

WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION

THE HAGUE DECLARATION ON TOURISM

The Inter Parliamentary Conference on Tourism,

Organized at The Hague (Netherlands) from 10 to 14 April 1989 jointly by the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU)* and the World Tourism Organization (WTO)**, at the invitation of the Netherlands Inter Parliamentary Group,

Considering that it is in the interest of all countries to facilitate both individual and group tourist travel, visits and stays which, contributing as they do to economic, social and cultural development, *foster* the creation of a climate of confidence and mutual understanding between the State member of the international community, the development of international cooperation and, hence, lasting peace in the world,

Considering that, in so doing, account should also be taken of the special problems of the developing countries in the field of tourism,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948, and in particular its Article 24, which states: "Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay", as well as Article 7 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 16 December 1966, by which States undertake to ensure, for everyone, "Rest, leisure, reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay, as well as remuneration for public holidays", and Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, also adopted on 16 December 1966 by the General Assembly of the United Nations, which states:

"Everyone shall be free to leave any country, including his own",

Considering the resolution and recommendation adopted by the United Nations Conference on International Travel and Tourism (Rome, September 1963) and, in particular, those concerning the promotion of tourism development in the various countries of the world and the simplification of governmental formalities for international travel,

Inspired by the principles set forth in the Manila Declaration on World Tourism, and the Acapulco Document, the Tourist Code and Tourism Bill of Rights, underscoring the human dimension of tourism, recognizing the new role of tourism as an instrument for improving the quality of life of all peoples and *as* a vital force for peace and international understanding, and defining the responsibilities of the State in its development, particularly with respect to promoting awareness about the importance of tourism among the peoples of the world and protecting and enhancing tourism resources as part of the heritage of mankind, with a view to contributing to the establishment of a more just and equitable new international economic order,

* The world wide organization of Parliaments in which 112 national Parliaments and the European Parliament are at present represented. The IPU was founded in 1889.

** An intergovernmental organization of universal character created in 1975 with the aim of promoting and developing domestic and international tourism.

Recalling the “central and decisive role” of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in the development of tourism as recognized by the General Assembly of the United Nations, with a view “to contributing to economic development, international understanding, peace, prosperity and universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion” ***,

Aware that an important contribution to the harmonious development of tourism can be made by the work of numerous inter governmental and non governmental organizations, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the United National Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO INTERPOL), and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the importance of close cooperation between those organizational and WTO,

Solemnly affirming, as a natural consequence of the right to work, the fundamental right, already consecrated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Covenants on Human Rights of the United National and in other universal and regional legal instruments, of everyone to rest, leisure and periodic leave with pay, and the right to use such time for the purposes of holidays, to travel freely for education or pleasure and to enjoy the benefits of tourism, both within his country of residence and abroad,

Recalling that it was at The Hague that the First International Congress of Official Tourist Traffic Associations met in 1925 and founded the International Union of Official Travel Organizations, which in 1975 was transformed into the World Tourism Organization,

Pronounces The Hague Declaration on Tourism as an instrument of international cooperation, rapprochement between peoples and as a factor of individual and collective development,

Urges Parliaments, Governments, public and private authorities, organizations, associations and institutions responsible for tourism activities, tourism professionals, as well as tourist themselves, to consider carefully and draw constant inspiration from its principles, as set forth below:

Principle 1

1. Tourism has become a phenomenon of every day life for hundreds of millions of people today:

(a) It encompasses all free movements of persons away from their places of residence and work, as well as the service industries created to satisfy the needs resulting from these movements;

(b) It constitutes an activity essential to the lives of human beings and modern societies, having become an important form of using the free time of individuals and the main vehicle for interpersonal relations and political, economic and cultural contact made necessary by the internationalization of all sectors of the life of nation;

(c) It should be the concern of everyone. It is both a consequence and a decisive factor of the

*** Article 3 (1) of the WTO Statutes.

quality of life in contemporary society. Therefore, Parliaments and Governments should accord increasingly sustained attention to tourism with a view to ensuring its development in harmony with the other fundamental needs and activities of societies.

2. All Governments should work for national, regional and international peace and security which are essential to the development of domestic and international tourism.

Principles II

1. Tourism can be an effective instrument for socioeconomic growth for all countries, if at the same time the necessary measures are taken to tackle the more urgent national priorities and to allow the national economy to reach an acceptable level of self sufficiency in which the country does not have to spend in excess of what it can hope to earn from tourism.

2. Consequently, the following measures should in particular be taken, if necessary with the help of the various forms of bilateral and multilateral technical cooperation, to ensure:

(a) That a sound infrastructure is built up and the basic facilities are provided;

(b) That training institutes are set up to meet the personnel needs of the tourism industry at different levels;

(c) That tourism forms part of an integrated plan for development of the country in which agriculture, industrial development, medical care, social welfare, education, etc. are other priority sectors;

(d) That the development of domestic tourism be equally encouraged with the promotion of international tourism. A strong base of domestic tourism will be a big asset for the development of international tourism in the country;

(e) That even in planning for domestic tourists, the Master Plan approach on an area basis is developed to bring about a balanced and integrated growth for the benefit of the community; and

(f) That the overall capacity of the natural, physical and cultural environment of destinations to receive tourism (carrying capacity) be always carefully taken into consideration.

Principle III

1. An unspoilt natural, cultural and human environment is a fundamental condition for the development of tourism. Moreover, rational management of tourism may contribute significantly to the protection and development of the physical environment and the cultural heritage, as well as to improving the quality of life.

2. In view of this intrinsic inter relationship between tourism and environment, effective measures should be taken to:

(a) Inform and educate tourists, both domestic and international, to preserve, conserve and respect the natural, cultural and human environment in places they visit;

(b) Promote the integrated planning of tourism development on the basis of the concept of

“sustainable development” which was set forth in the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Report) and in the report “The Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond” of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), both of which documents have been approved by the UN General Assembly;

(c) Determine and ensure respect for carrying capacity levels of sites visited by tourists even if this implies restricting access to such sites at certain periods or seasons;

(d) Continue to compile an inventory of man made and/or natural tourist sites of recreational, sporting, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, religious, scientific, social or technical interest and ensure that tourism development plans take special account of aspects related with environmental protection and the need to promote awareness among tourists, the tourism industry and the public at large of the importance of safeguarding the natural and cultural environment;

(e) Encourage development of alternative forms of tourism which favour closer contact and understanding between tourists and receiving populations, preserve cultural identity and offer distinctive and original tourist products and facilities;

(f) Ensure the necessary cooperation between the public and private sector to this end both at national and international levels.

Principles IV

1. In view of the eminently human character of tourism, consideration should always be given to the specific problems of tourists themselves, whether they be domestic or international. An international tourist is any person:

(a) Who intends to travel, and/or travels, to a country other than that in which he or she has his or her usual place of residence, and

(b) Whose main purpose of travel is a visit or stay not exceeding three months, unless a stay longer than three months is authorized or the three months authorization is renewed, and

(c) Who will not exercise, whether or not he or she is called upon to exercise, any activity remunerated in the country visited, and

(d) Who, at the end of the said visit or stay, will obligatorily leave the country visited, either to return to the country where he or she has his or her usual place of residence or to travel to another country.

2. It logically follows that a person cannot be considered an international tourist if he or she does not fulfil all the conditions enumerated in paragraph 1 and, in particular, if, after entering the country as a tourist for a tourist visit or stay, he or she seeks to prolong his or her length of visit or stay so as to establish residence and/or to exercise a remunerated activity there.

Principle V

1. The right of everyone to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay, and the right to travel freely, subject to reasonable restrictions which are explicitly provided for by law and which do not call into question the principle of the freedom of movement itself, must be universally recognized.

2. In order for these fundamental rights of every man and woman to be fully ensured, it is necessary to:

(a) Formulate and apply policies to promote harmonious development of domestic and international tourism and leisure activities for the benefit of all those who participate in them;

(b) Give due consideration to the principles set forth in the Manila Declaration on World Tourism, the Acapulco Document and the Tourism Bill of Rights and Tourist Code¹ particularly when States formulate or apply tourism development policies, plans and programmes in accordance with their national priorities.

Principle VI

The promotion of tourism requires facilitation of travel. Effective measures should therefore be taken by the public and private sectors to:

(a) Facilitate tourist travel, visits and stays, both on an individual and collective basis, irrespective of the mode of transport used;

(b) Contribute effectively to the expansion of tourist travel, visits and stays by taking appropriate facilitation measures with respect to passports, visas, health and exchange controls and the status of tourism representations abroad;

(c) Foster, to this end, the adoption and implementation of the Budapest Convention to Facilitate Tourist Travel, Visits and Stay, thereby permitting the liberalization of legal provisions applicable to tourists and the harmonization of technical standards concerning the operation of tourism enterprises, travel agencies and other bodies serving tourist.

Principle VII

The safety, security and protection of tourists and respect for their dignity are a precondition to develop tourism. Therefore, it is indispensable:

(a) That the measures to facilitate tourist travel, visits and stays be accompanied by measures to ensure the safety, security and protection of tourists and tourist facilities and the dignity of tourists;

(b) That an effective policy concerning the safety, security and protection of tourists and tourist facilities and respect for the dignity of tourists be established for this purpose;

(c) To identify precisely the tourist goods, facilities and equipment which, because of their use by tourists, require special attention;

(d) To prepare and make available appropriate documentation and information in cases of threats to tourist facilities and/or tourist sites;

(e) To implement, in accordance with the procedures specific to the systems of law of each country, legal provisions in the field of tourist protection, including in particular the ability for tourists to seek effective legal remedy from the national courts in the event of acts harmful to their persons, or property, and in particular the most grievous acts, such as terrorism;

(f) That States cooperate within WTO to prepare a catalogue of recommended measures governing the safety, security and protection of tourists.

Principle VIII

Terrorism constitutes a real threat for tourism and tourist movements. Terrorists must be treated like any other criminals and should be pursued and punished without statutory limitation, no country thus being a safe haven for terrorists.

Principle IX

1. The quality of tourism as a person to person business depends on the quality of the personal service provided. Therefore appropriate education for the general public starting at the school level, education and training of tourism professionals and the preparation of new entrants in the profession are essential for the tourist industry and the development of tourism.

2. To this end, effective measures should be taken to:

(a) Prepare individuals for travel and tourism, in particular by including tourism in school and university curricula;

(b) Enhance the status of tourist professions and encourage young people in particular to embark upon a career in tourism;

(c) Establish a network of institutions capable of providing not only training but also education in tourism on the basis of an internationally standardized curriculum which would also facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications and exchanges of tourism personnel;

Promote, in accordance with the recommendations of UNESCO in this field, training of trainers, permanent education and refresher courses for all tourism personnel or teachers regardless of level;

(d) Recognize the vital role of the mass media in developing tourism.

Principles X

1. Tourism should be planned on an integrated and coherent basis by public authorities, and between them and industry, taking into consideration all aspects of this complex phenomenon.

2. Whereas tourism has in the life of nations industrial importance at least equal to that of other economic and social activities, and whereas the role of tourism will expand in step with a scientific and technical progress and increases in free time, it appears necessary to strengthen, in all countries, the powers and responsibilities of the national tourism administrations, according them the same rank as administrations responsible for other major economic sectors.

3. The need for a global approach to the problems raised by tourism requires the establishment of a genuine national tourism policy, in whose formulation Parliaments, when properly equipped, can play a Special role 80 as to be in a position to adopt specific legislation on tourism and, if required, an authentic Tourism Code.

4. Recognizing the international dimensions of tourism, worldwide as well as regional, international cooperation is essential for its harmonious development through direct inter State cooperation and through the channel of international organizations¹, such as WTO, and between the

different components of the private sector of tourism through non governmental and professional organizations.