International Conference on Religious Tourism:
Fostering sustainable socio-economic development in host communities

Bethlehem, State of Palestine, 15-16 June 2015

I. PLACE AND DATE

1. At the invitation of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA) of the State of Palestine, the International Conference on Religious Tourism: Fostering sustainable socio-economic development in host communities will be held in Bethlehem, State of Palestine on 15-16 June 2015.

2. The Conference will be held at:

Convention Palace
Solomon Pools
Bethlehem, State of Palestine
Tel: +970 (2) 2768250
Fax: +970 (2) 2768252
http://www.conventionpalace.com/
II. REPLIES TO INVITATIONS

3. Participants of the International Conference on Religious Tourism are kindly requested to complete the online registration, by 1 June 2015, at the latest, at the following link: http://middle-east.unwto.org/Registration-International-Conference-religious-tourism, indicating, as much as possible, arrival, departure and accommodation details.

III. STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS

4. The Government of the State of Palestine will take the necessary measures to facilitate the arrival, stay and departure of participants invited by the Organization. Throughout their stay, participants will benefit from the privileges and immunities provided for in the Agreement concluded between the Organization and the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of the State of Palestine.

5. The agreement is based on Article 32 of the Statutes of the World Tourism Organization, which reads as follows: "The Organization shall enjoy in the territories of its Member States the privileges and immunities required for the exercise of its functions. Such privileges and immunities may be defined by agreements concluded by the Organization", as well as on Resolution 136(V) of the fifth General Assembly of UNWTO.

6. The Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the specialized agencies of 1947 and its Annex XVIII adopted by the seventeenth General Assembly through resolution 545 (XVII) shall be applicable in respect of the Conference. Participants will enjoy the privileges and immunities granted to delegates at the conferences of specialized agencies of the United Nations, as provided for under Article V of the Convention.

IV. ENTRY FORMALITIES

7. Access to Bethlehem, Palestine, is done through Israel and Jordan. All participants are required to have an Israeli visa. If the place of entry is Jordan, a Jordanian visa must be obtained as well. Participants are therefore requested to contact the diplomatic or consular missions of both countries to obtain their entry visas.

8. All nationalities that require an entry visa, are requested to register online and to contact the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of the State of Palestine (intlconf.registration@travelpalestine.ps), sufficiently in advance. To this end, participants should provide the Palestinian Authorities with the information below:
   - Name, surname and mother’s name
   - Nationality
   - Number and type of passport
   - Place and date of birth
   - Validity of passport (no less than 6 months)
   - Travel information (date, time and flight number)

V. INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT

9. MOTA is currently negotiating with Royal Jordanian the possibility for the airline to become the "official carrier" of the Conference and offering special fares for participants. Further information on this matter will be provided shortly.

VI. RECEPTION AND LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

10. MOTA will organize the reception of participants at the points of entry to Palestine and will facilitate the free transfer of delegates on arrival and on departure between the points of entry, the selected hotels and the venue of the conference.
11. Participants arriving from Queen Alia International airport (Amman) are requested to make their own transfer arrangements to the King Hussein Bridge. Taxis are available at the airport and cost approximately 25 Jordan Dinar, the equivalent of 25 €. The duration of the trip to the King Hussein Bridge is of approximately 45 minutes.

VII. ACCOMMODATION

12. A list of hotels with special rates for participants at the conference are provided below. Delegates are invited to contact directly the hotels for reservations, indicating that they will participate in the International Conference on Religious Tourism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotel</th>
<th>Rates in USD (based on bed and breakfast per person per night)</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Jacir Palace Hotel**** | Single room: 80 USD  
Double room: 105 USD | Address: Jerusalem - Hebron Road  
Bethlehem -West Bank -1167 -Palestine  
Tel: + (972) or (970) (0) 2 2766777  
Email: sales@jacirpalace.ps  
http://www.jacirpalace.ps/ |
| Grand Park Hotel**** | Single room: 70 USD  
Double room: 95 USD | Address: Star Street, Bethlehem.  
Tel: +970 2 2756400  
Fax: +970 2 276 3736  
Email: info@grandpark.com  

VIII. REGISTRATION AND BADGES

13. A registration desk will be open at the Convention Palace on Saturday 13, Sunday 14 and Monday, 15 June 2015, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 to 5 p.m. Badges will be issued at the time of registration. Participants are requested to wear their identification badges in the area reserved for the conference, as well as at all social events.

IX. WORKING LANGUAGES

14. The working languages of the conference are Arabic and English. A simultaneous interpretation service will be provided.

X. SOCIAL PROGRAMME

15. The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities has the pleasure to offer participants an array of optional tours. A description of each tour and a registration form are attached as Annex I.

XI. SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

16. Participants with special dietary requirements (vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, diabetic, halal, hindu, low-sodium, etc.) are kindly requested to inform organizers through the online registration form.
XII. **PRACTICAL INFORMATION**

17. **Local Currency and exchange rates:** the local currency is the ILS. The applicable exchange rate in March 2015 is approximately 4.3 for 1 Euro and approximately 4 ILS for 1 US dollar.

18. **Weather:** Bethlehem enjoys sunny days in June. The average maximum temperature is 35º C and the average low is 21º C.

19. **Official language:** the official language of the State of Palestine is Arabic. English is also used in hotels, banks, transportation services, etc.

20. **Official time:** the official time in the State of Palestine is GMT plus 3 hours.

21. **Electricity:** the electricity in the State of Palestine is 220 Volts.

22. For more information: [http://travelpalestine.ps/](http://travelpalestine.ps/)
Annex I

Social Programme

Registration form

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities is proud to welcoming our distinguished guests to Bethlehem for the International Conference on Religious Tourism: *Fostering sustainable socio-economic development for host communities.*

So as to offer the opportunity to all our visitors to discover Palestine’s multi-faceted culture, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities has the pleasure to offer participants an array of optional tours. Participants can choose the tour/s of their preference by registering online in the conference’s website or by completing and sending this registration form by email to intlconf.registration@travelpalestine.ps, by 1 June 2015.

- [ ] Flavors of Palestine – Saturday, 13 June 2015
- [ ] Spirituality in Palestine – Sunday, 14 June 2015
- [ ] Sacred Palestine – Monday, 15 June 2015
- [ ] Unique Palestine – Tuesday, 16 June 2015
- [ ] The Desert of Palestine – Wednesday, 17 June 2015
- [ ] Traditional Handicrafts of Palestine – Thursday, 18 June 2015

Please note that the tours will be guided in Arabic and English but depending on the number of registered participants and the language groups, we will try to accommodate the guiding languages.

Full Name ____________________________________________________________

Preferred Language ____________________________________________________
Flavours of Palestine

Saturday 13th of June 2015

8:00  Traditional Palestinian Breakfast at Afteem’s Restaurant

9:00  Departure from Bethlehem

10:00  visit of Taybeh or Birzeit village
        (visit of olive oil press)

12:30  lunch in Sebastya

Small Palestinian village with a rich olive oil history. The meal will be a choice of maqloubeh (vegetable and rice traditional dish) or Musakhan (hand-made bread, olive oil, sumac spice, grilled chicken)

14:30  visit to the Samaritans

One of the smallest communities in the world, living on top of Mount Garizim in the Nablus area. A memorable visit to discover the diversity of faiths and communities in Palestine.

15:30  Nablus

Nablus’s Old City hosts some of the oldest food factories of Palestine. Your afternoon stroll in the streets of Nablus will take you inside the candy factory, the spice shops, the soap factories and you will taste the world-famous knafeh dessert.

Back to Bethlehem and free evening
SPIRITUALITY IN PALESTINE

Sunday 14th of June 2015

8:00  Departure from hotel in Bethlehem
8:30  Visit of the church of the Nativity in Bethlehem
10:00 Visit of the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron
12:30 Visit of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock
13:30 Lunch in Jerusalem
14:30 Visit of the Holy Sepulcher
15:30 Visit of the Afghani and Naqshabandi Zawiyas in Jerusalem
17:00 Return to Bethlehem

Free evening
10:00 Departure from Convention Palace
10:30 Visit of the church of the Nativity in Bethlehem
13:00 Visit of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock
14:30 Visit of the Holy Sepulchre
16:00 return to hotel in Bethlehem
Unique Palestine

Tuesday 16th of June 2015

9:00 Departure from hotels in Bethlehem

9:30 Visit of Battir and short hike in the natural and historical landscapes of Palestine – World Heritage Site

12:30 Lunch in Battir

14:00 Cultural Visit of Hebron / Old City, Ibrahimi Mosque

17:00 return to hotel in Bethlehem

Closing Ceremony Evening
The Desert of Palestine

Wednesday 17th of June 2015

9:00 Departure from hotel in Bethlehem

9:30 Visit the Arab al-Jahaleen (hear about the Bedouin culture, enjoy the beauty of the desert)

11:00 Visit of the Nabi Musa site

12:30 Visit Saint George - Wadi Qelt

13:30 Coffee break at Bedouin site

14:00 Lunch in Jericho

15:00 Private visit of Hisham Palace

16:30 Return to hotel in Bethlehem

Free evening
Traditional Handicrafts of Palestine
Thursday 18th of June 2015

9:00 Departure from hotel in Bethlehem
9:30 to 11:30 visit of Hebron's ceramics and glass factories
12:00 visit of Bethlehem's olive wood carvers
13:30 lunch in Bethlehem
15:00 visit to Jericho's artisans (mosaic, honey, wool)
18:00 return to hotel in Bethlehem

Free evening