



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

Tuesday, 29 November 2016

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| 09:00 – 09:45 | Registration (Welcome Coffee) |
| 09:45 – 10:30 | Opening Ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Boyko Borissov, Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria• Mr. Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General, UNWTO• Ms. Nikolina Angelkova, Minister of Tourism, Bulgaria |
| 10:30 – 12:30 | High Level Meeting <p><i>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.</i></p> <p>Moderator: (TBC)</p> <p><i>Press Conference</i></p> |
| 13:00 – 15:00 | Lunch |



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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.

Moderator:

Mr. Greg Richards, Professor of Leisure Studies, Tilburg University, Netherlands (TBC)

Speakers:

Creative regeneration of the ancient Egyptian civilization heritage

Dr. Zahi Hawass, Egyptologist and former Minister of Antiquities Egypt (TBC)

The Case of Petra Jordan

HRH Princess Dana Firas, President, Petra National Trust (TBC)

19:00 – 22:00

Welcome dinner

Wednesday, 30 November 2016

08:45 – 09:30

Welcome Coffee

09:30 - 11:30

Session 2: Developing a sustainable tourism strategy for world civilization heritage

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 management and strategies in world civilizations heritages.

Moderator:

Mr. Walter Jamieson, Professor and Director, Service Innovation Program, College of Innovation, Thammasat University, Thailand (TBC)

Speakers:

The Case of Angkor Wat

Mr. Sok Sangvar, Head of Angkor Tourism Management Plan (TBC)

The origin of humanity

Dr. Zeray Alemseged, Paleoanthropologist, Ethiopia (TBC)

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

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

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 responsibilities and overcome challenges. 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.

Moderator:

Mr. Donald E. Hawkins, Tourism studies professor at the George Washington University, USA (TBC)

Speakers:

Digitally preserving world civilizations heritage

Mr. Ben Kacyra, Digital preservationist, CYARK, United States of America (TBC)

Cooperation between cultural tourism and creative industries

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

Representative of The Hermitage Museum and ancient civilizations (TBC)

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

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

14:00 – 16:00

Lunch

16:00 – 17:00

Closing Session and Conclusions

19:00 – 21:00

Farewell Dinner

Thursday, 1 December 2016

Technical visits