

ORIGINAL : FRENCH

REPORT OF

THE ISLAMIC CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE

TO

**THE 9TH CONFERENCE OF TOURISM MINISTERS
OF THE OIC MEMBER STATES**

21ST – 23RD DECEMBER 2015, NIAMEY – REPUBLIC OF NIGER

CONTENT

- **Report on the «2nd Tourism Travel Market of the OIC Member States : Promoting Family Tourism», Shajah, United Arab Emiates, 8-10 December 2015;**
- **Report on the « Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa »**
- **Note on the activities organized for the benefit of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and Konya, OIC Cities of Tourism for 2015 & 2016**
- **Report on Multilateral Trade Negotiations within the WTO relating to Services (Tourism sector)**
- **Note on upcoming Tourism Fairs of the OIC Member States**
- **List of activities relating to Tourism to be organized in 2016**

REPORT ON THE 2ND TOURISM & TRAVEL FAIR OF THE OIC MEMBER STATES: PROMOTING FAMILY TOURISM

**SHARJAH – UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
8-10 DECEMBER 2015**

In accordance with the 8th Ministerial Conference of Tourism Ministers of the OIC Member states held from 4th to 6th December 2013 in Banjul, Republic of The Gambia, the State of United Arab Emirates (Sharjah Emirate), the Islamic Centre (ICDT) and Sharjah Expo Centre organized under the High Patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed AL QASSIMI - Ruler of Sharjah and Member of the Supreme Council of UAE, the “2nd Tourism & Travel Fair of the OIC Member States” under the theme: Promoting Family Tourism, from 8th to 10th December 2015 at Sharjah Expo Centre of the United Arab Emirates, concomitantly with the 4th Halal Exhibition of the OIC Member States.

The objective of this Fair is to further strengthen cooperation among the OIC Member States in the tourism sector, promote the historic monuments and tourist sites of Member States and encourage investment in this sector. This Edition has focused on the one hand, on promoting family tourism industry, which represents 30% of the travel market in the world and on the other hand, it served as a platform to promote non-traditional destinations in the OIC Countries with high potential for ecotourism and cultural tourism.

The Fair which lasted 3 days, was open from 10am to 6pm to the public and professionals. It recorded the participation of around 125 enterprises, businessmen and visitors, whom represented the following Member States:

- State of the United Arab Emirates (Emirate of Sharjah)
- Islamic Republic of Pakistan
- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
- Arab Republic of Egypt
- Malaysia
- State of Palestine
- Republic of Kazakhstan
- Republic of Azerbaijan
- Brunei Darussalam
- Republic of Tajikistan
- Republic of Mozambique
- Republic of Senegal

Other non OIC Member States (Austria, Germany, South Korea, France, Japan, Great Britain and Russia) have also participated in this Fair.

It is worth underlining that within the framework of the facilitation of the participation of the OIC Member States and Institutions in the Fairs organized by ICDT, the Centre has sponsored the participation of Mozambique, Palestine, Azerbaijan, Malaysia, Egypt and of the Islamic Centre for the Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture in this 2nd Tourism Fair of the OIC Member States.

This Fair has been officially inaugurated on 8th December 2015 at Sharjah Expo Center by Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdullah Bin Sultan Al Qassimi, President of Sharjah ports and customs, in the presence of M. Abdullaha Bin Mohamed Al Qwais, President of the

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Sharjah, M Saif Al Midfa, Executive Director of Sharjah Expo Centre, their Excellences Mohammed Yusra Salleh, Ambassador of Brunei Darussalam in Abu Dhabi and Oleg Konovalov, 1st Consul of the Russian Federation in Dubai and of several diplomats and personalities of Sharjah Emirates and heads of stands of participating Countries.

The exhibition space was around 2000 sqm and the Fair registered 1000 businessmen of OIC Member Countries, seeking business and partnership opportunities. It is worth indicating at this point that the level of participation of OIC Members Countries has been influenced by the holding during the same period from 7th to 9th December 2015 of SIAL Abu Dhabi, which was inaugurated by His Majesty the King Mohamed the Sixth – King of Morocco and his Highness Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan – Prince of Abu Dhabi.

ICDT seized this opportunity to promote the services of the Centre among the exhibitors of participating Member Countries and ensured the promotion of the 15th Trade Fair of the OIC Member States scheduled from 22nd to 26th May 2015 in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

REPORTS OF THE MEETINGS OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE “REGIONAL PROJECT OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN A NETWORK OF CROSS-BORDER PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS IN WEST AFRICA”

REMINDER:

In compliance with the decision of H.E the OIC Secretary General, ICDT ensures, since 2006, the follow up of the implementation of the project on “Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas”. This project includes ten OIC Member States (Benin, Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Sierra Leone).

- **Meeting of the Committee of the Regional Project of “Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa”:** Casablanca, 10-11 July 2006.

A meeting of the Project Committee was held on 10th and 11th July 2006 in Casablanca (Kingdom of Morocco) at the headquarters of the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT).

This Committee is composed of the Regional Representative of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) for Africa, the Regional Coordinator of the Project, Mr. Mohamed Sakho and SESRIC.

The aim of this meeting was to:

- Present the Activity Programme approved on the sidelines of the 44th Meeting of the UNWTO Committee for Africa held in Bamako (Mali) 8th May 2006;
- To discuss the support modalities to the mobilisation of needed resources for the working out of the feasibility study;
- To discuss the coordination mechanisms for the implementation of this project.

The outcomes of the meeting were as follows:

- Signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between contracting parties;
- The setting up of a Follow up Permanent Committee (ICDT, SESRIC, Regional Coordinator and the UNWTO);
- Adoption of the draft terms of References of the Feasibility Study of the Project and submission of funding application of the project to IDB;
- Drawing up of a programme of Planned Activities;
- Contribution of the UNWTO for an amount of US\$ 50,000 within the framework of the financing of the feasibility study of the project whose total budget amounts to US\$ 425,000.

- **Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Regional Project of “Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Parks and Cross-Border Protected Areas in West Africa”:** Baku, Azerbaijan, 10th September 2006.

In compliance with the recommendations of the First Meeting of the Committee on the Regional Project of **“Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa”** held in Casablanca from 10th to 12th July 2006, ICDT has invited the contracting parties to the project to a 2nd meeting of the said Committee extended to 9 Member Countries, the Representatives of the OIC General Secretariat

and the IDB's Representative, which took place on 10th September 2006 in Gulustan Palace on the sidelines of the 5th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers held at the same place from 9th to 12th September 2006.

Upon deliberations, the meeting recommended among other the following:

- Approves the Reports of the Regional Coordinator and ICDT and the terms of reference of the Feasibility Study of the Project with four components as presented for its financing;
- Recommends the sending within the shortest possible time of a Ministerial Delegation of Member States accompanied by the Representatives of the contracting parties to IDB to raise its awareness to the importance of this project and make it grant a substantial financial contribution to the concerned study;
- Kindly requests H.E the OIC Secretary General to get involved in this initiative;
- Requests the Republic of Guinea to prepare this mission in coordination with the different contracting parties and to agree within the shortest possible time on the most convenient date to carry it out.

- **Meeting of the Committee on the Regional Project of "Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa"**: Casablanca, 24th March 2008.

Within the framework of the implementation of the Plan of Action of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for the strengthening of Economic and Commercial Cooperation, 9 OIC Member States and the UNWTO: Benin, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Sierra-Leone have initiated a project on "Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas".

To that effect, the Steering Committee held a meeting in Casablanca on 24th March 2008.

It is worth recalling that the Steering Committee was held successively in Dakar (March 2005), Bamako (May 2006), Casablanca (July 2006), Baku (September 2006), Accra (October 2007), Carthage De Indias (November (2007).

The aim of this meeting was to take stock of the progress achieved in the implementation of the project and to update the Programme of planned activities for the year 2008/2009.

This meeting was attended by:

- The Republic of Guinea;
- The Islamic Republic of Mauritania;
- The Republic of Mali;
- The Republic of Senegal;
- The Regional Coordinator of the Project;
- The OIC General Secretariat;
- The World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO);
- The Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC);

- **Meeting of the Steering Committee of the "Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Parks and Cross Border Protected Areas in West Africa"**: Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, 30th June 2008.

On the sidelines of the 6th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers, the Follow up Committee of the Regional Project of Sustainable Tourism Development in a Cross-Border Network and Protected Areas in West Africa held its meeting on 30th June 2008 in Meridian Hotel, Damascus (Syria).

This meeting was chaired by Mr. Nabika DIALLO, Counsellor to the OIC General Secretary, assisted by the Representatives of the ICDT, the UNWTO and the General Coordinator. During this meeting, which was attended by the representatives of the project Member States that participated in the 6th ICTM, the report of the meeting was approved and a resolution on this issue was submitted and adopted by the Conference.

The meeting commended above all the work accomplished by the Follow up Committee and the implementation of the Activity Programme 2008/2009 in compliance with the calendar that was prepared. It also approved the final choice of the Consultancy Company in charge of working out the feasibility study and requested Member States, which have not done so to set up a national coordination cell.

An awareness raising approach was made at the level of The IDB Group in order to involve it in the proceedings of the Follow up Committee and in the financing of the project during its execution phase.

- **Meeting of the Steering Committee of the “Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Parks and Cross Border Protected Areas in West Africa”**: Madrid, 6-7 February 2009.

The Director General of the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), Mr. Allal RACHDI, participated in the meeting on the “Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa”, Madrid 6-7 February 2009 at the headquarters of the World Tourism Organisation in Madrid, Kingdom of Spain.

This meeting focused on the consideration of the results of the 1st stage of the Feasibility Study prepared by the Consulting Company.

During this meeting, ICDT which ensures the coordination of the project at the level of the OIC reiterated the support of the OIC to this project and informed participants of the steps taken by the OIC and the Islamic Development Bank Group to ensure the implementation of this project.

- **Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Regional Project of “Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Parks and Cross-Border Protected Areas in West Africa”**: Casablanca, 9-10 July 2009.

Within the framework of the implementation of the Plan of Action of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for the strengthening of Economic and Commercial Cooperation, 9 OIC Member States and the UNWTO: Benin, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Sierra-Leone have initiated a project on “Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas”.

To that effect, the Steering Committee held a meeting in Casablanca on 9th and 10th July 2009.

It is worth recalling that the Steering Committee was held successively in Dakar (March 2005), Bamako (May 2006), Casablanca (July 2006), Baku (September 2006), Accra (October 2007), Carthagène De Indias (November (2007), Casablanca (24th March 2008) and Madrid on (6th February 2009).

This meeting was attended by:

- Burkina Faso;
- The Republic of The Gambia;

- The Republic of Guinea;
- The Republic of Mali;
- The Republic of Niger;
- The Regional Coordinator of the Project;
- The World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO);
- The Research Firm “Secheresse Consultants”

The steering committee approved the strategic orientations proposed by the Research Firm “SecheresseConsultants” provided that the latter takes into account the recommendations, observations and suggestions formulated during the meeting for the working out of the final strategy of the project.

- **Meeting of the Steering Committee of the « Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border parks and Protected Areas in West Africa”**: Astana, Kazakhstan, 3rd October 2009.

On October 3rd, 2009 the Steering Committee of the “Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a network of Cross-border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa” met in Astana (Republic of Kazakhstan) to examine the remaining activities of the project. The Republics of Benin, Niger, Mali, Senegal, Mauritania and Burkina Faso were represented during this meeting in addition to the Ministers of Benin and Niger.

This meeting was held on the sidelines of the 18th Session of the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) which on this occasion adopted a resolution on the project. (For details on this resolution, please refer to the following document in annex).

- **Meeting of the Steering Committee of the “Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border parks and Protected Areas in West Africa”**: Madrid, 15-16 December 2009.

The follow up committee on the “Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Borderparks and Protected Areas in West Africa” : met in Madrid on 15-16 December 2009 at the headquarters of the UNWTO in Madrid for the examination and approval by the committee of the projects files and the costs related to them, within the framework of phase 3: Plan of actions of the feasibility study on the Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border parks and Protected Areas in West Africa.

- **Preparatory Meetings of the Donors Conference of the Regional Project on Sustainable Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa:**

Within the framework of the financing of the project, which has reached the implementation stage, the Members of the Steering Committee of this project have agreed to organise on 27th and 28th May 2011, a Donors Conference in Dakar under the chairmanship of H.E. MaitreAbdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal.

To that effect, the Steering Committee held successively three preparatory meetings respectively in :

- ✓ Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran on 30th November 2010 on the sidelines of the 7th Seven Session of the Conference of Tourism Ministers;
- ✓ Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco, 27th and 28th January 2011;
- ✓ Dakar, Republic of Senegal, 18th and 19th April 2011.

- **Report of the Donors Conference for the Funding of the "Regional Project for Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa":** Dakar - Republic of Senegal, 27-28 May 2011.

In order to mobilize the funds needed to finance **the Regional Project for Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa**, the Steering Committee of the concerned project organized under the High Patronage of His Excellency Maître Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal and Current Chairman of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), a Conference of Donors at Meridien President Hotel in Dakar, Republic of Senegal, on 27 and 28 May, 2011.

This conference was preceded by the holding of a coordination meeting of the Steering Committee in the presence of focal points and managers of parks and protected areas on 26th May 2011.

This meeting was attended by:

Representatives of the recipient States of the project namely: the Republic of Benin, Burkina Faso, the Gambia, the Republic of Guinea, the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, Republic of Mali, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, the Republic of Niger, the Republic of Senegal and the Republic of Sierra Leone.

It is worth noting in this regard that the Delegations of Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Guinea, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone were represented by their Supervising Ministries.

The Delegation of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) led by His Excellency the Secretary General Mr. Taleb RIFAI;

- The OIC delegation led by Mr. Cheikh Oumar SOW, Director General of Economic Affairs and Representative of His Excellency Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General of OIC;
- The Delegation of the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) led by Mr. Houcine RAHMOUNI, Adviser to the Director General;
- The Delegation of the Republic of Guinea, Regional Coordinator of the Project, led by HE Elhadji OUSMANE BAH, Minister of State in charge of Public Works and Transports representing H.E the President of the Republic of Guinea, Professor Alpha CONDE. It included the Minister of Hotel Trade, Tourism and Handicrafts and the Delegated Minister for Environment;
- Mrs. Dho YOUNG-SHIM, Representative of KOICA and the STEP Foundation;
- Mr. Abdel Wahab CHERIF, Representative of the Regional Office of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) in Dakar;
- Mr. Savas Alpay, Director General of the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC);
- Representatives of the following Organizations and Institutions: the Islamic Development Bank Group (IDB)/African Development Bank (ADB)/French Cooperation Programme/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU)/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/Aga Khan Foundation STEP-KOICA/Foundation.

I/ OPENING SESSION:

The opening session was chaired by H.E Mr. Souleymane Ndéné NDIAYE, Prime Minister of the Republic of Senegal, Representative of HE Maitre Abdoulaye Wade, President of the

Republic of Senegal and Current Chairman of the OIC.

The welcoming address was delivered by H.E Mr. Thierno LO, Minister of Handicrafts, Tourism and Relations with the Private Sector and the Informal Sector of the Republic of Senegal. On this occasion, HE the Minister said that the international bodies and national governments are increasingly recognizing the role that tourism plays in reducing poverty. The project, he said will enable the ten Member States, project stakeholders to pool their efforts to strengthen their socio-economic and environmental advantages and derive most benefit from their enormous potential of ecotourism. He also stressed that this project will surely achieve the Millennium Development Goals by the 2015 deadline, particularly Goal 1 (Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger), the Objective 2 (Sustainable Management and Conservation of the environment) and Goal 3 (Develop a global partnership for development). H.E has also recalled the main objective of the Donors Conference, namely the presentation of the Funding opportunities Portfolio to donors and investors so as to guarantee the funding commitments of proposed activities. Finally, HE thanked the OIC, the STEP Foundation, the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and WTO for their technical and financial support to the project and finally H.E invited partners, donors and funders to support this project on which the countries concerned set much hope.

After the welcoming speech, a documentary film produced by ICDT on the Cross border Parks and protected areas of West Africa (CPA) was presented to participants. It gave a vivid and realistic idea of the current state of the concerned Parks and Protected Areas and the challenges and opportunities expected from the Conference.

Then, the Representative of KOICA and the STEP Foundation, Mrs. Dho Young-Shim called for the continuation of this project in an aggressive and resolute manner until the phase of its implementation. She also recalled the forthcoming General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in the Republic of Korea and at the same time proposed to organize a meeting of Ministers of the recipient countries of the project. Within this framework, she added that she would be ready to support strongly this project at the level of her country for its funding.

H.E Cheikh Oumar SOW, Director of Economic Affairs at the OIC conveyed the message of H.E Ekmeleddin IHSANOGLU, Secretary General of the OIC, in which he expressed his deep thanks to the President of the Republic of Senegal, H.E Maître Abdoulaye WADE for his constant support to programs and activities aiming at consolidating growth and development in OIC Member States. He also commended the efforts of H.E Taleb RIFAI for his dedication to the implementation of the project and the financing of the project feasibility study by the Korean Agency for Cooperation (KOICA). Furthermore, H.E has cited the initiation by the OIC of various programs to promote free trade in goods and services as well as the creation of several investment funds including the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (FSID) which since 2007 has disbursed 605 million U.S. dollars for various projects to reduce poverty in 28 OIC Member States. Then, HE informed participants of the measures taken at the 7th Ministerial Tourism Conference held in Tehran in November 2010 with proposals for the creation of the Award Prize of the tourism city and the OIC Excellence Label Award for handicrafts to allow tourism to regain its leading role, as driving force of socio-economic development among the OIC Member States. Finally, he urged regional and international partners to contribute to the execution of the project.

Then H.E Dr. Taleb RIFAI, Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization

(UNWTO), recalled in his speech that during the 16th Session of the General Assembly of WTO held in December 2005 in Dakar, H.E Maitre Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal, who chaired the opening ceremony of the meeting stated that the "Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa" is a priority for his country as well as for other States parties to the project. Then, HE described the trends in the tourism sector in 2010 and outlined the prospects for 2011. In this context, he cited the performances achieved by the African continent. Tourism is an essential development factor he said and for Africa in particular, it is a fact given its countless eco-tourism resources. H.E also announced the creation in 2003 by his organization of a special program for sustainable tourism development for the benefit of the African continent. Finally, he urged donors and partners to provide valuable support to this project on which the peoples of the States parties to this project are pinning all their hopes.

Finally, H.E Maître Souleymane Ndéné Ndiaye, Prime Minister of the Republic of Senegal, took the floor expressing the regrets of His Excellency Maître Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal and Current Chairman of OIC, for not being able to attend the Conference in view of other commitments. He then conveyed his deep thanks to the Secretary General of the WTO, the Representative of the Secretary General of OIC and Mrs. Dho Young-Shim-Representative of the STEP Foundation and the Korean Cooperation (KOICA) and the other participants for their presence at this important meeting. This project, he said, will contribute to reducing poverty by strengthening the socio-economic and environmental advantages in the ten respective states and the emergence of a vast regional tourism market. After expressing great satisfaction at the choice of his country to organise this conference, he presented the history of the project and underlined that it has been initiated at the right time given the current evils of climate change and the various crises, which occurred in recent years weakening populations and threatening natural resources which are increasingly scarce. Faced with this situation, he said, the international community has attempted to provide solutions through the organization of several summit meetings. At the level of the African continent, he cited the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) of which H.E Maître Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal is one of the originators as well as the Programme of the Great Green Wall which both of them, provide appropriate responses in Africa. At the sub-regional level, he stressed the importance of the Additional Act to the Treaty of WAEMU devoted to adopting a common policy of Tourism. He then reaffirmed the hope recipient States are pinning on the success of this project which, in addition to the tourism sector, will develop several other sectors. Moreover, the recent United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDCs) held in May 2011 in Istanbul, he added, has served as a platform to stress the highly important role of tourism in LDCs. Therefore, HE invited all public and private partners to support this project in all its implementation phases. Finally, H.E congratulated the Members of the Steering Committee, the Consultant and the Focal Points of recipient countries for the quality and exhaustiveness of the study and also for the appropriateness of selected measures.

II/PROCEEDINGS:

The Conference was marked by the following presentations:

Session 2: Introduction to the Conference

Moderator: Mr. Mohamed SAKHO, Regional Coordinator of the Project

In this section, Mr. Sakho Mohamed, Regional Coordinator of the Project outlined the history of this project by recalling the key stages of its implementation, including its genesis in March 2005 during the conference of Tourism Ministers as well as its institutional anchoring on the occasion of the 16th General Assembly of the UNWTO in November-December 2005.

✓ Presentation of the regional project by Frédéric PIERRET, Executive Director of the WTO

In his speech, the Executive Director of the WTO stated that this project is the first of its kind because it is the result of an initiative taken by 10 States of West Africa.

He especially emphasized the importance for African countries and particularly the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to develop the tourism sector owing to their eco-tourism resources. To that effect, he added that the impact of tourism promotion is likely to encourage the States parties to the project to develop the means of transport, improve the quality of accommodation and strengthen the capacities of actors working in this sector.

In his opinion, the portfolio of project financing opportunities as developed facilitates the intervention of donors because it has targeted components and allows them to invest in this project according to their focus and / or skills.

In conclusion, Mr. PIERRET opened three topics of reflection, namely:

1. All contributions will be useful regardless of the nature or level of commitment. The most important being the mobilizing nature of the project;
2. Beyond the sources of public funding, the project should later focus on private investment. For this purpose, new management methods should be devised in order to attract private partners and involve them in park management. The example of Southern Africa can fuel the reflection;
3. To involve in project governance the ministries concerned, the OIC and the WTO.

According to Mr. PIERRET, in order to implement the plan of action, it is necessary to imagine flexible, efficient and effective running based on existing sub-regional structures such as the WAEMU.

Presentation of the Feasibility Study and the portfolio of funding opportunities:

- ✓ Through a document entitled "Funding Opportunities", Mr. Jean Sécheresse, Representative of the Research Firm «Secheresse Consultants», presented the project, described the current precarious situation of CPA of West Africa and underlined the ways and means to develop the eight components of the plan of action for the implementation of the project and enable later its tourism exploitation.

Session 3: Mobilization of support and funding means required for the implementation of the project

- Presentations of donors, technical and financial partners

Moderator: Mr. Houcine Rahmouni, Adviser to the Director General of ICDT

During the introductory phase of this session, Mr. Houcine Rahmouni, Moderator of the session, stressed the urgency of pooling together resources and policies to redress the very precarious situation of the infrastructure of the regional project, federator of cross border parks and protected areas concerned and to breathe a new life and restore hope to local people and communities living in and around these parks and protected areas with a view to promoting tourism in the medium and long term and ensure sustainable development of this ecosystem. He also added that all ingredients are at present combined (Feasibility

Study and Funding Opportunities Portfolio) to succeed in this important project for the socio-economic development of the region and it is now up to donors and development partners to transform the hopes of local people into reality.

He then invited. H.E Mrs. BALDE Hadja Mariama BAH, the Minister of Hotel Trade, Tourism and Handicrafts of the Republic of Guinea, Regional Coordinator of the project to deliver her speech.

After expressing the condolences on her own behalf and on behalf of recipient countries to Mrs. Tourism Minister of Niger upon the death of her husband, H.E put emphasis in her speech on the following:

- Her appreciation of cooperation between Member States participating in the project and the work done so far by the Steering Committee;
- The precarious state of CPAs in West Africa and the importance of providing solutions to local people living around and whose incomes are less than 1 U.S. dollar per day;
- The socio-economic benefit of this project for the development of the sub-region especially for poverty reduction.

Finally, H.E Mrs. the Minister of Hotel Trade, Tourism and Handicrafts of the Republic of Guinea, Regional Coordinator of the project, expressed her full support to this project. Then, Mr. Rahmouni asked donors and development partners to give their views and comments on the project. Accordingly, the following representatives took the floor:

The Representative of the African Development Bank (ADB)

In her speech, she stressed the following:

1. With respect to the project:

- Quality of the Study;
- Integrated and regional approach;
- The innovative project;
- The multi-sectoral nature of the project and its extension to medium term.

2. With respect to ADB:

- In several areas and sectors the project is in phase with the strategy of the ADB;
- Its regional and innovative nature implies a financing through additional funding and some cost-sharing in relation to regional projects. Indeed, there is a cost-sharing mechanism for regional projects in ADB;
- Identification of specific areas of intervention by the Department of Agriculture and Environment of the ADB, which already implies a firm commitment;
- The project in other areas can be discussed in Tunis at the level of several other departments of ADB, which involves commitment promises;
- Clear commitment of the ADB in strengthening the infrastructure of water and energy.

3. At the level of the management and governance of the project

- Importance of a structure of aid coordination and donors' interventions;
- Importance of coordination between recipient countries;
- Importance of requests to be made globally to donors with a regional vision;
- Importance of coordination at the level of ECOWAS and WAEMU;
- Another stage of governance to be clarified with the private sector is the importance of the existence of a public-private platform; a call was made to the private sector to this end.

In his statement he identified the following areas:

- Sustainable management of natural resources;
- Rehabilitation of infrastructures;
- Promotion of public-private partnership;
- Promotion of SMEs;
- The impact on the economic and social development;
- Employment and decentralization.

Representative of the French Cooperation:

In his speech, he highlighted the following:

- This project contributes to a better regional integration;
- The importance of the evaluation of parks and protected areas through tourism;
- The importance of synergy between all actors;
- The progressive tourism development of CPAs.

He therefore, declared that the French Cooperation might be interested in certain actions related to the project.

Finally, he raised the issue of the involvement modalities of local populations in the project.

Similarly he pointed out that the French Development Agency intervenes in the park Diawling and is developing a project in Saint Louis.

Besides, he recommended the involvement of French, European and African local collectivities.

Representative of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB):

In his speech, he highlighted the following:

- The importance of the unifying nature of this project for the sub region;
- The importance of good coordination of interventions to avoid work duplication.

He has also stated that some areas of the project are in harmony with the vision of the IDB Group namely:

- The public sector infrastructure;
- Poverty reduction;
- The private sector development.

He finally stressed the importance of the procedure for submission of requests to the IDB Group namely:

- The priority aspects of the project development plans of recipient countries;
- Presentation of requests through the governor of each recipient country to the IDB.

It is therefore, necessary to note the commitment of the IDB in areas developed by the project and in its effective implementation.

Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

He stressed in his speech that:

1. The UNDP priorities focus on:

- ✓ The fight against hunger and poverty;
- ✓ conservation and protection of biodiversity;
- ✓ the importance of tourism as a growth factor;
- ✓ the economic and social development;

- ✓ Capacity building ;
- ✓ Communications.

2. The importance of coordination in ensuring a certain synergy between interventions

3. The importance of political and strategic aspects including:

- ✓ Harmonization of regulations and policies;
- ✓ Poverty Reduction based on regional tourism;
- ✓ Importance of pooling efforts and resources.

He finally said that UNDP will contribute and accompany the project in its implementation and will plea in favour of this project at the level of other partner institutions.

Representative of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC)

In his speech, he made a reflection on how to improve the outcome of the Conference in relation to the project by emphasizing the following:

The OIC policy in the field of Tourism development:

- ✓ Tourism is considered as a priority sector in the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action;
- ✓ Tourism forms the subject of a Ministerial Conference which meets every 2 years;

2. Funding opportunities within the OIC and in this case within the IDB Group;

- ✓ The existence of a window within the IDB for investment guarantees;
- ✓ The existence of a bank for the private sector;
- ✓ The existence of a solidarity fund for development in principle with a budget of US\$ 10 billion primarily for poverty reduction, of which 2 billion have been disbursed;
- ✓ The existence of a Special Programme for African Development endowed with a budget of US\$ 12 billion, of which US\$ 4 billion, were disbursed.

In other words, funds are available and there is reason to rethink the project in such a way as to develop private initiative to better promote it while avoiding the involvement the public sector in its management.

3. The successful experience in some countries like Turkey, Morocco, Malaysia and Tunisia in the field of tourism shows that the private sector has contributed significantly.

He therefore, proposed to reframe the project so that it relies much more on the private sector than on the public sector in order to better sell to the private sector while also drawing on the funding opportunities intended for this sector.

It is therefore necessary to give more space to the private sector and ensure that members change their orientation so as to concede the management of parks and protected areas to the private sector.

This idea was welcomed by the audience which recommended rather a public-private partnership in managing this project.

The Representative of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU)

In her speech she stressed the following:

- 6 Project Member States are Members of WAEMU;
- Several areas of the project are part of the common WAEMU policy and of its regional program;
- The Union area can be very attractive in many respects;

- Several projects of the WAEMU Commission are in total harmony with the project.

She said in this respect that the WAEMU Commission could play a major role in the development of this unifying project; therefore, the interest of the WAEMU in this project is total.

She cited in particular:

- Support to protection activities;
- The harmonization of the statutes of parks;
- Capacity-building;
- The harmonization of regulations and a Common visa for the 6 Member Countries of WAEMU.

She also stressed the existence of a WAEMU-UNWTO partnership.

The Representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

In her speech, she depicted her institution's experience in sustainable management, through the biosphere reserves, in the Park of Serengeti and Kruger National Park.

CONCLUSION:

Overall, it appears from the speeches and debates of this crucial session that the project was appreciated by the present Donors and development partners who have all expressed their commitments (not in figures) in supporting this project in its implementation phase, wholly or partially and showed a willingness to work in synergy so as to meet the concerns of governance and coordination of various stakeholders on the assumption that there is better coordination between and with recipient countries.

However, emphasis was put on the importance of involving the private sector in the management of this project in a more effective manner

- ✓ Presentation and answers to the questions of the Officers responsible for Parks and Focal Points

Moderator: Mr. Ousmane Ndiaye, UNWTO Regional Director for Africa

The final session was devoted to the presentations and answers of focal points, representatives of the parks and the Consultant.

On this occasion, the speakers highlighted their specific experiences and issues contained in the performance of their duties at the parks and protected areas.

At the end of the meeting the participants issued recommendations contained in the document annexed to the report entitled "Recommendations of the Conference".

Mr. Taleb Rifai, Secretary General of the WTO, has renewed the commitment of WTO to contribute effectively to the success of the project and, in the same vein, emphasized its relevance given the process and content. He urged countries to as well as the Tourism Ministers of recipient countries to show more commitment at the next General Assembly of WTO in South Korea.

III/ CLOSING SESSION:

The Closing Ceremony was chaired by Mr Cheikh Sadibou DIA, Director of Office of H.E the Minister of Handicrafts, Tourism and Relations with the Private Sector and the Informal Sector of the Republic of Senegal.

First, the floor was given to Mr. Ousseynou DIENG Director of Studies and Tourism Planning in Senegal for the presentation of the report and for the reading and adoption of the recommendations of the Conference.

Then the following speeches were delivered by:

- The Executive Director of the WTO, Frédéric Pierret, on behalf of the organizers;
- The Head of Cabinet of the Ministry of Handicrafts and Tourism of Mali, Mr. Abdoulaye Alkadi in charge of presenting the motion of thanks to the Senegalese authorities;
- Her Excellency the Minister of Hotel Trade,, Tourism and Handicrafts of the Republic of Guinea who extended her sincere thanks to the Senegalese authorities for their hospitality and offered gifts to the representatives of WTO, OIC , ICDT and SESRIC and to the ST-EP Foundation with a view to expressing to them the profound gratitude of the Governments of Member States for the quality of their technical and financial support and to urge them to carry on their assistance until the effective implementation of the project.

Then, the Head of the Cabinet, Mr. Cheikh Sadibou DIA, read out the statement of HE the Minister of Handicrafts, Tourism and Relations with the Private Sector and the Informal Sector of the Republic of Senegal who seized this opportunity to recall that the objectives and outcomes of this Conference, are in phase with the concerns of the international community, because the realization of this project whose cost is estimated at 46,863,527 Euros, i.e 31,000,000,000 CFA francs, will contribute to alleviating poverty, improving living conditions as well as preserving the environment and resources. He pointed out that The 3rd Session of the meeting; which was devoted to the mobilization of funds needed to finance the project, has allowed the identification of real funding potentials on behalf of partners and donors and showed the need for a reframing of the project and its governance for greater involvement of private sector and other departments concerned, all under the coordination of the Ministries of Tourism. H.E then asked the donors and partners to put their commitments into a concrete shape and ensure the effective mobilization of resources for the project. Finally, H.E thanked the OIC, WTO, IDB, ADB, STEP Foundation and the French Cooperation for their support of the project.

In addition, on the sidelines of the Conference, it was agreed within the Steering Committee to consider the possibility of organizing a similar meeting with the private sector (donors, investors and private donors) in order to strengthen the implementation of this project in compliance with the recommendation of the management of cross border Parks and Protected Areas in public / private partnership while recommending to invite the recipient countries of the project to allow beforehand, state-owned concessions to that effect.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONFERENCE:

The Donors' Conference for the Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa, convened in Dakar, Senegal, on 27 and 28 May 2011,

Having taken cognizance of the preliminary study that describes the condition of the sites, defines the strategic axes and proposes an action plan,

Having taken cognizance of the Portfolio of Funding Opportunities,

Having heard the introductory presentations of the project, the statements of potential funding entities and the explanations of the representatives of the governments and the

parks involved,

- Lauds the quality and exhaustiveness of the preliminary study as well as the relevance of the Portfolio of Funding Opportunities;
- Expresses its unanimous support for a project whose potential is extremely rich and promising in terms of sustainable tourism development, biodiversity conservation, poverty reduction, job creation and infrastructure development;
- Notes that this project holds a prominent place in the sub-regional economic integration process;
- Has taken note of the interest and proposals listed in the report annexed to the present recommendations on the part of the principal development partners (ADB, IDB, UNDP, Coopération française) and of the interested institutions (OIC, WAEMU, UNESCO);
- Invites other development partners to join this undertaking;
- Wishes this project to move forward to an operational implementation phase;
- Recommends the governance of the project to associate, around the tourism ministries and in a form to be determined, the technical ministries that are most closely concerned (in particular, those responsible for environment, transport, education, culture, handicrafts), promoters of similar initiatives, the interested funding entities and the private sector;
- Wishes the ten countries concerned to rapidly undertake a reflection regarding the place that should be accorded to the private sector in terms of investment and the management of the parks and/or some of their functions (accommodation, reception, visits, etc...), so as to develop public-private partnerships, for example, on a concession basis;
- Wishes the governments and the managers of the parks and protected areas concerned, as well as the representatives of the local communities to specify the modalities whereby the local populations are to be associated in the implementation of the project;
- Requests the governments to rapidly define cross-border management structures for each park and protected areas;
- Requests the ten governments concerned to include this project among the priorities of the development programmes they present to bilateral and multilateral funding entities;
- Requests the UNWTO, as executing agency of the project and in consultation with the ICDT, to carry out the necessary contacts with the AfDB, the IDB, Coopération française, WAEMU and the OIC in order to determine their respective commitments in the implementation of the project.

Report of the Meeting of the Steering Committee of the "Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa": Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco, 7 - 8 February 2012.

The Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Regional Project on "Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa" was held on 7th and 8th February 2012 in Casablanca (Kingdom of Morocco) in order to consider the ways and means of implementing the Project and its extension to other West African States.

This meeting that aimed at the establishing of a new strategy for revitalizing the project has gathered the stakeholders responsible for its implementation namely, the Islamic

Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the Project Regional Coordination represented by Her Excellency Mrs Baldé Hadja Mariama BAH, Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea. The meeting also recorded the participation of the Representatives of Burkina Faso, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and the Regional Office of the Islamic Development Bank Group (IDB) in Rabat represented by its Regional Director, Mr. El Abdehrrahman GLAOUI.

I/ OPENING SESSION:

- After the recitation of verses from the Holy Quran, Her Excellency Mrs. Baldé Hadja Mariama BAH, Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea took the floor to thank His Excellency Prof. Ekmeleddin IHSANOGLU, Secretary General of OIC and H.E Taleb RIFAI, Secretary General of UNWTO for their exemplary effort and unwavering support since the launching of this project in 2005.

Her Excellency also emphasized in her speech the importance of the concretization of commitments made by participants at the Donors Conference held in Dakar (Republic of Senegal) in May 2011 whose aim was to mobilize the financial resources necessary for the implementation of the Project. Her Excellency has also proposed to provide to this project an efficient follow up structure based on a new strategy for revitalizing and implementing the Project and a specific Activity Program.

Finally, Mrs. Minister expressed the wish to actively join in this project, the technical and financial partners namely, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) Commission, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the IDB Group.

- Taking the floor, Dr. El Hassane HZAINI, Director General of the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), expressed his appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, His Excellency Prof. Ekmeleddin IHSANOGLU, Secretary General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Government of the Republic of Guinea, the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the STEP Foundation for their valuable efforts and contributions to the implementation of this project.

He also stressed in his speech the importance that His Excellency the Secretary General of the OIC gives to this Project, which is part of his priorities, like for the railway Dakar-Port Sudan Project, the Cotton industry Project or even the Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States.

Then, the Director General of ICDT proposed the establishment of a new operational strategy to convince the donors to become more involved in the project, followed by a roadmap outlining the various steps and activities to be carried out by the stakeholders of the Project.

Finally, the Director General of ICDT invited the Committee to consider 19 organization the request of other Member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission and at the same time to ensure the continuity of this project. In this context, he informed the meeting that His Excellency Prof. Ekmeleddin IHSANOGLU, the OIC Secretary General will start direct contacts with the President of the ECOWAS in order to drum up support for ECOWAS participation in the project as proposed. Besides, he invited the recipient countries to incorporate it in their development plan and budgets.

- Mr. Ousmane N'Diaye, Regional Director of the UNWTO Program for Africa, took the floor, to express on behalf of HE the Secretary General of the UNWTO, Mr. Taleb RIFAI his deepest thanks to Dr. El Hassane HZAINI, Director General of ICDT and to Her Excellency Mrs. Baldé Hadja Mariama BAH, Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea – Project Coordinator Country – for their efforts aimed at implementing this Project. He also stressed in his speech the importance of defining jointly appropriate orientations to follow up the recommendations of the Dakar Conference, namely, raising funds with the help of partners that have shown on this occasion their interests to achieve this project.

- Finally Mr. Abderrahman EL GLAOUI, Regional Director of the IDB Group in Rabat took the floor to inform participants of the availability of the IDB to extend financial support to the themes related to poverty reduction within Member States. He also stressed the importance that the IDB Group gives to know-how transfer and exchange of experience and strengthening links (reverse linkage) for the benefit of the Member States of the Project.

II / PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING:

After the opening speeches, the Members of the Steering Committee examined the following items:

- Presentation of the follow up of the recommendations of Dakar Donors Conference by the stakeholders of the Project (Regional Coordinator, Focal Points, UNWTO / STEP Foundation, UNCTAD and ICDT);
- Issues related to the enlargement of the Project to Ghana, Liberia, Togo, Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire;
- Organization under the auspices of the IDB and ICDT of a Donors Conference open to the exclusive participation of Arab and Islamic Financial Institutions;
- Organization under the aegis of the UNWTO and ECOWAS of a Donors Conference open exclusively to Private Sector Participation (Donors, Investors and Private Donors);
- Participation and submission of the Regional Project to the Pan African Conference on “Managing Sustainable Tourism in African National Parks and Protected Areas”, scheduled for 2012 in Arusha (Tanzania);
- Development and Adoption of a Forward Programme of activities;
- Summary of the discussions and the recommendations of the Steering Committee of the Project.

Mr. Mohammed SAKHO, the Regional Project Coordinator took the floor tackling the progress achieved in the follow up of the Donors Conference's recommendations held in Dakar (Republic of Senegal) in May 2011.

He also highlighted the intent expressed on this occasion, by the technical and financial partners to get involved in financing the Project themes while focusing on their remarks related to the policies and procedures to be followed by the recipient states of this Project. He said that in this respect, only the Republic of Guinea has so far included this project in its National Development Plan and submitted specific funding applications.

He further informed the Committee of the outcomes of the informal meeting of the Recipient States of the Project with the Representative of the ECOWAS Commission held in Gyeongju (Republic of Korea) on the sidelines of the 19th General Assembly of the UNWTO.

He finally proposed among others, the following actions to revitalize the Project:

- To build on the “success stories” of the Parks and Protected Areas of the Eastern and Southern African Countries;
- To consider the participation of the private sector and technical partners (ECOWAS, WAEMU, and UNCTAD) in the financing and management of Parks and Protected Areas of West Africa;
- To develop a forward program of activities covering the 2012-2013 period.

III/ CLOSING SESSION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Before the closing ceremony of the meeting, the Committee adopted this report and the recommendations and the forward program of activities 2012/2013 annexed thereto and invited Her Excellency the Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea, Chairwoman of the Steering meeting to kindly submit the report of this meeting and annexes to her counterparts in order to collect their opinions before the final approval of this document and preferably before 29th February 2012.

- At the end of the meeting, Her Excellency the Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea conveyed her deepest thanks to His Excellency Prof. Ekmeleddin IHSANOGLU, the OIC Secretary General for the important message he addressed to participants and for his strong commitment to ensure in synergy with the Secretariat of the ECOWAS Commission and other institutions and organisations for cooperation and assistance development, the actions pleading the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the Project and to support the Regional Coordination Unit. Her Excellency the Minister has finally congratulated the Director General of the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), Dr. El Hassane HZAINÉ and all the ICDT’s staff for the efforts they made to ensure the success of the meeting.

Then, Dr. El Hassane HZAINÉ took the floor to extend his deep appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco and to Her Excellency Mrs. Baldé Hadja Mariama BAH, Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea for the high quality of her contribution to the implementation of this project and for her sustained effort in monitoring and coordinating the project and urged her to continue this mission until the effective implementation of the project

Finally, the Representative of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania took the floor on behalf of all participants, kindly requesting the Director General of ICDT to convey to His Majesty King Mohammed the VIth, May God Glorify HIM, a motion of thanks and gratitude.

At the end of the meeting, the Committee reiterated its deep appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco and to the Moroccan people for the hospitality and warm welcome extended to participants, to Her Excellency Mrs. Baldé Hadja Mariama BAH, Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea and the Director General and staff of ICDT.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Upon its proceedings, the Committee:

1. Reaffirms the need for the recipient countries to prioritize the project in their development plans and provide for an allocation of internal resources for the launching of activities identified in their national territory;

2. In order to move from the study phase to the operational phase, the Committee decides to adopt the following approach:
 - a) Preparation by the UNWTO of a typical file of project presentations;
 - b) Call for proposals from potential project owners (tourism departments, ministries in charge of park management, park managers, NGOs, private operators ...);
 - c) Presentation of projects within the steering committee for submission to donors.

Proposes in a first phase a selection of projects from the following priority themes: poverty reduction, private sector investment facilitation, public sector infrastructure requirement, biodiversity issues and product development.

3. Emphasizes the importance of transferring know-how and exchange of experience and strengthening links (reverse linkage) for the benefit of Members of the project;
4. Invites Recipient States to urgently formulate requests intended to bilateral and multilateral donors for the mobilization of additional funds besides the national effort;
5. Recommends to recipient countries to build the capacity of National Focal Points (NFPs) in order to implement this project;
6. Recommends to recipient countries to explore ways and means for a greater involvement of the private sector in the management of parks and protected areas. In this regard, it would be appropriate to organise a training workshop on “the Managing Method of Parks and Protected Areas” in collaboration with other 22organization international institutions;
7. Decides the 22organization of the Steering Committee meetings (NFPs, Regional Coordinator, Technical and Financial Partners) twice a year;
8. Recommends to the Ministries in charge of tourism to involve closely the Ministries Responsible for the management of parks and protected areas in the proceedings and actions of the Steering Committee;
9. Decides the accession of the following States: Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo which have expressed the wish to join this initiative as members of the Steering Committee. As such, they benefit from the second phase of the initiative on which a feasibility study will be conducted.

The agenda of the Steering Committee will include two parts devoted on the one hand, to the progress of the ongoing project and to the feasibility study of the project in the newly admitted countries on the other;

10. Decides that the functions of the Chairman of the Steering Committee be ensured alternately every two years by the Ministers of Tourism of the Recipient States. With respect to the 2012-2014 periods, these functions will be ensured by the Supervising Minister in charge of Tourism of the Republic of Guinea;
11. Proposes a Managerial Capacity Building Project:
 - a) Through the involvement of training institutions including the Islamic Research and Training Institute IRTI (IDB Group), ICDT, SESRIC and UNCTAD (Program Train For Trade) in human resource training programs identified by the project at national and regional levels;
 - b) Through the support of technical and financial partners to cover the costs of training and practical training sessions identified by the Steering Committee.
12. Invites Recipient States to participate in the following meetings:
 - a) A meeting of the Steering Committee in conjunction with the Pan-African conference on Sustainable Tourism Management in Parks and Protected Areas in Africa sched-

- uled for October 2012 in Arusha (Republic of Tanzania);
- b) An Information and awareness-raising Meeting on the sidelines of the 8th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers to be held in Khartoum (Republic of Sudan) in November 2012;
 - c) A meeting of the Steering Committee on the sidelines of the 20th General Assembly of the UNWTO scheduled to be held in August 2013 in Victoria Falls / Levingston in Zimbabwe and in Zambia;
13. Decides to organize a Donors Conference open to the participation of Arab and Islamic Financial Institutions and Private Sector in collaboration with the OIC, the UNWTO, the ECOWAS and WEAMU;
 14. Decides to conduct an high-level awareness-raising and executive marketing program involving the OIC, the UNWTO and the Project Coordinator at the level of Donors and financial institutions like the IDB Group, the ADB Group and World Bank;
 15. Suggests the participation of the Regional Coordinator of the Project Committee to the meetings of the Sessional Committee and the Ministerial Session of the COMCEC;
 16. Recommends to the ECOWAS Commission to take necessary measures for research funding and implementation of the feasibility study project in five other countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo), which will join the regional project in the second phase;
 17. Invites the ECOWAS and WAEMU Commissions to formalize their wish to become members of the Steering Committee in order to confer to the project its true regional dimension.

FIRST MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE, TOURISM, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION OF ECOWAS: Abidjan, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, 3rd to 5th April 2012.

With a view to reviving and boosting tourism in the West African Region, the first meeting of the Technical Committee, Tourism, Transport and Communication of ECOWAS States was held from 3rd to 5th April 2012 in Abidjan, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire.

This meeting was attended by the representatives of the ECOWAS Committee and the following countries: Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, the Gambia, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Togo and Senegal.

This meeting was also attended by some experts as resource person of whom, Mr. Mohamed SAKHO, Regional Coordinator of the "Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa", who on this occasion reported on the latest developments of this project.

Given its relevance and its socioeconomic impacts, the Committee underscored the importance of the adhesion of all ECOWAS Member States to this project and also recommended that ECOWAS should henceforth become the official implementation body of the project. In this regard, the Committee added that the implementation terms and conditions of this recommendation by ECOWAS must be determined in consultation with the stakeholders (UNWTO, OIC Member States and UNCTAD).

- **The 1st Pan-African Conference on Sustainable Tourism Development in African National Parks** organise in Arusha, Tanzania, from 15th to 18th October 2012.

Within the framework of the implementation of the "**Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West**

Africa", the Project Steering Committee met on October 17, 2012 on the sidelines of the First Pan-African Conference on Sustainable Tourism in African National Parks held in Arusha, Tanzania, from 15th to 18th October 2012.

This meeting was attended by the Project Regional Coordination represented by HE Mrs. Balde Hadja Mariama Bah, Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea as well as representatives from six states / Stakeholders in the project (Benin, the Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso). The Delegation of the Republic of Mali was also led by HE Mr. Ousmane Ag Rhissa, Minister of Tourism and Handicraft.

The meeting also recorded the participation of representatives of two states of West Africa willing to join the Project (Nigeria and Togo), the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

It should be noted that the four other states / Project Stakeholders namely Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone have not participated in this meeting.

OPENING CEREMONY:

During the opening ceremony of the meeting held under the chairmanship of Her Excellency BaldéHadjaMariama Bah, Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea, Mr. FrédéricPierret, Executive Director of the UNWTO took the floor first recalling the history of the project from its initiation until the last Steering Committee Meeting held on 7th and 8th February 2012 in Casablanca, Morocco. In addition, she stressed the importance for African countries to derive benefit from the positive outcomes of the Pan African Conference held in Arusha in order to develop a common strategy for the management of Parks and Protected Areas of the African Continent.

-Then, the Representative of the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade took the floor to deliver the speech of Dr. El Hassane HZAINÉ, Director General of ICDT in which he stressed the utmost importance the Secretary General of the OIC HE Prof. EkmeleddinIhsanoglu, gives to this project, which is among the priority actions of the OIC, like the Dakar- Sudan Port railway project, the Development Plan of the cotton sector or even the Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States.

In his speech, Mr. HZAINÉ also highlighted the turning point and progress reached by the Project upon the holding of the last meeting of the Steering Committee in Casablanca. In fact, this meeting, in addition to providing an opportunity to examine ways and means for the implementation of this Project and its extension to other States of West Africa, had adopted a provisional program of activities for the years 2012/2013 providing for, among others, mobilization strategies of funds needed to finance the project at national, regional and multilateral levels, budget entry and allocation of resources by Member States to implement this project.

-H.E Mrs Mariama Balde Hadja BAH, Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea took the floor to welcome the participants and commended the efforts made by the OIC and ICDT to implement this project successfully and notably, the holding of the Meeting of the Steering Committee of Casablanca on 7th and 8th February 2012. Her Excellency also expressed the hope that the Meeting of the Steering Committee of Arusha would allow the definition of new strategies for raising the funds needed to finance the concerned project.

The opening ceremony was closed by the messages of support to the project conveyed by the representatives of the West African Monetary Union (WAEMU) and Togo.

I. PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING :

After the opening ceremony, the Members of the Steering Committee adopted the agenda of the meeting and started deliberations on the various items contained therein and, under the chairmanship of Her Excellency Mrs Baldé Haja Mariama Bah, Regional Coordinator of the Project.

On this occasion, HE the Minister of Handicrafts and Tourism of Mali called upon Countries and Organizations / Institutions partners to support tourism in Mali, which upon the recent events, has experienced a decline..

After fruitful discussions, participants recommended the following:

❖ *Under the review and approval of priority projects submitted for consideration to the Steering Committee by States / Project Stakeholders:*

- Registration of the Project by the ECOWAS in the agenda items of both the meeting of Statutory Ministers and the Conference of Heads of States;
- The establishment of a framework for dialogue between ECOWAS and WAEMU for a better coordination of their activities;
- The joint organization by the ECOWAS and WEAMU of a meeting of Ministers in charge of Tourism and Environment focused solely on the Project in question;
- The need for Member States to seize the opportunities of tourism related events to be organized at national level in a bid to invite the Secretary-General of the UNWTO on the one hand, to address to the Heads of States and Governments an open letter within the framework of global awareness-raising campaign "Golden Book" of the importance of travel and tourism and to make a plea in favour of the Project in question;
- The formalization at the level of ECOWAS of a permanent consultative framework involving WAEMU, which will address issues related to the development and promotion of Tourism at sub-regional level;
- The need for Member States to seize the opportunity of the holding of the 8th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers of the OIC to advocate the Project at the level of Member States and Institutions attending this event;
- The preparation by the States / Stakeholders to the Project, with the assistance of the WAEMU of project sheets falling within the framework of the "**Support Programme Parks Agreement**" concerning the following parks: W, Arly and Pendjari located in the territory of Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger.

❖ *Under the assessment of the implementation of the schedule of activities 2012/2013:*

- The need for States to ensure the participation of their national focal points in the various meetings of the Steering Committee of the Project;
- ICDT's Assistance to initiate steps for the visit of the Secretaries General of the OIC and the WTO to IDB's President;
- The effective involvement of the WTO, ICDT, ECOWAS, WAEMU and the state / Project Stakeholders in mobilizing funds to finance the Project;
- The working out with the assistance of the ECOWAS of a strategy to raise funds needed to finance the study on Parks and Protected Areas of the other States of West Africa (Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo) desiring to join the project in

its second phase;

- The working out by the Regional Coordination of the terms of reference of the Training Workshop on the "Methods of Sustainable Management of Parks and Protected Areas" in collaboration with ECOWAS, WAEMU and UNWTO;
- Registration of the Project by the States / Stakeholders as a priority in development programs submitted to bilateral and multilateral donors.

❖ *Under the implementation modalities of the recommendations of the Conference of Tourism Ministers of the ECOWAS Member States:*

Within the framework of the Plan of Action for the implementation of the recommendations of the Meeting of Tourism Ministers held in Banjul on 21 and 22 June 2012, the Members of the Steering Committee, requested:

- ECOWAS to rely on the expertise of the WTO for the implementation of the Project;
- ECOWAS to work in harmony with the WAEMU for the fulfillment of tasks undertaken with UNWTO like for example the issues related to the development of tourism statistics, the classification standards of accommodation facilities and training in Tourism professions;
- ECOWAS and UEMOA to prepare a standard contract dossier of the concession of tourism activities in Parks and Protected Areas (accommodation and leasehold) taking into account the environmental management plans with the assistance of the UNWTO.

At the end of the workshop, the participants thanked the Tanzanian Government for kindly hosting this meeting and the Republic of Guinea, ICDT, UNWTO and the OIC for efforts in coordinating the project.

54th Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for Africa: Tunis, 24 -26 April 2013.

Upon the invitation of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the Director General of ICDT, Dr. El Hassane HZAINE, participated in the 54th Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for Africa held in Tunis from 24 to 26 April, 2013. On the Sidelines of the meeting, Dr. HZAINE held a meeting with the Ministers of Tourism of Burkina Faso, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia and Mauritania within the framework of the implementation of the Project. On this occasion, participants stressed, inter alia, the importance of raising funds needed to finance the project. In this regard, it was recommended that the IDB Group examines the possibility of using the Islamic Solidarity Fund and the SPDA to finance part of the project which is essential in the fight against poverty in the Member Countries of West Africa.

Meeting of the Steering Committee on the sidelines of the 8th Meeting of Tourism Ministers of the OIC: Banjul, 5th December 2013.

The Project stakeholders organized a meeting of the Steering Committee on 5th December 2013 on the sidelines of the 8th Meeting of Tourism Ministers of the OIC held Banjul on 5th December 2013 under the chairmanship of H.E Mr. Loucény Camara, Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicrafts of the Republic of Guinea - Regional Project Coordinator. On this occasion, H.E the Minister informed the participants of his intention to begin a tour in the sub- region concerned countries in order to incite his colleagues to contribute effectively to the Project. He also stated his willingness to take the opportunity of the holding the 40th Islamic Council of Foreign Ministers in Conakry in December 2013 to raise the awareness of these financial institutions of which the IDB Group. Finally, he

proposed the creation of a cross-border structure which will be provided with material and financial means.

After the meeting, the Committee made the following recommendations:

- ✓ To appoint a focal point for the country, for a renewable term of three years, given the fact that institutional change is a real problem for regular monitoring of the project at the level of Member State and affects the proper functioning of the Steering Committee at regional level;
- ✓ To provide the Regional Coordination Unit of the Project with material, technical and financial means to enable it to effectively fulfill its mission and ensure a good flow of information;
- ✓ To submit funding requests ranging between US\$ 100,000 and US\$ 250,000 as part of the new strategy of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC);
- ✓ To encourage the accession of new members to the new International Organisation of STEP Foundation as Founding Members States;
- ✓ To recommend the rotating Chairmanship of the coordination of the Steering Committee and determine the duration of the mandate;
- ✓ To organize regular visits of the Chairman of the Steering Committee in the Member States for their effective involvement in the monitoring of the project's activities;
- ✓ To organize on an annual basis, the meeting of Tourism Ministers of the concerned countries;
- ✓ To mandate the Chairman of the Steering Committee, namely the Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea, for advocacy with the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) on the occasion of the 40th session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers scheduled to be Conakry from 9th to 11th December 2013 in compliance with resolution E-3j40, adopted by the 36th Islamic Conference of Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs of the OIC, held in Jeddah from 30th June to 3rd July, 2013;
- ✓ To invite all stakeholders (Chairman of the Steering Committee, Regional Coordination Unit, Member States, OIC, WTO, ICDT, SESRC, WAEMU, ECOWAS) to implement the provisions relating to the project, approved by the 9th Conference of Tourism Ministers of the OIC;
- ✓ To reiterate the recommendation of the Donors Conference held in Dakar in May 2011, on the involvement of the private sector in the management of Parks and cross-border Protected Areas in West Africa;
- ✓ To reiterate the recommendations of the Steering Committee meetings held respectively in Casablanca (Morocco) and Arusha (Tanzania) on the submission by Member States of their national segments of identified projects in the Regional Project of Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa, adopted at the Donors Conference. In this regard, the meeting suggests to member states to seek the expertise of the IDB for the submission of their projects in compliance with the standards and procedures of this financial institution.

Report of the Meeting Steering Committee on "Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa"

The Regional Project Steering Committee on "Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa" was held on 17th and 18th December 2014 in Casablanca (Morocco) in order to examine the

implementation of the project and future actions in accordance with the attached agenda.

This meeting, which was chaired by His Excellency Moussa CONDE, Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea - Chairman of the Steering Committee brought together representatives of the following countries: Benin, The Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal. The meeting was also attended by the Representatives of the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) and the Regional Office of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) in Rabat. (The list of participants is in Annex).

I/ OPENING SESSION:

The opening session was marked by three speeches:

- The Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea (Chairman of the Steering Committee): HE Mr. Moussa CONDE has in his opening speech conveyed the greetings of the Government of Guinea and particularly those of His Excellency Professor Alpha CONDE, President of the Republic of Guinea, who wished full success to the proceedings of the meeting. H.E the Minister also thanked the ICDT for hosting the meeting and reiterated his firm determination to work together with the Members of the Steering Committee to make this project a real catalyst for development and integration in the West African Region. In his speech he also pointed out that the meeting will assess the implementation of the recommendations of the Steering Committee meeting held in Banjul in December 2013 and will examine as well the projects submitted by the recipient countries. Regarding the Regional Project Coordination Unit, H.E recalled that the meeting of the Steering Committee held in Banjul recommended providing this structure with material, financial and technical means that would enable it to fulfill its mandate. Finally, he expressed his gratitude to the OIC Secretary General as well as to the Director General of ICDT for their unwavering supports to the Project and expressed his wish for the implementation of the Project in order to ensure the sustainable tourism development and poverty reduction in the West African Region.
- Mr. Abderrahmane El GLAOUI, Director of the Regional Office of IDB in Rabat took the floor conveying the greetings of the President of the IDB Group to participants. In his speech, he emphasized the human and social nature of the regional Project and its importance for the fight against poverty and the protection of fauna and flora of the West African Region. He further affirmed the willingness of his institution to work jointly with the Countries and Regional Coordination as well in order to secure the financing of the Project.
- Dr. El Hassane HZAINI, Director General of ICDT welcomed the participants and stressed the strategic nature of the Project for the OIC and the West African Region. He urged Member States to take advantage of the available funding opportunities, particularly those of the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD) and the Special Programme for Development in Africa (SPDA) that fall within the framework of the fight against poverty and protection of biodiversity. Finally, he stressed the importance to build on the successes of the Countries of Eastern and Southern Africa Project in their research for their project's funding. He also emphasized the need to implement pragmatic actions that would contribute to speeding up the implementation of the concerned project.

II/ PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING:

After the opening ceremony, the members of the Steering Committee reviewed the various

points of the agenda of the meeting in accordance with the following:

➤ **Implementation status of the Project:**

Mrs Diallo from ICDT made a presentation on the Project focusing on the efforts made by the Steering Committee within the framework of the implementation of the Project. In this respect, she listed the main events organized by the said Committee, including:

- The meeting held in December 2009 at the headquarters of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in Madrid during which the feasibility study was validated;
- The Donors Conference held in May 2011 in Dakar, Republic of Senegal;
- The meeting organised in February 2012 by ICDT in Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco, to approve the provisional program of activities 2012/2013 and the extension of the project to other countries in West Africa (Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia and Togo);
- The last meeting of the Steering Committee held in Banjul, The Gambia, in December 2013, issued the following recommendations:
 - ✓ The establishment of a governance of the Project;
 - ✓ The involvement of the private sector and local communities in the implementation of the Project;
 - ✓ Registration of the Project as a priority in development plans and national programs;
 - ✓ The provision of national projects segments by the focal points;
 - ✓ The support of the project by the Islamic and regional finance institutions.

The Representative of the ICDT also recalled that since the Centre was mandated in 2006 by the OIC General Secretariat to follow up the Project, it has hosted several meetings of the Steering Committee in Casablanca. During the meetings of the OIC Tourism Ministers and the COMCEC, the Centre has always worked for the adoption of resolutions in order to accelerate the implementation of the Project. The final resolution of the COMCEC on the Project was an appeal launched to Member States, regional institutions, the private sector and the OIC institutions for a massive participation in the 2nd Donors Conference.

Finally, the Representative informed the participants of the visit of His Excellency Mr. Moussa CONDE to ICDT's headquarters in September 2014 during which the two sides agreed to hold this meeting.

In addition, Mr. Mohamed Sakho, the Regional Project Coordinator presented the actions that were carried out along with the recent developments that occurred since of the Project Steering Committee meeting held in Banjul in 2013 including:

- ❖ The organization in Ouagadougou of a sub-regional workshop from 5th to 7th February 2014 by WAEMU on tourism development in the WAPO complex (Park W "Niger, Benin, Burkina Faso;" Protected Area of Arly "Burkina Faso ", the Pendjarie" Benin "and OtikeranMandury" Togo ");
- ❖ The insertion of the Guinean component of the Project in the five-year plan for socio-economic development of the country (2011-2015);
- ❖ The Elaboration by the Regional Coordination Project of the Terms of Reference of the staff and the Budget estimate of the Regional Coordination Unit;
- ❖ The contacts established with the Islamic Development Bank on the sidelines of the 40th Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, held in Conakry from 9th to 11th December 2013.

➤ **Presentation of national segments of Projects by Focal Points:**

After the presentation of national segments of projects, the meeting emphasized, the need

to harmonize them in accordance with model project files prepared accordingly by the members of the steering committee.

➤ **Issues related to expansion of the project to other countries in West Africa:**

The coordinator recalled the decision of the Conference of ECOWAS Tourism Ministers meeting in Banjul on 22nd and 23rd June 2012, to provide the necessary support to that exemplary sub-regional integration initiative and expand it to other countries of the sub-region (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia and Togo).

➤ **Appointment of a new Chairman of the Steering Committee:**

The mandate of the chairman of the project steering committee was extended for the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

III/ ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS AND CLOSING SESSION:

Prior to the meeting's closing ceremony, the Committee adopted the report and the recommendations annexed thereto.

Dr. El Hassane HZAINÉ then extended his appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco and His Excellency Moussa CONDE, Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea for his valuable contribution to the realization of this project and for his constant and sustained efforts in monitoring and coordinating the project and urged him to continue this mission until its effective implementation.

Finally, the Representative of the Republic of Mali took the floor on behalf of participants requesting the Director General of ICDT to convey to His Majesty King Mohammed the VIth, May God glorify Him, a Motion of Thanks and Gratitude.

The next meeting of the steering committee will be held in Conakry, Republic of Guinea on the sidelines of the ministerial meeting of the project before the end of the first semester of 2015.

MOTION OF THANKS:

At the end of the meeting, the Project Steering Committee expressed to HIS MAJESTY MOHAMED THE SIXTH, KING OF MOROCCO, their high esteem and profound gratitude for HIS High solicitude towards the Centre and conveyed its deepest thanks to the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco for its continuous support to ICDT and the facilities it extended and which ensured the success of the meeting.

The Committee reiterated its deep appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco and the Moroccan people for the hospitality and warm welcome extended to the participants, it also conveyed to His Excellency Dr. Iyad Ameen Madani, Secretary General of the OIC, His Excellency Moussa CONDE Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handicraft of the Republic of Guinea and Dr. El Hassane HZAINÉ, Director General of and ICDT and the ICDT's Staff for their praiseworthy efforts to ensure the success of the meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE:

The Steering Committee of the Project:

- ❖ Very concerned about the impacts of Ebola hemorrhagic fever in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, appeals to all the countries of the sub region and the international

community for active solidarity with the peoples and governments of these countries;

- ❖ Recommends to hold in Conakry before the end of the first half of 2015 a meeting of ministers in charge of tourism in the countries concerned expanded to national focal points of the project, the implementation of the Project and on common actions to be undertaken in order the preparation of the 2nd conference of donors;
- ❖ Welcomes the offer of ICDT to organize in 2015 a Training of sustainable tourism managers in Parks and Protected Areas and project development Training in collaboration with UNWTO and the COMCEC;
- ❖ Approves the priorities set up in 2015 in accordance with the attached work program;
- ❖ Recommends that all beneficiary countries of the Project to achieve the Regional Coordination and ICDT national projects segments according to the types of projects in Annex sheets and before 31 January 2015;
- ❖ Thanks the Republic of Guinea for the efforts made in the Project implementation and welcomes the steps taken, the search for financing of the Project and the Regional Coordination Unit;
- ❖ Recommends a joint mission with the OIC Secretary General and the President of the IDB Group, the Director General of ICDT and the President of the Steering Committee for the research funding of projects relating to national segments and Unity regional Coordination in the second half of 2015;
- ❖ Decides the reappointment of the Republic of Guinea for the presidency of the steering committee for the period 2015-2016;
- ❖ Urges the President of the steering committee to conduct a fact-finding mission and outreach in member countries of the project by March 31, 2015;
- ❖ Commends member countries (Benin, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal) for the presentation of their national segments of projects and recommends harmonization in accordance with the type of project sheets provided in the Annex;
- ❖ Recommends to Burkina Faso, Gambia and Sierra Leone communicate their national projects segments before the end of January 2015 regional coordination and ICDT in accordance with the type of project sheets annexed;
- ❖ Recommends the holding of a meeting of the steering committee, on the sidelines of the General Assembly of WTO, scheduled for Colombia in 2015 and the 9th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers to assess the progress of the project and the preparations for the second conference of donors;
- ❖ Takes note of the terms of reference relating to the Regional Project Coordination Unit and the estimated budget and recommends its bid for funding to the IDB;
- ❖ Recommends the selection of projects for submission to donors in accordance with the following criteria:
 - Registration of projects as a priority in national plans and programs;
 - Focus on strategic areas, particularly those relating to the fight against poverty and the preservation of biodiversity;
 - Promotion of public-private partnership;
 - Project Registration involving more than one country;
 - Respect for project submission forms for better harmonization.
- ❖ Thanks the Secretaries-General of the UNWTO and the OIC for their efforts within the framework of the completion of the feasibility study, the organization of the First

Donors Conference of in Dakar in May 2011 and the urges them to continue their support to the effective implementation of the project.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS OF THE PROJECT:

Within the framework of the implementation of the calendar of activities relating to year 2015 adopted by the Members of the Steering Committee of the Project during their meeting held in December 2014 in Casablanca, ICDT has elaborated the terms of reference and the draft programs of the training seminars on the setting up of bankable projects and on tourism management in the parks and protected areas.

Upon the request of the Republic of Guinea, Regional Coordinator of the Project, the training workshop on the setting up of bankable projects will be hosted by ICDT from 15th to 17th February 2016 in Casablanca in collaboration with the SESRIC, also entrusted by the OIC General Secretariat to follow up this Project in collaboration with ICDT.

The 13th Steering Committee Meeting of the Project will be organized concomitantly with this workshop and the agenda of the meeting will be mainly devoted to the examination of the projects relating to national segments and the preparations of the 2nd Donors Conference to facilitate the mobilization of funds to finance this Project, which realization will positively impact sustainable development and contribute to alleviating poverty in the West African Region.

NOTE ON
ICDT'S ACTIVITIES FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF THE OIC
CITIES OF TOURISM 2015 & 2016:
AL-QUDS AL-SHERIF & KONYA

+ City of Al-Quds Al-Sherif:

- 1) ICDT has participated in the "Seminar on Exploring Tourism Potential of Al-Quds Al-Sherif City" organized in Istanbul, Turkey, from 24th to 25th November 2015;
- 2) Within the framework of the holding of the 2nd OIC Travel and Tourism Fair of the OIC Member States on 8-10 December 2015 in Sharjah (United Arab Emirates), ICDT offered to the State of Palestine, Bayt Mal Al Quds Agency and the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) 12 sqm booths free of charge with a view to enabling them to ensure the promotion of the City of Al-Quds Al-Sherif during this important Event;
- 3) ICDT plans to organize in 2016, in collaboration with Bayt Mal Al-Quds Agency, Trade Missions of Palestinian Businessmen in Morocco and in other OIC Countries with a view to boosting trade relations between Palestine and the Islamic Ummah;
- 4) To raise more awareness on the touristic potentialities of Al-Quds Al-Sherif, ICDT will publish a Special on this City in its Magazine "Tijaris", which deals with inter Islamic and International Trade and Investment matters;
- 5) In order to attract more investments to develop the economy of Palestine, ICDT plans to organize in Al-Quds Al-Sherif, in collaboration with the Ministry of Trade of Palestine, IDB Group and the OIC, a Conference on Investment promotion during the second quarter 2016.

+ City of Konya :

- 1) To increase the visibility Konya and enable the establishment of direct contacts with OIC Member Countries Tourist and Economic Operators, ICDT plans to offer to the Authorities of this City a 12 sqm booth free of charge during the 15th Trade Fair of the OIC Member States, to be held from 22nd to 26th May 2016 in Ryadh (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia);
- 2) To raise more awareness on the touristic potentialities of Konya, ICDT will publish a Special on this City in its Magazine "Tijaris".

REPORT ON MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS WITHIN THE WTO RELATING TO SERVICES (TOURISM SECTOR)

BACKGROUND NOTE

The Islamic Centre For Development of (ICDT), a Subsidiary Organ of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in charge of trade promotion among the Islamic Countries, was entrusted by the OIC General Secretariat and by the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) to follow in collaboration with the Islamic Development Group, the Multilateral Trade Negotiations organized by the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

To that effect, ICDT, presents on regular basis, reports on the evolution of these negotiations to the annual meetings of the COMCEC, the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs of the OIC and to the OIC annual Conferences of Foreign Ministers.

In anticipation of the ministerial meetings of the World Trade Organization, ICDT also prepares reports and preliminary studies in order to make known the views of Islamic countries and try to reach a common platform that can accommodate the different approaches.

The Centre also organizes training courses through seminars and workshops for the benefit of representatives of Members States of the public and private sectors on international trade negotiations and on intra-OIC trade negotiations.

I. THE MAIN TRENDS IN WORLD TOURISM IN 2014:

Tourism is today an important economic sector known for its rapid and sustained growth in recent decades. This sector is clearly a socio-economic leverage to the extent that it generates jobs, attracts foreign currencies and contributes greatly to the development of infrastructure. In 2014, tourist arrivals reached a record of about 1133 million compared to 1087 million in 2013 and revenues reached 1245 billion dollars. Demand remains strong in most markets and destinations despite the geopolitical, economic and medical crises occurred in parts of the World. With additional tourist arrivals of around 46 million (+4.3%), 2014 marks the fifth consecutive year of robust growth in this sector, which represents today 6% of world exports.

A. TRENDS BY REGION

Europe was the most visited region in 2014 and represented 51% of tourist arrivals and 41% of global revenues. Tourist arrivals reached 582 million in 2014 while revenues were around of 509 billion dollars. Growth was higher in Southern and Mediterranean Europe (+ 7%) and in Northern Europe (+ 6%), it was slower in Western Europe (+ 2%) while the Central and Eastern Europe recorded a decrease (-5%).

Asia-Pacific has recorded a consistent growth by hosting 263 million tourists and generating 377 billion dollars of tourism receipts. This region accounted for 23% of arrivals and 30% of global revenues.

The Americas welcomed 13 million more tourists in 2014 bringing the total to 181 million arrivals and tourism receipts to 274 billion dollars. The share of this Region in tourist arrivals is around 16% and 22% in terms of tourism receipts.

Africa recorded weak growth in 2014. This area represented 5% of arrivals and 3% of global revenues.

The Middle East recorded the same results as the African continent in 2014 with the difference that this Region showed more promising results.

B. MOST VISITED DESTINATIONS IN 2014

The 10 countries that have been most visited in 2014 were France (83.7 million arrivals), the United States (74.8 million arrivals), Spain (65 million arrivals), China (55.6 million arrivals), Italy (48.6 million arrivals), Turkey (39.8 million arrivals), Germany (33 million arrivals), England (32.6 million arrivals), Russian Federation (29.8 million arrivals) and Mexico (29.1 million arrivals).

C. TOURISM IN OIC COUNTRIES

According to the World Tourism Organization, in 2014 the most important arrivals in the OIC countries were registered in Turkey (38.811 million), Malaysia (27.437 million), Saudi Arabia (15.098 million), Morocco (10,282 million), Egypt (9.628 million), Indonesia (9,435 million), Tunisia (6.069 million), Kazakhstan (4.560 million) and Jordan (3,990 million). The countries which have generated the most receipts worldwide are in order of importance Turkey (29.552 billion dollars), Malaysia (21.820 billion dollars), Indonesia (9.848 billion dollars), Saudi Arabia (8.238 billion of dollars), Egypt (7.208 billion dollars), Morocco (7.055 billion dollars), Qatar (4.591 billion dollars), Jordan (4.375 billion dollars), Azerbaijan (2.432 billion dollars) and Tunisia (2.342 billion dollars). The analysis of tourists arrivals and receipts in OIC countries reveals for this year the existence of disparate revenues or even nonexistent in some countries in 2014. For example, the United Arab Emirates has realized tourism revenues of around 11.564 billion dollars in 2013 while in 2014 it generated no revenue. Even Lebanon, which had reached 5.872 billion dollars of tourist receipts in 2013 has not generated any receipts in 2014.

D. FUTURE PROSPECTS

According to World Tourism Organization forecasts, tourist arrivals will experience overall growth from 3 to 4% in 2015. The prospects are promising for Asia-Pacific and the Americas (+ 4% to + 5%) followed by Europe (+ 3% to + 4%), the Middle East (+ 2% to + 5%) and Africa (+ 3% + 5%). The market share of emerging economies is expected to reach 57% by 2030, equivalent to over 1 billion international tourist arrivals.

II. ELEMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE COMPLETION OF NEGOTIATIONS ON SERVICES:

Tourism and travel-related services includes services provided by hotels and restaurants (including catering), travel agencies and tour operator services, tourist guide services and other related services.

One of the most crucial aspects of international tourism is the cross-border movement of consumers. This permits even unskilled workers in remote areas to become services exporters, for instance by selling craft items, performing in cultural shows, or working in a tourism lodge.

Over 125 WTO Members have made commitments in Tourism under the GATS. This level

is greater than any other sector and indicates the desire of most Members to expand their tourism sectors and to increase inward Foreign Direct Investment as part of efforts to promote economic growth.

ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS :

Tourism services are included in the new services negotiations, which began in January 2000. The principles ruling trade in these services are contained, like all services, in the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

Under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), Governments Members of WTO must gradually liberalize trade in services through successive rounds of negotiations. As mandated in Article XIX, the latest round of negotiations began in 2000. In March 2001, the Council for Trade in Services adopted Guidelines and Procedures for the Negotiations on Trade in Services. Since the Doha Ministerial Conference in November 2001 negotiations in services are an integral part of the "single commitment" of the Doha Development Program, in which the negotiations on all raised subjects must be completed at the same time.

NEGOTIATION PROCESS :

The Doha negotiations are essentially conducted on two fronts:

- Bilateral and/or plurilateral negotiations to improve market conditions for trade in services - these are mainly to improve specific commitments on market access and national treatment (ensure that the privileges granted to local companies are also granted to foreign companies) and to promote the treatment of the most favored nation (more equitable treatment between WTO Members);
 - Multilateral negotiations among all WTO members to establish any necessary rules and disciplines (on domestic regulation, emergency safeguard measures, public markets and subsidies) which will apply to all WTO Members, with certain special provisions for developing countries and least developed countries.
- ✓ Initial offers of countries in the negotiations were as follows:
- At the end of April 2003, 71 initial offers were submitted by WTO Members;
 - Between 2003 and 2007, the OIC Member States submitted 18 offers / 71 initial: Nigeria, Oman, Qatar, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Morocco, Albania, Pakistan, Brunei, Indonesia, Guyana, Malaysia, Egypt, Gabon, Jordan, Suriname, Turkey and Bahrain.
- ✓ Revised offers :
- At the end of April 2008, 31 revised offers were submitted by WTO Members;
 - Offers of 5 OIC Member States, 5 were reviewed by the members of the WTO/ 31: Malaysia, Turkey, Suriname, Egypt and Bahrain.

MAIN AREAS OF NEGOTIATIONS ON SERVICES:

The negotiations on services cover the four following areas:

- ♦ countries under Article IV: 3 of the GATS).

EXTRAORDINARY SESSIONS:

The Council of Trade in Services is the body in charge of leading the negotiations. All subsidiary bodies such as the Working Group on Domestic Regulation and the Working Group on GATS Rules, report to the Council.

In 2008, two decisive phases were reached in the negotiations on services:

- ♦ The text on services, attached to the report of the Chairman of the Council of Trade in Services in that gathered in Extraordinary Session in July 2008, which sets out the elements required for the completion of negotiations;
- ♦ The Conference of announcement of intentions, which gave some indications on what the Members would be willing to include in their revised offers on services.
- ♦ The negotiations on services continued through successive rounds of consultations and bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral meetings. Progresses are limited since the Conference of announcement of intentions of July 2008.

CONFERENCE OF ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTIONS : July 2008

In the services sector, annex C of the July 2008 Package reiterates the commitments and objectives set during Doha Work program and in the GATS guidelines. It emphasizes the need to make significant offers in fields that interest developing countries.

Indeed Annex C of the July Package urges the Members to:

"Ensure the high quality of offers, particularly in sectors and modes of supply that interest developing countries in terms of exports, special attention being given to the least developed countries".

Members recall that the approach based on requests and offers is the main method of negotiation in the current Round and that, before the Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong, these negotiations were taking place on a bilateral basis. Members also pointed out that, in accordance with paragraph 7 of Annex C of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration, in addition to bilateral negotiations, negotiations based on requests and offers were also conducted on a plurilateral basis. Accordingly, 21 collective requests were submitted by co-authors to other groups of Members regarding the sectors and modes: aviation; architectural services, engineering services and integrated engineering services, audiovisual services; Computer and related services, construction services, distribution services, educational services, services related to energy, environmental services, financial services, legal services, logistics services, shipping services, and postal and mail services; services related to agriculture, telecommunications, tourism services, cross-border supply (modes 1 and 2), Mode 3, Mode 4, and MFN exemptions. On the basis of these requests, 21 concerned plurilateral groups have held four rounds of meetings. Since the Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong, the participants also held six rounds of bilateral meetings on requests and offers.

Members noted the interest of developing countries, as well as other Members, in Mode 4. The decision also stipulates that efforts to conclude the negotiations with a view to making rules must be 'intensified' and 'targeted technical assistance "should be provided to developing countries to enable them to participate effectively in negotiations on services.

The importance for developing countries as regards the movement of natural persons (Mode IV) is notable because it calls for an intensification and conclusion of negotiations on rules such as emergency of safeguards.

Notwithstanding these instructions, the negotiations since July have shown no sign of acceleration since the bilateral process of submitting requests and offers of market access continues to lag.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN SERVICES PRESENTED IN APRIL 2011 :

In April 2011, the Chairman of the Council for Trade in Services presented a report to the Trade Negotiations Committee on the results achieved and the remaining differences in

the four areas of the services negotiations: market access; domestic regulation; GATS rules; and implementation of LDCs modalities.

The report indicates that in the areas of:

- Access to markets, limited progresses have been made since July 2008;
- Domestic regulation, recent intensification of negotiations has allowed significant progresses, although there are still fundamental disagreements on important basic issues;
- The GATS rules, technical work is continuing, but it seems that there is convergence on the expected results in the three negotiating areas (safeguards, public markets and subsidies);
- The implementation of modalities for LDCs, if Members are in favor of a waiver allowing a preferential treatment for the least developed countries (LDCs), there are still disagreements, mainly on the scope of the waiver and on the rules origin for services and service suppliers.

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS:

Since July 2015, the Special session of the Council of Trade in Services held two informal meetings that have predominantly focused on the possibility of an MC10 deliverable on transparency in domestic regulation in services. At the meeting of 9 October Members shared their views. For the meeting of 20 November, Members discussed a submission that was made by the EU.

As of the day of preparing this report, although many delegations are favorable to the idea of a ministerial text on transparency, a significant number of Members, including country groupings, are not prepared to enter into a drafting exercise and some have explicitly rejected the possibility of an outcome in that respect at MC10.

Case of the LDCs:

In 2011, the WTO Ministerial Conference adopted a waiver that allows WTO Members to grant preferential treatment to services and services suppliers of least developed countries (LDCs).

To date, 17 WTO Members presented their notifications of preferential treatment to LDC services and services suppliers, namely the following countries: Canada, Australia, Norway, Korea, China, Hong Kong (China), Chinese Taipei, Singapore, New Zealand, Switzerland, Japan, Mexico, Turkey, United States of America, India, Chile and Iceland.

At the meeting of the Council for Trade in services held on 2nd November 2015, the Chairman of the Council further stated that the notification of Brazil should be available in the coming days. The European Union and South Africa have also indicated their intention to convey their notifications shortly.

Recently, the LDC Group discussed on the proposition of a project to the Nairobi Ministerial Conference related to the waiver on services. The group proposes an extension of the waiver period to 15 years from the date of submission of each notification (rather than the current 15-year lifespan of the waiver as from the date of its adoption in December 2011), as well as a definition of the term “preferential treatment” in the sense of the waiver.

NOTE ON UPCOMING TOURISM FAIRS OF THE OIC MEMBER STATES

ICDT is planning to organize in 2017, in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Tourism of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the 3rd Tourism Fair of the OIC Member States. A coordination meeting between ICDT and the Egyptian party will be held in Cairo on 22-23 December 2015 to discuss the organizational modalities of this Fair.

The 4th edition of the OIC Tourism Fair scheduled in 2019 will be hosted by the Islamic Republic of Iran, in accordance with the 8th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers of the OIC Member States held in December 2013 in Banjul, Republic of The Gambia.

ICDT submitted resolutions on both events for adoption by the 9th Conference of Ministers of Tourism of the OIC Member States.

LIST OF ACTIVITIES RELATING TO TOURISM TO BE ORGANIZED BY ICDT IN 2016

- Training seminar on Setting up of tourism projects, 15-17 February 2016, Casablanca;
- Conference on investment promotion, 2nd quarter of 2016, Al-Quds Al-Sharif;
- Promotion of the city of Konya during the 15th Trade Fair of the OIC Member States, 22-26 May 2016, Riyad ;
- Training seminar on the management of parks and protected areas, 2nd semester 2016, Casablanca;
- Trade Mission of Palestinian Businessmen to the Kingdom of Morocco, 2016, Casablanca.