



Economic and Social Council

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Item 13 (p) of the provisional agenda*

Economic and environmental questions: Global Code of Ethics for Tourism

Approval of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism

Note by the Secretariat

1. At its organizational session for 2001, the Council had before it a note by the Secretariat (E/2001/3) in which the Secretary-General proposed the inclusion under item 13 (Economic and environmental questions) of the provisional agenda for the substantive session of 2001 of an additional sub-item entitled "Global Code of Ethics for Tourism". The Council subsequently approved the provisional agenda for its substantive session of 2001, including the aforementioned sub-item, as contained in document E/2001/1 (Council decision 2001/202).

2. The unanimous adoption of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism by the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) at its thirteenth session in Santiago, Chile, in October 1999 was the culmination of an extensive consultative process over a two-year period involving the various stakeholders, including the WTO member States, the WTO Business Council, as well as the relevant community of non-governmental organizations and labour organizations.

3. The Code includes nine articles outlining the ethical principles, which should govern tourism development, and sets out guidance and standards to be followed by destinations, Governments, tour operators, developers, travel agents, and travellers themselves. Article 10 provides a mechanism for its implementation as well as for promotion of global cooperation. Its objective is to minimize the negative impact of tourism on the environment and on cultural heritage while maximizing the benefits for residents of tourism destinations. The significance of the Code in expanding the contribution of the tourism sector to economic prosperity and poverty alleviation, as well as in promoting understanding among nations can be appreciated from the fact that international tourism is forecast to triple in volume over the next 20 years.

* E/2001/100.



4. The following principles are embodied in articles 1 to 9 of the Code, following a preamble: (1) tourism's contribution to mutual understanding and respect between peoples and societies; (2) tourism as a vehicle for individual and collective fulfilment; (3) tourism as a factor of sustainable development; (4) tourism as a user of the cultural heritage of mankind and a contributor to its enhancement; (5) tourism as a beneficial activity for host countries and communities; (6) the obligations of stakeholders in tourism development; (7) the right to tourism; (8) the liberty of tourist movements; and (9) the rights of the workers and entrepreneurs in the tourism industry.

5. It may be recalled that following approval by the Economic and Social Council through its decision 254 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977, the General Assembly adopted resolution 32/156, on 19 December 1977, entitled "Agreement on Cooperation and Relationships between the United Nations and the World Tourism Organization". The Agreement, *inter alia*, confirmed the role of the Economic and Social Council in coordinating activities related to tourism and, in this connection, stipulated that the World Tourism Organization might make recommendations and proposals relating to international agreements in the field of tourism. The Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization, in his letter of 13 December 2000 to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (E/2001/3, annex), requested that the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism be included as an item in the provisional agenda of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in 2001 and subsequently be considered by the General Assembly with a view to obtaining its universal recognition and dissemination.

6. Against this background, annexed to the present document for the consideration of the Council is the resolution adopted at the thirteenth session of the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization, which contains the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

Annex

**Resolution 406 (XIII) of the General Assembly of the
World Tourism Organization
Approval of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism**
