



**CAP/CSA/29/4\_Report of Sec. Gen.**

**UNWTO COMMISSION FOR EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC  
UNWTO COMMISSION FOR SOUTH ASIA  
*Twenty-ninth Joint Meeting*  
Chittagong, Bangladesh  
17 May 2017**

**Item 4 of the provisional agenda**

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

**Note by the Secretary-General**

In this document, the Secretary-General presents to the Joint Meeting of the two Commissions for Asia and the Pacific his review of major tourism trends for 2016-2017, UNWTO's management vision and priorities as well as the administrative and financial matters of the Organization.

## Report of the Secretary-General

### Introduction

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1. The present report to the 29<sup>th</sup> Joint Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for East Asia and the Pacific and the UNWTO Commission for South Asia addresses the following subjects:
  - A. International Tourism in 2016 and 2017;
  - B. Priorities and Management Vision;
  - C. Mainstreaming Tourism in the Global Agenda;
  - D. Administrative and Financial Matters

### A. International Tourism in 2016 and 2017

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2. Demand for international tourism remained robust in 2016 despite challenges. International tourist arrivals grew by 3.9% to reach a total of 1,235 million, according to the April issue of the *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer*. Some 46 million more tourists travelled internationally last year compared to 2015.
3. 2016 was the seventh consecutive year of sustained growth following the 2009 global economic and financial crisis. A comparable sequence of uninterrupted solid growth has not been recorded since the 1960s.
4. By region, Asia and the Pacific (+9%) led growth, fuelled by strong demand from both intra- and interregional source markets. Africa (+8%) enjoyed a strong rebound after two weaker years. In the Americas (+4%) the positive momentum continued. Europe (+2%) showed rather mixed results, with double-digit growth in some destinations offset by decreases in others. Demand in the Middle East (-4%) was also uneven, with positive results in some destinations, but declines in others.
5. **Asia and the Pacific** recorded 25 million more international tourist arrivals in 2016 reaching a total of 309 million. Growth was strong in all four sub-regions, with Oceania receiving 10% more arrivals, South and North Asia both recording +9% and South-East Asia +8%.
6. **International tourism receipts** are estimated to have grown at a similar pace in this period (complete 2016 receipts results will be reported at the end of May).
7. **As for outbound tourism as measured by international tourism expenditure**, available data for 2016 indicates a positive performance in most of the ten leading source markets in the world: China (+12%), USA (+8%), Germany (+5%), UK (+14%), France (+7%) the Republic of Korea and Australia +8% each.
8. Based on current trends, the outlook of the UNWTO Panel of Experts and economic prospects, **UNWTO projects international tourist arrivals worldwide will grow at a rate of 3% to 4% in 2017.**
9. While Europe is expected to grow at 2% to 3%, **Asia and the Pacific and Africa will both grow at 5% to 6%**; the Americas at 4% to 5% and the Middle East at 2% to 5%, given the higher volatility in the region.

## B. Priorities and Management Vision

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10. The management priorities for 2016-2017 as approved by the 103rd session of the Executive Council are as follows:

- (a) **Promoting safe and seamless travel:** Building resilience within the sector requires a full integration of tourism systems within the national and local disaster risk and emergency management structure. It further requires this responsibility to be shared amongst all relevant stakeholders at the local, national and international levels. Simultaneously, current security challenges should not lead to a reverse of the recent advances registered in terms of travel facilitation worldwide, as it is proven that travel facilitation enhances tourism's capacity to create economic growth and jobs. On the contrary, improving security and enabling seamless travel can and should be common objectives. In this regard, UNWTO has continued its advocacy efforts in this area while providing technical assistance and capacity building for Member States. The following events have focused on this theme:
- (1) The 2016 UNWTO & WTM Ministers' Summit on 'Tourism and Security: Promoting Safe and Seamless Travel' (World Travel Market, London, UK, 9 November 2016);
  - (2) The UNWTO/UNWTO.Themis Foundation Regional Executive Training on Crisis Communications for Africa (Khartoum, Sudan, 14-18 November 2016);
  - (3) The UNWTO/European Travel Commission High Level Crisis Communication Seminar (UNWTO Headquarters, Madrid, Spain, 12 December 2016); and
  - (4) The 1st Meeting of the UNWTO High Level Task Force on Tourism and Security, created by the 103rd session of the Executive Council, held prior to the 105th session on 10 May 2017 in Madrid, Spain.
- (b) **Enhancing the role of technology in tourism:** In this area,
- (1) UNWTO organized, jointly with the Ministry of Energy, Tourism and Digital Agenda of Spain and the Region of Murcia, the 1st World Conference on Smart Destinations in Murcia, Spain on 15-17 February 2017, to advance and shape a tourism model for the 21st century based on innovation, technology, sustainability and accessibility;
  - (2) The Secretariat presented, during ITB 2017, the preliminary findings of the research on the 'new platform tourism services' (or the so-called sharing economy) (see presentation at [www2.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/unwto\\_npts\\_itb\\_2017\\_jk2sc\\_rev.pdf](http://www2.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/unwto_npts_itb_2017_jk2sc_rev.pdf)); and
  - (3) The Secretariat is preparing a roadmap on how this issue should be mainstreamed and further strengthened within the POW of the Organization.
- (c) **Placing sustainability at the heart of tourism development and promoting the contribution of tourism to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):**

The Secretariat has continued to advance this area through three main pillars:

- (1) **The UNWTO International Network of Observatories of Sustainable Tourism (INSTO):** INSTO is a network of tourism observatories monitoring the economic, environmental and social impact of tourism at the destination level, committed to regular monitoring of tourism in order to better understand destination-wide resource use and foster responsible tourism

management. There are currently 18 observatories in operation worldwide, the majority of which are in Asia and the Pacific (8 in China, 3 in Indonesia and 1 in New Zealand).

- (2) **Measuring Sustainable Tourism Initiative (MST):** UNWTO has made significant progress in Measuring Sustainable Tourism (MST) initiative which has been highly welcomed and supported by the 48th Session of United Nations Statistical Commission, held between 7 and 10 March 2017. The initiative, being implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Statistics Division, aims to develop a new statistical framework for tourism — integrating the various dimensions of sustainable tourism (economic, environmental and social) across relevant levels (global, national and subnational). Measuring Sustainable Tourism (MST) will be the central focus of the 6th International Conference on Tourism Statistics: Measuring Sustainable Tourism, to be held in Manila, the Philippines, 21-24 June 2017.
- (3) **10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP):** As one of the co-leads of the 10YFP Sustainable Tourism Programme (STP), UNWTO continues to contribute to the progress of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP), a collaborative platform to bring together and scale up existing initiatives and partnerships to accelerate the shift to sustainable consumption and production. In this context, the International Symposium of the Sustainable Tourism Programme of the 10YFP was held in Morocco on the side-lines of the 22nd Session of the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP22) on 11-12 November 2016, to increase awareness of tourism's role and commitment to fight climate change. In this context, UNWTO has also supported the adoption of the first African Charter on Sustainable and Responsible Tourism and the Declaration on 'Tourism and Climate Issues in Africa' on the occasion of COP22. Both documents pave the way for the implementation of sustainability and responsibility principles in the tourism sector in Africa.

### **C. Mainstreaming Tourism in the Global Agenda**

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11. Promoting tourism's contribution to economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability in the national and international agendas is one of the priorities of the Organization. The support of tourism at the highest level is essential for the development and implementation of policies that support the growth and sustainability of the sector and to ensure that the sector contributes to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With the adoption of the universal SDGs at the end of 2015, the advocacy work of UNWTO has been geared to ensure the support to tourism as an effective tool to contribute to the achievement of the 17 SDGs.
12. The **UNWTO/WTTC Open Letter on Travel and Tourism** campaign continues to advance. Since its inception in 2011, a total of 88 Heads of State and Government have been presented with the Open Letter. The initiative aims to promote the role of the sector at the highest level, foster cross-cutting policy coordination on tourism issues and raise awareness among decision-makers of pressing challenges facing the sector. In Asia and the Pacific, a total of 17 countries have so far adhered to this initiative (by date of acceptance: Indonesia, China, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Brunei, The Philippines; Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar, Mongolia, India, Laos, Cambodia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Maldives, Bangladesh, and Japan).
13. **The Secretariat continues to work to position tourism in the United Nations (UN) system agenda as well as in the agendas of other relevant international and regional organizations.** In this framework, it is worth highlighting:

- (1) **Official opening of the UNWTO Geneva Liaison Office:** UNWTO has officially opened its liaison office in Geneva in January 2017. The Office aims to enhance the support to Member States as well as facilitate the coordination with the United Nations and other multilateral organizations in the context of the 2030 Agenda. The Liaison Office is hosted at the International Trade Center (ITC).
- (2) **International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017:** The United Nations 70th General Assembly has designated 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development (A/RES/70/193). In the context of the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the International Year aims to support a change in policies, business practices and consumer behaviour towards a more sustainable tourism sector than can contribute to the SDGs. The IY2017 will promote tourism's role in the following five key areas:
  - (1) Inclusive and sustainable economic growth
  - (2) Social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction
  - (3) Resource efficiency, environmental protection and climate change
  - (4) Cultural values, diversity and heritage
  - (5) Mutual understanding, peace and security.

UNWTO has been mandated to facilitate the organization and implementation of the Year, in collaboration with governments, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders.

This is a unique opportunity to raise awareness of the contribution of sustainable tourism to development among public and private sector decision-makers and the public, while mobilizing all stakeholders to work together in making tourism a catalyst for positive change and thus we call upon all Members States to get engaged and make this opportunity a priority (see detailed information in Annex I).

## **D. Administrative and Financial Matters**

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14. The year 2016 closed with contribution income balancing budgetary expenditures and enabling a partial reimbursement of the advance made by the Working Capital Fund in 2015.
15. 2016 UNWTO Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements for the year 2016, including the unqualified opinion of the External Auditors, will be submitted to the 105th session of the Executive Council.
16. On a separate note, the United Nations Chief Executive Board for Coordination is reviewing a system-wide approach to the large liabilities raised by the After Service Health Insurance scheme of staff. This has proven to be a protracted issue which had made this review necessary. The detailed reports on the current status of financial and administrative matters of the Organization as of early 2017 will be presented to the 105th Executive Council.

17. During 2016, UNWTO continued to focus on accountability and financial management improvements including: (a) online budget and finance information as provided through Athena (UNWTO financial management information system) to managers and staff by programmes/projects thereby enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of programme implementation; (b) continued the enhancement of Athena (Athena II plan) to develop modules on: (i) purchase management, and (ii) accounts payable. Athena II modules will go live in mid-2017. Enhanced IT systems reduce manual intervention and increase the efficiency of the Organization's processes, extending well beyond accounting and finance matters and affecting all operations; (c) publication of the third edition of the UNWTO IPSAS Policy Guidance Manual to provide guidance on the policies and accounting practices established by UNWTO in the application of IPSAS
18. In order to improve the safety, reliability and availability of the Organization's ICT services, the possibility of updating the existing Data Processing Centre (DPC) was studied and, after carrying out the relevant studies, a new DPC was created. The new DPC contains a completely new physical infrastructure, with greater capacity for future growth that meets all the standards of safety and protection in force.
19. In relation to Human Resources policies and following UN General Assembly Resolutions 70/244 and 71/264, a new compensation package for staff in the professional category and above in the UN common System is being implemented in UNWTO since January 2017, replacing the dual salary scale by a unified scale and providing separate allowances for single parents.
20. Furthermore, the International Civil Service Commission carried out a Place-to-Place survey in Madrid during October 2016 to evaluate expenditure patterns and other characteristics of the households of staff in the professional and higher categories in comparison with the cost-of-living in New York. The outcome of the survey will be announced in the second trimester of 2017.
21. UNWTO has concluded with the UNDP an Agreement concerning the management of the UN-wide Junior Professional Officer Programme. Through this framework agreement the UNWTO is able to receive any JPO postings from Member States who wish to place their young professionals in UNWTO for 1-3 years by financing the post.
22. Following the approval of the Executive Council, a full renewal of the ground floor, lobby and reception area of the headquarters building has been satisfactorily completed in 2016.

## **Report on the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017 (IY2017) and report of the Steering Committee (April 2017)**

### **II. Introduction**

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1. During the reporting period, the following main activities have been carried out:

(a) Further development of a communication strategy, including the launch of the IY2017 website [www.tourism4development2017.org](http://www.tourism4development2017.org), the official IY2017 logo, and the consumer-oriented campaign "Travel, Enjoy, Respect".

(b) Holding of the second meeting of the Steering Committee for the IY2017 (SC2017), via teleconference, on 21 November 2016, during which the following four new members were introduced:

- The Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) (United Kingdom);
- The Network of European Regions for Competitive and Sustainable Tourism (NecsTOUR) (Belgium);
- The Travel Foundation (United Kingdom); and
- The University of South Florida Patel College of Global Sustainability (United States of America).

The Steering Committee now consists of 27 members (see part a).

(c) A reception, hosted by H.M. King Felipe VI of Spain on 17 January 2017 on the occasion of the launch of the IY2017, and an Official Opening Ceremony on 18 January 2017 in Madrid, Spain, with more than 600 participants.

(d) Identification of 14 IY2017 Official Events (see part b).

(e) Establishment of a Special Ambassadors Programme, which as of 1 March comprises seven high-profile individuals, namely:

- H.E. Mr. Juan Manuel Santos, President of Colombia;
- H.E. Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia;
- H.E. Shaikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, President, Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities;
- H.M. King Simeon II of the Bulgarians;
- H.E. Dr Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chairman, Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization;
- Mr. Huayong Ge, Chairman, China UnionPay; and
- Dr. Michael Frenzel, President, Federal Association of the German Tourism Industry.

(f) Launch of the Responsible Traveller Tips as approved by the World Committee on Tourism Ethics.

- (g) Completion of the first phase of the flagship report “Tourism for Development”—developed along the five key areas of the IY2017—in the form of a discussion paper for the purpose of a global consultation (see part c).
- (h) Elaboration of a concept note for the “Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030” report, addressing the links between tourism and the SDGs and setting an agenda for the sector towards 2030 (see part d).
- (i) Official presentation of the commemorative Spanish stamps on the occasion of the IY2017, hosted at UNWTO Headquarters on 20 February 2017.
- (j) Setting up of a sponsorship and partnership scheme that during the reporting period has attracted more than 45 Official Sponsors, Partners and Friends of the IY2017 (see part e).

**a. Composition of the Steering Committee for the IY2017**

**UNWTO Member States**

1. Samoa (Chair)
2. Colombia
3. Egypt
4. Indonesia
5. Morocco
6. Republic of Korea
7. Rwanda
8. Bahamas
9. Spain
10. Switzerland
11. Zimbabwe
12. Philippines
13. India

**UNWTO Associate Members**

14. Flanders

**UNWTO Affiliate Members**

15. Edmund Bartlett (Consolidated Tourism and Investment Consultants Limited)
16. BTW (Federal Association of the German Tourism Industry)
17. Amadeus
18. NH Hotel Group
19. HOTREC
20. ABTA

**Other key stakeholders:**

**Academia**

21. George Washington University
22. Hong Kong Polytechnic University
23. University of South Florida Patel College of Global Sustainability

**Global Tourism Associations and NGOs**

24. WTTC
25. PATA
26. The Travel Foundation
27. NECSTouR

**b. UNWTO IY2017 official events**

Opening Ceremony of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, 2017  
Madrid, Spain, 18 January 2017

Interactive Session on the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development on the occasion of the UNWTO Regional Commission Meeting for Africa  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 19 April 2017

UNWTO & Arabian Travel Market Ministerial Forum on *Tourism's Contribution to Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth and Diversification in the MENA region* on the occasion of the UNWTO Regional Commission for the Middle East  
Dubai, UAE, 24 April 2017

Roundtable on *Sustainable Urban Tourism* on the occasion of the UNWTO Executive Council  
Madrid, Spain, 10 May 2017

Event on the occasion of the UNWTO Regional Commission Meeting for Asia Pacific and South Asia  
Dhaka, Bangladesh, 15–17 May 2017

International Seminar on *New Technologies applied to Tourism* on the occasion of the UNWTO Regional Commission Meeting for the Americas  
Roatán, Honduras, 1 June 2017

Gala Dinner on the occasion of UNWTO Regional Commission Meeting for Europe  
Chisinau, Moldova, 6 June 2017

International Conference on Tourism Statistics: *Measuring Sustainable Tourism*  
Manila, Philippines, 21–24 June 2017

Event on the occasion of the UNWTO General Assembly  
Chengdu, China

Global Conference on Sustainable Tourism for Development and Peace  
Montreal, Canada, 18-19 September 2017

World Tourism Day 2017: *Sustainable Tourism – A Tool for Development* – Official Celebrations  
Doha, Qatar, 27 September 2017

UNWTO/Government of Jamaica/World Bank Group – Global Conference on Partnerships for *Jobs and Inclusive Growth Through Sustainable Tourism*  
Montego Bay, Jamaica, 27–29 November 2017

UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture: *Fostering Sustainable Development*  
Muscat, Oman, 11-12 December 2017

Closing Ceremony of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, 2017  
Geneva, Switzerland, December 2017 (tbc)

**c. Tourism for Development flagship report:**

The flagship report is aligned with the five key areas of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, namely (1) Inclusive and sustainable economic growth, (2) Social Inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction, (3) Resource Efficiency, environmental protection and climate change, (4) Cultural values, diversity and heritage and (5) Mutual understanding, peace and security. Initially a discussion paper, it will turn into a full-fledged report after a global consultation round with UN Member States, the private sector and academia. It will address the necessary changes for tourism to become a more effective tool for development and will include case studies and best practices from around the world.

**d. Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: “Journey to 2030”**

This publication will serve as a guidance document showing how the tourism sector can contribute towards the implementation and achievement of the 17 SDGs. In particular, it should inspire governments, policymakers and tourism companies to incorporate relevant aspects of the SDGs into the policy and financing framework as well as business operations respectively. The content of the report will be used to create an interactive web platform with the aim to share good practices, spark innovative ideas and set recommendations for action, as well as to monitor progress and results. Both the report and the platform shall provide a roadmap and co-creation space for the tourism sector and the SDGs process until 2030.

**e. List of Sponsors, Partners and Friends of IY2017 (as of 24 February 2017)**

<b>9 Official (EUR 50000)</b>
Global Tourism Economy Research Centre
Balearic Islands Tourism Agency
All Nippon Airways Co., Ltd
Minube
Chimelong
Amadeus
Ministerio de Comercio, Industria y Turismo de Colombia
Ras al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority
Morocco
<b>8 Diamond Partners (EUR 20000)</b>
The Travel Corporation
Ministry of Tourism of Mexico
Capital Airlines
Eventísimo
Azerbaijan
Georgia
Mastercard
Municipality of Arona (Tenerife, Spain)
<b>8 Gold Partners (EUR 10000)</b>

German National Tourism Board (DZT)  
Global Geoparks Network  
Agència Catalana de Turisme  
University of Applied Sciences HWT Chur  
Agència Valenciana del Turisme  
Turismo de Portugal  
Innovation Norway  
Intercontinental Hotels Group

**3 Silver Partners (EUR 5000)**

South Pole Group  
Swisscontact  
JTB

**18 Friends (EUR 1000)**

Zürich Tourism  
Technical University of Crete, Renewable and Sustainable Energy Systems  
FEE-Green Key  
Eden Network AISBL  
Cabi  
BIZIBIZIKI  
FEE-Blue Flag  
VIAJES CON ENCANTO SL dba CIVITATIS  
Borneo Eco Tours  
Mountain Lodges of Peru  
Fundació Privada de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau  
InLombardia  
Rainbow Garden Village  
Betterfly  
Hersonissos Municipality  
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