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## Report on the implementation of the General Programme of Work

### Regional activities

#### I. Introduction

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1. Improving competitiveness and sustainable tourism development have been the priorities of the UNWTO since the 18th UNWTO General Assembly (Kazakhstan, October 2009) and the 19th General Assembly (Republic of Korea, October 2011). The priorities of the Organization have focused on visa facilitation, air connectivity and taxation on tourism.
2. In this regard, the activities of the UNWTO in the region of the Americas have been directed towards the priorities of global importance but with implications at the regional and national levels. Consequently, this report summarizes the activities carried out by UNWTO since the 56th meeting of the Regional Commission for the Americas in the Victoria Falls region, within the framework of the 20th session of our General Assembly.

#### II. Activities

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##### A. “Global Leaders for Tourism” campaign

3. With the objective of tourism's inclusion as a priority issue in the global agenda, the “Global Leaders for Tourism” (“Golden Book”) campaign has advanced considerably during 2013 and 2014. The campaign, which is a joint initiative of the UNWTO and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), includes the presentation of an Open Letter to the heads of state and government around the world, acknowledging the importance of tourism in addressing current global challenges.

4. Since February 2011, when the first head of state received the Open Letter (President Felipe Calderón of Mexico), to date, twelve countries in the region have joined this initiative (Mexico, Colombia, Jamaica, Peru, Argentina, Haiti, El Salvador, Guatemala, Uruguay, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Bahamas).

## B. Competitiveness

5. In the area of improving competitiveness, the UNWTO participated, together with Themis Foundation, in the ***Human Capital Panel*** organized by the Vice-Ministry of Tourism of Peru, on 26 and 27 September 2013, where the diverse opinions generated by this topic were discussed. The Human Capital Panel seeks to bring together the government sector, the private sector and academia in order to analyse the improvements in training to bridge existing gaps and thus ensure the proper and efficient development of tourism.

6. The Human Capital Panel attracted over 200 participants, including officials of national tourism administrations of Member States of the UNWTO, representatives of the tourism private sector from areas such as accommodation and gastronomy, as well as public and private universities.

7. The topics covered in the workshop were: a general overview of human capital in the tourism sector, the internationalization of the vision of tourism professionals as a key factor in improving the tourism competitiveness of a country, the pedagogy of employability, to name just some of them, along with 14 working groups that were held throughout the day.

8. In February 2014 the UNWTO together with the Ministry of Tourism of the Dominican Republic organized the ***International Seminar on “Management of Cultural Heritage Tourism Destinations”***, which took place in the city of Santo Domingo on 17 and 18 February 2014.

9. The objective of the seminar was to analyse the tourism management of Cultural Heritage Sites in the Americas region, including intangible heritage and how to feature such heritage through its different manifestations: gastronomy, handicrafts, visual arts and their impact on local communities.

10. With the participation of panellists and moderators from 12 countries of the region throughout the seminar, in addition to the above issues, also addressed were the management of tourism routes, education and tourism, and the tourism promotion of intangible heritage.

## C. Sustainability

11. In the context of sustainability, the Regional Programme for the Americas participated in the ***“7th International Fair of the Amazon Region” (FIAM 2013)*** in the city of Manaus, Brazil, from 27 to 30 November 2013.

12. The UNWTO was invited to speak at the seminar ***“The Importance of Water for Tourism in the Amazon Region”***, at which it was pointed out that the region is the largest hydrological reserve on the planet. Consequently, the seminar stressed the responsibility to use water in a rational manner, as it is vital for nature and society and the economy of the region. Different solutions and alternatives for tourism development were analysed, ranging from the establishment of sustainable tourism observatories to the many uses and consequences of tourism activity.

13. Each year, the International Fair of the Amazon Region brings together the national authorities of the countries of the region and attracts some 1,000 participants at each edition, offering a broad view covering the environment, tourism and social conditions.

14. The UNWTO, together with the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism and the Inter-American Development Bank, held in Nassau, Bahamas, the International Conference on “**Tourism as a Key Sector for the Development of Island States**” on 18 and 19 February 2014.

15. The Conference used as its starting point the conclusions of the “Conference on Sustainable Development of Tourism in Islands” held in Reunion Island, France, in September 2013, with information that the National Tourism Authorities and the international community can use as inputs for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to be held in Samoa in September this year.

16. Likewise, a full programme on topics of relevance to island destinations was discussed, including prospects for competitiveness and sustainability, as well as regional integration, air connectivity, travel facilitation and risk management in order to identify vulnerabilities, challenges and good practices.

17. The Conference was focused mainly on the Caribbean subregion and provided an excellent opportunity to share with the international community, at the ministerial level as well as with experts, deeper knowledge as well as the lessons learned by small island developing states around the world in terms of their relationship with the tourism sector and its implications.

18. The Conference concluded with the drafting of a document outlining the main topics developed over its course and with the “Nassau Declaration on Tourism as a Key Sector for the Development of Island States”, which will serve as an input to the aforementioned conference to be held in Samoa and is attached to this document (annex 1).

#### D. Air facilitation

19. “**Ministerial Meeting on Air Connectivity**”, held in the framework of the “International Seminar on Tourism Destination Management of Cultural Heritage” in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 18 February 2014.

20. With the presence of 10 ministers and other invited experts, the meeting addressed issues such as visas and facilitation in the Latin American region and in the Caribbean, with the goal of identifying obstacles, evaluating and proposing new courses of action. The meeting concluded with the drafting of the Santo Domingo Declaration, which is attached to this document (annex 2).

21. Another **ministerial meeting on the same themes**, was held during the “International Conference on Tourism as a Key Sector for Development in Island States”, which took place in Nassau, Bahamas, on 18 and 19 February 2014.

22. In the case of this ministerial meeting, the focus was primarily on air connectivity in the Caribbean, tourism taxes and future challenges in the region.

23. Both ministerial meetings were presided over by the Secretary-General of the UNWTO and the respective ministers of the host countries (Dominican Republic and the Bahamas). Likewise, the Director of Sustainable Development of Tourism Programme Development presented an introductory report before the discussion among the experts and ministers.

## E. Training and capacity building

24. This programme is implemented by the UNWTO.Themis Foundation. The Foundation is the executing arm of the Organization in the field of education and training and its main objective is to improve and support the development of tourism in the Member States of the UNWTO.

25. Two major courses are held every year in the Americas: one in Mexico and the other in Argentina.

26. Last year, in the case of Mexico, the UNWTO.Themis Course on "**Gastronomy as a Tool for Tourism Competitiveness**" was held in Playa de Rosarito, Baja California, from 7 to 11 October 2013.

27. The UNWTO jump-started this initiative with the publication of a volume of the "AM Reports" series (Affiliate Members Reports) called "Global Report on Food Tourism", with the aim of carrying out an analysis of the current situation of food tourism, through a survey of Affiliate Members, and the insights provided by professionals of the tourism and gastronomy sectors with extensive experience in international organizations, in destination management, in tourism enterprises and in the field of training.

28. The objective was to try to arrive at a series of conclusions about some of the food tourism initiatives that are under way worldwide for possible inclusion in the strategic thinking on the part of both the public sector and businesses regarding development and promotion policies in this field. A further aim was to provide knowledge, skills, tools, and a forum for discussion and reflection on the various development and communication strategies so that, at the end of the course, participants would be able to design, plan and manage the opportunity represented by food tourism in the he overall strategy of their tourism destination.

29. More than 40 officials from national, regional and local governments as well as representatives from the private sector and civil society of Argentina, Costa Rica and Guatemala attended the course.

30. This year, the international course in Argentina took place in the city of Paraná, Entre Ríos, from 8 to 13 June 2014, and is entitled "**Excellence in Human Resources Management: Inclusion and Tourism Employment**".

31. The course is aimed at identifying the issues and market trends of the tourism labour market, in terms of training, employment and social responsibility, in order to facilitate the development and implementation of strategies for sustainable employment growth in the sector, with special emphasis on the inclusion of the most disadvantaged groups.

## F. Technical assistance

32. From 1 to 30 October 2013, a technical mission on "**Statistics, Statistical Indicators and Tourism Satellite Accounts**" was held under the auspices of the Tourism Authority of Panama (ATP).

33. The ATP required the technical support of the UNWTO with the following objectives: (a) to evaluate the methodologies applied by national experts in the field of tourism statistics; (b) to estimate some economic aggregates of tourism that can serve as reference data regarding the current state of the activity; and, above all, (c) to assess the implementation of inbound and outbound expenditure surveys that have been implemented in order to introduce corrective measures or improvements that may be required.

34. It also expected to train staff and specify tasks that would be recommended by the consultant for the biennium 2013-2014, in a Statistical Development Plan for such period, having as a goal the development of indicators on the activity.

#### G. Other activities

35. The UNWTO was invited to participate in the forum "***The Growth of the International Travel Economy and Protection of the Environment***" organized by the Harvard University Extension School, in October 2013. The speech on behalf of the UNWTO was given by the Regional Director for the Americas.

36. Leading figures from academia, the political world and the tourism private sector attended the meeting, such as the former president of Mexico, Felipe Calderón, the vice president of SABRE, Travelocity and Last Minute, as well as representatives of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, the hotel sector, cruise companies and executives of regional organizations such as PATA.

37. The presence of the UNWTO at this meeting shows that the Organization is a world leader in sustainable tourism. Moreover, it is working with the Harvard Extension School in seeking joint research projects to develop in the short term.

38. Likewise, our Organization was also invited to participate in the "***4th Mexico-European Union Forum on Mexican and European Challenges: Synergies in Both Directions***" which took place in Mexico City on 28 and 29 November 2013.

39. The Euroamérica Foundation is a European non-profit, plural and independent organization based in Spain, which serves the general interest, and its overriding objective is to stimulate cooperation and understanding between European and Latin American institutions, companies and personalities so as to foster relations between Europe and the Americas, primarily from the private sector. The Euroamérica Foundation wishes to reinforce the excellent opportunities to be had in both directions.

40. The Regional Director participated in the third session of the Forum called: "The Tourism Sector as a Revitalizing Factor for the Economy and a Creator of Employment" together with the Secretary of Tourism of Mexico, Claudia Ruiz Massieu Salinas, and the Director of the Spanish Tourism Office in Mexico and Central America, Álvaro Renedo.

41. On the occasion of the International Conference "***Tourism as a Key Sector for Development in Island States***", Taleb Rifai signed a memorandum of understanding with the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) whose Secretary-General, Alfonso Munera, was represented by its Director of Sustainable Development, Julio Orozco, on 19 February 2014. Also, another memorandum was signed with the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) represented by its Secretary General, Hugh Riley, on the same day.

42. The purpose of both documents is to improve cooperation between the UNWTO and the above-mentioned institutions, to define areas of common interest with a view to harmonizing activities among the Member States of this subregion, to provide training and develop strategies for sustainable tourism in the region, to train Member States in assessing and reducing risks that directly or indirectly affect

tourism in order to reduce its impacts, and to facilitate inter-institutional exchanges related research, consulting and the implementation of projects and programmes.

### **III. Meetings at Headquarters**

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43. The annual meeting between the UNWTO and the delegation of Central America was held at the Headquarters of the Organization on 24 January 2014 under the pro tempore chairmanship of the Dominican Republic and was attended by delegations from the following countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama, in addition to the participation of representatives of the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB), the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID), the Central American Agency for Tourism Promotion (CATA), the Central American Tourism Integration Secretariat (SITCA) and delegations from the private sector.

44. This traditional meeting, which has been held for many years now on the occasion of FITUR, makes it possible to analyse together with the delegations the state of tourism in the area, and to provide them with detailed information on the trends and outlook for the current year.

45. The main topics discussed by the ministers in this edition of the meeting included the relocation of the SITCA office to Managua from San Salvador under the responsibility of Anasha Campbell, the technical cooperation that the UNWTO can provide in the region, and travel facilitation from perspectives ranging from air connectivity to visa issuance.

46. In attendance as a guest was the Vice Minister of Tourism of Colombia, Sandra Howard Taylor, in her capacity as Chair of the Commission, who invited everyone to the 57th meeting of the CAM and the International Forum on Sustainable Development of Tourism and Innovation, which will take place in Cartagena de Indias, from 23 to 26 June 2014.

### **IV. Official visits**

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47. On 10 March 2014, the Minister of Tourism of Honduras, Emilio Silvestri, accompanied by the Ambassador of Honduras to Spain, Norman García Paz, visited the UNWTO Headquarters. The Minister announced the creation of a tourism cabinet composed of members of the sector proposed by the National Chamber of Tourism. Additionally, tourism was declared as a priority in the country's government plan that has been ratified by Presidential Decree, with the endorsement of all members of the cabinet, whose priorities include joining the "Global Leaders for Tourism" campaign of the UNWTO and creating the Sustainable Tourism Observatory in La Ceiba. For reference, a copy of the Presidential Decree is attached to this document (annex 3).

48. He also mentioned institutional activities being carried out since his recent appointment and informed the Regional Director on the future signing of an agreement between the Honduran Institute of Tourism and the National Autonomous University of Honduras for the launch of the Sustainable Tourism Observatory in La Ceiba, Honduras.

49. The Minister discussed the steps being taken by his administration to strengthen public-private partnership as well as new marketing strategies with new tourism products such as the Ruta Lenca.

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## V. Activities scheduled for 2014:

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- WTTC Americas Summit, 10-11 September | Lima, Peru
- 20th World Routes Development Forum, 20-23 September | Chicago, Illinois, United States
- ABAV 2014 – Tourism Fair for the Americas, 24-28 September | Sao Paulo, Brazil
- FITE 2014 - 12th edition of the International Tourism Fair in Ecuador, 25-28 September | Guayaquil, Ecuador
- UNWTO – World Tourism Day: “**Tourism and Community Development**”, 27 September | Guadalajara, Mexico
- FITPAR 2014 – International Tourism Fair of Paraguay, 10-12 October | Asunción, Paraguay
- Destinations for All Summit, 19-22 October | Montreal, Canada
- FIT 2014 - International Tourism Fair of Latin America, 25-28 October | Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Tourism Fair of Gramado, 6-9 November | Gramado, Brazil
- Tourism Outlook Seminar, 20-21 November | TBC (Jamaica)
- FITVEN 2014 – TBC | Venezuela
- Seminar on Tourism and Media, TBC | Cuenca, Ecuador

## Annex 1

### **NASSAU DECLARATION ON TOURISM AS A KEY SECTOR FOR DEVELOPMENT IN ISLAND STATES**

*Reaffirming* the Declaration of Barbados and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

*Recalling* the Reunion Island Declaration on Sustainable Tourism in Islands and noting the Davos Declaration on Climate Change and Tourism Responding to Global Challenges,

*Reaffirming also* that Small Island Developing States remain a special case for sustainable development in acknowledgement of their unique characteristics, challenges and vulnerabilities and the ongoing impact of these on their ability to achieve sustainable development and build sustained resilience,

*Acknowledging* that tourism is one of the principal economic activities in Small Island Developing States and therefore an essential source of foreign currency, job opportunities, livelihood, and inclusive growth,

*Acknowledging* also that the tourism in Small Island Developing States is subject to special social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities, including the particular vulnerability of Small Island Developing States to the adverse effects of climate change,

*Recognising* in this regard the important role of sustainable tourism as a positive instrument towards the eradication of poverty, the protection of the environment and the improvement of quality of life and its contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development,

*Recognising* also that as Small Island Developing States face many multi-dimensional issues, an integrated approach is required to address the specific opportunities and challenges in pursuing sustainable tourism,

*Recalling* the decision taken at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to convene a Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, which will take place in Apia, Samoa, in 2014,

We the Small Island Developing States, meeting in Nassau, Bahamas, from 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> February 2014, call on United Nations bodies and other international agencies, and the governments, national and local authorities of Small Island Developing States, as appropriate, to:

1. Ensure that full attention is paid to the role of tourism as a force for sustainable development and especially in poverty alleviation, and in the further shaping of policies and programmes to support Small Island Developing States in their sustainable development;
2. Continue to support sustainable tourism and develop policies that foster responsive, resilient and inclusive tourism, protect the natural and cultural heritage, especially their ecosystems and biodiversity, take full account of the current and future capacity of an island's resources (especially land, water coastline, energy and social capital), and note that existing initiatives,

such as the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, UNWTO Global Observatories on Sustainable Tourism and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism, among other international initiatives, could deliver direct and focused support to governments to this end;

3. Establish and maintain governance and management structures for tourism, which bring together tourism, environment, health, disaster management, culture, transport, security and immigration, planning and development responsibilities and expertise, and enable a meaningful partnership approach between the public and private sector and local community;
4. Promote policies that allow the economy and communities to gain maximum benefits from tourism, and support the design and implementation of participatory measures to strengthen local employment and engagement in the sector, including through financial partnerships, capacity development, especially in the area of statistics;
5. Provide science-based information and guidance to Small Island Developing States on the impact of climate change on tourism, and undertake greater political engagement and commitment, in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to address the adaptation and mitigation needs of Small Island Developing States;
6. Recognise the dependency of island tourism on air and sea transportation services, and in this regard, intensify efforts to develop competitive, frequent, reliable and fair services, enhance intra-regional air connectivity as well as airlift with traditional and emerging outbound markets, while contributing at the same time to emission reduction goals, and ensure that any future global and national policies on regulation and taxation of air services take account of the special circumstances of Small Island Developing States.
7. Develop innovative approaches to tourism products, based on the special qualities, biodiversity and distinctiveness of individual islands, and develop strategies to enhance the contribution of information and communication technologies to the industry;
8. Support and encourage regional partnerships, such as the Caribbean Tourism Organization and the Vanilla Islands in the Indian Ocean, and support further efforts to promote regional integration in Small Island Developing States in order to ensure a coordinated and competitive tourism industry;
9. Support international and regional tourism bodies in promoting and providing expertise in the sustainable development of tourism and encourage all Small Island Developing States to participate in them and extends its appreciation to the World Tourism Organization for its contribution and leadership to advance the sustainable development of tourism;
10. Consider these conclusions and main findings, as included in the Annex, at the Third International Conference on SIDS in 2014, disseminate them in other forums and encourage their further development and implementation.

## Annex to the Nassau Declaration on Tourism for Sustainable Development in Island States

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The conference on *Tourism as a Key Sector for Development in Island States*, jointly organised by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Ministry of Tourism of The Bahamas and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), was held in Nassau, Bahamas on February 19-20, 2014. The purpose of the conference was to share knowledge and lessons learned for tourism in island states, especially Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and to highlight priorities for strengthening the impact of tourism on their local economies and communities.

The following key issues were highlighted by the conference:

- **Tourism as a force for sustainable development**

The key position of tourism in the economy of SIDS, its growth potential, and relevance to the natural and cultural assets of islands, underline the need to prioritise tourism in global and local strategies for their sustainable development. At the same time, tourism development should be carefully planned to bring maximum advantage to island communities.

- **Strengthening the resilience of SIDS tourism in the face of change**

Vulnerability is an issue for all SIDS. Tourism in SIDS is significantly affected by climate change but is also vulnerable to a number of other external influences. The resilience of the sector must be addressed by active management.

- **Addressing the competitiveness of tourism in SIDS**

At a time of increasing global competition in tourism, SIDS must ensure that they are well placed to maintain and grow their market share. Key issues to address are their connectivity and the quality of their offer.

- **The careful management of limited resources**

A common characteristic of SIDS is their small size. Tourism should be carefully planned and managed to reflect and where possible enhance the capacity of physical and human resources on islands.

- **Partnership working on tourism between SIDS**

SIDS can be more effective in pursuing the development opportunities presented by tourism if they work together. This may require strengthening regional structures and programmes as a basis for cooperation.

- **The Bahamas**, host country of the conference, shared with the participants of the conference the different facets of its sustainability strategy built on the unique and rich biodiversity, culture and history of the archipelago. The Bahamas has played a leading role in the region advancing protection of the natural environment including implementation through the Caribbean Challenge Initiative.

The topics covered by the conference were contained in six sessions: maximising the local benefits of tourism; transport and air connectivity as a major factor for SIDS as destinations; regional integration – building partnerships to compete globally; climate change and environmental challenges; innovation in tourism product development; and resilient tourism development.

The main findings and conclusions from the conference are presented below.

### **Tourism as a major force for the sustainable development of SIDS**

Information on the importance of tourism in SIDS, and on the wide range of issues affecting its contribution to their sustainable development, was consolidated by UNWTO in the publication *Challenges and Opportunities for Tourism Development in Small Island Developing States* (2012) which formed an input to the Rio+20 conference and by The Commonwealth and The World Bank in the publication *Tourism and Inclusive Growth in Small Islands Development States* (2013).

Data from the 52 SIDS show the massive contribution that tourism makes to their economies. In half the SIDS tourism accounts for over 40% of the value of all exports of goods and services and is a primary source of foreign exchange earnings. In terms of economic impact, inbound tourism expenditure equates to more than 20% of GDP in two fifths of the SIDS where data is available.

There is considerable variation between the SIDS in their level of development. Ten fall in the lowest categories of income and human development while similar numbers are in the highest categories. Relative prosperity and poverty also varies between communities within individual SIDS.

The potential of tourism as a force for development rests partly in its strong global growth as a sector. The popularity of islands and the experiences that they offer place SIDS in a good position to benefit from this growth. Tourism arrivals in SIDS slowed considerably during the world economic recession, but most saw a strong bounce back subsequently. Amongst SIDS, it is those with the lowest levels of development that have seen fastest recent growth, showing the potential for tourism to grow where it may be most needed. This is illustrated by the graduation of Cape Verde, the Maldives, and most recently Samoa from Least Developed Country status due in part to their levels of income from tourism, with at least one other of the SIDS on the path to a similar transition supported by tourism.

The special opportunity presented by tourism as a force for development in SIDS is also seen in its ability to capitalise on the comparative advantage arising from the rich natural and cultural heritage of islands, while also presenting opportunities for enhancing the livelihoods of local communities.

The IDB has therefore joined efforts with the World Tourism Organization to strengthen its commitment to the tourism industry of the Caribbean region in this International Conference. Tourism may contribute towards poverty and inequality reduction, climate change management and regional integration, the three IDB's lending priorities. That is why the IDB wants to remain a key strategic partner for the Caribbean in the years to come, since the tourism sector still offers enormous opportunities to further enhance the environmental, economic and social welfare of the Caribbean nations. The IDB firmly believes that the Caribbean count upon sound strengths to keep its renowned status as a leading international destination.

### **Key issues for sustainable tourism in SIDS**

SIDS share a number of common characteristics which present tourism with various challenges as well as opportunities. These include their small size, relative isolation and maritime, and often tropical, environment. These characteristics make SIDS particularly vulnerable to economic and external shocks.

The small economic base of many SIDS means that they are prone to financial leakages and sometimes to shortage of labour and skills. This underlines the need to strengthening the conditions that enable local engagement in tourism investment, businesses and supply chains.

Scarcity of land and other resources, such as sources of energy and water, places a limit on tourism development and also requires tourism activities to be very well planned and managed. Furthermore, there is a particular need to protect the unique ecosystems and biodiversity of many islands, seeking to support and not damage them through tourism.

Climate change presents a particular threat to SIDS and their tourism economies, from direct impact on coastal areas and maritime environments and indirect influences on tourism markets and development.

If the potential of tourism as a force for sustainable development in SIDS is to be fully grasped, it is important to address a range of issues that affect their competitiveness. A key is the openness and accessibility of SIDS to tourism. Air connectivity plays an important part in this. SIDS should also continually strive to improve the quality of their tourism facilities, which in some destinations need new investment, while also diversifying the experiences on offer beyond the formula of sun, sea and sand.

The fact that many SIDS are economically dependent on tourism means that particular attention must be paid to ensuring the resilience of the sector at all levels.

Many of the challenges and opportunities facing SIDS in pursuing sustainable development through tourism can be more easily addressed by working together. There are a number of examples of developing partnerships between SIDS and other island territories that provide lessons for others to follow.

## **Outcomes and recommendations**

In order to take full advantage of the opportunity presented by tourism as a key contributor to the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States, the conference calls on UN bodies and other international agencies, the governments of SIDS and representatives of the tourism industry, to:

1. Increase the attention given to tourism in policies and programmes that support the sustainable development of SIDS.
2. Engage a wide range of stakeholders in the development of sustainable tourism strategies and action plans for SIDS and strengthen their capacity to implement them.
3. Generate new investment and business opportunities in the tourism sector, which reflect the need to maximise the contribution of tourism to island economies and minimise financial leakages from them.
4. Shape the development of tourism in ways which will provide an equitable source of income within island communities, contribute to poverty reduction and enhance local quality of life.
5. Recognise the importance to the competitiveness of SIDS of strengthening air connections from existing and emerging markets, while also addressing the need to minimise emissions from air travel.

6. Improve the frequency, affordability and convenience of inter-island transport within regional island destinations such as the Caribbean.
7. Strengthen the coordination of tourism policies and actions within groups of SIDS, to gain economies of scale in tourism management, share information and knowledge, and, as integrated regional destinations, achieve a higher profile in the marketplace.
8. Strengthen the institutional, technical and economic capacity of SIDS to adapt to the consequences of climate change for the tourism sector, supported by improved information, policies, planning and management.
9. Increase the number of tourism businesses and destinations within SIDS that meet and exceed international standards and best practice in the management of energy, water and waste and the conservation of biodiversity.
10. Improve the quality of all aspects of the visitor experience in SIDS, including the provision of innovative ways for visitors to appreciate and relate to the special natural and cultural heritage of islands.
11. Invest in skills and new technology to enable SIDS to benefit from the latest techniques for communicating with markets and directly with visitors, before, during and after their visit.
12. Strengthen the resilience of SIDS to the consequences of natural disasters and other incidents that may affect their safety, security and attractiveness for tourists, either perceived or in reality, through effective risk management, mitigation and communications.
13. Thanks the Government of The Bahamas for having hosted this conference.

**Annex 2**

**DECLARACION DE SANTO DOMINGO:**

**"REUNION DE MINISTROS Y AUTORIDADES DE TURISMO DE AMERICA SOBRE CONECTIVIDAD AEREA Y FACILITACION DE VIAJES"**

(Aprobada en fecha 18 de febrero de 2014)

Los Ministros y Autoridades de Turismo de las Américas y Jefes de Delegaciones de los Estados Miembros de la Organización Mundial de Turismo (OMT), reunidos en Santo Domingo, República Dominicana, por invitación del Ministerio de turismo de la Republica Dominicana, con ocasión de la celebración del "Seminario Internacional sobre Gestión de los Destinos Turísticos del Patrimonio Cultural":

**CONSIDERANDO:** Que la Organización Mundial de Turismo OMT, se ha empoderado de la necesidad de algunos Estados Miembros de superar barreras y dificultades importantes que limitan el crecimiento del turismo como son las políticas de visados y la conectividad aérea, entre otros.

**CONSIDERANDO:** Que dada la importancia de la Conectividad Aérea **y** para el desarrollo del turismo, existe una clara necesidad de mantener atracciones turísticas diferenciadas que fomenten los vuelos a esos destinos.

**CONSIDERANDO:** Que con una mayor conectividad aérea es posible aumentar el flujo de turistas internacionales y generar el consecuente incremento de ingresos de divisas a los países, así como crear nuevos empleos que impactaran positivamente en la calidad de vida de los pueblos.

**CONSIDERANDO:** Que la cooperación bilateral y multilateral son mecanismos eficientes para enfrentar con éxito debilidades comunes, como la conectividad y la facilitación migratoria.

**CONSIDERANDO:** Que las limitaciones en la Conectividad Aérea es una de las barreras que obstaculizan el pleno desarrollo del potencial turístico en la región de las Américas.

**CONSIDERANDO:** Que la facilitación migratoria **y de viajes** es otra tarea pendiente de superar, por la mayoría de los países de América, que dificulta la conectividad.

**DECLARAMOS:**

1.- Prioritaria la conectividad aérea en todos los Estados Miembros de la OMT de la Región de Las Américas, constituyendo esta declaración un compromiso de cada uno de los gobiernos aquí representados de formular e implementar las políticas públicas y alianzas público – privadas necesarias para superar esta barrera y mejorar el flujo de turistas internacionales en cada uno de nuestros países.

2.- Promover la suscripción de acuerdos multilaterales y bilaterales de servicios aéreos y de cooperación entre los gobiernos de los países declarantes con la finalidad de proponer, fomentar y/o fortalecer la conectividad entre los países de la región, a través de operaciones aéreas.

3.- Promover el análisis y generación de políticas y acciones conjuntas entre actores transversales del transporte aéreo y del turismo, en temas como conectividad aérea, facilitación de viajes, política fiscal, infraestructura aeroportuaria y cambio climático.

4.- Ratificar el mandato dictado por los Miembros del Consejo Ejecutivo en la 94<sup>a</sup> Reunión del 24-25 de octubre de 2012, en Campeche, México, “de que la OMT siga adelante con su agenda de agilización de los visados, especialmente en dos áreas claves: la sensibilización al más alto nivel político y la búsqueda de difusión de estudios de casos prácticos”. Asimismo, convinieron en que la conectividad aérea era otro impedimento importante para el crecimiento del turismo y pidieron a la OMT que reforzara sus lazos con los actores público y privado del transporte.

5.- Se insta a los gobiernos de las Américas, en el marco de la Soberanía de los Estados Miembros a que en sus políticas de trabajo, se hagan las coordinaciones necesarias para viabilizar:

- a) Una política regional de cielos abiertos y facilitación de viajes
- b) Políticas relativas a la agilización de visados y normas comunes
- (c) La estimulación de la inversión aeroportuaria

6.- Dada la importancia del transporte aéreo en el desarrollo del turismo, para los pueblos de la región de las Américas, los gobiernos de las partes se comprometen a establecer mecanismos para fortalecer los vínculos entre los ministerios de relaciones exteriores y sus autoridades de aviación civil en apego a la Declaración Conjunta Especial, suscrita en fecha 18 de marzo de 2013, entre la OMT y la Organización de Aviación Civil Internacional (OACI).

7.- Los Ministros y Jefes de Delegaciones de los Estados Miembros de las Américas de la OMT, en representación de sus Gobiernos y en apego a sus leyes, reafirman su compromiso de trabajar unidos en procura de la sostenibilidad y desarrollo de los destinos turísticos con patrimonio histórico y cultural, en beneficio del mejoramiento de la calidad de vida de sus pueblos, como resultado de una acertada política turística.

8.- Los Ministros y Jefes de Delegaciones de los Estados Miembros de las Américas de la OMT aquí reunidos, reconocen al Ministerio de Turismo de la República Dominicana por la invitación y hospitalaria acogida que ha permitido el exitoso desarrollo de esta reunión.

Dada en Santo Domingo, capital de la República Dominicana, a los dieciocho (18) días del mes de febrero de 2014.

Annex 3

**DECRETO PRESIDENCIAL**



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**DECRETO EJECUTIVO NÚMERO PCM-011-2014**

**EL PRESIDENTE DE LA REPÚBLICA EN CONSEJO DE MINISTROS,**

**CONSIDERANDO:** Que el Turismo es uno de los más importantes sectores generadores de empleo en el país, constituyéndose en una fuente importante de sustento para más de 300,000 familias hondureñas en todo el territorio nacional;

**CONSIDERANDO:** Que la actividad turística que se produce en el país realiza una importante contribución a las finanzas del Estado, con un aporte de mas de 700 millones de dólares en divisas y miles de millones de lempiras en tributos;

**CONSIDERANDO:** Que el sector, compuesto en un 80% por MIPYMES, ofrece un acceso rápido al mundo del trabajo a los jóvenes y a las mujeres, que tienen la oportunidad de encontrar salarios justos y protección social. Asimismo, el sector ofrece un espacio de respeto a los pueblos indígenas y afro descendientes, igualdad de género, desarrollo personal e inclusión social.

**CONSIDERANDO:** Que el sector Turismo contribuye a dar valor económico al patrimonio cultural y genera desarrollo económico ambientalmente sostenible;

**CONSIDERANDO:** Que el país cuenta con condiciones naturales, culturales, arqueológicas e históricas que hacen del turismo uno de los sectores económicos con mayor potencial de crecimiento, pudiendo constituirse en un pilar fundamental para el desarrollo futuro del país, aportando empleo, divisas, tributos e inversión y generando una sólida base de desarrollo sustentable para Honduras;

**CONSIDERANDO:** Que resulta vital crear las condiciones necesarias para que el Sector Turismo pueda contar con los elementos de contexto y de clima de inversión que potencien un acelerado proceso de desarrollo en los próximos años;

**CONSIDERANDO:** Que la recreación segura es un derecho de todos los habitantes del país, así como de todos los turistas que nos visitan;

**POR TANTO,**

**DECRETA:**



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**DECLARACIÓN DEL SECTOR TURISMO COMO FACTOR PRIORITARIO PARA  
EL DESARROLLO DEL PAÍS**

1.- Declarar al Sector Turismo como un Sector Prioritario para el desarrollo social y económico del país, constituyendo esta Declaratoria como una Política de Estado e integrando la misma, como parte de la más relevante Agenda del Gobierno.

2.- Delegar en la Secretaría de Desarrollo Económico y, por su vía, en el Instituto Hondureño de Turismo, la actualización de la Estrategia Nacional de Turismo Sostenible, reafirmando el deseo de estructurar una actividad turística amigable con el ambiente, consciente de los desafíos del cambio climático y promotora de una cultura de protección y conservación de los ecosistemas naturales del país y del valor del patrimonio arqueológico, las culturas vivas y las tradiciones nacionales.

3.- Instruir al Gabinete de Seguridad compuesto por la Secretaría de Seguridad, la Secretaría de Defensa, Dirección Nacional de Investigación e Inteligencia, la Dirección de Migración y Extranjería, a la Dirección Nacional de Aeronáutica Civil, y demás entes del Gobierno de la República para que en el marco de este Decreto Ejecutivo y en coordinación con el Gabinete de Desarrollo Económico desarrollen políticas y mecanismos para proteger y dar seguridad a los sitios y lugares turísticos del país para lograr que lo mismos sean declarados libres de violencia.

4.- Apoyar la integración del Turismo Sostenible como Política de Estado en el Plan de Nación y de las demás herramientas de planificación estratégica y operacional que del mismo se derivan. Apoyar también la consolidación de los esfuerzos nacionales para el diseño e implementación de la Estrategia para la adaptación y Mitigación al Cambio Climático del Sector Turismo, tomando como punto de partida la carta de intención firmada por el IHT, CANATURH, UNAH y OMT como parte del Foro de Turismo, Sostenibilidad y Cambio Climático en Centroamérica celebrado en el mes de abril de 2013, incluyendo la puesta en funcionamiento del Primer Observatorio de Turismo Sostenible y Cambio Climático en las Américas;

5.- Identificar los mecanismos para dar mayor competitividad a la aeronáutica civil, como conductor de nuestra conectividad aérea a los mercados meta;

6.- Asumir el compromiso de convertir a Honduras en un área de desarrollo de turismo sustentable de acuerdo a los parámetros de la Organización Mundial de Turismo (OMT), dependencia de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas (ONU) a través de la firma del libro de oro de este organismo, en el que se establecen las condiciones para este cumplimiento.

7.- Incorporar al Sector Turismo como uno de los tres pilares de la Estrategia Nacional de Imagen País y Marca País, desarrollando una actividad de promoción nacional e internacional que evidencie la riqueza de los destinos turísticos hondureños e invite al goce de vivencias y experiencias caracterizadas por nuestra diversidad natural, cultural e histórica.

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8.- Instruir al Instituto Hondureño de Turismo a la integración del Gabinete Itinerante del Sector, con la participación de actores del sector público, sector privado, sociedad civil, grupos indígenas y afro descendientes, teniendo la responsabilidad de acompañar las acciones del gobierno y realizar una contribución relevante en términos de visión, desarrollo y seguimiento.

9.- Informar a Países Amigos, Organismos Internacionales y Agencias de Cooperación Internacional, del contenido de esta Declaratoria, haciendo una importante acción de comunicación por parte del Gobierno.

Dado el Salón Constitucional de la Presidencia de la República, en la ciudad de Tegucigalpa MDC a los diez (10) días del mes de abril de dos mil catorce (2014).

JUAN ORLANDO HERNÁNDEZ ALVARADO  
PRESIDENTE DE LA REPÚBLICA

JORGE RAMÓN HERNÁNDEZ ALCERRO  
SECRETARÍA DE COORDINACIÓN GENERAL DE GOBIERNO

REINALDO ANTONIO SÁNCHEZ RIVERA  
SECRETARÍA DE LA PRESIDENCIA

RIGOBERTO CHANG CASTILLO  
SECRETARÍA DE DERECHOS HUMANOS JUSTICIA,  
GOBERNACIÓN Y DESCENTRALIZACIÓN



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MIREYA DEL CARMEN AGUERO  
SECRETARÍA DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES, Y  
COOPERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL

*Luis P.*  
LISANDRO ROSALES BÁNEGAS  
SECRETARÍA DE ESTADO EN LOS DESPACHOS DE  
DESARROLLO E INCLUSIÓN SOCIAL  
*G. R.*  
ALDEN RIVERA MONTES  
SECRETARÍA DE ESTADO EN EL DESPACHO  
DE DESARROLLO ECONÓMICO

*R. Antonio O.*  
ROBERTO ANTONIO ORDOÑEZ W.  
SECRETARÍA DE ESTADO EN LOS DESPACHOS DE  
INFRAESTRUCTURA Y SERVICIOS PÚBLICOS

*A. G. C. A.*  
ARTURO GERARDO CORRALES ALVAREZ  
SECRETARÍA DE ESTADO EN EL DESPACHO DE SEGURIDAD



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CARLOS ALBERTO MADERO ERAZO  
SECRETARÍA DE TRABAJO Y SEGURIDAD SOCIAL

JACOBOPAZBODDEN  
SECRETARÍA DE ESTADO EN LOS DESPACHOS DE  
AGRICULTURA Y GANADERÍA

JOSÉ ANTONIO GALDAMEZ  
SECRETARÍA DE ESTADO EN LOS DESPACHOS DE  
RECURSOS NATURALES, AMBIENTE Y MINAS

CARLOS MANUEL BORJAS CASTEJON  
SECRETARÍA DE ESTADO EN EL DESPACHO DE FINANZAS POR LEY