



World Tourism Day 2016

“Tourism for All: Promoting Universal Accessibility”

Declaration

The Ministry of Tourism and Sports of Thailand, authorities of the Member States of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), representatives of the tourism sector, disabled people’s organizations and related civil society bodies, international organizations, and media outlets met in Bangkok, Thailand, on 26/27 September 2016 on the occasion of the *World Tourism Day* to celebrate the theme “Tourism for All: Promoting Universal Accessibility”;

Recalling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in which disability is referenced in Goals 4, 8, 10, 11 and 17 and in which tourism is included specifically in Goals 8, 12 and 14;

Considering the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* of 2006 as the global action framework in the sphere of universal accessibility, whose Article 30 recognizes the legitimate right of access to sports, cultural, leisure and tourism activities by persons with disabilities;

Whereas the mandate of the UNWTO is “the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism”;

Inspired by the *Global Code of Ethics for Tourism*, adopted by the UNWTO General Assembly in 1999, and acknowledged by the United Nations General Assembly in 2001, whose Article 7 underlines that “...a direct and personal access to the discovery and enjoyment of the planet’s resources constitutes a right equally open to all the world’s inhabitants” and explicitly recommends that “tourism for persons with disabilities should be encouraged and facilitated”;

Referring to the *Recommendations on Accessible Tourism for All* and the *Recommendations on Accessible Information in Tourism*, adopted by the UNWTO General Assembly at its 20th and 21st sessions as reference documents for tourism stakeholders for making their infrastructure, products and services accessible to all people;

Considering the UNWTO Manuals on Accessible Tourism for All co-produced with civil society and private sector organizations – the ONCE Foundation, the European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT) and the ACS Foundation, as a source of technical knowhow for destinations;

Recognizing the wide scope of the multi-stakeholder recommendations emanating from the Declaration from the World Summit Destinations for All, held in Montreal, Canada, in October 2014;

Taking into account the *Bangkok Recommendations on Accessible Tourism* of 2007 and *Takayama Declaration on the Development of Communities-for-All in Asia and the Pacific*, adopted in 2009;

Commending the efforts of the Government of Thailand, the tourism sector and civil society stakeholders in making tourism destinations across the country ever more accessible;

THOSE PRESENT

Being:

1. Convinced that measures implemented to bring about Tourism for All benefit not only persons with disabilities and specific access requirements but all people, while entailing major socio-economic opportunities for tourism destinations and businesses;
2. Conscious of the gradual improvements regarding universal accessibility in tourism, but also of many serious and enduring challenges that people with disabilities across the globe are still facing;
3. Mindful of the importance of solid policy frameworks and strategic actions in making full access to and enjoyment of tourism destinations and activities by all truly possible;
4. Aware of the challenges in providing adequate information on the accessibility of tourism facilities, services and products, and the opportunities for promoting those that actually meet the needs of a greater diversity of customers;
5. Committed to multi-stakeholder partnerships between the policy makers, local authorities, the private sector, disabled people's organizations and local communities in making tourism destinations accessible for all;

UNANIMOUSLY CALL UPON ALL STAKEHOLDERS:

1. To ensure that the right to enjoy tourism by all becomes a reality and that the commitment of governments and companies to improve access for all is sustained by concrete actions;
2. To engage in awareness-raising and training so as to reduce both physical and attitudinal barriers within the sector and to be able to embrace the undoubted competitive advantages of investing in Tourism for All;
3. To implement the principles of Universal Design/Design for All when developing new tourism infrastructure, products and services and improving the existing ones;
4. To promote the provision of objective and accurate information on the accessibility of all products and services, and in accessible formats, with the aim to enable travelers to accurately assess whether their own needs will be met during the whole travel process;
5. To mainstream accessibility in tourism policy and throughout the tourism supply chain with the aim to ensure that there are no broken links and that everyone can fully enjoy a seamless tourism experience; and
6. To encourage multi-stakeholder cooperation at all levels that enables development of consistent and up-to-date policies and business practices in the sphere of accessible tourism.