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Report of the Secretary-General

Part I: Programme of Work

(c) UNWTO in the United Nations system

I. Introduction

1. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has continued forging strong links with the United Nations (UN) and its relevant entities and institutions, including but not limited to the UN General Assembly (UNGA) and its subsidiary bodies, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and various inter-agency mechanisms and networks. The aim is to ensure that tourism is recognized at the international level as a multidisciplinary sector, contributing to economic growth, sustainable development and poverty reduction. The present report provides a summary of the main activities with regard to the UN system carried out since the last GA report of this kind (A/20/5(I)(d)).

2. As of 1 March 2015, the UNWTO Secretariat has decided to assign a Liaison Officer in Geneva, Switzerland, with the aim of further enhancing its UN-related coordination and cooperation efforts and strengthening the Organization's advocacy and resource mobilization capacities. The activities presented in the current report include the various undertakings and substantive contributions of and close collaboration with the Secretariat's New York Liaison Office (NYLO) as well as with its Geneva representation.

II. Activities within the UN system

A. Participation in UN system substantive issues and activities:

3. UNWTO has continued to monitor and participate actively in the numerous processes of the forthcoming sustainable development goals (SDGs) which will be presented at the UN Summit on the Post-2015 Agenda to be held in September 2015. Following the work of the UNGA-established Open Working Group (OWG) on sustainable development goals led by Member States (MS), UNWTO has been contributing to a number of fora, including task teams, intergovernmental negotiations (IGNs), UN Statistical Commission, and Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the SDGs – all of which aim to address the SDGs from different approaches and expertise. Of the 17 proposed SDGs and over 160 targets featured in the Outcome Document of the UN post-2015 Summit, now in its final draft and to be



submitted for approval by the UNGA, tourism features as targets of three goals in addition to a reference in the preamble, as indicated below:

Preamble, paragraph 32: “...We are also determined to promote **sustainable tourism**, tackle water scarcity and water pollution, to strengthen cooperation on desertification, dust storms, land degradation and drought and to promote resilience and disaster risk reduction....”

Goal 8: *Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all*

➤ **target 8.9** – by 2030, devise and implement policies to promote **sustainable tourism** that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products;

Goal 12: *Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns*

➤ **target 12.b** – develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for **sustainable tourism** that creates jobs, promotes local culture and products; and

Goal 14: *Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development*

➤ **target 14.7** – by 2030 increase the economic benefits to SIDS and LDCs from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and **tourism**.

4. The Organization has paid additional attention to the preparations of two major UN conferences, namely:

(a) The FfD 3 Conference, held in Addis Ababa in mid-July 2015, was a key moment in the SDG process, whose overall outcome is a financing framework for the implementation of the SDGs. The Conference Outcome document contains in paragraph 129 a specific reference to sustainable tourism. Furthermore, in paragraph 90 of the Section on “International Trade”, the inclusion of strong language supporting trade in services, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) is the result of coordinated efforts of the UNWTO Secretariat and its Liaison representations.

(b) Habitat III (Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development) to be held in Quito in October 2016. In addition to contributing to the report on “Urbanization and Sustainable Development – Towards a New United Nations Urban Agenda”, the Secretariat managed to include tourism in an Issue Paper on “Local Economy” during the “Writing Workshop” organized by the Habitat III Secretariat.

5. In the lead up to the annual UN Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – 21st Session (COP21- Paris, France, 30 November – 11 December 2015), UNWTO has joined the discussions of an ad hoc HLCP working group to include an activity within the “One UN Exhibit” on the theme of “Energy and Industry” at COP21. The forthcoming Conference aims to achieve a new international agreement on the climate, applicable to all countries, with the objective of keeping global warming below 2°C.

6. As one of the key outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference, the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP) was established. Among the current six

programmes defined under the 10YFP initiative is the 10YFP Sustainable Tourism Programme (10YFP STP), which stems from the Marrakech Process and builds on the experience from the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism (GPST). In November 2014, during the World Travel Market, the 10YFP STP was launched presenting UNWTO as the Lead actor with the Governments of France, Morocco and the Republic of Korea as Co-Leads. Its governance structure is composed of a Multi-stakeholder Advisory Committee (MAC) with 23 members, which includes UNDP and UNEP, and 65 partners. In May 2015, UNWTO attended the First Global Meeting of all six 10YFP Programmes, which proved successful in identifying synergies across programmes and activities. The 10YFP STP provides an optimal framework to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production patterns in the tourism sector.

7. At the sixty-eighth (68th) and sixty-ninth (69th) sessions of the UNGA, four resolutions were adopted that are of relevance to UNWTO and the tourism sector, as follows:

(a) Resolution 69/233 on the “Promotion of Sustainable Tourism, including Ecotourism, for Poverty Eradication and Environment Protection” calls for concerted efforts to support tourism as a tool in poverty eradication and invites Governments to join the framework of the Global Observatory of Sustainable Tourism of the Organization. The resolution requests a further report to be submitted on its implementation to the seventy-first (71st) UNGA session in 2016. ([A/RES/69/233](#))

(b) Resolution 69/15 on “The Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (also ‘Samoa Pathway’)”. Paragraph 4 of the resolution includes “sustainable tourism”. UNWTO played an important role and significantly contributed to several events at the SIDS Conference (September 2014, Apia, Samoa), including the moderation of the CEB high-level side event on “The UN system partnering for the people of SIDS” and participation at the Private Sector Partnerships Forum. ([A/RES/69/15](#))

(c) Resolution 69/137 on the Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024. This resolution outlines the role of tourism as an important economic tool for these countries. ([A/RES/69/137](#))

(d) Resolution 68/207 on “Sustainable Tourism and Sustainable Development in Central America” expresses appreciation of the efforts of the Governments of Central America in the development of sustainable tourism and calls upon relevant support for these endeavours from the international community and the respective Governments. A report on this resolution is being prepared to be submitted to the 70th session of the UNGA. ([A/RES/68/207](#))

8. In order to support the global efforts to contain the Ebola virus disease (EVD) and provide a coordinated international response for the tourism sector, the heads of the UNWTO, the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Airports Council International (ACI), International Air Transport Association (IATA), and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) activated a Travel and Transport Task Force to monitor the situation and provide timely information to the sector as well as to travellers. UNWTO continues monitoring the Ebola situation through meetings of the International Health Regulation Emergency Committee (IHR) on Ebola.

9. As a result of a letter sent from UNWTO’s Secretary-General to WHO’s Director-General expressing the concerns of several tourism stakeholders on the naming of communicable diseases after specific geographic locations, UNWTO has received notification from WHO that, with other international organizations, it has developed a set of “Best Practices for the Naming of New Human Infectious

Diseases”. Of particular interest, the WHO Best Practices clearly state that disease names should not include references to geographic locations.

10. In the framework of the UN Steering Committee on Tourism for Development (SCTD) that was established under the aegis of the UNWTO in 2010 and comprises of eight other UN agencies¹, the following events were organized: (a) a Focus Session on “Tourism as an Engine for Growth and Development”, with Mexico and South Africa, and (b) an inter-agency meeting jointly organized with the Global Partnership on Sustainable Tourism (GPST), hosted by UNESCO, to discuss options for a coordinated approach for higher support to sustainable tourism in international aid flows.

11. UNWTO has further strengthened its cooperation with some other UN agencies and organizations, including but not limited to the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), as well as other relevant multilateral and regional organizations for promoting tourism security. In this regard, the Organization has also joined the CTITF's Working Group on Protection of Critical Infrastructure, Vulnerable Targets, Internet and Tourism Security in 2014. Among the events, hosted by CTITF, UNWTO's Secretary-General addressed the UNGA (June 2014) on UNWTO's views and work in the area of travel security – quite unprecedented as it was the first time ever that the head of a specialized agency was given this privilege.

12. At the working session on “Towards a Resilient Tourism Sector” which took place in Sendai, Japan, on the occasion of the 3rd UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR), March 2015, UNWTO presented a paper on the global and regional dimension of integration between disaster risk and emergency management and tourism.

13. Following the request of the UNWTO Executive Council (CE/DEC/6(C)), UNWTO started, in collaboration with the UN Statistics Division, the definition of a long-term project to develop standards-based measurement of sustainability issues of tourism, particularly: (1) Developing indicators for global monitoring; (2) Extending the National System of Tourism Statistics to consider the environment; and (3) Drawing on sub-national measurement to advance an understanding of tourism in relation to “sustainability” in broader sense.

14. The UN Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) organized an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on “Sustainable Tourism: Ecotourism, Poverty Reduction and Environmental Protection” in 2013 in cooperation with the Government of Morocco, UNEP and UNWTO. An outcome of this EGM was a recommendation, acknowledged by the Executive Council, for UNWTO to take the lead with Member States to secure the year 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.

15. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and UNESCO have joined forces with UNWTO to promote a global campaign urging travellers to support the fight against a number of forms of trafficking. More information available in the UNWTO's Executive Council report CE/98/3(I)(e).

16. A presentation of the “International Handbook on Tourism and Peace” was organized by the Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations and UNWTO in June 2014 in a side event of the 68th UN General Assembly. The Handbook was produced in the framework of a joint initiative carried out between 2012 and 2014 by UNWTO and the University of Klagenfurt, Austria on tourism and peace.

¹ International Labour Organization (ILO), International Trade Centre (ITC), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO),

B. Participating in UN meetings:

17. UNWTO was represented at the highest level at the following key events:

- (a) Special Thematic Debate of the UN General Assembly on “Culture and sustainable development in the post-2015 development agenda”.
- (b) Leadership Forum on Measuring for Impact: Convening Thought Leaders in Tourism, organized by the World Bank Group’s Trade & Competitiveness Global Practice, which provided an ongoing opportunity for leading tourism impact.
- (c) Meeting of the Chief Statisticians of the UN system, as well as the sessions of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA) especially to discuss the “data revolution” (or “big data”) and the monitoring of the SDGs.
- (d) Aviation Data Analysis Panel (ADAP) of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to underline cooperation between UNWTO and ICAO in the area of statistics.
- (e) 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians of the ILO that focused on green jobs, decent jobs, informal employment and informal sector, MDG indicators and the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

C. Participation in the Chief Executives Board (CEB) and its subsidiary structure working groups:

18. UNWTO regularly participates in the coordination mechanism established by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), supported by its three subsidiary pillars: the High Level Committee on Programme (HLCP), the High Level Committee on Management (HLCM) and United Nations Development Group (UNDG), all working closely with a number of major networks and working groups.

C1. CEB, HLCP, HLCM and UNDG:

19. In the margins of the 2nd Regular Session of the CEB in November 2013, the heads of agency of UNWTO and UNESCO signed a renewed cooperation agreement that reaffirms how tourism can play a significant role in the preservation, conservation and promotion of cultural and natural assets.

20. UNWTO attended all four sessions of the HLCP and HLCM during the period 2013-15. Within the mandate of the HLCP, among whose responsibilities is fostering policy coherence and programme coordination, UNWTO has either monitored and/or been engaged in several initiatives. Such initiatives include, but are not limited to, urbanization and sustainable development – particularly linked to the “New Urban Agenda” and Habitat III; inequalities, human rights and the post-2015 development agenda; the “Data Revolution” and “Big Data”; Youth and Gender issues; and the UN’s ongoing initiatives on UN-Water, UN-Energy and UN-Oceans. HLCP also reviewed during this period the UN system-wide implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

21. The HLCP sessions also held discussions on setting the UN response to the Ebola crises, while also reviewing several initiatives aimed at increasing the resilience of the UN as a system having to respond to emergencies, and to improve the UN by making its mechanisms “fit-for-purpose”.

22. Under the UNDG and HLCM pillars of the CEB, UNWTO also monitors closely the development of UNDP’s Resident Coordinator system and its implications for participating agencies, enhancements of physical security and cyber security within the UN, and reaching climate neutrality of UN bodies by 2020, among the main topics.

C2. Subsidiary networks of HLCM:

23. UNWTO contributed to and benefitted from the following HLCM networks: Finance and Budget (e.g., IPSAS compliance and implementation, cost control), Legal Advisers of the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations (e.g., protection of the privileges and immunities, non-staff contracts, cooperation with the EU), UN Human Resources (e.g., mandatory age for separation for staff, ICSC Compensation Review), Inter-Agency Security Management (e.g., procedures for Agencies' security), UN Inter-Agency Travel (e.g., joint airline negotiations, security and safety) and Information and Communications Technology (e.g., UN system to become "fit for purpose", "Design Thinking" approach).

III. Actions to be taken by the General Assembly

24. The General Assembly is invited:

(a) To welcome the explicit mentioning of sustainable tourism in three out of the seventeen proposed SDGs, and to request the Secretariat to undertake relevant action with regards to the delivery on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals;

(b) To further acknowledge and reaffirm its support to the ongoing work of the Organization within the 10YFP and its leading role in the Sustainable Tourism Programme, and to express its appreciation for the active participation and support of France, Morocco and the Republic of Korea in this process;

(c) To support the efforts of the Secretariat to achieve the adoption of the UN General Assembly resolution on proclaiming 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development;

(d) To encourage the Secretariat to remain active in the preparatory work and follow-up decisions of the Paris Climate Conference (COP21) and their implications for and responsibilities by the Member States;

(e) To reaffirm its support to the Secretariat in continuing its contribution to the UN system response to the Ebola virus and similar global risks, including those related to tourism security; and

(f) To recognize the importance of the benefits and further encourage the joint work and collaboration within the UN system, in particular through the UN Steering Committee on Tourism for Development (SCTD) and the participation in relevant system-wide coordination mechanisms, notably for mainstreaming tourism in the global development agenda as well as promoting complementarities and synergies between programmes, activities and outputs of the UNWTO with those of the other UN system entities.