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Report of the Secretary-General

Part I: Tourism trends and activities

(c) Priorities and Management vision

I. Introduction

1. 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,
- (b) Enhancing the role of technology in tourism, and
- (c) Placing sustainability at the heart of tourism development and promoting the role of sustainable tourism in development.

2. The current document provides an overview of the actions taken to advance these priorities.

3. The present document also includes a specific proposal for the creation of a 'High Level Task Force on Tourism and Security' as requested by the Executive Council following the thematic discussion held on this topic at the 103rd Session of the Council (see section III).

II. Progress in the priorities for 2016-2017

A. Promoting safe and seamless travel

4. Building resilience within the sector requires a re-alignment and 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.

5. 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.

6. UNWTO has been long working in the area of tourism, security and crisis management. In this regard, the Secretariat:

(a) published in 2011 a **Toolbox for Crisis Communications in Tourism** to help Member States to develop and implement effective crisis communication plans. UNWTO has made the Toolbox available with a special licensing agreement to all Members that wish to use it as the basis for their own crisis communication plan. Bahrain, Côte d'Ivoire, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Senegal, Serbia, Tunisia and Yemen have already made use of the UNWTO's Toolbox License Agreement. In this framework, the Secretariat has also implemented several training activities to enhance the capacity of Member States to develop and implement crisis communication plans;

(b) proposed in 2011 the **Recommendations on the Use of Georeferences, Date and Time in Travel Advice and Event Information**. The Recommendations, adopted by resolution A/RES/593(XIX) at the nineteenth UNWTO General Assembly, strongly call for, among others, the use of georeferenced information to limit unnecessary negative repercussions on destinations;

(c) participated in 2013 in the Closed Meeting on Tourism Security of the **UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC)**. At this meeting, participating organizations stressed the relevance of tourism security and the need for synergy and coordination among programmes and activities of the UN system organizations working in the field as well as other relevant actors including the private sector. As a follow-up to this meeting, UNWTO hosted a consultation meeting at its Headquarters in February 2014 with the support of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) which included the participation of representatives from the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism/Organization of American States (CICTE/OAS), Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Later that year UNWTO was invited to participate in the UNGA's biannual review of implementation of its Counter-Terrorism Strategy;

(d) organized in September 2014, the **UNWTO International Conference on Tourism Safety and Security in the Middle East and North Africa**, in Cairo, Egypt, which adopted the Cairo Declaration acknowledging that the resilience of the sector to exogenous factors that may threaten its sustainable development—such as armed conflicts, terrorism and other man-made or natural hazards—is the responsibility of governments, in partnership with private sector stakeholders;

(e) actively supports relevant regional and international processes and agreements such as the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, especially focusing on the integration of tourism and emergency management at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, in March 2015, as well as advancing facilitation efforts at ICAO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), recognizing that global safety and security challenges require a global, balanced and coordinated approach.

(f) regularly takes part in the coordination actions of the UN system and other international and regional organizations, including the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN System and Partners Consolidated Action Plan for Animal and Human Influenza (UNCAPAHI), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

(APEC) as well as in advisory bodies such as the International Health Regulation Emergency Committee (IHR) of WHO on Ebola and on the Zika Virus. As an outcome of such collaboration and as a response to UNWTO's request WHO has recently terminated the practice of naming new human infectious diseases, amongst other, after places, which lessens the unnecessary repercussions of such events to the tourism sector and fosters timely information sharing;

(g) is working closely with UNODC to promote a safe, secure and seamless travel environment. In this regard, a joint UNWTO/UNODC initiative to develop a tourism and security plan for Central America and the Dominican Republic was launched in November 2015 in El Salvador. This model could be replicated in other parts of the world;

(h) organized in January 2016 a High Level Meeting on Tourism and Security in Madrid, Spain, and dedicated the discussion in all Regional Commission Meetings held during 2016 to this important theme; and

(i) continues to advocate for safe, secure and seamless travel ensuring that national and economic security are considered as a whole.

7. To continue advancing in this area, the following activities are scheduled for the remainder of 2016:

(a) The 2016 UNWTO & WTM Ministers' Summit on 'Tourism and Security: Promoting Safe and Seamless Travel' (World Travel Market, London, UK, 9 November 2016);

(b) The UNWTO/UNWTO.Themis Foundation Regional Executive Training on Crisis Communications for Africa (Khartoum, Sudan, 14-18 November 2016);

(c) The UNWTO/UNWTO.Themis Foundation Practicum on Crisis Communication (TBC); and

(d) The UNWTO/European Travel Commission High Level Crisis Communication Seminar (UNWTO Headquarters, Madrid, Spain, 12 December 2016).

B. Enhancing the role of technology in tourism

8. The UNWTO Conference on Tourism & Technology held on the occasion of the 28th Joint Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for East Asia and the Pacific & the UNWTO Commission for South Asia (Nara, Japan, 1-4 June 2016) tackled the impact, challenges and opportunities of new technologies for tourism destinations and businesses.

9. The Secretariat is currently preparing a report on the impact and governance of the new business models (or the so called "sharing economy") on the tourism sector.

C. Placing sustainability at the heart of tourism development and promoting the role and contribution of sustainable tourism to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

10. The Secretariat has continued to advance this area through three main pillars (more detailed information in document CE/104/5(a)):

(a) The UNWTO International Network of Observatories of Sustainable Tourism (INSTO);

(b) The Sustainable Tourism Programme of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns; and

- (c) The Measuring Sustainable Tourism (MST) project launched, with the support of the UN Statistics Division (UNSD), to develop a system-wide, international statistical framework for measuring tourism's role in sustainable development.

11. With the celebration of **2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development**, priority will be given to actions which can contribute to enhance the knowledge and advocacy on the links of tourism with development and of the role of sustainable tourism in promoting development and inclusion in all nations.

III. **Tourism and Security: Towards a Framework of Safe, Secure and Seamless Travel through the Creation of a High Level Task Force**

12. For the fourth consecutive year—despite a slow and uneven global economic recovery, growing geopolitical challenges, health scares and security concerns—international tourism grew above average, proving the sector's relevance in stimulating economic growth and creating jobs for an increasing number of economies worldwide.

13. Tourism's importance to the global economy and its capacity to create jobs, reduce poverty, and advance the change towards more sustainable consumption and production patterns has been recognized through the inclusion of the sector in three of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 8.9, 12.b and 14.7).

14. Despite being one of the most resilient economic activities of today, the sector continue to be challenged by natural and man-made risks and crises. These circumstances impact affected destinations at economic and social levels. Considering that the tourism product is predominantly non-material and often depends on perceptions, the sector is sensitive to both objective and subjective risks.

15. To address these crises effectively, adequate relevant structures and processes have to be designed and put in place. They have to be robust and at the same time flexible enough that, in situations of crises, could be used to maintain security and the facilitation of seamless travel, while considering the specificities of the tourism sector.

16. Currently, the importance of the tourism sector and its impact on national economies remains underestimated, and tourism's integration into the national emergency structures and procedures is mostly addressed only after major incidents affect destinations.

17. The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 8 September 2006 resolving to take practical steps individually and collectively to prevent and combat terrorism. It includes, inter alia, addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis for the fight against terrorism.

18. In view of recent events impacting the sector at global level and the nature of the risks affecting tourism, the Executive Council has defined the promotion of safe and seamless travel as one of the priorities within the Programme of Work 2016-2017. In this framework, and following the thematic debate held at the 103rd session of the Executive Council, as well as the discussions held in the regional commission meetings, the creation of a High Level Task Force on Tourism and Security is proposed to the 104th session of the Council.

19. The purpose of the High Level Task Force shall be to progress the discussions on the current safety and security situation as a global challenge. Upon the decision of the Executive Council decisive action is to be taken to establish the High Level Task Force and its Terms of Reference.

20. The High Level Task Force on Tourism and Security shall have the following priorities:

(a) Foster the dialogue and understanding between the tourism sector and the security apparatus to strengthen effective coordination, knowledge-sharing and communication to maintain business continuity of critical functions during and following a crisis and be able to better lessen the effects, restore and recover from crises;

(b) Foster the decisive importance of crisis management plans and protocols, as well as the critical role of the crisis communication, inter alia, in the prevention, institutional responsibility and assistance in response to all types of crises;

(c) Promote innovative approaches aimed at devising more accurate travel advisories and facilitate the integration of tourism and security and the development of a resilient tourism sector through adequate mechanisms, resources and technical skills;

(d) Update, review and disseminate evidence-based information on the impact of seamless travel measures that are essential to help government agencies to make relevant, accurate and coordinated decisions;

(e) Highlight and promote the need of Member States adopting crisis preparedness and crisis communications plans, and in this regard encourage Member States to make use of the UNWTO Toolbox for Crisis Communications in Tourism and Recommendations on the Use of Georeferences, Date and Time in Travel Advice and Event Information;

(f) Develop and agree on the Terms of Reference of the Task Force, and ensure a balanced regional and sectorial composition and representation; and

(g) Build and consolidate—also with the participation of the security sector—the tourism sector's perspective, contribution and concerns and invite the security sector to make use of this Task Force in its consultations and activities.

IV. Actions to be taken by the Executive Council

21. The Executive Council is invited:

(a) To take note of the progress made in the priorities of the Organization;

(b) To recognize that the integration of the tourism and security sectors is of fundamental importance to ensure safe, secure and seamless travel as well as to prevent, lessen the effects of and recover from possible crises;

(c) To welcome the proposal for the creation of a High Level Task Force on Tourism and Security in order to strengthen the collective efforts to address these issues in the tourism sector at the global level; and

(d) To encourage Member States to become active members of the High Level Task Force on Tourism and Security.