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Report of the UNWTO Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness

Note by the Secretary-General

In this document, the Secretary-General presents to the Members of the Commission for Africa the report of the UNWTO Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness.

Report of the Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness

I. Background, achievements and composition

1. The Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness (CTC), as a subsidiary organ of the Executive Council and in fulfilment of its mandate, elaborated and agreed upon the following concepts related to the tourism value chain during the term 2013-2015, namely: *Tourism Destination, Destination Management/Marketing Organization (DMO), Tourism Product, Tourism Value Chain, Quality of a Tourism Destination, Innovation in Tourism and Competitiveness of a Tourism Destination*. The Executive Council at its 103rd session held in Málaga, Spain, on 9-11 May 2016 endorsed these definitions (CE/DEC/7(CIII)).

2. Considering the same approach, during the period of 2015-2017 the Committee prioritized some selected tourism types and agreed upon the following operational definitions, namely: *Cultural Tourism, Ecotourism, Rural Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Health Tourism, Wellness Tourism, Medical Tourism, Business Tourism (related to the Meetings Industry), Gastronomy Tourism, Coastal, Maritime and Inland Water Tourism, Urban/City Tourism, Mountain Tourism, Education Tourism and Sports Tourism*. The Executive Council at its 106th session held in Chengdu, China, on 12 September 2017 endorsed these definitions (CE/DEC/7(CVI)).

3. The definitions endorsed by the Executive Council at its 103rd and 106th sessions, respectively, were adopted as recommendations by the General Assembly at its 22nd session (Chengdu, China, 11-16 September 2017) (A/RES/684(XXII)). The outcome aims at contributing to enhance the normative role of the Organization while assisting its Members in their efforts to assess measure and benchmark on a common ground and within a harmonized understanding. The full list of definitions adopted as recommendations at the 22nd session of the General Assembly are available [here](#).

4. The Secretariat also drafted a provisional list of relevant quantitative and qualitative factors which identify the competitiveness of a tourism destination under two categories: i) governance, management and market dynamics, and ii) destination appeal, attractors, products and supply. This list was submitted to the 105th session of the Executive Council held on 10-12 May 2017 in Madrid, Spain, for information ([CE/105/5\(a\)](#) - Annex I Report of the Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness).

5. Based on the consensus reached by the CTC members, the Committee agreed on several lines of action for different factors. The objective is to provide the Member States with a conceptual and comprehensive framework for a clear understanding of the factors that explain competitiveness at the destination level which may be translated into guidelines to measure competitiveness:

- (a) Draft an operational definition or
- (b) Draft a position paper / technical report (to be published) or
- (c) Compile the information and data from the already existing available sources.

6. As regards the composition of the CTC, the new Chair of the Affiliate Members, Instituto para la Calidad Turística Española (Institute for Spanish Tourism Quality, ICTE) and Macao, China, joined the Committee for the period of 2017-2019 in their capacity as representatives of the Affiliate Members and of Associate Members of UNWTO, respectively (CE/DEC/5(CVII)). The other members of the Committee for the period 2015-2019 elected by the Executive Council at its 102nd session (Medellín,

Colombia, 17 September 2015, (CE/DEC/4(CII)): Croatia, Gambia, Italy (Vice-Chair), Maldives, Mexico, Namibia, Peru (Chair), Qatar and Republic of Korea remain unchanged.

7. The CTC is governed by the Rules of Procedure of the Technical Committees on Competitiveness and Sustainability approved by the Executive Council in CE/DEC/9(XCVI).

II. Meetings of the CTC

8. The Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness conducted two meetings since reporting last to the Executive Council:

(a) 6th meeting of the Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness

9. The CTC held its sixth meeting on 11 September 2017, in Chengdu, China, on the occasion of the 22nd session of the UNWTO General Assembly.

10. Delegates from 12 Member States attended the meeting: Peru (Chair), Croatia, Gambia, Mexico and Qatar in their capacity as members of the Committee, and China, Malta, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Uruguay as observers.

11. The meeting provided a follow-up of the progress already achieved by the Committee. The 103rd session of the Executive Council held in Málaga, Spain, in May 2016 had endorsed a set of definitions on some basic concepts of the tourism value chain. A second list of definitions elaborated by the CTC on some prioritized tourism types following a survey conducted among the CTC members were endorsed by the 106th session of the Executive Council held in Chengdu (CE/DEC/7(CVI)). They were adopted as recommendations by the 22nd session of the General Assembly (A/RES/684(XXII)).

12. During this meeting the programme of work for the Committee for the period of 2018-2019, which also incorporated the proposal of Peru (Chair), was presented and discussed. The CTC members agreed to move forward with the work plan in 2018-2019.

13. In the framework of this meeting, the results of the UNWTO/WTCF "City Tourism Performance Research" were presented to the CTC Members.

(b) 7th meeting of the Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness

14. The CTC conducted its seventh meeting on 19 January 2018 on the occasion of FITUR 2018.

15. Peru (Chair), Mexico, Qatar and Republic of Korea participated in the meeting in their capacity as members of the Committee while Instituto para la Calidad Turística Española – ICTE (Spain) and Macao (China) joined the meeting as representatives of the Affiliate Members and Associate Members of UNWTO in the CTC, respectively. Representatives from Barbados, Thailand and Colombia attended the meeting as observers and UNE (former AENOR) also joined the meeting as invited participant.

16. The meeting served as a platform to discuss the future activities and forthcoming steps of the Committee within the work plan for the period of 2018-2019 proposed by Peru (Chair) which had been previously reviewed at the 6th Meeting of the CTC held in Chengdu, China on 11 September 2017.

17. The CTC agreed to move forward with the "Work Plan Proposal 2018-2019" which is summarized as follows: (a) elaborate position papers on some selected factors and (b) develop technical guidelines on some selected factors for competitiveness. At the same time, during 2018-2019, the Committee will

also continue elaborating operational definitions on tourism types and other concepts related to the tourism value chain.

18. Other issues were also discussed during this meeting:

(a) The joint work Report about ISO TC 228 & “Accessible Tourism” drafted by WG 14 (initiative led by the Spanish Association for Standardization-UNE and UNWTO) was presented to the CTC Members. The CTC was recommended to serve as a platform to channel this report to the related institutions in their respective countries.

(b) It was brought to the attention of the CTC that many UNWTO Members request from the Secretariat knowledge and guidance on hotel classification. In this vein, the Secretariat suggested to consult internally the official positioning of UNWTO on whether to elaborate a “hotel classification policy document” before involving the CTC in this process.

III. Follow-up and work plan of the CTC

19. The CTC will continue with the work plan for the period of 2018-2019 by:

(a) Drafting position papers / technical reports on prioritized factors for competitiveness at this stage with the aim to provide tourism stakeholders with a conceptual and comprehensive framework for a clear understanding of the factors that explain competitiveness at the destination level. The position papers / technical reports, which may be translated into guidelines to measure competitiveness, will also provide a list of recommendations to improve destination competitiveness and assist the Members in their policy-making process.

(b) Developing technical guidelines which will assist the Members in their efforts to measure the competitiveness factors they consider relevant to their respective strengths and the current needs in their tourism destinations. The set of guidelines will facilitate the establishment of a methodology to develop quantitative and qualitative indicators (criteria) to measure the different competitiveness factors at the destination level.

(c) Elaborating further concepts and operational definitions (e.g. more tourism types, such as Cruise Tourism, Mega-events Tourism, Shopping Tourism, Religious and Spiritual Tourism, etc.) to strengthen the normative role of the Organization. In this process, the CTC will encourage the involvement of tourism institutions of the Members to contribute with their technical input to the work plan of the Committee.

20. The CTC will continue improving the list of quantitative and qualitative factors for competitiveness (i.e., include “resilience capacity” and “visitor’s experience”)

21. As agreed upon by the Committee during its 7th meeting, the Secretariat shared with each CTC member the contact details of the national standardization organization in their respective countries. The CTC members were encouraged to channel the Report about ISO TC 228 and “Accessible Tourism” drafted by Working Group 14 (initiative led by the Spanish Association for Standardization-UNE and UNWTO) to the related institutions responsible for standardization at country level. The CTC Members are not expected to produce an outcome on this issue but the results can be channelled through the Committee to achieve a normative position. It was also suggested that UNWTO and UNE update CTC Members on the developments on the WG14 so that the outcome of the work may be eventually brought to UNWTO’s Executive Council and General Assembly for endorsement.

22. The CTC recommends that the Secretariat conduct an internal consultation in order to discuss in detail the suitability of the proposal on whether to elaborate a hotel classification policy document which would officially position UNWTO on this issue.