

DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE WTO COMMISSION  
FOR EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC AT ITS FORTY-THIRD MEETING

Dakar, Senegal, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2005

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## AGENDA

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Nomination of the candidates for the various General Assembly offices:
  - **one** Vice-President of the General Assembly
  - **one** Member of the Credentials Committee
  - **one** Officer of the Assembly Committee of the Whole
3. Nomination of candidates to represent the region on the subsidiary bodies of the Executive Council :
  - **one** Member and **one** Alternate to the Programme Committee
  - **one** Member\* of the Sub-Committee for the review of application for affiliate membership
4. Election of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairmen of the Commission
5. Regional activities
6. Brief presentation on technical cooperation activities in the region
7. Other items
8. Place and date of the forty-fifth meeting of the Commission

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\* This should be a Member of the Executive Council

## PREAMBLE

1. The forty-third meeting of the WTO Commission for East Asia and the Pacific was held in Dakar, Senegal on 26 November 2005, within the framework of the 16<sup>th</sup> session of the WTO General Assembly which was hosted by the Government of Senegal.

2. The meeting was chaired by **Cambodia** and upon calling the meeting to order, the Chairman gave his opening remarks. He then gave the floor to the Secretary-General, Mr. Francesco Frangialli who informed the Commission of the major themes of the General Assembly, viz. how to respond to crisis; what tourism can do to alleviate poverty; and the focus of ST-EP initiative on least developed countries. The floor was then given to the Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific who welcomed the delegates present at the Meeting as well as representatives from the WTO Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific in Osaka. He also gave a warm welcome to the representatives of Timor-Leste who were attending the Commission meeting for the first time after their country adopted the statutes of the World Tourism Organization. The same was extended to Papua New Guinea which would become another new member of the Commission during the General Assembly.

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## DECISIONS

### ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Agenda item 1 (document CAP/43/Prov.Ag.)

3. After reviewing the provisional agenda and upon the proposal of the Secretariat, the Commission agreed to add a new agenda item (7) entitled "Other items".

4. The provisional agenda was **adopted** with these modifications and the final agenda of the meeting is located on page 2.

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### NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS TO STATUTORY ORGANS AND THEIR SUBSIDIARY ORGANS

Agenda items 2 to 4 (documents A/16/Com.Reg and A/16/Com.Reg. Add.1)

5. After reviewing the working documents submitted by the Secretary-General on the nominations and elections to statutory organs and their subsidiary bodies and after being apprised of the members' expression of interest to various organs, the Commission decided as follows:

#### ***NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES FOR THE VARIOUS GENERAL ASSEMBLY OFFICES***

6. The Commission decided to nominate the following Members as its candidates to the offices of the 16<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly:

- Vice-President of the Assembly: **Cambodia**

- Member of the Credentials Committee: Australia
- Officer of the Assembly Committee of the Whole: Thailand

***NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES TO THE SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL***

- Member to the Programme Committee (CTPC): Thailand (Mr. Pradech Phayakvichien)  
Alternate member to the Programme Committee (CTPC): Indonesia (Mr. Sapta Nirwandar)
- Member of the Sub-Committee for the Review of application of Affiliate Membership: Philippines

***ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN OF THE REGION***

7. The Regional Representative informed the Commission that although Indonesia and China presented their candidature to the Secretariat to chair the Commission for the period 2005-2007, Indonesia had withdrawn its candidature before the meeting. Indonesia confirmed this by informing the Commission that it supported China's wish to take up the position of Chairman of the Commission for 2005-2007. China thanked Indonesia and the Commission as a whole endorsed China's chairmanship for the period mentioned. And given that Thailand had previously presented its candidature to the Secretariat as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman, which had been accepted by participants, the Commission seconded the Regional Representative's proposal that Indonesia take up the position of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairman of the Commission. The Commission thus accepted **China's** election as Chairman of the Commission with **Thailand** and **Indonesia** serving as Vice-Chairmen for a term of office of two years commencing from the 16<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly. The Commission thanked Cambodia for its excellent performance as Chairman of East Asia and the Pacific during its term.

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**REGIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Agenda item 5 (document CAP/43/5)

8. The WTO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific presented to the Commission the report on the activities carried out in the region over a period of two years since the meeting of the Commission held in Beijing, China in October 2003, during the 15<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. He informed the Commission that since the World Tourism Organization has modified the structure of the Secretariat's work divisions by devoting one department exclusively to technical cooperation activities, the Regional Representations of the various sub-regions of WTO, which traditionally were in charge of technical cooperation activities in each region have consequently seen the nature of their work modified. Their focus is now on the implementation of the various components of WTO's

programme of work. He informed the Commission that the philosophy of Asia's representation at WTO is to keep pace with the fast growing rate of tourism in Asia, which is changing the tourism scenario in the region and in the world as a whole. Also, the region's representation has become selective in its work with the aim to fit into the national agendas of the member countries' tourism expectations and needs.

9. In 2004, following WTO's general programme of work, the Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific structured its activities to reflect the priority areas of action of the Organization, focusing on the advocacy of sustainability principles, poverty reduction activities through tourism, capacity-building of NTA officials, the provision of policy advice and support to national tourism administrations and assistance to less-known tourism destinations to build an overall positive image in order to attract more tourists. The Commission was also informed that given that the Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific was assigned the task of supervising and implementing the Phuket Action Plan on behalf of the WTO Executive Task Force, the Asia Representation devoted the most part of 2005 to activities directly linked to the speedy recovery of the tourist destinations affected by the tsunami in **Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Maldives** – the countries which were the hardest hit. Great efforts have been made particularly, in areas of effective communication and marketing, awareness-raising of recovery activities in the affected destinations and community relief with particular reference to SMEs in the tourism sector. Activities of longer term duration which have also been carried out related to crisis management and early warning systems as well as green belt re-development.

10. The Regional Representative also briefed the Commission on some activities planned for the immediate future including the next commission meeting to be held alongside the meeting of the Commission for South Asia in Macao, China. This was a proposal from the Secretariat to the commission during its 42<sup>nd</sup> Meeting in Shiga, Japan, last June. The same proposal had been presented and accepted by the Commission for South Asia. Delegates were also invited to participate in the forthcoming International Conference on Tourism and Handicrafts, scheduled to be held in Iran in May 2006; Sustainable Tourism Indicators Workshop planned for the Philippines; and the International Conference on Cultural Tourism and Local Communities, which will take place in Yogyakarta, Indonesia in February 2006.

11. About the meeting of the two commissions to be held in Macao, the Regional Representative added that the Secretariat is planning to link it with a ministerial debate on Asia's tourism policy. Within the meetings' framework, the Organization is also considering nominating the famous film star Jackie Chan as Asia's Tourism Ambassador. The Republic of Korea then followed with the suggestion that in addition to cooperation with educational institutions, WTO should also reinforce the links between sports and tourism, and consider other famous personalities such as top sportsmen as Asia's tourism ambassadors. Korea added that risk management should be given top priority since both BBC and CNN are drawing a very gloomy picture about the bird flu in Asia. Korea also informed the Commission that the Great Mekong region has started organising a bicycle tour which is making some contribution to the local economy. The cyclists buy water and other basic necessities from the local population residing in areas through which the tour passes.

12. Indonesia congratulated WTO on its efforts in the tsunami recovery process and proposed to the Commission that WTO commemorate 26 December in remembrance of all the innocent victims of the tsunami. This is seconded by Thailand and the rest of the Commission.

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## TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION

### Agenda item 7

10. The Chief of Technical Cooperation gave a brief overview of WTO's missions and technical projects or activities in the region. WTO's technical cooperation service provides technical assistance to all its member States and territories on a wide range of subjects. This assistance takes the form of sectoral support missions and technical projects which the Organization undertakes upon the request of governments of its members. The former is of shorter duration and carried out with the aim to identify and assess specific tourism-related technical needs of the countries that have requested them. Technical cooperation projects have been one of WTO's main activities in its general programme of work. It is normally preceded by technical assistance missions which identify tourism development needs and formulate project proposals. These proposals become the basis of the Organization's assistance to governments which is provided through the dissemination of technical know-how for the formulation of tourism policies and strategies in planning, development, marketing, promotion, education and training. Other areas WTO's technical projects cover include *inter alia*, identification and assessment of potential tourism development areas, establishment of coherent framework for long-term sustainable development, preparation of national and regional tourism development master plans, strengthening of institutional capacities of NTAs, Tourism legislation, hotel classification systems and information technology. WTO projects are implemented through funds from various donor agencies such as UNDP, the World Bank, the European Union and SNV (Dutch Development Agency). Funding can also be provided by central or provincial governments. WTO is currently negotiating with the Asian Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the European Union and other donor countries in order to undertake joint tourism programmes and projects.

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## OTHER ITEMS

### Agenda item 8

11. The Commission was informed that the General Assembly would approve the statutes of the ST-EP (Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty) Foundation. The governing board of this Foundation will be composed of six representatives from the six regional commissions of WTO. There was thus the need to nominate a representative from East Asia and the Pacific to serve on the ST-EP Foundation's Board of Governors. **Japan** was nominated by the Commission for this position.

12. The Chairman accepted **Malaysia's** request to seek the support of the Commission for its candidature in the bidding to host the 17<sup>th</sup> WTO General Assembly. The Regional Representative informed the Commission that during the Commission for South Asia the previous day, they had unanimously endorsed Malaysia's candidature. He also said the Czech Republic had withdrawn its candidature. The Commission was unanimous in its backing for Malaysia.

13. Japan took the floor to inform the Commission that it is currently undertaking a campaign to change its image as a very expensive tourist destination with the slogan "Visit Japan Campaign". This is having good results through the growth they are seeing in international tourist arrivals year in year out.

14. Timor-Leste thanked the Commission for the warm welcome it had received and for the invitation to join the meeting even before the ratification of its membership.

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**PLACE AND DATE OF THE  
FORTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE COMMISSION**

Agenda item 8

12. The Regional Representative recalled that on the occasion of its 42<sup>nd</sup> session in Shiga, Japan, the Commission had agreed to the proposal to hold both the Commission meeting for South Asia and Commission meeting for East Asia and the Pacific in the same venue of Macao, China in 2006. Therefore the 44<sup>th</sup> Meeting will be held in Macao, China, along with the 48<sup>th</sup> Meeting of South Asia. On the issue of the venue for the 45<sup>th</sup> Meeting, the Chairman informed delegates that the decision would be taken in Macao. The Commission took note of the interest expressed once again by Japan in hosting the 45<sup>th</sup> Meeting in Kobe, Japan.

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