UNWTO Conference on
“Tourism: a Catalyst for Development, Peace and Reconciliation”
Passikudah, Sri Lanka, 11 - 14 July 2016

Profile of Speakers

Session 1: The contribution of tourism development to peace and reconciliation

Chantha Tith
Vice Minister of Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia

HE Mr. Tith Chantha has been working for Tourism of Cambodia for 26 years since the first day of Cambodia Tourism re-established after war and political problem in the past.

He has position as Secretary of State, Royal Government of Cambodia, since 2013 after serving as Director General and Deputy DG of tourism for more than 10 years.

HE Mr. Tith Chantha has education background of Economics and Master Degree in Tourism Management from United Kingdom (University of Brighton).

His Excellency has grown, studied and worked through difficult time of war and political instability in the past and development of Cambodia today. Therefore, he is one of witnesses of Peace and Tourism Development.

Guy Didier Hyppolite
Minister of Ministry of Tourism, Haiti

HE Mr. Guy Didier HYPPOLITE is the new Minister of Tourism in Haiti was born on September 7th, 1979 in Port-au-Prince. After studying Legal Sciences at Quisqueya University, he began his professional career as Head of Legal Affairs of one of the biggest financial group in the country until 2010.

When his father Guy Yvon HYPPOLITE, former Director of TELECO in December 2009 passed away, Guy Didier decided to join his mother Rachel De Delva HYPPOLITE to run the family business Le Relais de Chateaublond located at the Parc Historique de la Canne-à-sucre in Tabarre, across the American Embassy.

The Minister has several years of experience in the Hospitality and Catering field. Indeed, as the General Manager of the restaurant Le Relais de Chateaublond, his love and passion for the Haitian gastronomy, a major component of our cultural heritage, and his fastidiousness of Customer service led him to join the prestigious Tourism Association of Haiti (ATH). Very soon, his talent of counsellor and his dedication to the tourist question brought him to the position of General Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Association and also to the Board of the Conciliation and Arbitration Chamber (CCAH).

This journey, guided by determination, ardour and dedication enabled, thanks to the confidence of the tourist sector, this young entrepreneur to receive the heavy responsibility and honour to serve his country at the highest authority of promotion that is the Ministry of tourism where he promise to make every effort to regain the legitimate part of Haiti on the World tourist market full of customers increasingly demanding on quality service.
Hiran Cooray
Chairman of Jetwing Hotels Ltd. and President of Tourist Hotels Association of Sri Lanka

Hailed as a respected professional in Sri Lankan tourism, Hiran Cooray contributes an immense mixture of passion, honesty, integrity and tenacity to the industry. Carrying on the legacy of his father, the late Herbert Cooray, he is the current Chairman of Jetwing - a family owned company which counts a storied history of over 4 decades. His achievements are numerous and much acclaimed, being educated at the prestigious St. Joseph’s in Colombo and going on to graduate from the University of North Carolina and having followed a General Managers course at Cornell University. Mr. Cooray has been Chairman of PATA Sri Lanka Chapter (2003/4), represented Sri Lanka on the Board of Directors of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) (2010/12), President of the Tourist Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (2005/8); and was recently appointed an Alternate Member of the UNWTO – World Committee on Tourism Ethics 2013-2017. Mr. Cooray is currently serving for the second term as President of Tourist Hotels Association of Sri Lanka 2014-2016.

Today, Mr. Cooray sits on the Boards of the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotions Bureau, having already served as a board member of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) from 2010-2014. He has also been a Member of the Board of Small Luxury Hotels, from 2007-2014.

In addition, he holds over 50 directorships in various hotels and related companies – making him a much sought after speaker/panelist at tourism related international forums.

István Ujhelyi
Member of the European Parliament and the Head of the Hungarian National Delegation to the S&D Group

István Ujhelyi is a Member of the European Parliament and the Head of the Hungarian National Delegation to the S&D Group. Currently, he is Vice-Chair of the Transport & Tourism Committee, Chair of the Tourism Task Force and also a member in the EP's delegation responsible for relations with China.

After graduating as a lawyer, he was elected member of the local government of Szeged. In 2002 he became a Member of the Hungarian Assembly. He was Deputy-speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly between 2010-2014. Moreover, he served in several high-level positions in the Hungarian government, for instance as State-Secretary of the Prime Minister's Office on several political fields (2009-2010) and State-Secretary of the Ministry of the Local Government and Regional Development responsible for tourism policy (2006-2008). He was also President of the National Tourism Committee in 2009-2010.

Mr. Ujhelyi has been Member of the Hungarian Socialist Party from 1993. Since 2004, he has been Vice-President of the Party. He is also the founder of the think tank European Democrats and President of the EU-China One Belt One Road Culture & Tourism Development Committee.
Jens Thraenhart
Executive Director of Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office (MTCO)

Jens Thraenhart was appointed by the tourism ministries of Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and China (Yunnan and Guanxi) to head the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office (MTCO) as its Executive Director.

The Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office (MTCO) is an inter-governmental body to promote the Mekong region as a single tourism destination, and foster responsible tourism development in the Greater Mekong Subregion.

Mr. Thraenhart is founder & president of Digital Innovation Asia (DIA). In 2009, he co-founded China Travel Trends, as well as award-winning China digital marketing and social media agency Dragon Trail, and has led marketing and Internet strategy teams with the Canadian Tourism Commission and Fairmont Hotels & Resorts. He has consulted for many global companies, including recently Prestige Cruise Holdings (now Norwegian Cruise Lines), Swire Hotels, Dusit International, Shinta Mani Hotel Cambodia, and the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

Educated at Cornell University with a Masters of Management in Hospitality, Mr. Thraenhart was recognized as one of the travel industry’s top 100 rising stars by Travel Agent Magazine in 2003, was listed as one of HSMAI’s 25 Most Extraordinary Sales and Marketing Minds in Hospitality and Travel in 2004 and 2005, and named as one of the Top 20 Extraordinary Minds in European Travel and Hospitality in 2014. A UNWTO Affiliate Member, and past Chair of PATA China, he founded the Annual China Responsible Tourism Forum & Awards in 2011. A dual citizen of Germany and Canada, Jens now lives in Bangkok/Thailand.

Xu Jing
Director, World Tourism Organisation Regional Programme for Asia and the Pacific

As a long-serving member for over two decades, Xu Jing is the Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific at the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) since the end of 2003. He was also appointed by UNWTO as the Director - Executive Secretary of the General Assembly and the Executive Council in January 2014.

Mr. Xu began his tourism career at the China National Tourism Administration where he was in charge of the international relations division. He joined UNWTO in 1992 as Officer to the Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific. Over the years, he has coordinated and supervised numerous UNWTO technical cooperation projects and various support missions on subjects of contemporary interest to the tourism community of Asian countries.

He also holds honorary academic positions in several universities where he lectured on tourism issues of international and regional significance, including the Chinese University of Hong Kong, University of Suzhou, Sun Yat-sen University, Shanghai Institute of Tourism, Hainan University, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Kyunghee University in the Republic of Korea and University of Balearic Islands in Spain. He is also a senior advisor to the Chinese municipalities of Guilin and Huangshan.

Mr. Xu holds a master degree in Tourism Management from the University of Surrey in England and majored in English literature during his undergraduate studies in Beijing Second Foreign Language Institute.
Session 2: Local community involvement and “peace sensitive tourism”

Anita Mendiratta
Founder and Managing Director of CACHET CONSULTING

A trusted and respected global strategic advisor and five-time author in Tourism & Development, Ms. Mendiratta is the Founder and Managing Director of CACHET CONSULTING – an international consulting firm working closely with leaders in governments, private sector businesses, and international organizations.

Ms. Mendiratta has established a reputation for providing critical direction, insight and inspiration into destination development, recovery and competitiveness. Alongside her business leadership, she is also honoured to be the Special Advisor to the Secretary General of the UNWTO, Strategic partner to the WORLD BANK GROUP and Lead consultant of CNN International’s T.A.S.K. GROUP.

In 2011 Ms. Mendiratta authored “COME CLOSER: How Tourism is Shaping the Future of Nations”, nominated for the Financial Times Book of the Year. This was followed in 2013 by her authoring of “Tourism Stories: How Tourism Enriched My Life”, and in 2015 by “Tourism Shaping Tomorrow – Global Observatories Of Sustainable Tourism - Building A Better Tourism Future” and “Tourism Stories (Volume 2): My Story, My Community, Our Future”, both books on special commission by the UNWTO. In 2016, she authored the Philippines Edition of “Tourism Stories” on special assignment for the UNWTO, Philippines Department of Tourism and USAID.

As a result of her international reputation as an advisor, author, presenter and confidante at the highest levels, she has become a sought after speaker, moderator and coach in for leaders and nations across the globe.

Louis, Liu Yi
Deputy Head of Tourism Management and Planning in School of Tourism Management, Sun Yat-sen University

Graduated from National University of Singapore, Dr Liu is currently the deputy head of the department of Tourism Management and Planning in School of Tourism Management, Sun Yat-sen University.

Specialized in economic geography, industrial upgrading and tourism value chain studies, Dr. Liu has already established himself in the academics with various publications in the top academic SSCI journals in his fields, leading three national level research projects supported by the National Science Foundations, Ministry of Education and Tourism Bureau of China and completing dozens of planning projects of tourism development, heritage conservation and scenic spot design.

Since 2014, Dr. Liu has participated in UNWTO Sustainable Tourism Observation in the Luoyang city of Henan Province. Based on pilot test in 2014, he has initiated a mega-data research project for monitoring sustainable tourism through online information. This research aims for developing an overarching and live-broadcasting observation system of sustainable tourism in China.
Louis D’Amore  
Founder and President of the International Institute for Peace through Tourism (IIPT)

Mr. D’Amore has been instrumental in promoting the travel and tourism industry as the world’s first “Global Peace Industry” since the founding of IIPT in 1986. At the first IIPT Global Conference in Vancouver in 1988, he first introduced the concept of Sustainable Tourism. He also introduced a new paradigm of "Higher Purpose of Tourism" that he has since promoted in IIPT Conferences throughout the world.

In 1992, following the U.N. conference on Environment and Development (Rio Summit), he developed the world’s first Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism for the Canadian tourism industry. He also conducted the world's first international study on Codes of Conduct and Best Practices in Tourism and Environment for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

As a consultant prior to founding IIPT, he conducted the world’s first comprehensive study on the future of tourism in 1976. Additionally, he worked as a futurist and consultant for ten years to the Canadian tourism industry during which time he pioneered socially and environmentally responsible tourism in Canada.

Martin Brackenbury  
Director of Classic Collection Holidays and Managing Partner of Brackenbury & Partners

Martin Brackenbury is a Director of Classic Collection Holidays and Managing Partner of Brackenbury & Partners.

Formerly a Director of Thomson, Panorama, Airtours and Exodus Holidays he was also a Professor at Nottingham University in the UK.

He has served for a number of years on Industry bodies: FTO (Chair), IFTO (President), ABTA (Director) and UNWTO (Chair of Affiliate members).

He has carried out many missions researching and then advising Governments and the private sector on responsible tourism development in more than 40 countries in the past 30 years.

He speaks widely on tourism matters at international meetings and policy forums. He is a member of the UK’s Tourism Hall of Fame and is a recipient of a number of significant awards.
Hiroshi Sawabe
Executive Director, Office of International Tourism, Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA)

Hiroshi Sawabe was appointed as Executive Director, Office of International Tourism, of JATA in Tokyo in October 2013, responsible for business relationship with UNWTO, PATA, WTTC, international tourism meetings and bilateral tourism development with overseas government tourism offices and tourism private sectors.

Before this appointment, Mr. Sawabe was Executive Director, Sales and Planning, of JATA Travel Showcase Promotion Office in Tokyo in April 2012. JATA Travel Showcase is one of Asia’s largest tourism events with a goal to stimulate demand in the tourism industry.

Mr. Sawabe also was Chief Director of the Visit World Promotion (VWC) Office of the Japan Association of Travel Agents from 2008 to 2012. He was appointed as the first Head of “Visit World Campaign (VWC) 20 Million Travelers Promotion Office in Tokyo” in February 2008. The VWC is a nationwide project to stimulate demand for Japanese outbound travel.

Mr. Sawabe has a diverse, over 40-year long career in the international travel industry. He worked for Nippon Travel Agency as General Manager of Inbound & Outbound Travel, and for Regional Director of Los Angeles CVB & Los Angeles World Airports, Asia Pacific. Before joining the JATA, he worked in Tokyo for Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide as Regional Director of Sales & Marketing, Japan, Korea & Guam.

Mario Hardy
Chief Executive Officer of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)

Dr. Hardy is an entrepreneur, serial angel investor with close to 30 years of combined leadership, corporate development and change management experience.

He is the past Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the PATA Foundation, a non-profit organisation with a mission to contribute to the sustainable and responsible development of travel and tourism in Asia Pacific through the protection of the environment, the conservation of culture and heritage, and support for education.

Prior to PATA, he worked 14 years for UBM/OAG a business with a focus on data analytics and events for the aviation sector and occupied several leadership roles in London, Beijing and Singapore.

He began his career with People’s Express Airlines in 1985, before joining Canadian Airlines in 1987 where he spent 12 years in a number of sales, marketing and operational roles, leading to his appointment in a senior management role heading the Group Sales & Charter division in 1997.

He has a BSc from the University of Montreal, a Public Relations Certificate from L’École des Hautes Études Commerciales de Montréal and an International Trade Certificate from the O’Sullivan College of Montreal.
Mr. Wong has been engaged in the development of cultural and heritage resources and has been giving presentations and lectures to NGOs, government and tertiary educational institutes. Since 1993, he has been participating as a member in the United Nations multi-agencies Silk Road Project.

Session 4: Marketing and rebranding of post-conflict destinations

Mr. Muqbil has attended and reported on dozens of global travel trade shows, travel industry summits, annual general meetings and summits, over the years and is one of the longest serving travel trade journalists in Asia Pacific.

Reputed for his knowledge, courage and independent thinking on tourism related issues, Mr. Muqbil’s opinions have always found a hearing amongst professionals and laymen alike.

Born and educated in India, Mr. Muqbil holds a Diploma from the London School of Journalism. He worked for Travel Trade Gazette Asia, and was chief correspondent TTG Asia, PATA Travel News, to mention a few of the posts he held in the field of tourism and journalism in his career.
Malik Fernando
Director, Operations of MJF Holdings/Dilmah Tea

Malik Fernando is Director Operations of MJF Holdings/Dilmah Tea. He holds a B.Sc. in Management from Babson College, Boston.

Established by his father Merrill J. Fernando, Dilmah was the pioneer in branding, packaging and therefore ‘adding value’ to tea at origin. Dilmah is recognized as an innovator in the multinational dominated tea category, emphasizing tradition and authenticity.

Mr. Fernando spearheads Resplendent Ceylon which is creating a series of small luxury resorts, starting with the iconic Ceylon Tea Trails & Cape Weligama, a cliff top beach resort, both members of Relais & Chateaux. Three more resorts are under development.

Sandra Carvão
Chief of Communications and Publications, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Sandra Carvão is Chief of the Communications and Publications at the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and Spokesperson for the Organization since April 2010.

Between 2007 and 201, Ms. Carvão was Deputy Chief of the UNWTO Market Trends, Competitiveness and Trade in Tourism Services Section. Prior to joining UNWTO in 2003, Sandra was Market Manager at the Portuguese National Tourist Office in Lisbon.

Sandra has a degree in International Relations, Economics Branch, by the Instituto de Ciências Sociais e Políticas/Universidade Técnica de Lisboa and a postgraduate degree in Marketing by the Universidad Complutense de Madrid.
Sarah Mathews
Head of Destination Marketing APAC, TripAdvisor

Sarah Mathews, together with her team of four, is responsible for leading TripAdvisor's efforts and initiatives in collaborating with and providing support to tourism boards across Asia Pacific as well as developing strategies that will drive awareness for each destination. Her insights into the regional travel industry has made her a consistent figure in trade shows and conferences where she shares case studies and best practices of key industry players.

Having joined TripAdvisor in the London office back in 2012, Ms. Mathews managed key clients across Europe, Asia and Africa, building close relationships with tourism boards including South Africa Tourism and Greek National Tourism Organization. Her stellar work with South Africa Tourism has manifested in a case study that was featured in the recently published UNWTO-E Marketing Handbook.

Born and raised in Hong Kong, Sarah is proficient in Chinese and has spent most of her life living in Hong Kong, Beijing and Australia, allowing her to have an in-depth understanding of the region's cultural needs and sensitivities. Prior to joining TripAdvisor, Ms. Mathews has held positions in Hong Kong Tourism Board (based in London) and Visit Flanders where she managed international marketing for the respective destinations.

Ms. Mathews is also part of the Executive Board of Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), currently holding the position of Vice Chairman.

Sonali Chatterjee
Sales Director, India and South Asia for CNN International

Based in New Delhi, Ms. Chatterjee has led CNN International's fast growing advertising business in the region for the past 8 years. She is responsible for managing and offering strategic advice to the increasing number of companies targeting the global consumer, through CNN's various platforms.

Under her leadership, the CNN International Ad Sales business in the region has seen exponential growth with acquisition of key clients in the South Asia region and embraced new product categories. There has also been greater engagement with IT services and digital companies including CNN being chosen as the exclusive television partner for a leading web portal's launch in the United States. Chatterjee has also overseen the strengthening and expansion of client interest and investments in CNN's green platforms creating beneficial long term partnerships.

A media industry veteran, Ms. Chatterjee has holistic experiences across genres including news, sports & entertainment. She has worked in sales as well as creative client solutions and has been deeply involved in the branding exercise of many clients. She holds a Master's Degree in International Relations from Jawaharlal Nehru University and enjoys reading, listening to music and solving cryptic crosswords in her leisure time.
Trevor Claringbold
Editor of Pro-Traveller magazine and Creative Director of Globetrotter Television channel

With a media background stretching back three decades, Trevor Claringbold has a wonderfully diverse experience, yet still retains the same passion for the industry he’s always had.

An award-winning travel journalist, and an award winning broadcast producer, Mr. Claringbold is also an experienced cameraman, television producer, editor, and photographer. He is Editor of the high-end family and cultural Pro-Traveller magazine, and Creative Director of the new Globetrotter Television channel.

Probably best known for his 15 years at the BBC, as a Sony Gold Award winning producer and presenter, he has reported live from refugee camps in central Africa, a veterans return to Normandy’s D-Day beaches, backstage at the BBC Children in Need event, and even from inside a WW2 tank during a mock battle!

The last few months have seen Mr. Claringbold concentrating on the new Globetrotter Television project – a brand new broadcast television channel for travel and tourism. With the groundwork done, and a significant number of the world’s major tourist boards keen to support the new channel, Mr. Claringbold has a busy summer looking at potential investors, partnership deals, and series sponsors.

Of course, it is for travel journalism that Mr. Claringbold is most widely recognized. He has travelled to more than 70 countries, and produced over 500 articles in his extensive career. He has won the Italian Tourist Board award for Best Article. He also mentor’s young journalism talent, using his event radio stations and filming opportunities, and is a guest lecturer at Canterbury Christchurch University.