



Executive Council

Ninety-ninth session
Samarkand, Uzbekistan, 1-4 October 2014
Provisional agenda item 9

CE/99/9
Madrid, 1 September 2014
Original: English

Thematic discussion: “Tourism and Culture: Creating New Partnership Models”

I. Background

1. The close interconnections between tourism and culture and the need to develop new partnership models that ensure mutual benefits gain particular relevance at a time of unprecedented tourism growth. With more than one billion international tourists travelling worldwide every year, it is increasingly important to underline the shared responsibility among culture and tourism stakeholders at all levels in the sustainable development of cultural tourism as well as the immense opportunities that exist to build new partnership models that contribute to improve the livelihoods of host communities, support tourism development and foster the promotion and preservation of cultural resources.

2. The year 2014 marks the 20th anniversary of the Samarkand Declaration on Silk Road Tourism, a milestone document adopted by 19 countries, UNWTO and UNESCO, which calls for “a peaceful and fruitful rebirth of these legendary routes as one of the world’s richest cultural tourism destinations”. The expansion of cultural routes, alongside the flourishing of creative industries, opens up interesting opportunities to create new tourism products and experiences while spreading the benefits of the sector throughout the tourism and culture value chains.

3. In this context, UNWTO and UNESCO will organize on 4-6 February 2015, the World Conference on Tourism and Culture, *Building a New Partnership* in Siem Reap, Cambodia, bringing together for the first time the Ministers of Tourism and the Ministers of Culture from all regions.

II. Objectives

4. On the occasion of the 99th session of the UNWTO Executive Council, and in preparation for the UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture in Siem Reap, Cambodia, to be held on 4-6 February 2015, the thematic debate aims to:

- identify key opportunities for and obstacles to stronger cooperation between tourism and culture; and
- discuss how to build new partnership models that strengthen socioeconomic links, reinforce mutual engagement in the promotion, protection and safeguarding of culture and heritage, and build up cultural tourism for sustainable development.



III. Guidelines for discussion

5. For the purpose of a fruitful and lively participation in the discussion, the Secretariat invites delegations to share their experiences in the development and management of cultural tourism, particularly focusing on the following areas:
 - (a) Governance, including the different roles and mandates of the two sectors and existing frameworks for collaboration;
 - (b) Stakeholder engagement and public-private partnerships models;
 - (c) Community engagement and development;
 - (d) Promotion and protection of cultural heritage;
 - (e) The role of creative industries—visual and performing arts, food and cuisine, design and architecture, literature and media—in tourism development and enriching the visitor experience;
 - (f) Quality, innovation and the use of technology;
 - (g) Communicating and promoting corporate and visitor responsibility.

IV. Actions to be taken by the Executive Council:

6. The Executive Council is requested:
 - (a) To call for enhanced collaboration between tourism and culture aimed at building new partnership models that ensure the promotion and protection of cultural values and assets while advancing sustainable tourism.
 - (b) To encourage Member States to actively participate in the UNWTO/UNESCO Conference as well as to engage their tourism and cultural stakeholders.
 - (c) To recall the importance of the Samarkand Declaration on Silk Road Tourism on the occasion of its 20th anniversary, and invite the signatory parties to promote its full implementation.