

**Statement made by Sarbuland Khan on behalf of World Tourism Organization
at the 7th session of the UNGA Open working Group on the SDGs,
8 January, 2013**

Mr. Chairman,

It is a pleasure for me to speak on behalf of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) on the 10 Year Framework of Programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (10YFP).

UNWTO was one of the first UN organization which joined the 10 YFP by submitting a programme on sustainable tourism under the Framework.

At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20 Conference in June 2012, Heads of State formally adopted the 10YFP as a global action framework to enhance international cooperation on sustainable consumption and production (SCP) by supporting the implementation of policies and activities at the regional and national level.

Due to its global economic and social importance, which has become critical from a resource-use perspective, the tourism sector has been recognized as a key area to accelerate the change towards more SCP patterns and has been integrated as one of the five initial programmes of the 10YFP. Sustainable tourism can be a key area to accelerate the change towards more sustainable consumption and production because of its unique circumstances and characteristics:

First, in information and economic terms, tourism is one of the most complicated products; it is classified as a trust and belief product because it is in the future, takes place at a distance and has a high proportion of immaterial elements;

Secondly, tourism takes place at a distance from the usual area of residence, so tourists are especially seeking new forms of behavior and are today increasingly interested in more sustainable and eco-friendly products and services;

Thirdly, growth in the tourism sector, while yielding direct economic and social benefits to those engaged in it also can also trigger growth processes in other sectors;

By leveraging these unique circumstances and characteristics of tourism and the existing international collaboration networks and research, by stimulating innovation, and by replicating and scaling up SCP initiatives, tourism can be a major contributor to SCP and be at the cutting edge of the efforts to help accelerate the global shift to resource efficient economies and sustainable lifestyles.

The significant contribution of tourism to sustainable development was recognized in the RIO+20 Outcome Document "The Future We Want", where it is included as a thematic area and cross-sectorial issue demonstrating how tourism can be a catalyst for development, emphasizing that *"...well-designed and managed tourism can make a significant contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development, and having close linkages to other sectors, create decent jobs and generate trade opportunities..."*.

Mr. Chairman,

Over the past decades, tourism has experienced significant growth and diversification, becoming one of the fastest-growing economic sectors in the world. Tourism generates 5% of global GDP (9% when indirect and induced impacts are considered), accounts for 30% of the world's trade in services and employs one out of every eleven people worldwide.

Tourism is also a central source of employment generation, offering a direct entry point into the workforce, particularly for youth and women in urban and rural communities, and a diversity of investment opportunities for young entrepreneurial talents. Tourism also represents a voluntary mechanism for a voluntary redistribution of wealth between the rich and the poor.

Considering the cross-cutting nature of the sector, tourism has important forward and backward linkages to the entire economy including agriculture, manufacturing, creative industries and Information Technology and Communication services. From a resource perspective, it has a huge potential for resources efficiency, leading to greener growth. It creates additional productive capacities, trade and green jobs while retaining wealth and reducing leakages.

The long-term forecast on “Tourism Towards 2030” published by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) shows that, by 2030, emerging economies will account for 58% of the 1.8 billion international tourist arrivals. This should be compared with the 47% of the 1,035 billion arrivals reached in 2012, growing from just 25 million in 1950. This indicates the magnitude of efforts required to shift towards SCP by both developed and developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

UNWTO is actively promoting sustainable and responsible tourism through its technical assistance, training and research programmes and publications and through its partnership initiatives, in collaboration with Governments, other UN agencies, international organizations, private sector, academic institutions and civil society.

UNWTO is fully supportive of the implementation of the 10YFP programme and, as a Lead Actor, believes that accelerating the change towards sustainable consumption and production patterns in the tourism sector can have a significant positive impact in both developed and developing countries on job creation, trade and poverty reduction, leading to green growth and achieving people centered development.

Mr. Chairman,

As regards the 10YFP, significant progress has been made in establishing its governance structure and Secretariat and in setting out the processes for project identification and evaluation. UNWTO has developed collaborative arrangements with other relevant UN agencies, with a view to the implementation of the sustainable tourism programme. A Trust Fund has been set up. However, an adequate level of funding will be crucial for the success of the 10YFP and its programmes. As so many speakers have recognized this morning, the Framework is an exemplary model of collaboration which can bring together all relevant stakeholders under a single structure of collaborative implementation. If successful, we can set the pace for long-term progress in moving the world towards more sustainable consumption and production patterns, which is at the core of our common efforts to secure a sustainable future for this and the coming generations.

I thank you.