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PRESENTATION OF THE WHITE PAPER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This White Paper (WP) responds to both, the commitment made by the Secretary General and the request of the UNWTO governing organs to embark upon a reform process of the World Tourism Organization, so as to make it more relevant to members and more efficient in addressing the current and future tourism and global development challenges.

After analysing the evolution of the Organization in recent years, as well as its ability and shortcomings to respond to the new opportunities and challenges that the growth of tourism has brought to societies and their governments, the WP proposes a number of changes and possible adjustments to enhance its capacity and performance.

A first issue is the need to concentrate UNWTO's work on a few, high priority subjects of interest and relevance to most members, aiming at significant results in those areas, so as to strengthen its position as a global leader on tourism policy issues and to provide more meaningful, strategic services to members. Proposals are made to involve more strongly the members in the definition of priorities for the biennial programmes of work, giving to the Regional Commissions a new, more substantive role in the identification of regional priorities. In parallel, it is proposed to merge the Programme and the Budget & Finance Committees, for achieving more coherence in the allocation of resources to priority areas, and to fully refurbish the composition and way of operation of the technical committees. Five priority areas of work are detailed for the 2010-2011 biennium, already included in the current Programme of Work, and a proposal is made to start tackling, in an in-depth manner, three new areas: domestic tourism, employment in tourism and tourism governance issues.

Secondly, the WP makes proposals to strengthen the members' sense of ownership of the Organization, through changes in the contents and format of the General Assembly and Executive Council, and in all other meetings of its organs; through more frequent communications between the Secretariat and its members, using new, e-based mechanisms; through the designation of UNWTO Focal Points in each Member State; through the creation of a Management Committee as a subsidiary organ of the Executive Council, among others.

A third concern refers to technical cooperation activities, considered as a key mechanism to provide services to all Member States and not only to those in a developing stage. Expanding external funding sources is seen as crucial to provide these services, and proposals are made to involve members in the search of additional funds, in close coordination with the newly appointed Executive Director responsible for resource mobilisation. UNWTO's full insertion in the UN system, as well as the integration of tourism in wider national and regional sustainable development strategies, should be leveraged to facilitate fund-raising. Particular attention is given to the ST-EP Initiative, with proposals for

increasing its poverty reduction impacts, expanding its sources of funding and better channelling its implementation and dissemination of its results.

The WP stresses the need for the Organization to multiply its partnerships with external institutions, within and outside the UN system, and especially with the private sector. This is seen as an effective tool to expand UNWTO's reach and sphere of influence, as well as a constructive potential way for increasing its resources. Affiliate membership is considered crucial for establishing more permanent partnerships with private and non-governmental stakeholders; given the wide variety and different interests of current and potential members, proposals are made to insert the Affiliate Members within UNWTO's regional working frameworks. Special attention is given to the academic sector, seen as key to generate know-how; a proposal is made to create a Knowledge Network to serve as a kind of "think-tank" for the Organization and its members.

The WP proposes a dual system for establishing time-bound external entities serving specific UNWTO objectives, including those already existing. Following the practice of other UN bodies, it is proposed two categories of external entities: "controlled" and "non-controlled" entities, the former being full part of the Organization and in which the Secretary General has full control, while the latter being under the responsibility of a totally external board or authority, with only some representation from UNWTO.

Finally, and in order to achieve the main objective of becoming a more relevant and efficient Organization, the WP proposes a number of changes in the Secretariat's structure and management, some of which are currently being implemented. A key move from a department-based to a programme-based organizational structure is already helping to make a better use of human and financial resources, while providing a more integrated working framework that will, in addition, facilitate evaluation of results. Proposals are also made regarding staff recruitment, career development, travel expenses, intensive use of modern electronic media, administrative procedures, internal audit and a few other areas in order to raise efficiency and cut costs without reducing services to members.

Many of the White Paper's proposals require decisions by the Executive Council and/or the General Assembly, while others are within the realm of decisions by the Secretary General, but they are nevertheless submitted to members for their consideration and/or information.