

FOR DECISION

Agenda item 3(d)i
Report of the Secretary-General
Other administrative and statutory matters
Membership

CE/109/3(d)i rev.1
Madrid, 18 October 2018
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Executive summary

The UNWTO Secretary-General and other senior officials have undertaken systematic actions aimed at attracting non-member States to join or re-join the Organization.

To this end, the Secretariat has, among other initiatives, prepared detailed working documents focusing on membership benefits and concrete areas of cooperation for non-member States in Europe, the Americas, Asia-Pacific and Africa.

Since the 108th session of the Executive Council held in San Sebastián, Spain, the Secretariat has received an official letter from South Sudan expressing the country's interest in joining UNWTO. The UNWTO Secretariat is awaiting the official application of the country.

Action by the Executive Council

DRAFT DECISION¹

The Executive Council,

Having examined the report of the Secretary-General on membership status,

1. *Takes note* of the efforts made by the Secretary-General and other UNWTO officials in order to expand membership;
2. *Welcomes* the systematic approach of the Secretariat towards attracting new Members through the preparation of detailed working documents with membership benefits and concrete areas of cooperation;
3. *Calls upon* those Member States of the United Nations that do not yet belong to UNWTO to join the Organization; and
4. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in this regard.

¹ This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Council, please refer to the Decisions document issued at the end of the session.

I. Present membership

1. At the date of this document, the total number of Member States of the Organization is 158. On 30 May 2018, the Secretariat received a letter from the Minister of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism of South Sudan to the Secretary-General expressing the country's interest to join UNWTO. The Secretary-General has been communicating with the country in order to clarify all the necessary procedures and legal requirements for the admission of South Sudan as a Full Member of the Organization.

II. Contacts with non-member States

2. The UNWTO Secretariat has undertaken the following actions since the 108th session of the UNWTO Executive Council and the following activities are being planned in September-October 2018 aiming at attracting non-member States to join or re-join the Organization:
 - (a) Detailed working documents focusing on membership benefits and concrete areas of cooperation have been prepared for the following non-members:
 - (i) **Europe** – Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom;
 - (ii) **The Americas** – United States of America, Canada;
 - (iii) **Asia and the Pacific** – Australia, New Zealand; and
 - (iv) **Africa** – South Sudan.
 - (b) The Secretary-General met with the Ambassador of Canada to Spain to discuss the membership issue and areas of possible cooperation.
 - (c) The Special Representative of the UNWTO to the United Nations met with the Minister of Tourism, Official Languages and La Francophonie of Canada in New York to discuss the possible membership of Canada in the Organization. The Minister was informed about the UNWTO Management Vision and Priorities and she expressed her interest towards the Organization, namely in the area of sustainability.
 - (d) UNWTO officials met the Ambassadors of Sweden, Finland, Luxembourg, Estonia and Norway in Spain to make detailed presentations on membership.
 - (e) Letters from the UNWTO Secretary-General have been sent to the Ministers in charge of tourism and foreign affairs of non-member States highlighting membership benefits, concrete areas of cooperation and official development assistance (ODA) as a mechanism to cover 89% of the membership fee and to implement technical cooperation projects in developing countries.
 - (f) The UNWTO was present at the conference “Circularity in the Built Environment Enabled by Digitalization” in Brussels by organizing a parallel session on circularity in the building and construction sector in cooperation with the One Planet Sustainable Buildings and Construction Programme led by the Ministry of Environment of Finland. This activity was an important impetus for conducting dialogue with Finland to re-join the Organization.
 - (g) The UNWTO has launched, with the support of the Switzerland State Secretariat of Economic Affairs (SECO), the Tourism for the Sustainable Development Goals (T4SDGs) Platform, an innovative online tool providing the global community a space to co-create and engage to realize the 2030 Agenda through tourism. In this sense, letters from the Secretary-General have been sent to Member and non-member States Ireland and Iceland expressed interest in cooperating within this important initiative.

- (h) UNWTO officials will participate in the 102nd session of the OECD Tourism Committee on 30-31 October 2018 in Paris and will meet with decision makers from the ministries of tourism of non-members to conduct further negotiations.

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