



Preparatory Notes for Delegates 4th UNWTO Silk Road Task Force Meeting

Radisson Blu Iveria Hotel, Tbilisi, Georgia
7-8 July 2014

The key objectives of this meeting are to strengthen the role of the Silk Road Task Force and to address the priorities and strategies for the Silk Road Action Plan 2014/2015. This gathering of Task Force members from across the Silk Road is designed to provide Member States with the opportunity to give direct input into the Programme and contribute to the achievement of tangible and feasible results. It is intended to be a practical working group that will allow you to make a positive contribution on behalf of your country.

The Silk Road Programme is focussed on three key areas of activity:

- Marketing and Promotion
- Capacity Building and Destination Management
- Travel Facilitation

The Meeting will be organized so that participating Member States can contribute to the generation of ideas and initiatives that will strengthen Silk Road tourism across these three key areas. We would like to devise strategies and plans for how Ministries, destinations and local stakeholders can benefit by implementing collaborative initiatives, which could include:

- Development of concrete initiatives and project ideas, with a particular country or clusters of countries taking the lead
- Innovative campaigns for collaboratively strengthening the Silk Road brand and raising awareness
- Concepts and/or models for community capacity building programmes across the Silk Road
- Development of trans-boundary partnerships
- Approaches to securing funding and human resource capacity for the Silk Road programme

The success of this event is dependent on the input of all involved. We would like all the participants to be prepared to share current activity taking place, best practice examples, and ideas you may already have for collaborative activities. This sharing of experience will help stimulate discussion and generate new ideas for taking the collaborative development of the Silk Road forward.

To make the most out of your participation in the Meeting, we kindly request that you:

- Review the Silk Road Action Plan- the 2014/2015 edition, which will be available online soon; previous editions can be downloaded at <http://silkroad.unwto.org/en/content/silk-road-action-plan>. For full information on the UNWTO Silk Road Programme, visit silkroad.unwto.org
- Have a basic understanding of your destination's connection with the Silk Road and how this could possibly be utilized to promote and develop tourism
- Review the questions listed within the Silk Road Task Force Meeting programme (and enclosed below for easy reference) and be able to contribute constructively to the discussion with examples from your destination

- Prepare/take note of examples of best practice/current activities from your destination that you would like to share with your colleagues from the Silk Road
- Considering that this meeting takes place within the framework of *Routes Silk Road*, there will be a lot of emphasis on aviation, route development and visas. News and updates from your country on any of these issues will be useful.
- Bring examples of how you currently market the Silk Road (if applicable)

Workshop discussion questions (taken from meeting programme):

Please keep in mind that these topics will be covered during the Meeting and that your input will be essential.

Workshop on Focus Area I: Marketing and Promotion

- How can the Silk Road brand present new marketing opportunities for destinations?
- How can Silk Road countries better implement cooperative marketing opportunities with neighbouring countries and destinations?
- What are the key marketing and promotion initiatives that Silk Road Member States would like to see launched in 2014/2015?

Workshop on Focus Area II: Capacity Building and Destination Management

- What are the current priorities for capacity building in destinations along the Silk Road?
- How can National Tourism Administrations collaborate more effectively to foster sustainable tourism development?

Workshop on Focus Area III: Travel Facilitation

- Research shows that Silk Road countries are improving their visa policies, but are they doing enough from a collaborative perspective to open up the borders for travel in the long term?
- How can Silk Road destinations cooperate better to enhance route development in 2014/2015? When will we see low cost carriers connecting the Silk Road?

Important links:

UNWTO Silk Road Programme silkroad.unwto.org

Routes Silk Road: www.routesonline.com/events/171/routes-silk-road-2014/

Georgian National Tourism Administration: gnta.ge/

United Airports of Georgia www.airports.ge/