

Speakers and Panellists

(in order of appearance)

DAY ONE

Thursday 18 June, 2015

Welcome Sessions



Mr. Shanzhong Zhu

UNWTO Executive Director for Technical Cooperation and Services

Mr. Shanzhong Zhu is currently serving as the Executive Director for Technical Cooperation and Services at the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). From late 2008 to 2013, he was Vice Chairman of China National Tourism Administration (CNTA), and was responsible for overseeing international relations, marketing and promotions in domestic and overseas markets, tourism security and the establishment of a public service network.

Mr. Zhu previously served CNTA in different capacities, namely as Director of the CNTA Sydney Office, Director of the CNTA New York Office, Deputy Director-General of the International Marketing Department and Director-General of the Marketing and Communication Department of CNTA. He received his Master's Degree in Tourism Economic Management from the Graduate School of New York New School in 1988. He also has a Bachelor Degree in English Language and Literature from Nanjing University in China.



Ms. Alla Peressolova

Head of UNWTO Silk Road Programme

Ms. Alla Peressolova has been working for UNWTO for over twenty years in different areas, and is currently in charge of two Programmes at UNWTO – Fairs Programme and Silk Road Programme.

She is responsible for the UNWTO's relations with the major international fairs, including WTM London, ITB Berlin, FITUR Madrid, Intourmarket Moscow and ATM Dubai. Over the years, she has established strong alliances with over 20 international and regional fairs, where she has been developing on-going programmes and events. She is in charge of such successful events as the Ministers' Summit, which gathers over 100 ministers of tourism every year at WTM, London. Since 2010, she has also been responsible for the UNWTO Silk Road Programme, a collaborative platform aimed at raising the profile of Silk Road tourism by supporting Silk Road destinations in the promotion of responsible and sustainable tourism across the regions of Europe, Asia and Middle East.

**Moderator: Mr. Xu Jing****UNWTO Director of Regional Programme for Asia and the Pacific**

Mr. Xu Jing is currently Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific at the UNWTO – a position he has occupied since the end of 2003. In addition to his regional responsibilities, as of January 2014, he has been appointed UNWTO's Director – Executive Secretary of the General Assembly and the Executive Council.

Mr. Xu Jing began his career in tourism 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 coordinated and supervised numerous UNWTO technical cooperation projects and sectorial support missions on subjects of contemporary interest to the tourism community of Asian countries.

Mr. Xu Jing holds a Master's 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.

**Mr. Yuri Peshkov****Culture Specialist, UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan**

Mr. Yuri Peshkov is the National Programme Specialist of the UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, responsible for UNESCO's Culture Programme in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. His work currently focuses on the promotion of culture for sustainable development and the protection of cultural diversity through the implementation of integrated operational and normative projects aimed at the preservation of tangible and intangible heritage, the promotion of diversity, cultural expressions and intercultural dialogue. Prior to UNESCO, he worked as an archaeologist for the Institute of Archaeology and for the Central State Museum of Kazakhstan.

**Mr. Gai Jorayev****Institute of Archaeology, University College London**

Mr. Gai Jorayev is a specialist on management and modern use of heritage, and has extensive experience in working in developing countries. He has participated and managed projects focused on the documentation of sites and monuments, exhibition design and interpretation, education and public outreach. Mr. Jorayev has extensive experience in working with international organizations, and is currently collaborating with UNESCO, ICOMOS and UNWTO on tourism and heritage projects in Central Asia. He is closely involved in UNESCO's efforts for the serial World Heritage nomination of the Silk Road sites in the region. Mr. Jorayev is currently based at the Centre for Applied Archaeology of the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, where he also contributes to teaching masters level students. He is experienced in spatial analyses and also leads aerial photography research.



Mr. George Chogovadze
Head, Georgian National Tourism Administration

Mr. George Chogovadze has been Head of the Georgian National Tourism Administration since 2014. Previously, Mr. Chogovadze held positions as: Deputy Head of Economic Affairs for Tbilisi City Hall; General Manager of Lufthansa City Center Central Travel; Head of Marketing and of the PR Department of Batumi State Marine Academy, and Chairman of the Events and Public Relations Commission. Mr. Chogovadze has a Master of Business Administration, which he obtained at ESM Tbilisi.



Ms. Alessandra Priante
Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Italy

Ms. Alessandra Priante takes care of international relations in the newly formed Directorate General for Tourism within the Italian Ministry of Culture and Tourism, with specific dedication to the UNWTO and all strategic issues focused on global tourism.

Previously, Ms. Priante has been in charge of public funding and research in the Italian Ministry of Culture - Direction for Cinema and has represented Italy in various international and European Institutions. She has also been the Italian representative at *Eurimages*, the Council of Europe's fund devoted to film co-productions, and *Media*, the European Commission Fund for the audiovisual sector. Furthermore, Ms Priante has been the Italian Diplomatic Cultural Representative in the Gulf Area, where she was responsible for promoting Italian culture and education. In line with her academic preparation and research interests, Alessandra has published numerous sector publications and books. She teaches culture management and strategy at some of the major Universities in Italy for post-graduate students.



Mr. Ningbin Hou
Director-General of Emperor Qin Shi Huang Mausoleum Museum Xi'an (Terracotta Army World Heritage Site)

In 1986, Mr. Ningbin Hou received a major in archaeology at the school of history in Northwest University. Mr. Hou has an extensive background in the preservation and administration of archaeological cultural relics, and has held positions such as Assistant Director of the Shaanxi Archaeological Institute, Vice Director of Relics Preservation and Archaeology Department of Shaanxi Provincial Administration of Cultural Heritage and Curator of Han Yangling Museum. Mr Hou has made an active contribution to the development and protection of Shaanxi cultural relics, and is now the curator of the Emperor Qin Shihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum. Mr Hou has published over ten professional works and theses, including the archaeological report *The Han Dynasty Tombs in Bailu Yuan*, which provides important reference to the study of Han Dynasty tombs in Guanzhong Plain, as well as in the Shaanxi Province.

Keynote Presentation

Tourism Connecting Land, Spirit and People



Mr. Neville Poelina

Former Chairman, World Indigenous Tourism Alliance (WINTA)

Mr. Poelina is a Nyikina man from the Kimberley. He was the inaugural Chairperson of the World Indigenous Tourism Alliance (WINTA), and is presently a member of the Tourism Western Australia board of commissioners and the Western Australia Indigenous Tourism Council. Mr. Poelina was born in Derby, Western Australia and is the proud father of five children. He has lived in the Kimberley all his life and holds a wealth of knowledge of the region. He has traditional ties right throughout the Kimberley and Aboriginal culture, and society is his life. Starting off selling bait and fishing trips to Broome's visitors at 6 years of age, Mr. Poelina has a lifetime involvement in tourism. He has been operating his own multi award winning business Uptuyu Adventures since 2002. Mr. Poelina was called back to his traditional lands to establish the Oongkalkada Wilderness Camp and Indigenous Training Centre, where he now bases his business operations. Mr. Poelina is passionate about sharing cultural insights in the spectacular ever changing Kimberley.

Panel Session II

From the ground up: Inspiring stories of local entrepreneurs championing tourism



Moderator: Mr. John Bell

UK travel correspondent

Mr. John Bell has been a journalist for prominent media for twenty years, specializing in travel and transport. He is an expert on both travel and aviation, and is a visiting lecturer in Tourism Marketing and the Media at several universities around the world. Mr. Bell is also the former Chairman of the British Guild of Travel Writers, Vice-President of the European Travel Press and Vice Chairman of his London Tourist Board, where he helped develop the low cost marketing tools which he uses worldwide when working with tourism bodies, governments and the UNWTO. Not only did he edit the first BBC programme on independent travel, "Travelog", which ran for 10 years, but he also edited the CNN International "Hotspots" worldwide travel show. With frequent appearances on BBC radio, presently he also writes for many national newspapers, including The Independent and Mail on Sunday in the United Kingdom and The Age in Australia.



Mr. Timur Duysengaliyev
Director, Tourism Industry Committee, Ministry of Investment and Development, Kazakhstan

Mr. Timur Duysengaliyev has held the position of Director of the Tourism Industry Department, Ministry of Investment and Development Republic of Kazakhstan, since October 2014. Previous experience includes the position of CEO at JIBEK JOLY Tourist Company, which has been operating inbound and domestic tourism in Kazakhstan since 1993. Mr. Duysengaliyev has been an active player in Kazakhstan's tourism development for over 20 years, as the initiator and co-executive of the Silk Road State Programme; as Member of UNWTO Silk Road Working Group, as Member of the Tourism Board of the Government of Kazakhstan; and as Executive Director of KITA (Kazakhstan Inbound Tourism Association). In the first half of 2014, Mr. Duysengaliyev played an active role in the preparation of the tourism development Master Plan of the Almaty Region.



Mr. Pushpakumara Manel Withana
Chairman, Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

Mr. Pushpakumara Manel Withana has over 40 years of experience in the leisure and tourism sector specializing in hotel property development, management, and financial controls. Having graduated from the Ceylon Hotel School in 1970, Withana commenced his career at Ceylon Holiday Resorts (CHR), the owning company of two pioneer resorts in Sri Lanka, Bentota Beach Hotel and Coral Gardens Hotel. Previous roles include Director of John Keells Hotels and CEO of Carson Cumberbatch Hotels in Sri Lanka. His public sector experience includes serving as the Chairman of Sri Lanka Tourism from 2002 – 2004 where he initiated the development of a new national tourism policy. Since February 2015 he has been serving as the Chairman of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, which is the apex body responsible for the national tourism policy. In his capacity as Chairman, he has been a strong advocate of sustainable tourism in the island. Mr. Withana is a member and past president of the Ceylon Hotels School Graduates Association (CHSGA) and of the Sri Lanka Chapter of the Institute of Hospitality UK. He is strongly committed to social service and welfare and has been a member of Lions International for nearly 25 years.



Ms. Maria Ángeles Martínez Minguenza
Head of International Relations Unit, State Secretariat of Tourism, Spain

Ms. Maria Ángeles Martínez Minguenza has held the position of Head of the International Relations Unit in the Secretariat of Tourism at the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism, since 2014. Ms. Martínez Minguenza has a background in law, and holds two Master Degrees in International Relations and in Public Administration & Tourism. Ms. Martínez Minguenza has worked as a consultant and researcher for several public and private entities, such as the Spanish Institute for Women, the Economic and Social Council and the Centre of New Strategies for Public Governance.

Since becoming a Senior Civil Servant of the Spanish State, Ms Martínez Minguenza has worked in various Ministries and, in addition to tourism, has been involved in International Cooperation and European Union programs focused on gender equality and public administration.



Mr. Peter Wong

Chairman, Culture Resources Development Co Ltd, China & Executive Chairman, China Chamber of Tourism

Mr. Peter Wong Man Kong, BBS, JP, former alumni of the University of California at Berkeley, is a recipient of the “Young Industrialist Award of Hong Kong”, and deputy to the National People's Congress of PRC. He is the Executive Chairman of China Chamber of Tourism and a permanent honorary Chairman of the Hong Kong Chinese General Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Wong has been developing heritage projects along the Silk Road for over 20 years, and holds lectures to many tertiary educational institutes, NGOs and governments on heritage preservation and development.

BBC Guest Presentation **Silk Road: A view from the world**



Ms. Katy Xu

Vice President Greater China and North Asia, BBC Advertising

As Vice President, Greater China & North Asia, Ms. Xu is responsible for BBC's Advertising business in Japan, Korea, China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and the Philippines among others. She is currently based in Hong Kong.

Ms. Xu's key achievements over her 15-year career in international media include helping emerging Asian brands understand the international media landscape and consumers, bridging the culture gap between the East & the West, and facilitate the conversation between Asian brands and global media. Ms. Xu holds a Master of Economics from the National University of Singapore.

The Silk Road through the Arts



Mr. Zhenyu Lin

Performing Arts Director and Cultural Tourism Show Investor

Mr. Zhenyu Lin is a professor, renowned Chinese Literary Director, and investor and Board of Director of a cultural tourism enterprise. Mr. Lin is also the Director of the Department of Cultural Industries Management, Communication University of China (CUC), which is the highest educational institution in the sector of media, film and television arts in China.

Previously, he was a director at CCTV, China's national television station, and was also a guest director for major celebrations and activities of the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the 2008 Olympiad. In recent years, Mr. Lin has been mainly engaged in directing and investing in large-scale cultural tourism performances. Currently, he is organizing a production series entitled the 'World of the Silk Road'.

With an international educational background, and as both a director and a scholar, Mr. Lin has a strong appreciation for the significance and value of cultural tourism in the tourism industry. Mr. Lin directed the closing ceremony – "Eternal Peace & Harmony" of the Xi'an China International Horticultural Expo in 2011, which granted him the honour of the Gold Remi Award in the 45th Houston International Film Festival in the USA.

DAY TWO

Friday 19 June, 2015

Opening Ceremony



Mr. Taleb Rifai
UNWTO Secretary-General

Mr. Taleb Rifai is Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). He began his four-year term on 1 January 2010 and has been elected for a second four-year term, starting January 2014, by the 20th Session of UNWTO General Assembly held in August 2013.

Mr. Rifai has an extensive background in international and national public service, the private sector and academia. Positions held include: Assistant Director General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), several ministerial portfolios in the Government of Jordan (Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Minister of Information and Minister of Tourism and Antiquity), CEO of Jordan's Cement Company, Director of the Economic Mission to Washington DC and Director General of the Investment Promotion Corporation of Jordan. Mr. Rifai was involved in research, teaching and practicing Architecture and Urban Design in Jordan and the USA. He has a Ph.D. in Urban Design and Regional Planning from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, an M.A. in Engineering and Architecture from the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) in Chicago, and a BS.c. in Architectural Engineering from the University of Cairo in Egypt.



Mr. Qinjian Lou
Governor of Shaanxi Province

Mr. Qinjian Lou joined the Communist Party of China in August 1975. He holds a Doctor's Degree in Engineering, and is a professor-level senior engineer enjoying the State Council Special Allowance. He is also Deputy to the 16th, 17th and 18th National Congress of the CPC, alternate member of 18th CPC Central Committee, Deputy to the 12th Shaanxi Provincial Congress of the CPC, and also of the 11th Shaanxi Provincial People's Congress. Mr. Lou is responsible for the overall affairs of the provincial government. He is currently in charge of the Finance and Auditing Departments.



Mr. Zhongwu Yang

Director-General, Shaanxi Provincial Tourism Administration

Mr. Zhongwu Yang, General Director of Shaanxi Provincial Tourism Administration, ph.d candidate of Xi'an Jiaotong University, holds a Bachelor Degree in Engineering, a Master Degree in Advanced Business Administration from Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business. He has served successively as heads of Tongchuan Foreign Affairs Office, Tongchuan Opening-up Affairs Office and Tongchuan Overseas Chinese Affairs Office. He has also successively held the posts of the General Secretary of Tongchuan People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, County Magistrate of Yijun, Party Secretary of Yijun, Tongchuan Propaganda Department Minister, Tongchuan Executive Vice Mayor.

He has planned and organized tourism promotional activities such as the Dialogue between Qinling Mountains and Yellow River and the highly successful China Xi'an Silk Road International Tourism Exposition.

Mr. Yang edited and published the following books: Sublimation; Tongchuan, a Mountain; Tales of Great Qinling; Blue Book on Shaanxi Tourism Development---2014.

Keynote Presentation

On the Trail of Genghis Khan



Mr. Tim Cope

Author, film maker and adventurer, Tim Cope Journeys

Mr. Tim Cope -National Geographic Adventure Honoree 2007 and Australian Adventurer of the year 2006 - has spent the best part of a decade travelling Russia, Mongolia, and Central Asia by bicycle, row boat, skis, horse, camel and many other means. Mr. Cope's most renowned journey was a three and a half year odyssey from Mongolia to Hungary by horse on the trail of Genghis Khan and in the spirit of the nomads of the steppe.

Upon return from every experience Mr. Cope has been motivated to take his personal discoveries to schools, organisations and community groups through the medium of lectures, film and articles. Since December 2007, when Mr. Cope returned from his horseback journey from Mongolia to Hungary, he has completed an award winning film series for ARTE in Europe, and ABC TV in Australia, and, most recently, a book for Bloomsbury Worldwide (On the Trail of Genghis Khan, An Epic Journey Through the Land of the Nomads.) Mr. Cope's book, which was released in Australia, the USA, Canada, the UK and Germany, won the 'Best Adventure Travel Book' and the 'Grand Prize' at the Banff International Mountain book and Film Festival 2013. Since 2008, Mr. Cope has been returning to Mongolia annually to guide trips for World Expeditions.

**Moderator: Mr. Nick Easen****Senior Content Producer for Horizons airing on BBC World News**

Mr. Nick Easen is an award winning journalist with 17 years' experience in the international media with a significant focus on China and Asia. He is currently working as a senior content producer for BBC World News documentary TV series. He has worked as the business travel correspondent for BBC.com, based out of New York. Mr. Easen specifically focuses on travel and tourism, as well as in business, economics, science and technology for TV, web and print. He has worked for five major news networks, both globally and for domestic UK, including BBC, CNN, CNBC, ITV and TVE in Spain.

Mr. Easen has reported, produced and written for daily television and feature shows for Cable News Network (CNN), in both London and Hong Kong, and features on Fast:track now the Travel Show for BBC World News. He is now working freelance, and was a director working on TVE's major British cultural and language series, and a Senior Content Producer for Horizons airing on BBC World News. He has also done on-camera reporting and producing for CNBC's World Business.

**Mr. Abd Al Razaq Arabiyat****General Manager, Jordan Tourism Board**

Mr. Abed Al Razzaq Arabiyat is the current Managing Director of the Jordan Tourism Board; the leader in positioning and promoting Jordan as the destination of choice in international markets. Prior to his position at the Jordan Tourism Board, Mr. Arabiyat filled the position of Finance Department Director at the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission, while simultaneously holding the position of Director of Administrative Affairs at the Commission.

Mr. Arabiyat has worked in several ministerial positions, including: Accountant in the Financial Department of the Ministry of Planning before moving on to becoming the Head of Auditing, as well as Financial Manager at the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities before moving on to becoming the Financial & Administrative Manager for the Tourism Development Project. Mr. Arabiyat holds a PHD in Finance from the Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies, a Master's degree in Banking and Financial Science from the Arab Academy for Banking and Financial Science, and a BA in Public Administration and Political Science from the University of Jordan.



Mr Xiaoping Li
Vice President, Ctrip.com

Mr. Xiaoping Li is the Vice President of Ctrip and President of Ctrip Transport Business Group. He oversees all aspects of transportation ticketing business including air ticketing, railway ticketing, and coach ticketing.

Previously, Mr. Li served as vice president of the commerce department in Shanghai Airlines. He has a wealth of managerial experience and has a rich knowledge of the travel industry. Under Mr. Li's leadership, Ctrip Transport B.G. achieved record revenue growth and operational performance that outpaced most industry peers.



Mr. Hubertus Hessel
Vice President Commercial Strategy & Planning, Finnair

Mr. Hubertus Hessel serves on Finnair's Commercial Management Team and is responsible for commercial strategy initiatives, business analytics, distribution and commercial partnerships, including Finnair's joint businesses with other airlines and its membership in the oneworld alliance.

Previously Mr. Hessel has served as Finnair's Area Vice President, Revenue Management and Pricing, and prior to that held commercial management roles at other airlines including airBaltic and SWISS. He began his career in 2001, coinciding with the beginning of great upheaval and volatility in the aviation sector, working with both LCCs and network carriers as they successfully transformed their businesses.



Mr. Peng Liu
Chief Brand & Innovation Officer of HNA Aviation Group

Mr. Peng Liu is the Chief Brand & Innovation Officer of HNA Aviation Group, the core and cornerstone entity under HNA Group. Mr. Liu joined HNA in 1999 and successively held the posts of Deputy General Manager of Cabin & Ground Department, General Manager of Strategy Planning Department in Hainan Airlines and Assistant President of HNA Aviation Group.

After graduating from Wuhan University with a degree in International Finance, Mr. Liu started a lifelong aviation career in an airline delivering the highest standards of safety, comfort and hospitality graced with its own delicate touch of Chinese culture. HNA Aviation now manages 17 companies including airlines and aviation-related businesses with a fleet of over 360. Among the subsidiaries, the flagship Hainan Airlines has been certified as Skytrax five-star airline since 2011 and kept a record of safe operation for more than twenty years.



Ms. Petra Stuček
Managing Director, Ljubljana Tourism

Ms Petra Stuček is now in her second year as Managing Director of the Ljubljana Tourist Board. Prior to this role, she had a leading role in communications for foreign and domestic public in Ljubljana Tourist Board, reporting directly to CEO. In recent years, her team has won several prestigious titles, such as “WTTC Tourism for tomorrow” award for Ljubljana as the most sustainable destination in the world, and the “Digital Tourism Think Tank” award for outstanding web portal content.

Ms Stuček has extensive experience in PR and marketing, and was PR manager for the advertising agency S Team Bates Saatchi & Saatchi. She has also worked as a Marketing Manager in Communication Services start-up telco company Telemach, as a Sales Executive on leading commercial TV POP TV and she started her carrier as a PR & Marketing Manager in multinational pay TV company MultiChoice.

Ms, Stuček holds a degree of Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana and is currently completing a post-graduation study on Faculty of Economics for Master’s degree in Tourism and second one in Sales. She also successfully finished a specialization in the “Slovene School of Public Relations”

Launch of the ‘TripAdvisor Travel Trends Guide for the Silk Road 2015’



Ms. Sarah Mathews
Head of Destination Marketing APAC, TripAdvisor

Ms. Sarah Mathews heads up the team for Destination Marketing at TripAdvisor, covering the APAC region. The Destination marketing team’s key focus is to work and support all tourism boards in Asia Pacific.

Born and raised in Hong Kong and fluent in Chinese, Ms Mathews has spent most of her life living in Hong Kong, Beijing and Australia giving her a deep understanding of the region. Her career started with Cesar Ritz Colleges and then eventually joined the London team for the Hong Kong Tourism Board and Visit Flanders where she held positions in MICE, and international marketing. Her role with both organizations meant regular contact with industry partners and working together to drive awareness of each of the destinations.

Ms Mathews started her TripAdvisor career in the London office; looking after European, Asian and African Tourism clients. She has worked closely with key clients like South Africa Tourism and Greek National Tourism Organization. Sarah’s work with South Africa Tourism includes a case study featured in the recent UNWTO E-Marketing Handbook. Her role with TripAdvisor is to share best practices not only for tourism boards but also for all relevant industry partners and players. Sarah is currently Chair of Industry Council on PATA and on its Executive Board.

Closing remarks



Mr. Zoltán Somogyi

UNWTO Executive Director for Programme and Coordination

Mr. Somogyi is currently Executive Director for Programme and Coordination at the UNWTO. Previously he has held the position of UNWTO Executive Director for Member Relations and Services, and the Hungarian Ambassador to Montenegro. Mr. Somogyi served in the Hungarian national tourism system as the Chairman of the Hungarian National Tourism Agency (2002), the President of the then newly established Hungarian Tourist Office (2005), and State Secretary for Tourism (2006). In this period he initiated the elaboration of the National Tourism Development Strategy, the modernization of Hungarian tourism-related law, and the creation of an efficient tourism crisis management system. In 1996, he was appointed to the Ministry of Economy, first as General Director and later as Under-Secretary of the State, both in charge for tourism. Mr. Somogyi began his career in one of Hungary's largest travel companies where he worked as a tour guide, in the sales team and as the General Director of International Relations of the company. He graduated from the Budapest University of Law with a Doctorate and later the Budapest University of Economics.