



**Standing Committee
for Economic and Commercial Cooperation
of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC)**

Proceedings of the 6th Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group

“EFFECTIVE TOURISM MARKETING STRATEGIES: ICT-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR THE OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES”



**COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE
September 2015**



**Standing Committee
for Economic and Commercial Cooperation
of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC)**

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE 6TH MEETING OF THE
COMCEC TOURISM WORKING GROUP
ON
“EFFECTIVE TOURISM MARKETING STRATEGIES:
ICT-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR THE OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES”**

(September 3rd, 2015, Ankara, Turkey)

**COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE
September 2015**

For further information please contact:

Ms. Aylin SENOL GUN
Expert

Mr. Mustafa Adil SAYAR
Expert

COMCEC Coordination Office
Necatibey Caddesi No: 110/A
06100 Yücetepe
Ankara/TURKEY
Phone : 90 312 294 57 10
Fax : 90 312 294 57 77
Web : www.comcec.org
e-mail : comcec@comcec.org
asenol@comcec.org
msayar@comcec.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
1. Opening Session	2
2. The COMCEC Tourism Outlook	3
3. Role of the ICT in Tourism Sector: Global Trends and Projections in ICT- Based Tourism Marketing	5
4. ICT- Based Tourism Marketing in the Member Countries: Current Situation, Main Challenges, Recommendations and Prospects	7
5. Success Stories of the Member States	12
5.1. Egypt.....	12
5.2. Iran	12
5.3. Malaysia.....	13
5.4. Turkey.....	14
6. Policy Options for ICT-Based Tourism Marketing in the Member Countries	16
7. Private Sector Efforts for ICT-Based Tourism Marketing	17
7.1. WTTC- “Encouraging Private Sector to Utilize ICT Tools in Tourism Marketing”	17
7.2. ICVB- “İstanbul Digital Platform Project”	18
8. Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding	19
9. Closing Remarks	21
Annex 1: Agenda of the Meeting	22
Annex 2: Program of the Meeting	23
Annex 3: The Policy Recommendations	26
Annex 4: List of Participants	29

Introduction

The 6th Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group was held on September 3rd, 2015 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Effective Tourism Marketing Strategies: ICT-Based Solutions for the OIC Member Countries.” The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 12 Member States, which have notified their focal points for the Tourism Working Group namely, Azerbaijan, Cameroon, Egypt, the Gambia, Guinea, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Mali, Mozambique, Palestine, Tunisia and Turkey. Representatives of COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO), SESRIC, Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT), World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), International Federation for Information Technologies and Travel & Tourism (IFITT) and İstanbul Congress and Visitor Bureau as well as some other guests have also attended the Meeting.¹

At the outset, the representative of the COMCEC Coordination Office informed the participants about the tourism outlook of the Member Countries. It was followed by the presentation made by the IFITT representative on global trends and projections in ICT-based tourism marketing.

The participants considered ICT-based tourism marketing strategies of the Member Countries through focusing on the Analytical Study titled “Effective Tourism Marketing Strategies: ICT-Based Solutions for the OIC Member Countries” commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office specifically for the Meeting with a view to enriching the discussions.

The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges regarding ICT-based tourism marketing in their respective countries. The private sector efforts for ICT-based tourism marketing were also reflected to the discussions. The participants had the chance to discuss the policy options for enhancing the cooperation in this important field. The Room Document based on the findings of the Analytical Study submitted to the Tourism Working Group Meeting and the answers of the Member Countries to the policy questions sent to the Member States by the COMCEC Coordination Office were the main inputs for the discussions during moderation session.

Lastly, the COMCEC Coordination Office presented the COMCEC Project Funding Mechanism, introduced by the COMCEC Strategy, and informed the participants of its details.

¹ The list of participants is attached as Annex 4.



1. Opening Session

In line with the tradition of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Meeting started with the recitation from the Holy Quran. At the outset, Mr. M. Metin EKER, Director General of the COMCEC Coordination Office introduced the COMCEC and its activities briefly.

Mr. EKER stated that COMCEC has been the Ministerial level decision making body within the OIC family. COMCEC annually brings together the Ministers of Economy, Trade, Development and Finance with a quite rich agenda ranging from trade, transport, tourism, agriculture to poverty alleviation and financial cooperation. He pointed out that Tourism Working Group Meeting is also a preparation for the Ministerial Meeting and its outputs would be submitted to the Ministers for their deliberations.

Mr. EKER highlighted that importance of tourism has been well-addressed in many COMCEC Meetings. Tourism is a major source of income and employment for many Member Countries. Under the tourism section of the COMCEC Strategy, there are a number of output areas. One of them is the marketing dimension. He pointed out that the subject of today's meeting is very pertinent to the marketing efforts of the Member Countries. He stressed that ICT solutions have become attractive particularly for the relatively disadvantages actors in the tourism sector such as tourism SMEs. ICT Solution provide the SMEs with quite cost-efficient ways and means to reach the global tourism market. Many Member Countries design strategies to enable SMEs to utilize the ICT tools. However, as articulated by the Analytical Study, there are some dimensions, such as the availability of ICT infrastructure, skilled workforce; public-private dialogue and digital marketing strategy, to be considered for effective utilization of ICT tolls in tourism marketing. Mr. EKER concluded his words by introducing the program and by expressing his wishes for successful deliberations.

Ms. Zaleha A. ISMAIL, Director of Technology and E-Marketing Division from Tourism Malaysia was elected as the Chairperson of the Meeting. Ms. ISMAIL introduced herself and thanked all the participants for electing her as the Chairperson of the Meeting.

2. The COMCEC Tourism Outlook

Ms. Aslı TAŞMAZ DADAKOĞLU, Expert from the COMCEC Coordination Office, has presented some of the key developments of tourism sector in the world and in the OIC Member Countries. In her presentation, Ms. DADAKOĞLU provided an overview of tourism sector in the world and in the Member Countries.

She stated that tourism has experienced continued expansion and become one of the most rapidly developing industries in the world. She shared some figures with a view to demonstrating that a strong tourism sector could contribute in many ways to development and the economy. She reminded that tourism can be a part of the solution to foster socio-economic development and job creation for OIC Member Countries. She also mentioned the new tourism trends like sustainability, changing consumer behaviors, social media and technology. She added that these trends would lead to increased competition among countries.

Ms. DADAKOĞLU continued her presentation by sharing some figures regarding tourist arrivals and tourism receipts in the world. She stated that international tourist arrivals increased from 678 to 1.133 million in the period of 2000-2014. She expressed that the growth rates of international arrivals in Asia-Pacific, Middle East and America were higher than Europe for the year 2014. She expressed that international tourism receipts reached to 1.249 billion \$ in 2014 with the annual growth rate of 3.8% and showed positive growth rates for the last five years. She also gave some information about the prospects for the year 2015.

Furthermore, Ms. DADAKOĞLU elaborated on the tourism sector in the Member States. Regarding to tourist arrivals, the Member States performed above the world averages for the period 2005-2012. She expressed that the Member Countries constituted 14-17% of international tourist arrivals and 12-14 % of tourism receipts in the period 2005-2012. It was highlighted that there was a tendency to increase in the share of Member Countries in both tourist arrivals and tourism receipts. It was also stated in terms of tourist arrivals, Top-10 OIC Member States hosted 137.1 million international tourists in 2014. Regarding the tourism receipts, she underlined that Top-10 Member States earned 110 billion US \$ in 2014 and these tourism receipts were concentrated in a few member countries.

Furthermore, Ms. DADAKOĞLU provide some figures on travel balance in some member countries. She stated that some member countries have a tendency to spend more than their tourism receipts like Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Qatar. She also emphasized that some countries have surplus on the travel balances. Within the sub-groups of the OIC, with regards to the tourist arrivals, OIC-MENA can be seen as the best performing OIC sub-region. Similarly, tourism receipts of the OIC-MENA exceeded the OIC Asia sub-region.

Ms. DADAKOĞLU also provided a brief account of the recent developments in the Member Countries. She stated that despite some positive developments in the OIC Member Countries, some other major destinations like Sierra Leone, Guinea, Tunisia, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan faced declines in 2014.

Underlining the great potential in tourism sector among the Member States, Ms. DADAKOĞLU mentioned the following challenges affecting tourism performance in the OIC Member Countries:

- Insufficient Tourism Investments and Infrastructures
- Poor Tourism Planning & Product Development
- Travel Facilitation Problems
- Safety and Security Related Problems
- Low Tourism Service Quality
- Insufficient Marketing and Promotion
- Insufficient Image Building and Branding

She underlined the importance of tourism marketing by using ICT tools in the Member Countries. She shared the ICT Readiness Index scores of some Member States which is derived from “The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index 2015” report published by World Economic Forum. It is realized that there are only seven Member Countries in first 50 countries which are ranked according to their ICT readiness index scores and Bahrain has the highest rank among OIC Member countries. She emphasized that most of the Member Countries do not have enough competitive advantage in ICT readiness for tourism sector.

She underscored that ICT has changed and continues to change the nature of tourism. She stated that technology helps businesses to optimize their operations, achieve greater marketing reach, and improve their products. She added that online marketing is critical to raise the awareness for any product, and organizations need to adapt to ensure they have the right platforms in place to attract their target markets.

She also expressed that governments need to give importance to ICT tool in their countries by

- improving ICT adoption by tourism SMEs in their business interactions
- improving their competitiveness by enhancing business relationships between source markets and destinations
- facilitating the involvement of SMEs in the global digital value chain through the development of simple, low-cost and easy solutions.

She concluded her presentation by mentioning the importance of ICT and its impacts on tourism marketing.

3. Role of the ICT in Tourism Sector: Global Trends and Projections in ICT- Based Tourism Marketing

Prof. Lorenzo CANTONI, President of the International Federation for IT and Travel & Tourism (IFITT) made a presentation titled “Role of ICT in Tourism Sector: Global Trends and Projections in ICT-Based Tourism Marketing.”

Prof. CANTONI started his presentation by explaining the relevance of e-tourism in each phases of travel. He shared some figures related to e-tourism and stated that the internet is the top source for both leisure (%74) and business travel planning (%77). Then, he informed the participants about the top 10 online sources used in travel planning. In this regard, he pointed out that search engines are among the most popular online planning sources for travelers, particularly among leisure travelers.

Moreover, Prof. CANTONI presented some tools and strategies in e-tourism marketing. Some of these tools and strategies are as follows:

- In order to be present and visible: Owned media(websites, mobile apps, blogs) and earned& paid media (Social Media)
- To attract people and to interact with them: direct messages (newsletters/ mailing lists), backlinks, Search Engine Optimization, Search Engine Marketing
- To analyze their practices and to listen to them: Online reputation analysis based on Online Travel Reviews, Web analytics, etc.
- To provide technical infrastructure and legal frameworks: High-speed connections, mobile, coverage, Wi-Fi, clear and efficient regulation.

After mentioning opportunities and challenges in e-tourism marketing, Prof. CANTONI shared some critical success factors in e-tourism. He highlighted the importance of the “target” and having meaningful dialogues with the target. He also pointed out that it is necessary to invest in contents/services and technologies, but much more in human resources able to reach the right audiences; interact with them and analyze their behaviors. Prof. CANTONI concluded his presentation by stressing the need of keeping updated and using ICT tools to train foreign travel agents as well as industry members at large.

Questions and Remarks

Question: In the presentation, challenges and opportunities of the digital technologies are mentioned from the supply side of tourism sector. What are the opportunities and challenges of digital technology for the demand side of tourism sector? How these challenges can be overcome?

Answer: From the demand side, usually we see digital technology is a huge opportunity. Because tourism is an information-intensive sector, with the technology people get much more information. However, there are some challenges. One of them is putting at risk the possibility of relaxing. During vacation, if you are bringing with you your smart phone, checking e-mails,



dealing heavily in social media, you are basically in the same group and not leaving the everyday life. It has to be tackled by education. When you visit a country, make sure you interact with the local people to learn about something rather than checking through your smart phone.

Question: The presentation outlines the importance of e-marketing. As talk-driven destinations like the Gambia, what would you think we need to implement to get the individual travelers?

Answer: When tourists visit your country, the one strategy may be to ask their permission to send them proactively messages, e-mails, newsletters. In this way, you can establish direct connection with the tourists and ask their support to provide their experiences, pictures about the country during their visit. Another strategy that is highly used in many countries is to invite highly reputed/famous bloggers and ask them to share their experiences about the country.

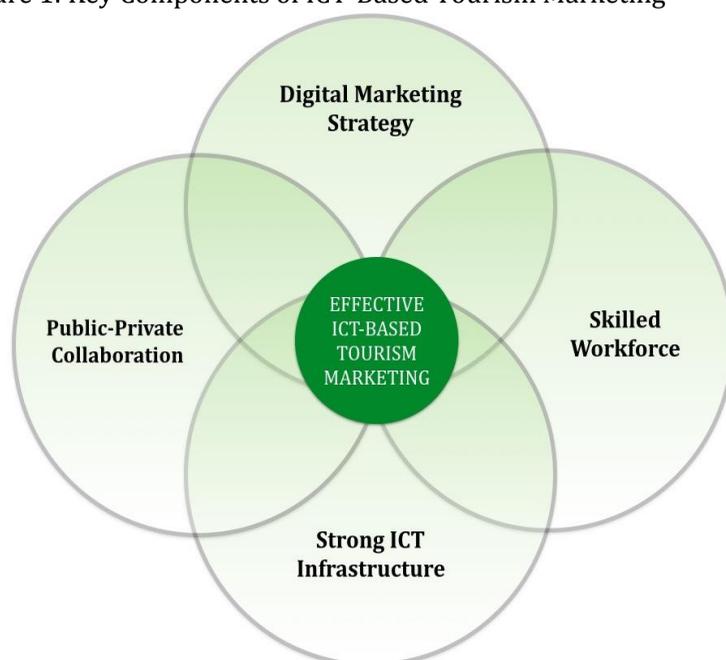
4. ICT- Based Tourism Marketing in the Member Countries: Current Situation, Main Challenges, Recommendations and Prospects

Mr. David BROWN, Director of Tourism Marketing at Solimar International, made a presentation on “ICT-Based Tourism Marketing in the Member Countries: Current Situation, Main Challenges, Recommendations and Prospects.”

Mr. BROWN started his presentation by depicting the OIC Member Countries as a diverse set of countries with varying social and cultural approaches to marketing, significantly different levels of economic development. His analysis was made according to the three official regional groupings of the OIC Member Countries, namely Arab, Asia and Africa Groups along four key components of effective ICT-based tourism marketing:

- Strong ICT Infrastructure
- Integrated Marketing Approach
- Skilled Digital Workforce
- Public-Private Collaboration

Figure 1: Key Components of ICT-Based Tourism Marketing



Mr. BROWN stated that information and communication technology requires the availability and proper functioning of several key components:

- Hardware such as computers, phones and cameras
- Software to achieve certain goals
- Networking such as fiber optics, satellite communication, and telephone connection to transmit information

Mr. Brown mentioned that each of these components must function in concert together. The user must fully understand how to utilize each of these components to achieve their goal and government policy has a significant impact on the availability of tools and the vitality of the networks. He utilized two standard global indicators to help measure the maturity and vitality of a country's ICT infrastructure as it relates to tourism marketing: internet penetration and average connection speed.

Regarding the Internet penetration which means the percentage of the population regularly using the internet and provides insight on availability of ICT networks and tools as well as human development around technology usage, Mr. Brown illustrated that average internet penetration varies greatly among OIC member groups. The Arab group leads with an average penetration of 41% - led largely by the GCC states, all of which have penetration rates higher than 80%. However, the Arab Group has the highest disparity of internet penetration - with a high of 90% in Bahrain and about 1% in Somalia. Members from the Asian group have a slightly lower average penetration rate of 28%, led by Brunei (64.5%). Africa has the lowest penetration rate at 13%, over 3 times less than the Arab region. Within Africa, penetration is the highest in the Maldives (44%) and lowest in Guinea (1.3%)

Mr. BROWN also utilized Average Connection Speed to articulate the health of the country's network and the ability of users to send and receive information. This indicator is particularly impactful on tourism marketing content such as high resolution images, videos, and the use of complex internet-based software. While the Arab region leads the OIC member countries in average connection speed, all OIC member countries still lag behind western Europe, the US and Japan. A survey conducted of public and private sector tourism stakeholders demonstrates slight dissatisfaction with speeds and accessibility (average of 2.7 on a scale of 1 - 4 where 1 is completely dissatisfied and 4 is most satisfied). There is room for improvement in all regions.

Furthermore, Mr. BROWN discussed how taxes and tariffs on ICT hardware such as computers and smartphones as well as internet access have a significant impact on the success of a country's online tourism marketing activities. The increased price of digital goods and services leads to reduced adoption rates and significant negative impacts on the competitiveness of the tourism economy. Research has demonstrated that countries with the highest ICT taxes experience a 0.7 - 2.3% reduction in GDP per capita - a phenomenon known as "digital drag". Asia has some of the highest ICT taxes, including Bangladesh at an average of 73% across all hardware, software and services sampled. Arab countries have relatively low taxes, including the UAE with less than 1%.

He continued his presentation by discussing how internet usage and availability of online access is an essential foundation for successful ICT-based tourism marketing. He stated that all OIC member countries are working to rectify what is known as the "Digital Divide", the disparity in access and knowhow of online tools. This divide usually falls along several key variables - urban/rural, wealthy/poor, educated/uneducated, old/young. Mr. BROWN explained that educational programs and investment in infrastructure help reduce the divide and make countries more competitive in the tourism market by increasing the capacity of tourism marketers and strengthening the favorability of destination by digitally active tourists. Survey respondents throughout the OIC member countries mentioned "lack of know how" and "availability of skilled staff" as barriers to maximizing ICT-based tourism marketing solutions. This "skills gap" is a global phenomenon and is particularly prevalent in the OIC's developing economies. Mr. BROWN expressed that one potential cause is the expanding requirements of successful online tourism marketers, including a firm understanding of:

- Mobile Technology
- Content Marketing
- Social Media
- Email Marketing
- Marketing Automation
- Search Engine Optimization
- Digital Advertising

Mr. BROWN stated that OIC member countries can strengthen their online tourism marketing workforce through investment in professional ICT-based training programs and curriculum available at all levels of schooling. He continued by describing how Oman has launched a successful program free to all Omani citizens designed to introduce core concepts of digital literacy and provide a gateway to more advanced training. Internship and apprenticeship programs with destination marketing organizations and tourism business provide hands-on learning that strengthen the workforce and create a “pathway for success”.

Mr. BROWN noted that many ICT-based tourism marketing challenges are multi-dimensional and require solutions that expand beyond the reach of the Ministry of Tourism of the tourism industry alone. Intra-governmental cooperation and regular meeting on tourism issues is essential to initiate programs to reduce barriers and find efficient solutions. He pointed out that dialogue must also be regular and fluid between the public and private sector in order to strengthen the operating environment and expand marketing impact through cooperative initiatives.

Mr. BROWN stated that within a successful operating environment, tourism marketers must think strategically. He added that good tourism marketing strategy successfully integrates traditional marketing (print, radio, TV, billboards) with digital solutions to leverage a clear and consistent brand. He said that digital marketing strategies consider and prioritize all of the online marketing channels. Websites remain the most important online marketing tools for tourism within OIC member countries – though there is great disparity among the regions of best practice. Many countries with high volumes of tourists (UAE, Turkey, Malaysia, Jordan, and Egypt) maintain superb, sophisticated websites.

He described 11 global best practice criteria: *image-rich, focus on experiences, customized for different audiences, dynamic content, social media integration, press sections, trade sections, email capture, concierge services, and responsive to mobile devices*. He mentioned that Jordan as having one of the OIC’s most sophisticated and thorough websites that meets all 11 global best practice criteria. While others – where tourism is still a developing industry – have minimal or outdated websites. Many countries have none at all.

He also mentioned that social media is an important component of the tourism marketing toolkit and a valuable part of an integrated tourism marketing strategy. Many countries that have invested in websites, also maintain vibrant social media presence. Turkey and Egypt have consistently demonstrated creativity in social media – including campaigns that effectively reach valuable target markets. Overall, African countries’ destination marketing remains relatively weak in both website design and social media usage where countries in Southeast Asia have excelled.

Mr. BROWN highlighted the case studies that were included in the report, specifically the three that were conducted as field research. Oman's successful ICT training and public-private partnership training programs were noted. Malaysia's comprehensive strategy and online marketing efforts were discussed. Finally, Mozambique's initiatives to use online marketing for national parks were showcased.

Mr. BROWN concluded his presentation by providing some policy recommendations on how the public-sector can help strengthen the online marketing environment through three key areas:

1. ***Building a skilled ICT-based tourism marketing workforce by:***
 - analyzing the gap between available skills and what is desired by the public and private sector
 - supporting digital literacy education in primary and secondary schools as well as supporting the private sector to establish apprenticeship programs
 - encourage ICT knowledge exchange among tourism businesses and between industries
2. ***Creating opportunities for public-private sector collaboration with:***
 - strengthen policymaker's awareness of the importance of ICT in the tourism economy
 - the establishment of tourism working group that facilitate collaborative solutions of major sectoral issues
 - the development and implementation of a holistic destination marketing strategy developed with the best interest of all stakeholders
3. ***Improving the ICT operating environment through:***
 - reduction of taxes on ICT equipment and services
 - expanded broadband services
 - improved access to ICT for all citizens

Questions and Remarks

Remarks: Turkey has the 3rd rank in the world in terms of social media of travel and tourism industry. Last two years, we have launched the social media programs and especially "Home of Turkey" branding campaign. In ICT-based tourism marketing, we are very good in some areas, particularly at dreaming and inspiring phases of travel cycle. As Turkey, we are ready to cooperate with the Member Countries to share our experiences.

Remarks: Many Ministries are struggling with how to develop and enact digital marketing strategies. Resources need to be made available to educate policy-makers on best practices for digital marketing.

Question: In the presentation, four components of ICT-based tourism marketing are highlighted. Apart from the ICT infrastructure, for our Member Countries what is first component to start with to use ICT-based tourism marketing?

Answer: Regarding the prioritization of different components, in the ideal world, all should be done together and complement each other. For instance, when a digital marketing strategy is

prepared, it needs to be done through public-private dialogue. Through learning each other's need, public-private dialogue may help to infrastructure development. It is very hard to say which one comes first. Each of the four main pillars of ICT-based tourism marketing are interrelated and should be addressed continuously and simultaneously. But personally I can say that education may come first. Educating everyone about the importance of ICT can be the first step to enable the other components to work smoothly.

Question: What is the appropriate level of investment in various social media channels and online platforms?

Answer: Each destination will find different success with different platforms. The online marketing strategy is a critical tool that helps prioritize and monitor the return on investment of each activity. Understanding the destination's tourism goals (increase visitors, increase length of stay, improve circulation) as well as the target markets (geographic, interests, etc.) will dictate which digital marketing channel is the most effective.

5. Success Stories of the Member States

5.1. Egypt

On behalf of Arab Republic of Egypt, Ms. Soheir Mustafa Abdel SABOUR, Senior Tourism Specialist in Ministry of Tourism shared her country's experience in ICT-based tourism marketing with the participants.

She stated that technology is playing an increasingly important role in the tourism industry. ICT has pervaded every aspect of human life whether it is health, education, economics, or entertainment. ICT has a potential impact on tourism business, digital and online marketing and it is considered as one of the most important components for destinations and tourism business to reach and influence travelers.

She pointed out that Egypt recognized the global trends as a critical component of the national economy for its dynamic and innovative potential, therefore, it has launched a campaign "Masr Wahashouna" that has brought an increase demand from neighboring Middle Eastern markets during Ramadan and Eid. She highlighted that the success resulted in the identification of a clear target market.

Ms. SABOUR stated that the information center of the Egyptian Tourist Authority is keen to keep the information on the site relevant and updated. She highlighted the following tools applied in this regard:

- WEBSITE: The electronic site: www.egypt.travel was an effective tool, 14 languages are available, and the page is customized according to the country.
- PROJECT OF EGYPT NOW: Cameras are used in the front of hotels and tourist sites to show life streaming.
- MOBILE APPLICATION: An option added to the mobile to show site seeing in 7 languages.
- SOCIAL media: "Twitter-Facebook-Instagram-Youtube"
- Online competitions
- Google advertisement

She expressed that Egypt won the third place for the use of information technology in managing Egyptian tourist destination, organized by the IFITT in collaboration with the information center in the Egyptian tourist authority. Lastly, Ms. SABOUR stated that Egypt works on building a skilled workforce on ICT-based tourism marketing in order to eliminate digital illiteracy.

5.2. Iran

On behalf of Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Seyed Sajad MOKHTARI HOSSEINI, Tourism Marketing and Promotion Expert in Iran Cultural Heritage, Handicraft and Tourism Organization made a presentation and shared his country experience in ICT-Based Tourism

Marketing, particularly focusing on the case study of “Tourism Information Telephone Center, No.09629”.

Mr. MOKHTARI informed the participants on the “Tourism Information Telephone Center, No.09629” as a successful enterprise in making use of technology achievements in tourism to inform the clients about the required services of concern to them. He stated that this system has been designed in two different languages-Farsi and English- to make the way to provide both domestic and international tourists in Iran with their required information such as some data on attractions, the country climatic conditions, weather forecast countrywide, data on museums, cultural centers, accommodations and even more detailed information like location of gas stations, banks and so on.

In his presentation, Mr. MOKHTARI showed some pictures and charts about the system operators at work, system software, field advertising that has been applied in promoting the system. He also introduced applications and websites of No.09629 System.

Mr. MOKHTARI expressed at the very end that this successful experience can be considered as a launch pad for the future projects concerning the Islamic Republic of Iran’s long term plan for developing its inbound tourism as a matter of concern in upgrading the system, making use of social networks, phone applications and so on.

5.3. Malaysia

On behalf of Malaysia, Ms. Zaleha Asmahan ISMAIL, Director of Information Technology Management Division, from Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board (Tourism Malaysia), Ministry of Tourism and Culture made a presentation on “Effective Tourism Marketing Strategies : ICT-Based Solutions for Malaysia.”

Ms. ISMAIL stated that the internet has modernized the face of travel industry, with its massive impact among the tourists. Travelers are seeking information about different destinations via internet, which is influencing their decision-making. She pointed out that as technology develops, consumer behavior changes as such:

- Communication is increasingly mobile – more immediate, shorter, faster and in real time
- Consumer conduct conversation 24/7
- Visual information reigns supreme
- Consumers are assisted by search engine developments
- Location-based services are gaining popularity
- Customer journey are becoming more complex – increasing range of factor, platforms and channels influence the customer decision making process

She expressed that realizing these changes, the website www.tourismmalaysia.gov.my being the main online promotion was developed with the intention to create a more vibrant and colorful image of Malaysia to entice visitors to choose Malaysia as their travel destination. This

website should reach more people throughout the world, especially Tourism Malaysia's key target market. Therefore, the content is made available in 16 languages and since its launch in 2012. The website is continuously enhanced adopting current technology trend.

She also pointed out the other ICT-Based solutions being used in Malaysia. These are:

- **Trip Planner Mobile App:** An app that gives travelers personalized, inspiring and practical information on Malaysia, and all you can see and do. It organizes travel plans into an itinerary that has all of the visitor's trip details in one place.
- **Social Media channel:** Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Blog and Instagram
- **Tourism Malaysia Contact Centre:** An integrated contact centre to manage enquiries received by telephone, email, website and social media such as facebook by Tourism Malaysia
- **Trulyasia TV:** An online video platform that showcases Malaysian destination, culture and events to a worldwide audience
- **GOASEAN TV Channel:** A new TV channel called GOASEAN TV is tasked to promote tourism packages for the 10-country ASEAN group, showcasing destinations and tourism products in different concepts and formats to suit a variety of interests, from tourism trivia, travel news and documentaries to travel reality shows, as well as incorporating social media.

Ms ISMAIL concluded her presentation by stating that that customer is king and we need to understand their behavior to get their attention.

5.4. Turkey

Mr. Özgür AYTÜRK, Coordinator from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism made a presentation on ICT Based Tourism Marketing in Turkey.

Mr. AYTÜRK stated that the Ministry started a professionally planned and intense digital strategy at the beginning of 2014 and within less than two years' time, Turkey became the third most popular country/destination in the world, based on the total number of the followers on social media platforms. He expressed that this strategy was actualized in accordance with the Ministry's "Turkey Home" media campaign which is run over 100 countries globally with an annual budget of USD 50 M. He briefly informed the participants about the experiences which Turkey had on social channels like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Google+ etc. and gave figures about the world ranking. He also indicated that the official Turkey Home Facebook page was recently awarded as the best branded Facebook page at the Skifties 2015 Social Media Awards. Mr. AYTÜRK informed the participants that the Ministry also created a specially designed YouTube channel where people can watch and share HD videos of Turkey.

Apart from these, Mr. Aytürk mentioned their digital PR projects such as Gastro Hunt and Fashion Hunt in which the Ministry hosted social media influencers from different countries to showcase the cuisine, culture, fashion, natural beauties and other values of Turkey. He showed

a sample of the videos which were shot during these projects and are currently screened on the social platforms of the Ministry.

Lastly, he showed some samples from the digital ads and contents that Turkey has on different platforms such as Trip Advisor, Expedia, Matador Network etc. He indicated that the Ministry is in close relationship and collaboration with other state institutions and organizations; associations and unions; private sector and also individuals.

6. Policy Options for ICT-Based Tourism Marketing in the Member Countries

The session was moderated by Mr. Ramazan ÇOKÇEVİK, Deputy Director General of Promotion, Ministry of Culture and Tourism. At the outset, Mr. ÇOKÇEVİK stated that “the Room Document for the Moderation Session of the 6th Meeting of the Tourism Working Group”, prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office in light of the findings of the analytical study prepared specifically for the Meeting and the answers of the Member Countries to the policy questions which have already been sent by the CCO, would serve as the basis for the discussions in the moderation session.

At the beginning of the session, Mr. Mustafa Adil SAYAR, Expert from the COMCEC Coordination Office, made a brief presentation on the responses of the Member Countries to the policy questions on ICT-based tourism marketing sent to the Tourism Working Group focal points by the CCO. In his presentation, Mr. SAYAR gave a brief information on policy questions. He stated that the purpose behind these policy questions was to strengthen policy dimension in the discussions of the Tourism Working Group. After presenting the questions and responses of the Member Countries, he introduced the draft policy advices included in the Room Document.

After the presentation, Mr. ÇOKÇEVİK gave the floor to all delegations asking their opinions and comments for each policy advices as well as the experience of their respective countries in this regard. The participants agreed on the policy advices given in the room document. Based on intensive deliberations, CCO drafted attached document² reflecting the main points of agreement by the delegations to be submitted to the 31st Session of the COMCEC as an outcome of the 6th Meeting of the Tourism Working Group.

The policy recommendations highlighted by the participants are as follows:

- Building and Strengthening a Skilled Workforce on ICT-Based Tourism Marketing in the Member Countries
- Enhancing cooperation between the government and private sector on ICT usage and diffusion in tourism marketing
- Developing comprehensive and effective digital marketing strategies in the Member Countries

² The policy recommendations document is attached as Annex 3.

7. Private Sector Efforts for ICT-Based Tourism Marketing

7.1. WTTC- “Encouraging Private Sector to Utilize ICT Tools in Tourism Marketing”

Ms. Reine Gammoh made a presentation titled “Encouraging Private Sector to Utilize ICT Tools in Tourism Marketing.” Ms. GAMMOH started her presentation by introducing some social media marketing statistics and the nature of social media marketing in terms of content creation. Some thoughts included:

- A significant 92% of marketers said that social media was important to their businesses.
- The two skills most marketers want to master are effective social tactics and best way to achieve engagement.
- A significant 72% of marketers surveyed analysed their social media activities.
- Marketers plan to increase their use of visuals (73%), videos (72%), blogging (69%), and podcasting (26%), in that order.
- Video is becoming more important: A significant 57% of marketers use videos in their marketing; however, 72% want to learn more about video marketing.
- Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest, and Instagram were the top seven platforms used by marketers.

Ms. Gammoh also discussed case studies of tourism destinations using social media to amplify their brand awareness and messaging to great success. In this respect, first she focused on Jordan due to her previous experience initiating and managing the country’s tourism board social media strategy. Secondly, she focused on Australia, which is currently the most successful destination using social media marketing. Some takeaways were:

- Use vibrant imagery and creative copy to reach your audience
- Carefully identify your target audience and the best way to communicate with them
- Always respond to feedback in a positive, helpful, and friendly manner
- Customize your content to the audience, the platform, and the overall message

She continued her presentation with some more examples of organizations using social media successfully, like the UNWTO, the WWF, and WEF. She went on to provide some tips for social media marketing. They were:

- Make your content/stories share-worthy
- Try, test, and see what works
- Entice your audience. Show them what they’re missing.
- Inject some fun into your brand and your message
- Listen. Engage. Respond.
- Utilize social media platforms where your audience can engage with you
- Put the spotlight on your community

- Stay current
- Think globally

After discussing some challenges and suggestions for overcoming them, Ms. Gammoh suggested some free online tools to assist the OIC Member Countries in starting their social media strategies and improving their knowledge and skills. Some mentioned are as follows:

- Google analytics academy – for learning about SEO: <https://analyticsacademy.withgoogle.com>
- Klear.com – to measure social marketing activity and make smarter decisions: <http://klear.com/>
- Canva.com – to help create visuals for social marketing: <https://www.canva.com/>
- BuzzSumo – to help find and curate content around a keyword or topic: [buzzsumo.com](https://www.buzzsumo.com)
- Bufferapp.com – to schedule posts to different platforms as well as provide some analytics

7.2. ICVB- “İstanbul Digital Platform Project”

Ms. Gülben OĞUZ, Visitor Information Coordinator from Istanbul Convention and Visitor Bureau (ICVB) made a presentation introducing the İstanbul Digital Platform Project.

At the outset, Ms. OĞUZ informed the participants about the owner, partners of the project as well as its implementation period. She highlighted that the main aims of the project were to increase the number of foreign visitors to İstanbul; removing the information pollution surrounding the city and promote İstanbul on international platforms. She demonstrated some samples from official web-site of the project “www.howtoistanbul.com” and stated that everything about the city is only one click away. Ms. Oğuz mentioned some national technical and international stakeholders to cooperate as part of the implementation of the project.

Ms. OĞUZ continued her presentation by mentioning some of the challenges faced during the implementation of the project such as unusual richness of history, culture, art and natural wonders to exhibit in one single destination website and difficulties in getting the most accurate and up-to-date information about the city from the relevant stakeholders. She highlighted some of the critical success factors in the project. Some of them are as follows:

- Howtoistanbul.com became a platform to bring together all formal State organizations, public and private sector, as well as NGOs.
- The local and international giants of online booking, travel and events have joined the platform with unique booking widgets specifically coded for Howtoistanbul.com
- Howtoistanbul became a live and unique example of Government and Private sector partnership in terms of content providing.

Ms. OĞUZ concluded her presentation by mentioning some lessons learnt from the project and highlighting the importance of ICT tools for tourism marketing.

8. Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding

Mr. Ali ORUÇ, Expert at the COMCEC Coordination Office made a presentation on the COMCEC Project Funding introduced by the COMCEC Strategy.

First, Mr. ORUÇ informed the participants about where the COMCEC Project Funding stands in the COMCEC Strategy.

Mr. ORUÇ underlined the basic qualifications of the COMCEC Project Funding as “simple and clearly defined procedures and financial framework”, and mentioned that CCO provided continuous support to the member countries during the all stages of the COMCEC Project Funding Mechanism.

After briefly explained the Project Cycle Management (PCM) concept, Mr. ORUÇ highlighted the potential project owners. It was emphasized that relevant ministries and other public institutions of the Member Countries and the OIC Institutions operating in the field of economic and commercial cooperation could submit projects. He also underlined that member countries have to be registered to respective working group in order to submit their project proposals.

He continued his presentation by explaining the “Project Selection Criteria” namely, compliance with Strategy’s Principles, and targeting strategic objectives of the Strategy, focusing on output areas and pursuing multilateral cooperation among the OIC Member Countries. He mentioned that CCO had revised project selection criteria for third call for project proposals and regular participation of member countries and OIC institutions to relevant working group meeting had been added as a new criterion. Mr. ORUÇ also emphasized that project proposals submitted by the member countries should be compliant with the sectoral themes for the third call stated in the Program Implementation Guidelines.

Mr. ORUÇ pointed out the importance of the multilateralism for project appraisal and stated that project proposals should focus on common problems of at least two member countries and also should offer joint solutions for these problems.

During the presentation, three key actors and their responsibilities under the COMCEC Project Funding were identified; Project Owner (Project Submission and Implementation); the CCO (Program Management) and the Intermediary Bank (Project Monitoring and Financing). Moreover, steps and roles of these key actors throughout the project application process were defined.

Monitoring of projects was another issue explained in the presentation. Mr. ORUÇ presented that the Bank would be mainly responsible for financial and technical monitoring of projects while the CCO would oversee the overall implementation of the PCM.

With respect to the financial framework, Mr. ORUÇ emphasized that the funds are grant in nature and would be provided by the CCO. From the illustration of the indicative grant limits and co-finance rates for the COMCEC projects, it was seen that Member Countries could submit a project with a budget up to USD 250.000 with the condition that they have to cover at least ten percent of project total budget (cash or in kind). This amount would be USD 100.000 for the OIC Institutions and at least twenty five percent should be covered by the project owner.



Mr. ORUÇ also gave information on 2015 Projects. He stated after the second call for project proposals made in September 2014, that member countries and OIC institutions had shown great interest to the second call and 62 project proposals were submitted by 20 member countries and 3 OIC institutions. He also stated that within the framework of the second call, one successful tourism project is being implemented under the COMCEC Project Funding in 2015. It was titled “Strengthening Community Resilience through eco-tourism” and proposed by the Gambia.

Mr. ORUÇ shared brief information with participants regarding several changes made in the mechanism for the third call. He underlined that CCO had set up a new online project submission system and member countries could submit their project proposals easily by using this user-friendly system. He continued his presentation with demonstration of project proposal submission by using new online project submission system.

Lastly, Mr. ORUÇ reminded participants that third call for project proposals was started as of early September 2015 and project proposals would be submitted to the CCO until 31st September, 2015. He also invited all esteemed countries and OIC institutions to submit their project proposals.

9. Closing Remarks

The Meeting ended with closing remarks of Ms. Zaleha A. ISMAIL, Director of Technology and E-Marketing Division of Tourism Malaysia and the Chairperson of the Meeting and Mr. M. Metin EKER, Director General of the COMCEC Coordination Office.

In her remarks, Ms. ISMAIL thanked all the Member Countries for giving her the opportunity to chair this session. She also thanked all the participants, presenters for their invaluable contributions to the discussions.

Mr. Metin EKER also thanked all the participants for their invaluable contributions. He underlined that the observations, comments and critiques of the participants on the analytical study prepared specifically for the Tourism Working Group Meetings would be mostly welcomed in order to improve its quality. He stated that the main output of the meeting is the draft policy recommendations and they would be presented to the 31st Session of the COMCEC for adoption. Mr. EKER also highlighted the importance of PCM mechanism and invited the Member Countries as well as the relevant OIC Institutions to submit their projects.

Mr. EKER also informed the participants that the next (7th) Meeting of the Tourism Working Group will be held on February 4th, 2015 in Ankara with the theme of “Muslim Friendly Tourism (MFT): Understanding the Demand and Supply Side in the OIC Member Countries.”

Before concluding, Mr. EKER thanked again all the participants and wished them a safe trip back home.



Annex 1: Agenda of the Meeting



6th MEETING OF THE COMCEC TOURISM WORKING GROUP (September 3rd, 2015, Ankara)

“EFFECTIVE TOURISM MARKETING STRATEGIES: ICT-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR THE OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES

DRAFT AGENDA

Opening Remarks

1. The COMCEC Tourism Outlook
2. Effective Tourism Marketing Strategies: ICT Based Solutions
 - a. ICT- Based Tourism Marketing Tools/Instruments
 - b. Recent Trends and Success Factors in ICT- Based Tourism Marketing
3. ICT-Based Tourism Marketing in the Member Countries: Current Situation, Main Challenges, Recommendations and Prospects
 - a. The Usage and Diffusion of ICT Tools in Tourism Marketing
 - b. Government Policies and Programmes for Effective Usage of ICT-Based Tourism Marketing
 - c. Selected Case Studies related to ICT-Based Tourism Marketing
4. Policy Options for ICT-Based Tourism Marketing in the Member Countries
5. Success Stories of the Member States
6. Private Sector Efforts for ICT-Based Tourism Marketing
7. Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding

Closing Remarks

Annex 2: Program of the Meeting



6th MEETING OF THE COMCEC TOURISM WORKING GROUP (September 3rd, 2015, Ankara, Crowne Plaza Hotel)

“Effective Tourism Marketing Strategies: ICT-Based Solutions for the OIC Member Countries”

DRAFT PROGRAMME

- 08.30-09.00 **Registration**
- 09.00-09.15 **Opening Remarks**
- 09.15-09.45 **The COMCEC Tourism Outlook**
- *Presentation: Ms. Aslı TAŞMAZ DADAKOĞLU*
Expert
COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO)
 - *Questions and Answers (Q&A)*
- 09.45-10.45 **Role of ICT in Tourism Sector: Global Trends and Projections in ICT-Based Tourism Marketing**
- *Presentation: Prof. Dr. Lorenzo CANTONI*
President
International Federation for IT and Travel & Tourism (IFITT)
 - *Q&A*
- 10.45-11.00 *Coffee Break*
- 11.00-12.30 **ICT-Based Tourism Marketing in the Member Countries: Current Situation, Main Challenges, Recommendations and Prospects**
- *Presentation: Mr. David BROWN*
Director of Tourism Marketing
Solimar International

- *Discussion*
- *Questions for Discussion*
 - *What are the impacts of technological changes on tourism policies of your country?*
 - *What are the challenges faced by your country regarding ICT-Based Tourism Marketing?*

12.30-14.00 *Lunch*

14.00-15.30 **Success Stories of the Member States**

- *Presentation(s)*
- *Discussion*

15.30-15.45 *Coffee Break*

15.45-17.15 **Policy Options for ICT-Based Tourism Marketing in the Member Countries**

There will be a moderation session under this agenda item. The participants are expected to deliberate on the policy options/advice for ICT-Based Solutions for Effective Tourism Marketing in the Member Countries. The Room Document was prepared by the CCO, in light of the findings of the analytical study prepared specifically for the Meeting and the answers of the Member Countries to the policy questions which have already been sent by the CCO. This Document has been shared with the Tourism Working Group focal points before the Meeting with a view to enriching the discussions during the Session and coming up with concrete policy advice for the policy approximation among the Member Countries in this important field. At the beginning of the session, CCO will make a short presentation introducing the responses of the Member Countries to the policy questions as well as the Room Document.

- *Discussion*
- *Questions for Discussion*
 - *What lessons can be learned from the country experiences in ICT-based tourism marketing?*
 - *How can cooperation be furthered among the Member Countries in ICT-based tourism marketing?*

17.15-17.45 **Private Sector Efforts for ICT-Based Tourism Marketing**

- *Presentation: "Encouraging Private Sector to Utilize ICT Tools in Tourism Marketing"*
Ms. Reine GAMMOH
Social Media Manager
World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC)

- *Presentation: "Istanbul Digital Platform Project"*
Ms. Gülben OĞUZ
Visitor Information Coordinator
Istanbul Convention and Visitor Bureau (ICVB)
- *Discussion*
- *Questions for Discussion*
 - *What are the success factors and challenges for private sector in e-marketing?*
 - *What lessons can be learned from the private sector experiences?*

17.45-18.05 Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding

- *Presentation: Mr. Ali ORUÇ*
Expert
COMCEC Coordination Office
- *Discussion*

18.05-18.15 Closing Remarks



Annex 3: The Policy Recommendations

THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS HIGHLIGHTED BY THE 6TH MEETING OF THE TOURISM WORKING GROUP

Distinguished Members of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group,

The COMCEC Tourism Working Group (TWG) has successfully held its 6th Meeting on September 3rd, 2015 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of *“Effective Tourism Marketing Strategies: ICT-Based Solutions for the OIC Member Countries.”* During the Meeting, Tourism Working Group, made deliberations for policy approximation among the Member Countries regarding ICT-based tourism marketing. The Room Document, prepared in accordance with the main findings of the analytical study conducted specifically for the 6th Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group titled *“Effective Tourism Marketing Strategies: ICT-Based Solutions for the OIC Member Countries”* and the answers of the Member Countries to the policy questions sent to the COMCEC Tourism Working Group focal points by the COMCEC Coordination Office, was the main input for the discussions. During the Meeting, the participants agreed on the policy recommendations included in the Room Document. The existing document includes these policy recommendations highlighted during the Meeting.

The Member States of the TWG are kindly invited to communicate their observations on this document, if there are any, to the COMCEC Coordination Office by September 17th, 2015. The comments received before September 17th, 2015 will be able to be incorporated into the Document. After incorporating the Member States’ contributions, this document will be submitted to the 31st Ministerial Meeting of the COMCEC to be held on 23-26 November 2015 in İstanbul, as an outcome of the 6th TWG Meeting.

The Tourism Working Group underscored the importance of:

1- Building and Strengthening a Skilled Workforce on ICT-Based Tourism Marketing in the Member Countries

Rationale: The diffusion and usage of ICT tools in tourism sector has resulted in increasing demand for high quality IT staff, new skills and managerial requirements as well as courses, certificate programs and on-the-job trainings for the use of the technology.

The Analytical Study highlighted that digital literacy is a critical component in the efficient implementation of ICT-based tourism marketing solutions. It was stressed that most of the OIC Member Countries have large skill gaps in the ICT-skilled workforce in tourism sector. Skill gaps are seen as the most consistent barrier for tourism businesses and destination marketing organizations to fully optimize their digital marketing strategies. For most of the OIC Member States, training curriculums do not include ICT-related issues specifically applied to the tourism sector. Therefore, it is essential to develop specific policies and programs in the Member Countries to build and strengthen ICT-based tourism marketing skills.

“Lack of skilled ICT-Based Tourism Marketing Workforce” is highlighted in the responses of the Member Countries to the policy questions as an important challenge faced by Member Countries in usage and diffusion of ICT-tools and services in tourism marketing.

2- Enhancing cooperation between the government and private sector on ICT usage and diffusion in tourism marketing

Rationale: ICT usage is essential for enhancing the competitiveness of the tourism SMEs in the Member Countries since it enables their access to global markets. The analytical study pointed out that public sector can create an enabling environment for ICT-based tourism marketing through regular and proactive collaboration with the Private Sector. In this respect, governments may implement some policies and provide some incentives to raise awareness of the private sector as well as stimulate their interest for the ICT usage in tourism marketing. In the responses of the Member Countries to the policy questions, “limited collaboration among stakeholders” is stressed as one of the challenges faced by the Member Countries.

3- Developing comprehensive and effective digital marketing strategies in the Member Countries

Rationale: A comprehensive and effective marketing strategy, which integrates multiple online marketing channels and articulates marketing goals, responsibilities, and measures for success, is a foundation for efficient ICT-based tourism marketing. The Analytical Study pointed out that considering the speed of changing trends and availability of new online platforms, without a well-planned strategy, ICT-based tourism marketing can easily be unfocused, resource-intensive and ineffective. It was stressed that the Member Countries need comprehensive and effective digital marketing strategies to better implement the ICT- based solutions in their tourism marketing efforts.

In the responses to the policy questions, “Lack of digital marketing strategy” is also highlighted as one of the challenges faced by the Member Countries.

Instruments to Realize the Policy Recommendations:

- ***COMCEC Tourism Working Group:*** In its subsequent meetings, the COMCEC Working Group may elaborate on the above mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner.
- ***COMCEC Project Funding:*** Under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC Coordination Office calls for project each year. With the COMCEC Project Funding, the Member Countries participating in the Working Groups can submit multilateral cooperation projects to be financed through grants by the COMCEC Coordination Office. For the above mentioned policy areas, the Member Countries can utilize the COMCEC Project Funding and the COMCEC Coordination Office may finance the successful projects in this regard. The projects may include seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of



experts, workshops and preparing analytical studies, needs assessments and training materials/documents, etc.

- **Capacity Building Activities:** With the COMCEC Coordination Office's resources and Member Countries' own resources, some capacity building and technical assistance programs on the aforementioned policy areas can be organized in the Member Countries. These activities may include seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of experts, workshops and preparing analytical studies, needs assessments and training materials/documents, etc.

- **OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum:** In its next meetings, the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum may elaborate on the above mentioned policy areas from the private sector perspective.

Annex 4: List of Participants

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS OF 6th MEETING OF THE COMCEC TOURISM WORKING GROUP (September 3rd, 2015, Ankara)

A. INVITED STATES

THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

- Mr. JAVID ABDULLAYEV
Senior Specialist, Ministry of Culture and Tourism

THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

- Ms. JUDITH A. E. ANOCK
Chef of Service for Promotional Activities,
Ministry of Tourism and Leisure
- Ms. MIREILLE D. NGO NJONOK LEA
Planning and Cooperation Division,
Ministry of Tourism and Leisure

THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

- Mr. AHMED ABDEL HAMED
General Manager, ETA
- Ms. SOHEIR MUSTAFA ABDEL SABOUR
Senior Tourist Specialist in Ministry of Tourism

THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

- Mr. FODAY BAH
IT / E-marketing Manager, Gambia Tourism Board
- Ms. IDA JENG NJIE
Director of Tourism International, Gambia Tourism Board

THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA

- Ms. FATOUMATA TOURE
Chief of Staff, Tourism, Hotels and Handicraft
- Ms. MAIMOUNA CISSOKO
National Director Hotels



ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

- Mr. SEYED S. M. HOSSEINI
Marketing Expert for Middle East and Africa

MALAYSIA

- Ms. ZALEHA A. ISMAIL
Director of Technology and E-Marketing Division,
Tourism Malaysia
- Mr. GUNASILAN ANNADURAI
Information Technology Officer, Ministry of Tourism and Culture

REPUBLIC OF MALI

- Mr. SIDY KEITA
Director, Mali Tourism Authority
- Mr. IDRISSE KONE
Agent, Mali Tourism Authority

THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

- Mr. JOSE FARIA
Head of Department Monitoring and Planning,
Ministry of Tourism
- Mr. LAISSE MUCAVELE
Head of Department,
Ministry of Culture and Tourism

STATE OF PALESTINE

- Mr. AZMI ABU GHAZALEH
Economic Counsellor,
Embassy of the State of Palestine in the Republic of Turkey

REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA

- Ms. INES HERMI
Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts
- Mr. MOURAD ALOUINI
Head of Department, Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

- Mr. RAMAZAN ÇOKÇEVİK
Deputy Director General, Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Ms. ESEN NEFTÇİ
Vice Head of Department, Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Mr. ÖZGÜR AYTÜRK
Coordinator of Director General, Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Mr. MUSTAFA ÖZSOY
Expert, Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Ms. HATİCE ANIL YILMAZ
Information and Press Specialist, Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Mr. AGAH REHA TURAN
Expert, Ministry of Development
- Mr. AZİZ SERKAN KILIÇ
TÜRSAB

B. INVITED INSTITUTIONS

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES AND TRAVE AND TOURISM (IFITT)

- Prof. LORENZO CANTONI
President, Chair-Holder, USI

THE WORLD TRAVEL & TOURISM COUNCIL (WTTC)

- Ms. REINE GAMMOH
Social Media Manager, World Travel and Tourism Council

İSTANBUL CONGRESS AND VISITORS BUREAU (ICVB)

- Ms. GÜLBEN OĞUZ
Visitor Information Coordinator

THE ISLAMIC CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE (ICDT)

- MOHAMMED Y. JERRARI
Documentalist, Islamic Centre of Development of Trade



STATISTICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTER FOR ISLAMIC COUNTRIES (SESRIC)

- Ms. MAEDEH BON
Researcher, Tourism Planning and Management

SOLIMAR INTERNATIONAL

- Mr. DAVID BROWN
Director, Solimar International

C. COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

- Mr. METİN EKER
Director General, Head of COMCEC Coordination Office
- Mr. MUSTAFA TEKİN
Head of Department
- Mr. SELÇUK KOÇ
Head of Department
- Mr. FATİH KAYA
Head of Department
- Ms. AYLİN ŞENOL GÜN
Expert, Drafting
- Ms. ASLI TAŞMAZ DADAKOĞLU
Expert, Drafting
- Mr. MUSTAFA ADİL SAYAR
Assistant Expert, Drafting
- Mr. MEHMET C. AKTAŞ
Assistant Expert, PCM
- Mr. ALİ ORUÇ
Assistant Expert, PCM
- Mr. AHMET OKUR
Protocol Relations
- Ms. ÖZGÜL YÜKSEL
Coordinator of Organization

- Ms. HANDE ÖZDEMİR
Coordinator of Registration Office
- Ms. HAVVA KÖSEOĞLU
Assistant of Registration Office
- Mr. OZAN LİF
Coordinator of Documentation Centre
- Mr. KEMAL ARSLAN
Coordinator of Meeting Rooms
- Mr. ALİ VURAL
Assistant of Meeting Rooms
- Mr. ERCAN İBİK
Coordinator of Transportation
- Ms. NAZİFE GÜLGEN
Coordination of Social Programme
