



REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

Minister of Tourism

International Congress on World Civilizations and Creative Tourism

Sofia, Bulgaria, (29 November – 1 December 2016)

Tourism has grown at an accelerated pace over the last decades to become one of the leading global socio-economic sectors. In 2012, for the first time, over one billion international tourists travelled the world and UNWTO forecasts continued growth in the years to come. Cultural tourism plays a leading role in creating new socio-economic opportunities for tourism development at local, regional and national level, while presenting important challenges.

As a follow up to Siem Reap Declaration, adopted at UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture in 2015 in Cambodia, it is crucial to develop, coordinate and implement tourism and other public policies and practices in an integrated manner. The International Congress on World Civilizations and Creative Tourism will address how we can bring to life world civilizations through creative tourism. The Congress will be an excellent platform and unique opportunity for public and private tourism stakeholders to present and share views, experiences and good practices in developing strategies that encourage and facilitate new and innovative forms of cultural tourism. The aim of the Congress is to discuss how creative tourism can play a significant role in safeguarding and promoting tangible and intangible heritage, as well as in generating socio-economic benefits for all stakeholders.

Jointly organized by the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the Congress will bring together Ministers of Tourism and other public and private tourism stakeholders as well as internationally recognized professionals within creative industries, experts, and scientists linked to the tourism industry, including related to world civilizations.

Preliminary Programme

International Congress on World Civilizations and Creative Tourism

Sofia, Bulgaria, 29 November- 1 December 2016

Monday, 28 November 2016

17:00 – 19:00 Registration – Grand Hotel Sofia
19:00 – 22:00 Opening dinner (Upon invitation only)

Tuesday, 29 November 2016

08:00 – 09:00 Registration (Welcome Coffee) – Sofia Tech Park

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Stephan A. Shtereff, TV Anchor and Performing Artist

Opening Ceremony

09:00 – 09:15 Family photo for heads of delegations

09:15 – 10:30 Opening Speeches

- Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria (TBC)
- Mr. Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General, UNWTO
- Ms. Nikolina Angelkova, Minister of Tourism, Bulgaria
- Ms. Jordanka Fandakova, Mayor of Sofia, Bulgaria



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10:30 – 12:30

High Level Meeting

The High Level Meeting will address how world civilizations can be brought back to life through sustainable creative tourism and how effective partnership models can be developed to contribute to safeguarding and promoting world civilizations, while creating socio-economic benefits for local communities.

Message from Mr. Karmenu Vella, Commissioner, Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission (Video)

Moderator: Mr. Max Foster, CNN Anchor and Correspondent

Confirmed participants include:

- Ms. Nikolina Angelkova, Minister of Tourism, Bulgaria
- H.R.H. Princess Dana Firas, President of Petra National Trust, Jordan
- King Simeon II of Bulgaria, former Prime-minister of Bulgaria
- Mr. José Manuel Soria, Former Minister of Energy, Industry and Tourism, Spain
- Mr. Nazim Samadov, Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism, Azerbaijan
- Mr. Yiorgos Tziallas, Secretary General for Tourism Policy and Development, Greece
- Mr. Faryad Rawandozi, Minister of Culture, Tourism and Antiquities, Iraq
- Mr. Mahmood Mousa Mousa, Chairman of the Iraqi Tourism Board, Iraq
- Mr. Najib Balala, Cabinet Secretary of Tourism, Kenya
- Mr. Edward Zammit Lewis, Minister of Tourism, Malta
- Mr. Stanislav Rusu, Director General of Tourism Agency, Republic of Moldova
- Mr. Syed Sardar Ali Shah, Minister of Culture, Tourism and Antiquities Department, Government of Sindh, Pakistan
- Ms. Mihaela Vrabete, State Secretary of Tourism, Romania
- Ms. Marija Labovic, CEO, National Tourism Organisation of Serbia
- Mr. Nabi Avci, Minister of Culture and Tourism, Turkey
- Mr. Charles Romel Banda, Minister of Tourism and Arts, Zambia
- Mr. Walter Mzembi, Minister of Tourism, Zimbabwe
- Ambassador Michael Christidis, Secretary General, Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)

Press gathering for the high level meeting participants

13:00 – 15:00

Lunch

15:00 – 17:00

Session 1: Bringing to life world civilizations through creative tourism

Tourism is about experiencing the world and its living cultures. Thanks to creative tourism a distinctive and unique visitor experience can be created, bringing world civilizations back to life. In this session, speakers will share insights on how to create an iconic experience and lead tourism development through creativity and innovation with regard to world civilizations.



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Moderator:

Ms. Anita Mendiratta, Managing Director, CACHET Consulting, South Africa

Speakers:

The Case of Petra Jordan

H.R.H. Ms. Princess Dana Firas, President, Petra National Trust, Jordan

Mr. José Manuel Soria, Former Minister of Energy, Industry and Tourism, Spain

Creative regeneration of the ancient Egyptian civilization heritage

Dr. Zahi Hawass, Archaeologist, Egypt

Ancient Greek Civilization

Mr. Pavlos Yeroulanos, Head of the project "Greece: A Different Path to Growth" and Chairman of the Board of Kefalonia Fisheries S.A.

20:00 – 22:00

Gala dinner - Military Club Concert Hall

Wednesday, 30 November 2016

08:45 – 09:30

Welcome Coffee

09:30 - 11:30

Session 2: Developing a sustainable tourism strategy for world civilizations

If managed in a sustainable manner, tourism can be a key element in preserving built and living heritage, respecting socio-cultural authenticity and ensuring socio-economic benefits for all stakeholders. Furthermore, it can contribute to improving the understanding of world civilizations. In this session, speakers will discuss sustainable development and strategies in world civilizations heritages.

Moderator:

Dr. Walter Jamieson, Professor and Director, Service Innovation Program, College of Innovation, Thammasat University, Thailand

Speakers:

The Case of Angkor Wat

Mr. Sok Sangvar, Head of Angkor Tourism Management Plan, Cambodia

The origin of humanity

Dr. Zeray Alemseged, Professor, University of Chicago, Ethiopia

Ancient Thrace and Its Cultural Heritage

Dr. Peter Delev, Professor of ancient history, St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia, Bulgaria

11:30 – 12:00

Coffee break



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12:00 – 14:00

Session 3: Building partnerships between tourism and creative industries in the safeguard and promotion of world civilizations: Benefits and challenges

Promoting closer linkages between cultural tourism and creative industries can represent an opportunity for fostering the appreciation and preservation of world civilizations. Developing mutually beneficial partnership models, will require engaging public and private stakeholders at all levels to address challenges and opportunities. In this session speakers will share their experiences in cooperating with different sectors such as technology, science, etc, in order to preserve, promote and better understand world civilizations as well as public and private partnerships.

Moderator:

Dr. Donald E. Hawkins, Tourism studies professor at the George Washington University, USA

Speakers:

Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili, Ambassador of Georgia to Spain, Permanent Representative to the UNWTO

Cooperation between cultural tourism and creative industries

Ms. Caroline Couret, Co-creator, the Creative Tourism Network, Spain

Nature and the Thracian Extraurban Religious topoi of Faith as a Creative Touristic Resource

Dr. Valeria Fol, Professor, Institute for Balkan Studies with Centre of Thracology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria

Thracian Political and Religious Centers as a Sustainable Touristic Resource in Bulgaria

Dr. Diana Gergova, Professor, Institute for Balkan Studies with Centre of Thracology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria

14:00 – 14:30

Sofia Declaration Proposal
Closing Session and Conclusions

14:30 – 16:00

Lunch

16:00-18:00

Complimentary Tour of Sofia (Optional)

20:00 – 22:00

Farewell Dinner- Hadjidraganov's Cellars



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Thursday, 1 December 2016

09:00 – 14:00

Technical Visit I: Sofia Holy Forest

Delegates will visit The St. Alexander Nevsky Patriarchal Cathedral, Sofia's oldest building "St. George Rotunda", Boyana Church, UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the National Museum of History.

08:00 – 20:00

Technical visit II: Sofia – Plovdiv – Kazanlak

Delegates will visit the Old Town of Plovdiv, a site on the tentative UNESCO World Heritage List and visit the Ancient Roman Theatre, the best preserved Roman structure in Bulgaria.

In Kazanlak delegates will visit the The Thracian Tomb of Kazanlak, UNESCO World Heritage Site, and The Museum of Roses.