Joint Communique
on
SAARC Tourism Cooperation

July 29, 2005
Colombo

SAARC Tourism Ministers Meet
Jointly Organized by:
SAARC Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI)
and Federation of Chambers of Commerce
& Industry of Sri Lanka (FCCISL)

SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION
JOINT COMMUNIQUE

SAARC Tourism Minister’s Meeting was held in Colombo jointly organised by the Ministry of Tourism, Sri Lanka and the SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Hon. Anura Bandaranaike, Minister of Tourism and Minister of Industry & Investment Promotion, Sri Lanka inaugurated the Tourism Meet.

We, the Minister of State for Civil Aviation and Tourism of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, the Secretary Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism of the Kingdom of Bhutan, Minister of Tourism of the Republic of India, the Minister of Tourism & Civil Aviation of Republic of Maldives, the Minister of Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation of the Kingdom of Nepal, the Managing Director, Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Minister of Tourism of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka gathered in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 29 July 2005 for SAARC Tourism Minister’s Meeting convened by the Ministry of Tourism, Sri Lanka and the SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Reaffirming our confidence in the meeting of twelfth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad in January 2004;
Convinced of the laudable objective of enhancing Tourism into SAARC Region and within SAARC Region;
Convinced that existing easy geographical access to all our countries open tremendous opportunities for tourism;
Recognizing that the current trends of increasing package tours for several destinations and intra regional travel could be taken into advantage of the SAARC region;
Affirming that public and private sector partnership is essential for the development of tourism as envisaged;
Resolving to forge ahead with strategies, with a proactive joint campaign to promote inter region and intra region tourism beneficial to all the countries in the SAARC region thus bringing in economic, social and cultural dividends to the people in the region.

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Recognize that the future development of tourism for the region largely depends upon the level of cooperation in transport sectors viz, Air, Sea and Land;
Note that simplification of immigration procedures and other frontier formalities will enormously facilitate the travelers into the region and within;
Agree to use the SAARC mechanisms for further development of tourism as envisaged,
Agree to receive the maximum benefits from the areas of Culture and heritage, Eco and adventure tourism and other tourism products in a sustainable manner;
Agree to work on mechanisms to reduce frontier formalities, introduce special packages, and improve air accessibility;
Agree to work on further mechanisms to create awareness and promote the region to the world market;
Agree to work on further mechanisms to create awareness, and promote the region to travelers within the region;
Agree to work on activities leading to awareness including inviting media personnel, travel agents and tour operators, exchange of tourism experts etc;
Agree to adhere to follow best practices on tourism related activities;
Agree to strengthen the initiative taken to have joint working groups to implement plan of action on a clear direction;

Hon. Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin  
State Minister for Civil Aviation & Tourism, People’s Republic of Bangladesh

H E Dasho Karma Dorji  
Secretary, Ministry of Trade, Industry & Tourism  
Kingdom of Bhutan

Hon. Smt. Renuka Chowdhury  
Minister of Tourism Republic of India

Hon. Dr. Mahamood Shaigee  
Minister of Tourism & Civil Aviation Republic of Maldives.

Hon. Buddhhi Raj Bajracharya  
Minister of Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation, Kingdom of Nepal

Brigadier (Retd) Hon. Hashim Khan  
Managing Director/Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation, Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Hon. Anura Bandaranaike  
Minister of Tourism, Industry & Investment Promotion, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Macky Hashim  
President, SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry

We express our deep gratitude and appreciation to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka for the generous hospitality accorded and the excellent arrangements made to have the SAARC Tourism meeting a success.