

FOR DECISION

Agenda item 4
**Report on the preparation of the
General Assembly**

CE/109/4
Madrid, 1 October 2018
Original: English

Executive summary

With the aim of making the proceedings of the session of the General Assembly more agile, interactive and less overloaded, the Secretary-General, after consultation with the Chair of the Executive Council and the Chairs of the Regional Commissions, proposes neither to hold the Regional Commission meetings, nor the Executive Council session that have been traditionally held on the eve of the Assembly session.

The decisions on the items to be reported to the General Assembly will be taken by the Regional Commissions held in the first semester of 2019 and by the 110th Executive Council in Baku, Azerbaijan, in June 2019. If endorsed by the Council, during this same session it also will examine all issues which were addressed at the Council session on the eve of the first plenary session of the Assembly.

There will only be one Regional Commission meeting per region in 2019, to be before the 110th session of the Executive Council (June 2019, Baku, Azerbaijan). The agendas of the Regional Commissions will include, on the one hand, the designation of their representatives to the various General Assembly offices; and, on the other, the designation of their representatives to those subsidiary bodies of the Council whose membership is to be renewed.

The Programme and Budget Committee will also hold its meeting prior to the 110th session of the Executive Council. It will meet after the 111th session of the Executive Council for the election of its Chair and Vice-Chair.

Action by the Executive Council

DRAFT DECISION¹

The Executive Council,

Having examined the report on the preparation of the General Assembly,

1. *Endorses* the proposed modifications with regards to the meetings of the Regional Commissions in 2019; and
2. *Decides* that there will be no meeting of the Executive Council on the eve of the twenty-third session of the General Assembly, and that consequently both the Programme and Budget Committee and the 110th session of the Executive Council taking place in Baku, Azerbaijan, will examine all necessary issues to be submitted to the General Assembly for approval.

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. Place and dates

1. At its twenty-second session held in Chengdu, China, on 11-16 September 2017, the General Assembly decided to accept the generous invitation of the Government of the Russian Federation (resolution A/RES/708(XXII)) to host its twenty-third session in the Russian Federation, in accordance with Rule 1(2) of its Rules of Procedures.
2. The UNWTO Secretariat is working in close cooperation with the Government of the Russian Federation on the organization of the General Assembly in the city of Saint Petersburg, the Russian Federation.

II. Programme of meetings

3. After reviewing the structure of the previous sessions of the General Assembly and in the spirit of modernization and resource optimization, the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Chair of the Executive Council and with the Chairs of the Regional Commissions, proposes to hold fewer events in the framework of the session. This will allow making the proceedings less encumbered, more interactive and more focused on the topics of particular relevance for the Member States.

A. Preparatory and related meetings**Regional Commissions**

4. There will only be one Regional Commission meeting for each region in 2019, which each Regional Commission will hold during the first semester of 2019, in the venues decided in their last respective sessions, and on dates prior to the 110th session of the Executive Council to be held in June 2019 in Baku, Azerbaijan.
5. Their agendas will include the designation of their respective representatives for the various General Assembly offices, which should be approved by the Assembly itself, in accordance with the Statutes of the Organization and with the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly. Each Commission will also be required to designate its representatives to serve on those subsidiary bodies of the Council whose membership is to be renewed: Programme and Budget Committee, Committee on Tourism and Sustainability, Committee on Statistics and the Tourism Satellite Account, and Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness.
6. Finally, they will be required to put forward candidates for the vacant seats on the Executive Council, for which elections will be held during the Assembly. This will enrich the agendas of the next Regional Commission meetings, during which designation to the different offices will take place and will avoid, subject to their confirmation, the necessity to host a meeting in the framework of the General Assembly for that same purpose.

Executive Council

7. The 110th session of the Executive Council will take place in Baku in June 2019 on the kind invitation of the Government of Azerbaijan (decision CE/DEC/19(CVIII)). If endorsed by the Council, this session will now be in charge of examining all the issues which used to be considered at the session of the Council held on the eve of the first plenary session of the Assembly. It will consequently transmit to the Assembly all items on which an Executive Council recommendation is required.
8. The following 111th session of the Council will be held immediately after the last plenary session of the Assembly for the election of Council Officers for 2020 and the filling of vacant seats on subsidiary organs of the Executive Council for the period 2020-2023.

Programme and Budget Committee

9. As no Executive Council session will be held on the eve of the first plenary session of the Assembly, the Programme and Budget Committee will also hold its meeting prior to the 110th session of the Executive Council. The Programme and Budget Committee will meet at the General Assembly after the 111th session of the Executive Council for the election of its Chair and Vice-Chair.

Committee for the Review of Applications for Affiliate Membership

10. The meeting of the Committee for the Review of Applications for Affiliate Membership will take place prior to the 110th session of the Executive Council.

Affiliate Members

11. The Plenary of the Affiliate Members will be held in the framework of the Assembly.

Credentials Committee

12. The Credentials Committee will meet before the first plenary session of the Assembly. It will present its report to the Assembly at its first plenary session.

Side events

13. In order to enhance the technical nature of the General Assembly proceedings and to encourage high-level participation of the private and public sectors, a number of side events will be organized in the framework of the Assembly. Detailed information on them will be communicated at a later stage.

B. General Assembly session

14. The provisional agenda of the twenty-third session of the General Assembly is being drafted in accordance with Rule 5(1) of its Rules of Procedure. Members are kindly reminded that they may propose the inclusion of new items in the provisional agenda, provided they follow the procedure laid down for this purpose in Rule 5(3) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly.
15. The Assembly will be called upon to elect the President of its twenty-third session, in accordance with Rule 16 of its Rules of Procedure.

Official ceremony and High-level Ministerial Dialogue

16. An official ceremony, followed by the High-level Ministerial Dialogue will be organized in the framework of the Assembly.

Technical Committees

17. The meetings of the technical committees (Committee on Tourism and Sustainability, Committee on Statistics and the Tourism Satellite Account, and Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness) will take place in the framework of the 23rd General Assembly, prior to its plenary sessions.

III. Facilities provided to the Organization by the Government of the Russian Federation

18. The authorities of the Russian Federation have already taken all necessary measures to host this session in the facilities of ExpoForum International, one of the leading Russian convention and exhibition centres, and other venues downtown and to provide all necessary services to the delegates of the UNWTO Members. They will also facilitate the

entry into their territory of Full, Associate and Affiliate Members of the UNWTO, as well as of the other participants invited by the Secretary-General.

IV. Invitations and working documents

19. The corresponding convocation letters and invitations issued by the Secretary-General to all Members, together with the provisional agenda prepared in accordance with Rule 5(1) of the General Assembly's Rules of Procedure and an information note, will be sent by e-mail within the prescribed time limits, i.e., ninety days before the opening of the session.
20. The working documents necessary for the General Assembly's discussions and resolutions on the various agenda items will be posted on a dedicated webpage within the time limits prescribed in Rule 8 of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure.
21. In light of the United Nations mandate to promote sustainability, the World Tourism Organization is strengthening its efforts towards environmental sustainability by implementing paperless events and conferences.

V. Languages of the Assembly

22. The five official languages and the Chinese language (resolution A/RES/694(XXII)) will be used for the Assembly and the other related meetings, in part or in totality, as each meeting requires.

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Annex: Tentative draft provisional programme outline of the twenty-third session of the UNWTO General Assembly

Tentative draft provisional programme outline¹
Twenty-third session of the UNWTO General Assembly
 Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation

(as of 25 September 2018)

Day	MORNING	LUNCH	AFTERNOON	EVENING
Day 1	Committee on Tourism and Sustainability*		Side event (TBD)	Welcome Ceremony and Dinner
	Committee on Statistics and the Tourism Satellite Account*			
	Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness*			
	Plenary of the Affiliate Members*		Credentials Committee*	
Day 2	Group photo for heads of delegation Official Opening	Lunch for ministers / heads of delegation*	Plenary 1	
	High-level Ministerial Dialogue			
	Media Conference*			
Day 3	Plenary 2 and General Debate		Side event (TBD)	
			Associate Members meeting*	
			Affiliate Members Board*	
Day 4	111th session of the Executive Council		Technical visit	Closing dinner
	Programme and Budget Committee (PBC)*			

* By invitation.

¹ This tentative draft provisional programme will be updated in due time