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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2023

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/78/461, para. 53)]

78/145. Sustainable and resilient tourism and sustainable development in Central America and the Dominican Republic

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 68/207 of 20 December 2013, 70/196 of 22 December 2015, 72/214 of 20 December 2017, 74/211 of 19 December 2019 and 76/201 of 17 December 2021, and all relevant declarations and conferences on this matter,

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,



Reaffirming further the Paris Agreement,¹ encouraging all its parties to fully implement the Agreement, and parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change² that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible,

Recalling the New Urban Agenda, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), held in Quito from 17 to 20 October 2016,³ which recognized the commitment to sustain and support urban economies to transition progressively to higher productivity through high-value-added sectors, including through the promotion of cultural and creative industries, sustainable tourism, performing arts and heritage conservation activities, among others,

Recalling also the Sendai Declaration and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030,⁴ adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the latter of which, *inter alia*, recognized the need to promote and integrate disaster risk management approaches throughout the tourism industry, given the often heavy reliance on tourism as a key economic driver,

Welcoming the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, adopted at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and calls for its timely implementation,

Welcoming also the convening of the United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028, from 22 to 24 March 2023,

Looking forward to the third United Nations Ocean Conference, to be co-hosted by Costa Rica and France and to be held in Nice, France, in June 2025,

Recalling its resolution [77/178](#) of 14 December 2022 on the promotion of sustainable and resilient tourism, including ecotourism, for poverty eradication and environmental protection, and its resolution [77/269](#) of 6 February 2023, in which it proclaimed 17 February as Global Tourism Resilience Day,

Welcoming the decision by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its resumed fifth session, in its resolution 5/14 of 2 March 2022,⁵ to convene an intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment,

Taking note of the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative and its role in accelerating climate action and advancing the tourism sector towards a sustained, sustainable and resilient economic growth pathway, while acknowledging the efforts that are being undertaken by countries in the Central American Integration System region to combat plastic pollution,

Recalling its resolution [77/282](#) of 26 April 2023 on building global resilience and promoting sustainable development through regional and interregional infrastructure connectivity, in which it emphasized that infrastructure impacts the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, and stressing the importance of

¹ Adopted under the UNFCCC in [FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1](#), decision 1/CP.21.

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

³ Resolution [71/256](#), annex.

⁴ Resolution [69/283](#), annexes I and II.

⁵ [UNEP/EA.5/Res.14](#).

quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure for addressing the interconnected social, economic and environmental challenges,

Welcoming the holding of the high-level thematic debate on tourism on the theme “Putting sustainable and resilient tourism at the heart of an inclusive recovery”, convened by the President of the General Assembly in May 2022, in collaboration with the World Tourism Organization, as an important milestone to work towards a concerted approach on tourism at the highest level, within the United Nations system,

Recognizing the important cross-cutting role of sustainable tourism as a positive contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, including the eradication of poverty, with a focus on ecotourism, rural tourism, community-based tourism and micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, the generation of trade opportunities, the creation of decent jobs, protection of the environment, improvement of quality of life, and advancement of social inclusion, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, especially in developing countries,

Noting in this regard the role of the Central American Integration System,⁶ through the Central American Tourism Integration Secretariat, and the Central American Tourism Council in the promotion of sustainable tourism in the region,

Commending the ongoing efforts of the Governments of the States members of the Central American Integration System, in coordination with the Central American Commission on Environment and Development and in cooperation with the World Tourism Organization, in the implementation of existing and new programmes designed to launch and promote sustainable tourism throughout the region,

Acknowledging that tourism is among the economic sectors hardest hit by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and stressing that the challenges require comprehensive solutions and international collaboration which contribute to strengthening policies and financial support needed to sustain the livelihoods dependent on the sector, reduce inequalities, eradicate poverty and safeguard the benefits of tourism, including coastal and rural tourism, in order to promote a more sustainable tourism model based on social inclusion and the conservation and protection of the environment,

Taking note of the World Tourism Organization *World Tourism Barometer* of September 2023, which highlights that international tourism is expected to continue its recovery backed by strong travel demand, that the latest World Tourism Organization data show that the recovery has continued in 2023, with an estimated 700 million tourists travelling internationally between January and July 2023, about 43 per cent more than in the same period of 2022, and noting, however, that it was mentioned in the *World Tourism Barometer* of May 2023 that, according to experts, the economic environment continues to be the main factor weighing on the recovery of international tourism,

Noting with concern that, owing to its geographical location and its geological and hydrometeorological characteristics, Central America is a region prone and vulnerable to natural hazards, including those that are climate-related, which have resulted in disasters causing substantial human and economic losses, including impacts on gross domestic product per capita, income, and poverty reduction,

Recognizing that the Central American Integration System region contains significant natural resources and that its rich biodiversity provides invaluable benefits to its populations and to its countries’ economies, and noting that sustainable tourism

⁶ The membership of the Central American Integration System includes Belize, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

can contribute directly to the conservation of ecosystems through a variety of activities and by raising awareness of the importance of biodiversity and, in this regard, that the States members of the Central American Integration System are improving their institutional and policy frameworks, strategies and action plans,

Noting the role of the World Tourism Organization as a member of the informal advisory group on mainstreaming biodiversity, which is tasked with supporting the Executive Secretary and the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity,

Acknowledging the importance of ongoing actions to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production⁷ in the tourism sector while contributing to sustainable development and resilient societies,

Stressing the importance of the tourism sector becoming more sustainable, resilient, digital and accessible, while stressing the need to close the digital divides, both between and within countries and including the rural-urban, youth-older persons and gender digital divides, and to harness information and communications technologies for development, and recalling the need to emphasize quality and affordability of access to bridge digital and knowledge divides, and improve digital literacy using a multidimensional approach that includes speed, stability, affordability, language, training, capacity-building, local content and accessibility for persons with disabilities,

Recalling its resolution [70/193](#) of 22 December 2015, entitled “International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, 2017”, noting the efforts and initiatives taken to celebrate the Year, with a view to creating awareness of the important contribution of tourism to sustainable development while promoting the exchange of good practices, knowledge and experiences, as well as increased cross-border collaboration by developing joint ventures to increase the synergies of tourism, including the sharing of tourism-related data and statistics, as appropriate, and noting the report of the Secretary-General on the proclamation of 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development,⁸ and recalling also its resolution [74/198](#) of 19 December 2019, entitled “International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development, 2021”,

Recognizing the importance of promoting tourism product development by Indigenous Peoples and local communities in order to support their economic development and participation in trade while protecting natural environments and cultural traditions,

Stressing the need for responsible tourism and for its beneficial socioeconomic impact on local communities, the economic empowerment of women through tourism, fair tourism, the protection of women, children and people in vulnerable situations against all forms of exploitation in tourism, the prevention of trafficking in persons and trafficking in cultural artefacts, respect for intangible cultural heritage and cultural and natural sites, the protection of tourists as consumers and the provision of unbiased information to tourists,

Noting the existing joint initiatives designed and implemented to stimulate regional tourism integration and to foster the development of Indigenous and local communities, such as the Mayan World regional brand,

Recalling the outcomes of the Forum on Sustainable Tourism and Climate Change in Central America, held from 21 to 24 September 2023 in La Ceiba, Honduras, the outcomes adopted at the 126th meeting of the Central American

⁷ In accordance with United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 4/1 ([UNEP/EA.4/Res.1](#)).

⁸ [A/73/283](#).

Tourism Council, held in San Salvador on 30 August 2023, the twenty-second Forum for the Development of Tourism Integration of Central America and the Caribbean, held in San Salvador on 28 September 2022, and the declaration of the fifteenth forum on the development of tourism and on the harmonization of efforts to promote tourism in Central America and the Dominican Republic, held in Guatemala City on 27 August 2014, and looks forward to the second Social, Solidarity and Sustainable Tourism Forum, to be held with the support of the International Social Tourism Organization,

Recalling also the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization, held in Madrid from 30 November to 3 December 2021, and welcoming its twenty-fifth session, held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, from 16 to 20 October 2023,

Emphasizing that rebuilding tourism after the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is an opportunity for transformation, with a focus on leveraging its impact on destinations, fostering community-based models and building more sustainable, resilient and inclusive communities and businesses through innovation and public-private partnerships to foster investments in sustainable travel and infrastructure, targeted training and human resources development,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on sustainable tourism and sustainable development in Central America;⁹

2. *Recognizes* the major role that sustainable and resilient tourism plays in advancing towards the achievement of sustainable development of the States members of the Central American Integration System, as an instrument of social inclusion that generates decent jobs and entrepreneurship opportunities, contributing to inclusive economic growth and the improvement of the quality of life of the population, aimed at achieving poverty eradication in all its forms and dimensions, and that it contributes to the promotion of climate resilience, environmental sustainability and disaster risk management in tourist activities and destinations;

3. *Emphasizes*, taking into account the fact that the tourism sector is vulnerable to natural hazards and disasters, including those that are climate-related, the need to foster resilient tourism development in the Central American Integration System region, including through national strategies for rehabilitation aftershocks, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction plans and public-private partnerships;

4. *Recognizes* that since the adoption of resolution 76/201 in 2021, despite the many challenges they have faced owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, Central America and the Dominican Republic have shown numerous positive developments, initiatives and efforts to promote sustainable tourism and sustainable development, making significant progress towards recovery and enhancing resilience, recognizing the implementation of policies at the national level, and employing an integrated and holistic approach for the promotion of sustainable tourism and sustainable development to generate benefits in the social, economic and environmental pillars;

5. *Encourages* strategic actions and accelerators to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on sustainable development and to promote a sustainable recovery in the tourism sector, through global and regional political action and coordination to mitigate the effects of the pandemic and support the recovery therefrom, which will require substantial financial efforts to rebuild a more resilient, diversified, inclusive and sustainable tourism sector;

6. *Recalls* the adoption of the principles of sustainable tourism, developed by the Central American Tourism Integration Secretariat and found in its strategic plan

⁹ A/78/210.

for sustainable tourism development, 2021–2025, which captures the region’s vision of itself as an integrated, sustainable, multi-location, cross-border destination of high quality and emphasizes its action plan for tourism and climate change as a component of the regional strategy on climate change;

7. *Recognizes* that the tourism sector has been a catalyst for achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions in Central America and the Dominican Republic, including addressing environmental issues, in particular climate change, poverty eradication and economic development, highlighting the importance of strengthening appropriate policies and financial support within a broader framework of sustainable development policies and of adopting a comprehensive, multisectoral approach for the sustainable development of tourism;

8. *Encourages* regional and national tourism organizations to promote destination models that seek the highest possible direct benefits for local and national economies, in order to contribute to improving quality of life and reducing poverty in local communities, taking into account the integration of sustainability policies in the tourism sector, and invites all stakeholders to identify, assess and mitigate the impacts of tourism on the three dimensions of sustainable development;

9. *Stresses* the importance of biocultural heritage, endogenous development, scientific research and replicable models to promote sustainable, community-based, rural and local tourism activities for the benefit of people and nature, in close collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and youth, as a priority for the Central American Integration System region, recognizes that some countries in the region are developing new and innovative models, such as the tourism, conservation and sustainable livelihoods model, and also recognizes the importance of strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage, as well as promoting the participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the protection of cultural and traditional knowledge and practices for the achievement of a more sustainable tourism sector;

10. *Recognizes* the valuable role of international cooperation with relevant partners, and encourages them to continue to support the implementation of various projects aimed at promoting sustainable tourism in the region by, *inter alia*, strengthening ecotourism, rural, cultural and heritage tourism, including colonial sites, preventing trafficking in cultural artefacts and ensuring respect for intangible cultural heritage and cultural and natural sites;

11. *Encourages* Member States and relevant stakeholders to support cooperatives, community-based organizations and micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises with initiatives towards achieving a stronger business environment, technical assistance, institutional networking and capacity-building and by enhancing institutional coherence policy that supports funding mechanisms and initiatives for poverty eradication programmes and projects;

12. *Welcomes* the progress made by the States members of the Central American Integration System in converging towards a regional tourism strategy based on preserving the region’s biodiversity and natural and cultural attractions and reducing poverty through employment and entrepreneurial tourism development that emphasizes micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, while addressing the adverse effects of climate change, to improve the quality of life of the region’s inhabitants;

13. *Appreciates* the continued efforts of the States members of the Central American Integration System to support sustainable tourism development, including the adoption and implementation of new legislation and policies, and encourages them to use sustainable tourism as a tool to promote the eradication of poverty and enhance the protection of biodiversity, cultural heritage and community development;

14. *Encourages* cooperation to promote the engagement of women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities, and initiatives that foster their socioeconomic empowerment through sustainable tourism that continues to promote equitable partnerships, the creation of jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities;

15. *Recognizes* the important efforts made by the Central American Integration System region to include those in vulnerable situations in decision-making in the tourism sector, with a more decentralized and participatory approach, especially rural and local communities and Indigenous Peoples, aiming also to advance the empowerment of women and girls and provide opportunities for youth, and calls upon the international community to support local, rural and community-based tourism initiatives to ensure that tourism continues to support economic growth and sustainable development;

16. *Also recognizes* the continued need to support sustainable tourism activities and relevant capacity-building efforts that promote environmental awareness, conserve and protect the environment, respect wildlife, biodiversity, ecosystems and cultural diversity and improve the welfare and livelihoods of local communities by supporting their local economies and the human and natural environment as a whole;

17. *Notes* the importance of adequately measuring the sociocultural and environmental impact of tourism, and encourages efforts to fill the present data gap in this area by taking advantage of the emergence of non-traditional solutions and sources of data, with an overarching goal of advancing the national sustainable development agenda beyond the tourism sector;

18. *Recognizes* that the implementation of sustainable consumption and production patterns in the tourism sector in Central America, and hence advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹⁰ in the region, requires, *inter alia*, the identification and adoption of more resource-efficient tourism planning approaches by all relevant stakeholders;

19. *Stresses* the need to promote the further development of sustainable tourism, in particular through the consumption of sustainable tourism products and services, and to strengthen the development of ecotourism, maintaining, in particular, the culture and environmental integrity of Indigenous and local communities and enhancing the protection of ecologically sensitive areas and the natural heritage and Indigenous cultural and religious sites of those communities;

20. *Invites* Governments and other stakeholders to join the Sustainable Tourism Programme of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns,¹¹ which aims at promoting innovation and circular thinking to accelerate resource efficiency in the tourism value chain;

21. *Notes with appreciation* the launch of the first phase of the Tourism Observatory of the Central American Integration System Region in June 2023, and looks forward to its completion, and invites Governments and other stakeholders to consider joining the International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories of the World Tourism Organization, which contributes to the promotion of economically, socially and environmentally sustainable tourism, and to support the practice of informed policymaking around the world;

22. *Encourages* further collaboration by public-private partnerships towards the enhancement of quality data collection, including disaggregated data, in accordance with national legislation, taking into account the concerted efforts by

¹⁰ Resolution 70/1.

¹¹ A/CONF.216/5, annex.

national authorities of the States members of the Central American Integration System, in conjunction with the private sector, through the establishment of observatories for sustainable tourism to monitor the development of tourism at the destination level in order to provide timely information for evidence-based policies and decision-making;

23. *Urges* the tourism sector in the States members of the Central American Integration System to be part of the coordination, knowledge-sharing and communication mechanisms for security and emergency management at the national and regional levels and to collectively promote an evidence-based approach in developing measures for safe, secure and seamless travel, which will enable government agencies to make relevant, informed and coordinated decisions, and in that sense welcomes the progress of the Secretary-General's call to protect everyone on Earth through universal coverage of early warning systems, including through the Early Warning for All initiative;

24. *Welcomes* the efforts of the World Tourism Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, regional commissions and other regional organizations, as well as the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to promote sustainable tourism worldwide;

25. *Invites* Member States and other stakeholders and the World Tourism Organization to continue to support the activities undertaken by the States members of the Central American Integration System for the promotion of sustainable tourism in the region, including with regard to emergency preparedness for better disaster risk reduction, the vulnerabilities of the Central American Integration System region to disasters caused by natural hazards and their impacts on sustainable tourism, as well as for capacity-building, job creation and the promotion of local culture and products, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

26. *Invites* Member States and relevant stakeholders to welcome the many opportunities that the new digital transformation of the tourism sector offers for creating and implementing innovative technologies to modernize the tourism industry in the States members of the Central American Integration System, by creating momentum for economic growth and expanding opportunities, including for women and young people, harnessing digital technology, fostering innovation and training and building human capacity, for the successful recovery and resilience of the tourism sector;

27. *Encourages* the States members of the Central American Integration System, through the Central American Tourism Council and the Central American Tourism Integration Secretariat, to promote sustainable tourism by intensifying bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation at the level of the tourism industry, and to continue to support sustainable tourism through policies that foster responsive and inclusive tourism, strengthen regional identity and protect their natural and cultural heritage, including their ecosystems and biodiversity, and notes that existing initiatives, such as the One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme, among other international initiatives, can deliver direct and focused support to Governments;

28. *Also encourages* the States members of the Central American Integration System to establish and strengthen quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, emphasizing the need to promote investments in infrastructure that are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable, so as to promote sustainable tourism in the region;

29. *Reiterates* the commitment to the development of sustainable regional infrastructure projects that stimulate sustainable economic productivity, promoting equitable growth of regions across the urban-rural continuum, and encourages urban-rural interactions and connectivity by strengthening sustainable transport and mobility, and technology and communications networks and infrastructure, including connectivity between cities and their surroundings, peri-urban and rural areas, as well as greater land-sea connections, where appropriate, and encourages the development of tourism infrastructure and the promotion of tourism diversification, including through public-private partnerships, as a way to foster job creation for local communities, the preservation of their way of life, culture and heritage and the promotion of the three dimensions of sustainable development, while simultaneously inviting Member States to take measures to protect the environment and the sociocultural heritage of a destination;

30. *Recognizes* that persons with disabilities have equal rights to access tourism services and opportunities, such as independent travel, accessible services, trained staff, reliable information and inclusive marketing, and that great efforts should be made to ensure that tourism policies and practices are inclusive of persons with disabilities, the majority of whom live in developing countries;

31. *Calls upon* Member States and the tourism sector to take effective measures, in the context of sustainable tourism, including ecotourism initiatives, to help to promote the equal participation of women and the balanced participation of youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities, at all levels and in decision-making processes in all areas, and to promote effective economic empowerment, mainly through decent job and income creation;

32. *Recognizes* that addressing the need for improved monitoring of the development impacts of tourism requires rethinking and changing traditional practices in order to incorporate multiple data sources to provide public administrations and the tourism sector with the most updated intelligence on tourism, and notes the progress achieved through the International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories of the World Tourism Organization, which is focused on continuously monitoring the impacts of tourism, tackling the three dimensions of sustainability, strengthening evidence-based decision-making and creating a culture of continuous and timely monitoring and measurement;

33. *Welcomes* the positive role that tourism can play in the conservation of biodiversity and in fighting climate change, which provides a further argument for enhancing the environmental components of tourism policies and better utilizing the potential of sustainable tourism as an enabling agent of change, and also welcomes the convening of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 30 November to 12 December 2023, and looks forward to the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in 2024;

34. *Reiterates its call for* the prevention of new and the reduction of existing disaster risk through the implementation of integrated and inclusive economic, structural, legal, social, health, cultural, educational, environmental, technological, political, financial and institutional measures that prevent and reduce hazard exposure and vulnerability to disaster, increase preparedness for response and recovery and thus strengthen resilience, and reaffirms the need for the enhancement of the means of implementation and the capacity and capability of developing countries, including the mobilization of support through international cooperation, for the provision of

means of implementation to augment domestic efforts in accordance with their national priorities;

35. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization and with other relevant United Nations entities, to submit to the General Assembly at its eightieth session an action-oriented report on the implementation of the present resolution, including concrete recommendations to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in this regard, in the States members of the Central American Integration System, and decides to include in the provisional agenda of its eightieth session the item entitled “Sustainable development”.

*49th plenary meeting
19 December 2023*