

**DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE WTO COMMISSION
FOR SOUTH ASIA AT ITS FORTY-SEVENTH MEETING**

Dakar, Senegal, 25th 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 Executive Council and its subsidiary bodies:
 - **one** candidate to 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-ninth meeting of the Commission

* This should be a Member of the Executive Council

PREAMBLE

1. The forty-seventh meeting of the WTO Commission for South Asia was held in Dakar, Senegal, on 25 November 2005 within the framework of the 16th session of the WTO General Assembly, which was hosted by the Government of Senegal.

2. The meeting was chaired by **India** and upon calling the meeting to order, the Chairman gave an overview of the tourism situation in South Asia. 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. He also informed the Commission that the floating seat on the Executive Council would be assigned to South Asia. 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.

DECISIONS

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Agenda item 1 (document CSA/47/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.

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 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

- Member of the Executive Council: **India**
- The floating seat on the Executive Council was allotted to **Iran**

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 sixteenth session of the General Assembly:

- Vice-President of the Assembly: Pakistan
- Member of the Credentials Committee: Maldives
- Officer of the Assembly Committee of the Whole: Sri Lanka

NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES TO THE SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

- Member to the Programme Committee (CTPC): India (Mr. Amitabh Kant)
Alternate member to the Programme Committee (CTPC): Sri Lanka (Mr. Seenivasagam Kalaiselvam)
- Member of the Sub-Committee for the Review of application of Affiliate Membership: Iran

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN OF THE REGION

7. After deliberations over which countries (**Pakistan, Iran or India**) would represent the region on the Executive Council, the Commission proposed that Pakistan take up the chairmanship of the Commission in the spirit of unity in order to allow India and Iran to take the seat and the floating seat of the Executive Council respectively. Pakistan, while agreeing with this proposal, sought the support of the Commission for its candidature for the Executive Council during the next elections. The Commission recalled the decision taken at its 41st meeting held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, in September 2001, where it decided that the chairmanship of the Commission be on a rotational basis, using the alphabetic order of the countries as the basis for rotation. According to this decision, the current chairmanship being India would be followed by Iran. However, since Iran would be taking the membership of the Executive Council, a special decision was taken by the Commission to elect Pakistan as the Chairman of the Commission. The Commission further agreed to India's suggestion that the rotational system of electing the Chairman for the Commission be continued at the next election time. The Commission thus elected **Pakistan** as its Chairman with **Bangladesh** and **Bhutan** serving as Vice-Chairmen for a two-year term commencing from the 16th session of the General Assembly.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Agenda item 5 (document CSA/47/5)

8. The 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 15th 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.

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 through tourism, capacity-building of NTA officials and the provision of policy advice and support to national tourism administrations. 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 relates 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 along with the meeting of the Commission for East Asia and the Pacific in Macao, China in 2006. This was a proposal from the Secretariat to the commission during the 46th Meeting of the Commission in Lahore, Pakistan, last April. The same proposal had been presented and accepted by the Commission for East Asia and the Pacific. Delegates were also invited to participate in the forthcoming International Conference on Tourism and Handicrafts, to be held in Iran next May; 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.

TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION

Agenda item 6 (document CSA/47/6)

11. 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 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 in order to 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.

OTHER ITEMS

Agenda item 7

12. 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 South Asia to serve on the ST-EP Foundation's Board of Governors. **India** was nominated by the Commission for this position.

13. The Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific informed the Commission that under item 21 of the Agenda of the General Assembly, the Commission was required to select a country as host of World Tourism Day 2007. **Sri Lanka** had previously presented its candidature to the Secretariat in this respect. The Commission gave its full support to Sri Lanka as host of World Tourism Day 2007.

14. The Chairman accepted **Malaysia's** request to seek the support of the Commission for its candidature in the bidding to host the 17th WTO General Assembly. The Commission was unanimous in backing Malaysia for this position.

PLACE AND DATE OF THE FORTY-NINTH MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

Agenda item 8

15. The Regional Representative informed the Commission that following the decision taken during the 46th Meeting in Pakistan to hold its next meeting together with the Commission for East Asia and the Pacific. In this respect, the 48th meeting of the Commission will be held alongside the 44th Meeting of the Commission for East Asia and the Pacific in Macao, China. (The exact dates will be determined later). The place and date of the 49th Meeting of the Commission for South Asia will be decided during the 48th Meeting.

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