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CSD-7 HIGHLIGHTS TUESDAY, 20 APRIL 1999

CSD-7 conducted dialogue sessions on "Changing Consumer Behavior" during the morning and on "Promoting Broad-based Sustainable Development through Tourism while Safeguarding the Integrity of Local Cultures and Protecting the Environment" during the afternoon.

CHANGING CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

OPENING STATEMENTS: Kenneth Hine, CEO, International Hotel and Restaurant Association, on behalf of Industry, said tourism is a major communication industry. He stressed the need for efforts by governments, trade unions, industry and local authorities to educate consumers. Estafania Blount, ICFTU, on behalf of Trade Unions, said a sustainable tourism industry requires modifying the model on which tourism is based as well as individual tourist behavior. She noted tourism workers' role and responsibility in the transition toward sustainable tourism. She stressed the need for all stakeholders to have a similar understanding of what sustainable tourism is.

Sharon James, Voluntary Service Overseas, on behalf of NGOs, presented seven possible outcomes from CSD-7, including the initiation of a review of the Global Code of Ethics currently being developed by the World Tourism Organization and a UNEP-led inter-agency effort to evaluate the range of activities underway to influence consumer behavior. She also proposed that governments at all levels and the tourism industry undertake capacity building and initiate programmes that address health issues associated with tourism. Margarita Najera Aranzabal, Mayor of Calvia, Spain, on behalf of Local Authorities, drew attention to the economic opportunities offered by international tourism, but cautioned that incentives should be developed to encourage informed decisions. She called for forward-looking planning by local authorities that shifts away from the prevailing quantitatively-oriented model toward one based on a covenant amongst various social and economic actors.

Adel Rady (Egypt) highlighted efforts in Egypt to promote sustainable tourism, including training, information and public awareness. He noted examples of the importance of tourism management systems that operate with full stakeholder cooperation. He said the challenge is to measure and monitor progress. Donal Guilfoyle (Ireland) outlined the growth of tourism in Ireland, highlighting techniques used and lessons learned. Successful techniques included: "de-marketing," encouraging visitors to steer clear of sensitive sites; market orientation toward sustainable accommodation, transportation, activities and purchases; and raising tourist awareness. He said visitor

expectations are focused on robust and renewable resources, and quality of life is improving for the host community without significant environmental deterioration.

DIALOGUE: On education, Trade Unions suggested that tourist information centers could provide information. Industry underscored the importance of consistency and continuity in educational efforts. Trade Unions noted that they have existing structures for educating workers. Industry emphasized the need for unions to communicate the importance of the environment to their members. Trade Unions suggested that tourists learn about labor disputes at places they patronize. Local Authorities said tourist businesses may also need education.

On using the media to educate consumers, NGOs said issues concerning tourism, gender and conservation must be appropriately covered by major media. BOTSWANA noted the need for media to publish balanced statements. NGOs suggested building consumer advocacy capacity. On influencing and changing consumer behavior, NGOs' said consumer behavior has negative effects that are not reflected in pricing. Local Authorities suggested influencing behavior with financial incentives and punitive pricing. Trade Unions said consumer education could begin on the way to destinations. Local Authorities suggested showing in-flight videos on destination sites. NGOs said airlines are often reluctant to show them. Industry described ongoing efforts in this regard.

On certification and other industry activities, Industry agreed in principle with NGOs that certification schemes should include criteria for education. NGOs recommended establishing minimum standards to ensure proper certification schemes, noting the multiplicity of schemes. The NETHERLANDS called attention to Industry's initiative in this regard. NGOs said consumers need to be educated on the meaning of different eco-labels. Industry invited other major groups to participate in its "Dodo Education Campaign." Several speakers discussed the Global Code of Ethics currently being developed by the World Trade Organization, with NGOs calling for an inclusive drafting process. ARGENTINA stressed the need to find a neutral basis for certification to create credibility through adequate enforcement.

Additional comments included Trade Unions' question of whether eco-tourism could include protection for worker's health. NGOs said successful tourism should consider effects on human health of both local and visitor populations. The US supported the NGOs' recommended CSD-7 outcomes, stressing the usefulness of promoting multi-stakeholder participation in all guidelines, particularly in implementation and monitoring.

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In summary, Industry said it looked forward to expanded information on the challenge of HIV/AIDS in the workplace, and sought further development and implementation of organized environmental rating programmes such as Green Globe. NGOs stressed the importance of involving those affected in the development of guidelines for consumer behavior and emphasized that eco-labels should deal with social, cultural and economic issues as well as environmental ones. Local Authorities supported establishing general guidelines for sustainable tourism behavior. Trade Unions noted that tourism workers rather than management are best placed to influence travelers.

PROMOTING BROAD-BASED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TOURISM WHILE SAFEGUARDING THE INTEGRITY OF LOCAL CULTURES AND PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

OPENING STATEMENTS: Karen Ford, Deputy Secretary-General of the Caribbean Tourism Organization, on behalf of Industry, referred to a recent declaration by the Association of Caribbean States highlighting tourism as the industry best able to increase employment and income in the region. She said that tourism must take into account environmental and socio-cultural considerations to be sustainable. She noted factors related to tourism that negatively impact local populations and the environment and highlighted strategic partnerships among stakeholders as a solution. Indira Saxena, Commonwealth Trade Union Confederation, stressed the importance of involving all stakeholders, particularly workers, in promoting sustainable tourism. She underscored the need to focus on worker education and awareness and to ensure workers' health as a condition for sustainable tourism.

J.S. Nsubuga-Bewayo, Mayor of Jinja, Uganda, on behalf of Local Authorities, highlighted the over-reliance on market mechanisms to guide tourism development and consumption decisions as a major barrier to sustainable development. He stressed the need to ensure that local residents benefit from tourism in their communities and said Local Agenda 21 planning serves as a mechanism for cooperation among stakeholders to achieve sustainable tourism. Wilfredo Alanguí, Indigenous Peoples' Center for Policy Research and Education, on behalf of NGOs, recommended establishing three multi-stakeholder working groups to assess financial leakages in tourism, to develop a plan to ensure Indigenous Peoples' land, water and resource rights, and to design a plan for international trade and investment frameworks that would enable new economic opportunities for local communities. He said the results should be conveyed to CSD-8.

Cecilia Perez Balladares (Panama) highlighted measures undertaken by Panama to promote heritage tourism. She drew attention to ongoing partnerships between tourism, conservation and scientific research organizations to bring about reciprocal benefits to the country and also promote sustainable tourism. Alexis Hatzadakis (Greece) noted that the main goal of tourism policy should be to preserve natural resources in order to achieve sustainable tourism development. He emphasized that programmes for tourist activities in destinations with traditional cultures must be long-term, given the sensitivity of cultural identity and the exposure of and influence on local communities by massive tourist inflows.

DIALOGUE: Local Authorities highlighted problems related to growth-based tourism economies and recommended shifting to steady-state models where the number of hotels and tourists are limited. He said industry cannot self-regulate in this regard and stressed local governments' role in setting optimum capacity. Industry noted that locations differ in their requirements, and proposed processes to determine carrying capacity driven by local-level actors. Local Authorities said growth will reach an ultimate limit, and a consensus process should determine that limit. Industry said the multi-stakeholder, local-level process should decide whether there are limits to growth. Regarding economic incentives, Local Authorities said pricing should influence appropriate behavior and cover environmental costs. Local Authorities also suggested establishing eco-taxes as a means of generating investment for urban renewal, among others.

Trade Unions stressed the need to leave revenue in the local community to pay for damage caused by tourism. NGOs noted the need to educate local communities about tourism's impacts to make informed decisions. Industry observed that job-related training and community-generated education would promote sustainable tourism. Trade Unions pointed out that the high workforce turnover in the tourism industry called for improved working conditions and job stability. Trade Unions urged consideration of workers' health. NGOs observed that rural women should have a special role in developing sustainable tourism in local areas and could be encouraged by building local capacity.

Trade Unions noted that local control of tourism is limited because decisions are often made by elites in distant areas. NGOs underscored that certain WTO agreements have been imposed on indigenous people and local communities and stressed the need to involve them when reviving the multi-stakeholder process. On cultural tourism, NGOs underscored the uniqueness of indigenous peoples' spirituality and noted that tourism practices often disregard religious beliefs and values. NGOs said local communities have the right to require "prior informed consent" regarding certain tourism practices. Industry indicated that benchmarks for hotels are being developed, including regard for local cultural heritage. BOLIVIA noted an increase in trade of cultural goods in some developing countries and stressed the need for control methods that would require certificates of origin. Local Authorities highlighted their role in preserving local culture and suggested that industry focus on the local workforce before bringing in workers from outside. Trade Unions noted the importance of music as part of the cultural heritage that tourists enjoy and proposed developing a music network to encourage awareness of Agenda 21. Industry expressed an interest in working with such a network.

In summary, Industry highlighted desired outcomes for CSD-7, including support for: indicators of sustainability that reflect market and non-market elements; employee and consumer awareness programmes with multi-stakeholder input and funding; and certification programmes based on ISO standards and Agenda 21 for Travel and Tourism. Trade Unions noted that their effective participation is based on workers' ability to participate in the workplace and be involved in planning and implementation. Local Authorities said maintenance of resources used by tourists should be supported by industry, and endorsed a new steady-state model for tourism. NGOs stressed the need for informed participation of local communities and indigenous peoples if tourism is to be sustainable.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Discussions held since the CSD Intersessionals on the upcoming review of the Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States have resulted in a new text, which will form the basis of CSD-7 negotiations. Representatives of the G-77/China and the EU have also been in contact to clarify their respective negotiating positions since the CSD Intersessionals, although delegates report that the informal consultations produced little progress.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

TOURISM SEGMENT: The Tourism Segment will conclude following a morning dialogue session on the "Coastal Impact of Tourism" in Conference Room 1.

HIGH-LEVEL SEGEMENT: The High-Level Segment will commence at 2:00 pm in Conference Room 1. It will hear ministerial statements on "Tourism and Sustainable Development" followed by a dialogue on the same issue.

SIDE EVENTS: The International Commission to Develop an Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption will meet at 11:15 am in the Press Conference Room. See the *CSD Today* for a full listing of side events.