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Report of the Secretary-General

Part I: Current situation and activities

(a) International tourism in 2013 and 2014

I. International tourism in 2013 and 2014

- Overview on the year 2013:** Despite a fragile global economic recovery, particularly in the eurozone, and important geopolitical shifts, international tourist arrivals grew by 5% in 2013 to reach 1,087 million. Emerging (+4.8%) and advanced economies (+5.2%) grew at the same pace.
- By region,** demand for international tourism was strongest for destinations in Asia and the Pacific (+6%), Africa (+6%) and Europe (+5%). The leading sub-regions were South-East Asia (+10%), Central and Eastern Europe (+7%), Southern and Mediterranean Europe (+6%) and North Africa (+6%).
- Preliminary data on **international tourism receipts for 2013** indicates that the growth in receipts has followed closely that of arrivals. With a projected growth rate of between 4.5% and 5% in real terms (local currencies, constant prices), international tourism receipts are estimated to have reached US\$ 1,150 billion in 2013 up from 1,077 billion in 2012.
- Among the top ten tourism destinations,** receipts were up by double-digit growth rates in Thailand (+23%), in Hong Kong (China) and Macao (China) (+18% each), the United Kingdom (+13%) and the USA (+11%). Receipts in Spain, France, Italy and Germany grew between 1% and 5%. China on the other hand, saw its tourism receipts decline by 3%.
- As for outbound tourism as measured by international tourism expenditure,** among the ten most important source markets in the world, Russia and China clearly stand out. China, which became the largest outbound market in 2012 with an expenditure of US\$ 102 billion, saw an increase in expenditure of 26% to a total of US\$ 129 billion in 2013. The Russian Federation, the 5th largest outbound market worldwide (US\$ 54 billion), reported a 25% growth while Brazil (US\$ 25 billion) became part of the ten top source markets by expenditure in 2013, with a growth rate of 14%. The performance of key advanced economy source markets was comparatively more modest. France (+5%) recovered from a negative 2012; the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia grew between 2% and 4%. In contrast, Italy reported a 2% decline in outbound expenditure.



6. **International tourism in 2014:** UNWTO forecasts international tourist arrivals to increase by 4% to 4.5% in 2014, again above its long-term forecast of +3.8% per year between 2010 and 2020. The UNWTO Confidence Index, based on the feedback from over 300 experts worldwide, confirms this outlook with prospects for 2014 higher than in previous years. 2014 regional prospects are strongest for Asia and the Pacific (+5% to +6%) and Africa (+4% to +6%), followed by Europe and the Americas (both +3% to +4%). In the Middle East (0% to +5%), prospects are positive yet volatile.

7. Considering that this document was prepared in April 2014, an update on the 2014 results will be provided to the Executive Council during its 98th session.

II. Actions to be taken by the Executive Council

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