by the Regional Secretary on behalf of the Secretary-General.

The Regional Secretary explained that part of the Commission funds were contributions by Member States towards the promotional budget. Commission funds were kept in a Current Account since it was expected to spend them, but this had not been possible due to various reasons. He also outlined the terms of the Agreement between the Organization and the Government of Sri Lanka.

The delegate of Afghanistan stated that arrangements were being made to remit the amounts due from them as soon as possible in US Dollars.

THE COMMISSION TOOK NOTE of the Accounts submitted, clarifications by the Deputy Secretary-General and the Regional Secretary, statement by the delegate of Afghanistan, and DECIDED to request the Secretary-General to arrange for Commission funds to be held in trust by the Regional Secretary, on behalf of the Secretary-General.

IX. REPORT ON THE COMMISSION'S PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 1978/79

The Regional Secretary introduced the report of the Commission's Programme of Work for 1978/79 (WTO/CSA/5/78/9) which had been circulated in advance. He pointed out that the report indicated the progress in implementation of various measures adopted by the Commission in regard to research, operations and promotion.

R E S E A R C H

Members provided the following additional information:

1. All available statistics have been sent to the Secretariat (Bangladesh).
2. Annual report for 1977 was tabled and statistics for the 1st quarter of 1978 will be sent as soon as possible (Afghanistan).

3. Annual report for 1977 was being published and copies will be made available soon (Iran).
4. Latest statistics available for 1977 and the 1st quarter of 1978 were tabled (India, Pakistan, George Steuarts Travel International Ltd. on behalf of Sri Lanka).
5. A copy of a survey on reaction and expenditure pattern of tourists - 1976/1977 will be sent to the Secretariat (India).
6. A copy of an aptitude survey on tourist demand will be sent to the Secretariat (Nepal).
7. A copy of a survey on traffic flows of tourists into five cities, carried out in connection with a scheme for tourist villages will be sent to the Secretariat (Pakistan).
8. No surveys carried out recently on an official basis, but a copy of one on Reaction of American Tourists done by him personally was sent to the Secretariat-General. Copies can also be made available to the Secretariat and other Member States (Dr. Binazir of Iran).

THE COMMISSION DECIDED to continue implementation of earlier decision that Member States should send the Secretariat-General, Regional Secretariat and other Member States:

(1) Monthly/Quarterly and Annual tourist statistics. Quarterly Statistics to be sent within two months of the end of a quarter, and Annual Statistics by April of the following year.

(2) Copies of Surveys carried out on Tourist Demand.

(3) Data on Tourist Supply - accommodation and transport facilities available.

(4) Copies of Studies carried out on Tourism Planning.

(5) Information on Tourism Financing - budgets, investment and incentives offered.

(6) Copies of all other tourist publications, particularly relating to legislation, regulations and facilitation.

O P E R A T I O N S

Hotel Classification

Member States provided the following additional information:

1. A classification system based on the Uniform Standards recommended is now under consideration (Bangladesh).
2. An UNDP expert is working out details of a classification system, which they hope to finalize before the end of the year (Afghanistan).

3. A classification system based on the Uniform Standards has already been adopted, and they hope to finish classification by the end of the year (Pakistan).
4. Present classification systems were based on the Uniform Standards, but these are now being revised to suit local conditions (Iran, India).
5. Services provided in a hotel are very important, and there should be a permanent inspection unit to continuously review whether standards are being maintained (India, Afghanistan, Nepal).

The Deputy Secretary-General complimented the Commission on being the first one to adopt Uniform Standards. Two other Commissions - Europe and the Middle East - have also agreed on Uniform Standards, while the other three are examining this matter. He suggested that when all the Member States in the region had completed classification, it will be useful to make a comparative study of the different systems.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED:

- (1) To continue implementation of earlier decision that Member States should devise and adopt hotel classification systems based on the Uniform Standards recommended by the Commission.
- (2) Member States to keep the Regional Secretariat informed of the progress in implementation.

Facilitation

THE COMMISSION DECIDED:

- (1) To continue implementation of earlier decision that Member States should liberalize frontier formalities in accordance with the specific recommendations made by the Commission.
- (2) Member States to keep the Regional Secretariat informed of the progress in implementation.

Promotion of Intra-regional Tourism

The Regional Secretary drew the attention of Members to certain suggestions made by SITA World Travel (India) Pvt. Ltd. for the promotion of intra-regional traffic between India and some of the neighbouring countries (Annexure I to the working paper), and a Memorandum submitted by Mr. Lafeer Kariapper, Consultant to George Steuarts Travel International Ltd. (outline summary in Annexure II).

Mr. Lafeer Kariapper introduced his Memorandum, which had been circulated in advance. The Memorandum examined the scope for intra-regional tourism, the facilities and resources presently available, and recommended various measures for the promotion of intra-regional tourism.

In discussion the following points were made:

1. Reciprocal measures have to be introduced by the Governments of Member States to promote intra-regional tourism (PTDC).
2. Affiliate Members in the region should meet first and formulate recommendations to the Governments on such matters as relaxation of visa formalities and liberalization of foreign exchange quotas (PTDC, Sri Lanka Railway Tourist Service).
3. A Working Party established by the Commission had made specific recommendations for the promotion of intra-regional tourism, and these had been accepted by the Commission at an earlier meeting (Regional Secretary).
4. Sri Lanka had introduced a special foreign exchange allowance for intra-regional travel, separate from the allowance for international travel (Regional Secretary).

Foreign exchange allocations had been considerably liberalized recently and this should encourage intra-regional travel (India).

Pakistan nationals are allowed unlimited travel on their National Carrier on prepaid tickets (Travel Walji's Ltd).

5. Special group tours for youth are now available only to domestic tourists, but it may be possible to extend this to regional tourists (Bangladesh).
6. It will be desirable to introduce special discounts for rail travel in the region on the lines of the "Eurorailpass" (Travel Walji's Ltd.).

There is already a special fare for rail travel between Colombo and Madras, and this should be extended to cover other points (Sri Lanka Railway Tourist Service).

7. Members should study the proposals contained in the Memorandum before the Regional Seminar, which will provide an excellent opportunity to discuss this subject in depth (India).

THE COMMISSION DECIDED that Members should study the Memorandum submitted by a Consultant to George Steuarts Travel International Ltd, Sri Lanka, (Affiliate Members) and consider the feasibility of adopting the recommendations contained therein, before the proposed regional seminar on "Promotion of Inter- and Intra-regional Tourism".

Development of Promotional Air Fares

In discussion the following points were made:

1. National Carriers of Member States to meet and formulate an uniform policy to be recommended to Governments, on discounted fares both to and within the region (PIA, George Steuarts Travel International Ltd.).

2. A meeting of National Carriers had been held, and one of the recommendations accepted at an earlier Commission meeting was that the National Carrier and the National Tourism Authority in each Member State should meet first (Regional Secretary).
3. A deadline should be fixed for reporting the outcome of these joint discussions to the Regional Secretariat (PTDC).

THE COMMISSION DECIDED:

- (1) To reiterate earlier decision that the National Carrier and the National Tourism Authority in each Member State should meet, examine potential markets and existing promotional air fares, and recommend what further measures should be adopted for the development of tourist traffic.
- (2) That disparities in present air fares, and suggested discount for intra-regional travel as contained in the Memorandum submitted by a Consultant to George Steuarts Travel International Ltd, Sri Lanka, (Affiliate Member) should also be examined at the above meetings.
- (3) That Member States should inform the Regional Secretariat of the outcome of these discussions by 15 August 1978.

Vocational Training

The Regional Secretary stated that he had discussed the request for a feasibility study with the Assistant Administrator of the UNDP during a meeting of Resident Representatives held in Colombo in April. The Assistant Administrator had been favourably disposed towards this proposal and formal approval is now being awaited.

The Deputy Secretary-General indicated that India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka had already supplied the required information.

The delegate of Bangladesh stated that their Tourism Training Institute was being developed with UNDP/ILO assistance.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED:

- (1) To reiterate earlier decision requesting the Secretariat-General for an expert or a team of experts to carry out a feasibility study of the proposal to establish a Regional Training Centre, and recommend alternate measures if necessary, to meet the training requirements of the region.
- (2) That Member States who have not yet informed the Secretariat-General about the training facilities already available, tourism manpower requirements, and nature and scope of additional training facilities required in terms of an earlier decision, should supply this information without any further delay.
- (3) To exchange students, tourist officials and experts between Member States, on a bilateral or multilateral basis, in terms of an earlier decision.

P R O M O T I O N

The Regional Secretary pointed out that after initial efforts of joint promotion during "South Asia Tourism Year-1975", there had been very little progress in implementation of various measures adopted under the 1976/1977 and 1978/1979 Programmes of Work. This was perhaps due to the fact that promotional measures required considerable funds particularly in foreign exchange. Members may now wish to consider implementing certain measures since Commission funds were available. It was essential however, that any promotional campaign should be continuous and sustained if it is to be effective. The report indicated the position regarding certain measures on which action had been initiated by the Secretariat. He tabled a quotation from a Canadian producer for the film, handed over to him by the PTDC representative at the meeting.

In discussion the following points were made:

1. The purpose and objectives of the film, the markets to which it is directed, theme and content of the film should be identified first (India, Bangladesh, Travel Walji's Ltd.).

A committee of experts should be appointed to draw up a script and evaluate the usefulness of the film (PTDC, Travel Walji's Ltd, Pakistan).

The film should cover a common theme such as "The Asian Highway" or "Festivals in South Asia", rather than merely enumerate the tourist attractions in each member country (India).

2. Since the cost of producing the film is known, members may wish to consider whether the necessary funds can be made available before discussing other details (Deputy Secretary-General).

Funds are not available to meet their share of the cost (Bangladesh).

Government approval will have to be sought for special funds (Nepal).

Maximum commitment they can consider is about US\$5000/- (Pakistan).

3. On the basis of their experience with the RCD, the proposal to produce a joint film may not be practicable (Iran).

The possibility of getting a foreign producer to make a film on the region and obtaining copies from him, as they had done in their own countries at a minimal cost, should be explored (Afghanistan, Pakistan).

4. Film was not the only medium for promotion, and what is required is a comprehensive marketing programme rather than individual promotional measures (George Steuarts Travel International Ltd.).

A committee of experts should be appointed to go into the whole concept of marketing and submit recommendations to the Commission (India, Pakistan).

5. The Secretariat may be authorized to proceed with the publication of the Regional Hotel Guide and Information Bulletin (Nepal).
6. All promotional measures adopted by the Commission so far should be reviewed by the committee of experts (India, Bangladesh).

THE COMMISSION DECIDED:

(1) To establish a Marketing Committee consisting of one expert from each Member State to review the present promotional programme, particularly the proposals to produce a joint film and brochure, and to recommend a comprehensive marketing programme to the Commission.

(2) That the first meeting of the above Committee should be held at the Regional Secretariat in July 1978.

S O U T H A S I A T O U R I S M D E C A D E

The delegates of Pakistan and Bangladesh reported that action had already been initiated for the establishment of National Committees to implement the measures adopted.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED to reiterate its earlier decision:

(1) Member States to establish National Committees, fully representative of public and private sectors of the tourist industry, to implement the measures adopted.

(2) Each Member State to nominate a representative to coordinate with the National Committee and report progress quarterly to the Regional Secretariat.

(3) To review progress in implementation of the measures adopted at Commission meetings.

X. WAYS OF USING THE STUDIES, REPORTS AND HANDBOOKS
PREPARED BY WTO UNDER THE 1976/1977 PROGRAMME

The Regional Secretary introduced Working Paper WTO/CSA/5/78/10, which had been circulated in advance.

The delegate of Pakistan stated that this Working Paper had been received late, and hence, they were not in a position to comment on it. He suggested that members be given time to study it and communicate their views to the Secretariat.

The delegate of Iran indicated that they had not received even the documents referred to in the Working Paper.

The delegate of India provided details of the following research work being undertaken by them:

- Foreign Tourist Survey which will be available shortly.
- Domestic Tourism Survey to be carried out by the Central Statistical Commission.
- Study group on hotel rates, which will consider construction and operational costs as well as incentives.

She indicated that the relevant WTO recommendations and guidelines will be taken into consideration in these projects.

The Deputy Secretary-General stated that documents referred to in the Working Paper had been sent at different times to the official addresses provided by Member States. Apart from follow-up action at national level, there were certain matters on which regional action was possible and these could be considered at the next Commission meeting. The Secretariat-General would like to receive details of studies undertaken by Member States, so that their experience can be useful to others.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED:

(1) Member States to study the Working Paper on "Ways of using the Studies, Reports and Handbooks prepared by WTO under the 1976/1977 Programme", and communicate their views to the Regional Secretariat.

(2) Matters involving consideration on a regional basis to be submitted to the next Commission meeting.

XI. PROPOSALS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DRAFT GENERAL PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR THE PERIOD 1980/1981

The Regional Secretary introduced Working Paper WTO/CSA/5/78/11 which had been circulated in advance. He also drew the attention of members to the circular letter of 10 May 1978 sent by the Secretariat on Priority Needs of members.

The delegates of Pakistan, India and George Steuarts Travel International Ltd. suggested possible studies for inclusion in the General Programme of Work of the Organization.

The delegate of India requested the assistance of an expert to advise and provide guidelines for case studies in tourism training programmes.

The Deputy Secretary-General stated that the suggestions made had been noted for consideration. Some of the suggestions were already covered in the current Programme of Work of the Organization. Members could make further suggestions if they wish to before the end of July, since the TCPC meeting to consider the Draft General Programme of Work will be only in November.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED:

(1) To suggest inclusion of the following in the Draft General Programme of Work of the Organization:

- Study to determine the potential generating markets for the South Asia region.
- Study on the effects of tourism on the culture of the South Asia region.
- Study on the air fare structure to the South Asia region.
- Market research study on South Asia region to promote intra-regional tourism.

(2) Member States to send further proposals, indicating their priority needs, to the Secretariat-General and Regional Secretariat by the end of July 1978.

XII. REVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN MEMBER COUNTRIES

The Regional Secretary tabled a Review of the development of tourism in member countries (WTO/CSA/5/78/12) which had been circulated in advance.

The delegates of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka Railway Tourist Service (on behalf of Sri Lanka) provided additional statistics on arrivals and receipts.

In discussion the following points were made:

1. A separate estimate of tourist arrivals in the region should be made instead of adding the totals of member countries, since otherwise the same tourist is likely to be counted more than once (PTDC).
2. Tourist nights is a more accurate and useful measure than arrivals, particularly in planning facilities to be provided (India).
3. According to preliminary estimates there was a growth rate of 16% to 18% in arrivals and 16% to 25% in receipts during 1977 in South Asia, which was one of the highest growth rates for a region in the world (Deputy Secretary-General).

THE COMMISSION TOOK NOTE of the Review of the development of tourism in member countries.

XIII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- A. The delegate of India informed the members about the meeting held in February 1978 of the Legal Working Party, of which India was the Chairman. The Working Party had considered the Draft Convention on Privileges & Immunities of the WTO, but had been able to deal with only four Articles in five days. Certain countries had wanted to restrict the privileges and immunities on the basis that the Draft Convention did not take into account recent developments, and contained more -

privileges and immunities than those normally granted to other international organizations. It would appear that the Draft Convention had been based on the UN Convention of 1946, and the objections raised referred to restrictions on regional and non-universal organizations. The Working Party was open to all Member States, and if the Member States belonging to the Commission were unable to attend meetings they could nominate representatives based in Europe. This would ensure greater representation of developing countries in the Working Party.

The Deputy Secretary-General pointed out that Member States can adopt the Convention with reservations, and also provide safeguards in the Convention to prevent abuse of privileges and immunities. The decision of the Executive Council was that the Secretariat-General should collect in one document all the comments made by Member States on the Draft Convention, and submit a revised Draft to the Working Party as soon as possible.

THE COMMISSION TOOK NOTE of the statement by the delegate of India and the comments of the Deputy Secretary-General.

- B. The representative of George Steuarts Travel International Ltd. suggested that WTO should take up with IATA the question of providing gratis or rebated transportation to participants in WTO meetings.

The representative of Travel Walji's Ltd. pointed out that such transportation was provided to participants in meetings of travel trade associations such as UFTAA.

The Deputy Secretary-General stated that this matter could be taken up at the Joint WTO/IATA Working Party, if a specific proposal was made through the Commission's representative on the Working Party.

THE COMMISSION REQUESTED the representative of George Steuarts Travel International Ltd. to submit a specific proposal for gratis or rebated transportation.

XIV. PLACE AND DATE OF NEXT SESSION

The Regional Secretary explained that meetings are normally held in rotation among Member States, and that Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Iran had hosted meetings under the WTO. If there were no offers from Member States, then the meeting will be held at the Regional Secretariat.

The delegate of India offered to host the next meeting in November/December 1978, if no other Member State was interested.

THE COMMISSION DECIDED to accept India's offer to host the next meeting in November/December 1978.

VOTES OF THANKS

The Chairman proposed a Vote of Thanks to the host country for the excellent facilities provided for the meeting, and for the warm hospitality extended. He also thanked all the members, Deputy Secretary-General and the Regional Secretariat for their cooperation and assistance at the meeting.

The delegates of ~~all~~ the Member States, the representative of George Steuarts Travel International Ltd. (on behalf of Sri Lanka), the Deputy Secretary-General and the Regional Secretary expressed similar sentiments in thanking the host country, and the Commission carried the Vote of Thanks unanimously.

The delegate of India proposed a Vote of Thanks to the Chairman, and the Commission carried the Vote unanimously.

The delegate of Iran thanked the Chairman, the members, the Deputy Secretary-General and the Regional Secretariat for their cooperation in holding the meeting.

The Chairman then declared the sessions closed.
