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Agenda item 20

Global Code of Ethics for Tourism

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 21 December 2020

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/75/458, para. 10)*]

75/223. Global Code of Ethics for Tourism

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 56/212 of 21 December 2001, 60/190 of 22 December 2005, 65/148 of 20 December 2010 and 70/200 of 22 December 2015,

Recalling also the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development¹ and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation),² the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”, as endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/288 of 27 July 2012, the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020,³ as endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 65/280 of 17 June 2011, the outcome document of the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, entitled “SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway”, as endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 69/15 of 14 November 2014, and the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024, adopted at the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, as endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 69/137 of 12 December 2014,

¹ Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

² Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

³ Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9–13 May 2011 (A/CONF.219/7), chap. II.



Recalling further the Manila Declaration on World Tourism of 10 October 1980,⁴ the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,⁵ Agenda 21 of 14 June 1992⁶ and the Amman Declaration on Peace through Tourism of 11 November 2000,⁷

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 this 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,

Recognizing, inter alia, that well-designed and well-managed tourism can make a significant contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development, has close linkages to other sectors and can create decent jobs and generate trade opportunities,

Recognizing also the important dimension and role of sustainable tourism as a positive instrument towards the eradication of poverty, the protection of the environment and the improvement of the quality of life for all people, its potential to make a contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development, especially of developing countries, and its emergence as a vital force for the promotion of international understanding, peace and prosperity,

Welcoming the adoption of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012⁸ and the launching of the sustainable tourism programme of the Framework, and encouraging further implementation through capacity-building projects and initiatives to support sustainable tourism,

Noting the importance of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism,⁹ which outlines principles to guide tourism development and to serve as a frame of reference for the various stakeholders in the tourism sector, with the objective of minimizing the negative impact of tourism on the environment and on cultural heritage while maximizing the benefits of tourism in promoting sustainable development, poverty alleviation and gender equality, as well as understanding among nations,

⁴ A/36/236, annex, appendix I.

⁵ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

⁶ Ibid., annex II.

⁷ [A/55/640](#), annex.

⁸ [A/CONF.216/5](#), annex.

⁹ See [E/2001/61](#), annex.

Taking note of resolution 668 (XXI) adopted by the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization at its twenty-first session, held in Medellin, Colombia, from 12 to 17 September 2015, resolution 707 (XXII) adopted at its twenty-second session, held in Chengdu, China, from 11 to 16 September 2017, and resolutions 722 (XXIII) and 723 (XXIII) adopted at its twenty-third session, held in Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, from 9 to 13 September 2019,

Noting with great concern the threat to human health, safety and well-being caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, as well as the severe disruption to societies and economies and the devastating impact on lives and livelihoods, and that the poorest and most vulnerable are the hardest hit by the pandemic, reaffirming the ambition to get back on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by designing sustainable and inclusive recovery strategies to accelerate progress towards the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to help to reduce the risk of future shocks, and recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic requires a global response based on unity, solidarity and renewed multilateral cooperation,

Noting with concern the grave impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism sector, especially on micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular in countries dependent on tourism, owing to closures and travel restrictions, recognizing that, while safety and public health in the wake of the pandemic should be prioritized, recovery of the tourism sector is urgently needed and that the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism should continue to serve as a reference, in times of crisis and recovery, for all the parties involved in the tourism value cycle to achieve sustainable tourism development, and looking forward to the convening of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization, to be held in Marrakech, Morocco, in 2021, and to the discussions under the agenda item on ethics in that context,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;¹⁰

2. *Also takes note* of the adoption, by the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization at its twenty-third session, in September 2019, by its resolution 722 (XXIII), of the Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics, along with its Optional Protocol, and expresses its appreciation to the World Tourism Organization and its World Committee on Tourism Ethics for the work undertaken in the promotion and implementation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and the efforts deployed in streamlining the process of the development of the Framework Convention;

3. *Further takes note* of the United Nations policy brief entitled “COVID-19 and transforming tourism”, launched by the Secretary-General on 28 August 2020, recognizes the importance of ethical principles as laid down in the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism when applying the measures necessary for supporting a post-COVID-19 tourism recovery, and encourages tourism enterprises and trade associations around the globe to sign the Private Sector Commitment to the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism;

4. *Encourages* the World Tourism Organization, through its World Committee on Tourism Ethics, to continue to promote and disseminate the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and to monitor the implementation of the ethical principles related to tourism by both the public and private sectors;

5. *Welcomes* the growing interest among Member States, especially among the States and territories members of the World Tourism Organization, and their increasing institutional and legal commitment towards the implementation of the

¹⁰ A/75/254.

Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, reiterates its invitation to those Member States and other tourism stakeholders, in particular in the private sector, that have not yet done so to introduce, as appropriate, the principles of the Global Code into their relevant laws, regulations, professional practices and codes of conduct, and in this regard expresses appreciation to those Member States and industry practitioners that have already done so;

6. *Recognizes* the need to promote the development of sustainable tourism, including non-consumptive tourism and ecotourism, taking into account the spirit of the International Year of Ecotourism, 2002, the World Ecotourism Summit, 2002, the Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism¹¹ and the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, so as to increase the benefits from tourism resources for the population in host communities while maintaining the cultures and the environmental integrity of those communities and enhancing the protection of ecologically sensitive areas and of the natural heritage, and to promote the development of sustainable tourism and capacity-building in order to contribute to the strengthening of rural and local communities, taking into account the need to address, *inter alia*, the challenges of climate change, halting the loss of biodiversity, safeguarding cultural artefacts and promoting respect for living culture, heritage and traditions;

7. *Invites* the States Members of the United Nations and other stakeholders to support the activities undertaken by, *inter alia*, the World Tourism Organization for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism, including in the context of capacity-building to promote the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products, including by empowering women and youth and extending the benefits of tourism to all sectors of society, including the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of the population, while minimizing its negative impact;

8. *Recalls* the related targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹² that, *inter alia*, aim to devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products as well as develop tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly, at its eightieth session, a report on the implementation of the present resolution within his report related to sustainable tourism, in consultation with the World Tourism Organization, and decides to include in the provisional agenda of its eightieth session the item entitled “Global Code of Ethics for Tourism”, unless otherwise agreed in the discussions on the revitalization of the Second Committee.

*48th plenary meeting
21 December 2020*

¹¹ A/57/343, annex.

¹² Resolution 70/1.