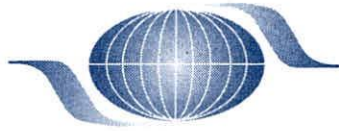


WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION

**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**



A/17/26
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**REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ENTRUSTED TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY
OF A LEGAL INSTRUMENT TO DEAL WITH THE FACILITATION OF TOURIST
TRAVEL**

Note by the Secretary-General

In this document, the Secretary-General presents to the General Assembly a summary of the conclusions of the first meeting of the Working Group, which was held at Headquarters on 25 April 2007.

**REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ENTRUSTED TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY
OF A LEGAL INSTRUMENT TO DEAL WITH THE FACILITATION OF TOURIST
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SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS OF THE FIRST MEETING

1. By its decision CE/DEC/3(LXXIX), the Executive Council set up a Working Group to examine the feasibility of an appropriate legal instrument to deal with the facilitation of tourist travel.
2. The Secretariat received communications from 64 Full Members and 2 Associate Members, which expressed their interest in the matter. Four States informed the Secretariat that they wished to form part of the Working Group, but were unable to participate in the proceedings of the first meeting. A total of 36 Member States and one Associate Member actually participated in the first meeting held at Headquarters on 25 April 2007.
3. During the consideration of the second agenda item (Designation of the Chairman of the Working Group), two States were proposed to take on this function: Algeria and Croatia. The participants decided by consensus to establish a co-chairmanship of the Working Group, shared between these two States. It should be noted that the two co-Chairs of the Working Group will be called upon to carry out this function over the long term, for the meetings to come.
4. On conclusion of its first meeting, held at UNWTO Headquarters on 25 April 2007, the Working Group adopted the following conclusions, which constitute its "road map" until its next meeting.

A. MEMBERSHIP OF THE GROUP

5. The participants decided that membership of the Group should remain open while recommending continuity of participation by the interested States. The Secretariat will therefore be contacting both the States Members of the Organization represented at the first meeting of the Working Group to ask them to confirm their interest and those member States that did not attend the first meeting to invite them to make known their position about their possible future participation. The international universal and regional organizations concerned will also be invited to join the Group's proceedings as observers.

B. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE GROUP

6. The Working Group asked the Secretariat to draw up a list of all existing international instruments, treaties, decisions or recommendations of international organizations, including regional instruments, adopted by UNWTO and other institutions, that may have an influence on tourism facilitation and to prepare a summary presentation which could serve as the basis for the work of the Group at its next meeting.

7. In the light of this information, the Working Group intends to assess the need for a legal instrument on the facilitation of tourist travel and to determine the exact nature such an instrument should have in order to meet that possible need most effectively.

8. Subject to later clarification on this point, the Working Group is considering asking the Secretariat, after its next meeting, to send to States Members and non-members of the Organization and to interested international organizations a questionnaire on:

- the state of legislation applicable to tourist travel;
- the problems that States face in implementing that legislation; and
- more generally, the difficulties they encounter as receiving or generating States in the area of tourist travel; and
- the solutions recommended.

If deemed necessary, this questionnaire would supplement the information gathered by the Secretariat and the data already available in UNWTO's Lextour database.

C. DATE OF THE SECOND MEETING

9. The Working Group will meet at Cartagena, Colombia on the afternoon of 27 November 2007 during the seventeenth session of the UNWTO General Assembly.

D. FOLLOW-UP ACTION BY THE SECRETARIAT

10. In accordance with the decisions taken at the first meeting, the Secretariat contacted the States that took part in that meeting to ask them to confirm their interest, as well as the States that did not attend to invite them to state their position about their possible future participation. The Secretariat should be able to submit a final list of interested States to the second meeting of the Working Group so that a decision may be reached on its composition.

11. A letter was also sent to a number of intergovernmental organizations asking them to forward to the Secretariat any comments on this subject that they felt would be useful and inviting them to participate as observers in the future proceedings of the Working Group.

12. As requested by the Group at its first meeting, the Secretariat is at present engaged in identifying all existing international instruments, treaties, decisions or recommendations of international organizations, including any regional instruments, adopted by UNWTO and other institutions, that may be linked to the subject of facilitation. The findings of this survey will be presented in an addendum to this document and serve as the basis for the work of the Group at its second meeting.

