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Report of the Secretary-General

Part I: Tourism trends and activities

(a) International tourism in 2016

I. International tourism in 2016

1. International tourist arrivals grew by 5% between January and April 2016 according to the June issue of the *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer*. Results were robust across almost all subregions despite ongoing challenges, showing that tourism is a dynamic and resilient economic sector.
2. Destinations worldwide received 348 million international tourists between January and April 2016, some 18 million more than the same period last year (+5.3%). This follows an increase of 4.6% in 2015, and could make 2016 the seventh consecutive year of above-average growth, with international arrivals increasing by 4% or more every year following the crisis in 2009.
3. By region, Asia and the Pacific (+9%) recorded the highest increase, with all Asian subregions enjoying growth of 7% or above. By subregion, sub-Saharan Africa (+13%) led growth, strongly rebounding from previous years' modest results.
4. **Europe** (+4%), the world's most visited region, consolidated the healthy results of recent years with Northern Europe and Central and Eastern Europe (both at +6%) in the lead, followed by Southern and Mediterranean Europe (+4%) and Western Europe (+3%).
5. **Asia and the Pacific** (+9%) recorded the highest growth in international arrivals across world regions in January-April 2016, with robust results in all four subregions. South-East Asia and Oceania both achieved 10% growth, while arrivals in North-East Asia increased by 8% and in South Asia by 7%.
6. In the **Americas** (+6%), all four subregions continued to enjoy significant growth in the first four months of 2016, led by Central America and South America (both at +7%). Arrivals in the Caribbean (+6%) and North America (+5%) were fuelled by continued strong outbound demand from the United States, where tourism expenditure increased by 9% through May.



7. International tourist arrivals in the **Middle East** are estimated to have declined by 7% through April according to available information.
8. In **Africa** (+7%), international tourist arrivals experienced a clear rebound in sub-Saharan Africa (+13%), while in North Africa results were down by 8%. (Results for both Africa and the Middle East should be read with caution as they are based on limited available data.)
9. As for **outbound tourism as measured by international tourism expenditure**, the still very limited available data for 2016 indicates that a few leading source markets--China (+20%), the USA (+9%), Germany (+4%) and Australia (+12%)--led growth among the top sources so far in 2016.
10. As for other traditional advanced-economy source markets, expenditure from the United Kingdom (-1%), France (-3%), Canada (-3%), Republic of Korea (+1%) and Italy (+1%) was rather weak.
11. By contrast, expenditure from the previously very dynamic source markets of the Russian Federation (-38%) and Brazil (-38%) continues to decline significantly, reflecting the economic constraints in both countries and the depreciation of the ruble and the real against virtually all other currencies.
12. According to the UNWTO Tourism Confidence Index, prospects for May-August 2016 remain positive and in line with the performance of January-April. The Index shows confidence is highest in Europe, followed by the Americas. Around 500 million tourists expected to travel abroad between May and August 2016, the Northern Hemisphere summer holiday peak season.
13. UNWTO forecasts international tourist arrivals to increase by 3.5% to 4.5% over the full year 2016, in line with UNWTO's long-term projection of 3.8% growth a year for the period 2010 to 2020.
14. Considering that this document was prepared in August 2016, updated information on international tourism in 2016 will be provided verbally to the 104th session of the Executive Council.

II. Actions to be taken by the Executive Council

15. The Executive Council is invited to take note of the report of the Secretary-General on the current situation and prospects for international tourism.