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Response for increased support for tourism in the development agenda

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Yesterday, at its sixth meeting, the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Working Group on Official Development Assistance (ODA), chaired by the Minister of Tourism in South Africa, Minister Derek Hanekom, approved in principle the creation of a Tourism for Development Facility (TDF) at the UNWTO. It will be presented today to the 100th Executive Council meeting of the UNWTO in Rovinj, Croatia and will come into operation once approved by the General Assembly in September this year.

According to the UNWTO, tourism generates 9% of the world gross domestic product (GDP) (direct, indirect and induced), accounts for 30% of service exports and one in every 11 jobs. However, in 2013 a mere 0.08% of all ODA funding (192 million USD) was allocated to the tourism sector. With such imbalances between the importance of tourism in the global economy and Global Aid-for-Trade vis-à-vis the amount of ODA allocated to tourism development activities, the Executive Council decided to create the Working Group on ODA.

The ODA working group was created during the ninety-fifth session of the Executive Council in May 2013, following a proposal from South Africa, with the aim of supporting the efforts of the UNWTO Secretariat in achieving full ODA eligibility at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and mobilising new resources for the Organisation.

The Working Group's priorities are to: 1) pursue full ODA eligibility for the UNWTO at the OECD Development Assistance Committee; and 2) support the UNWTO to build a more conducive framework for the resource mobilisation from the international community.

The TDF will be the UNWTO's new development mechanism to support ODA-eligible countries to access financial assistance for sustainable development through tourism. The Facility will also provide ODA donors with a new framework to strengthen the means of implementation and invigorate the global partnership for development through tourism under the proposed Sustainable Development Goals.

Enquiries

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