

Agenda item 9**Report of the Executive Council
to the General Assembly**

A/26/9

Madrid, 20 August 2025

Original: English

UN Tourism is going green. All General Assembly documents are available on the UN Tourism website at www.unwto.org or use the Quick Response code here.

**Executive summary**

As the statutory provisions indicate, the Executive Council is required to report to the General Assembly on its activities, dealing both with the decisions it has taken in implementation of Assembly resolutions and with the administrative and technical decisions taken between Assembly sessions. Since the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the Executive Council has held its 120th, 121st, 122nd and 123rd ordinary sessions.

DRAFT RESOLUTION¹

Agenda item 9

Report of the Executive Council to the General Assembly
(document A/26/9)

The General Assembly,

Having examined the report,

1. *Takes note* of the information presented concerning the Council's activities, and in particular the decisions of its 120th, 121st, 122nd and 123rd ordinary sessions;
2. *Takes cognizance* of the major matters considered by the Council such as the implementation of the Programme of Work for 2024-2025 and the draft Programme of Work for 2026-2027, and the financial situation and human resources of the Organization;

Noting that the minimum funding for the Task Force on Redesigning Tourism for the Future required by the 121st session of the Council was not received by the Secretariat by the established deadline,

3. *Decides* to dissolve the Task Force on Redesigning Tourism for the Future;
4. *Takes note with satisfaction* of the progress in the implementation of the Regional and Thematic Offices in Brazil, Uruguay, Morocco and Uzbekistan;
5. *Encourages* the Executive Council to continue efforts to enhance its effectiveness and efficiency in the performance of its mandate;
6. *Pays tribute* to the dedication and competence demonstrated by its Chairs, Saudi Arabia in 2024 and Brazil in 2025; and
7. *Thanks* the Vice-Chairs, Democratic Republic of Congo and Jamaica in 2024 and South Africa and Czechia in 2025, for the quality of the work they carried out in the exercise of their functions.

¹ This is a draft resolution. For the final resolution adopted by the Assembly, please refer to the Resolutions document issued at the end of the session.

I. Introduction

1. As Article 19(a) and Article 20 of the Organization's Statutes indicate, the Executive Council is required to report to the General Assembly on its activities, dealing both with the decisions it has taken in implementation of General Assembly resolutions and with the administrative and technical decisions it has taken between Assembly sessions.
2. This document reports on matters covered in decisions already taken by the Council in the fulfilment of the functions enumerated in the two aforementioned statutory provisions and Rule 29 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council since the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, from 16 to 20 October 2023.
3. Since the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the Executive Council has held four ordinary sessions, whose dates and venues were as follows:
 - 120th session, 20 October 2023 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan
 - 121st session, 10-11 June 2024 in Barcelona, Spain
 - 122nd session, 13-15 November 2024 in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia
 - 123rd session, 29-30 May 2025 in Real Sitio de San Ildefonso, Spain

II. Regular functions of the Executive Council

Election of its Chair and Vice-Chairs

4. The composition of the Executive Council for 2024 and 2025 is available in Annex I.
5. At its 120th and 122nd sessions, respectively, the Council elected Saudi Arabia as Chair of the Council for 2024 and Brazil as Chair of the Council for 2025. At the same sessions, the Council also elected the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Africa as first Vice-Chair for 2024 and 2025, and Jamaica and Czechia as second Vice-Chair for 2024 and 2025.

Subsidiary bodies of the Executive Council

6. At its 120th session, the Executive Council elected new members of its subsidiary bodies:
 - (a) The Council elected the following Members to the Committee on Matters Related to Affiliate Membership until 2027: Algeria, Argentina, India, Jordan, Republic of Korea, Spain, Tajikistan, Uruguay, and Uzbekistan, and further elected, until 2025, Macao, as representative of the Associate Members and Asociación Empresarial Hotelera de Madrid (AEHM), as representative of the Affiliate Members (CE/DEC/2(CXX)).
 - (b) For the Committee on Statistics, the Council elected the following Members until 2027: Morocco and Seychelles (Africa), Costa Rica and Honduras (Americas), Philippines (East Asia and the Pacific), India (South Asia), Austria and Portugal (Europe), Saudi Arabia (Middle East), and further elected, until 2025, Flanders, as representative of the Associate Members and Asociación Empresarial Hotelera de Madrid (AEHM), as representative of the Affiliate Members (CE/DEC/2(CXX)).
 - (c) For the Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness (CTC), the Council elected the following Members until 2027: Kenya and Zambia (Africa), Haiti and Uruguay (Americas), Thailand (East Asia and the Pacific), Sri Lanka (South Asia), Malta and Republic of Moldova (Europe), Lebanon (Middle East), and, further elected, until 2025, Flanders as representative of the Associate Members, and Asociación Empresarial Hotelera de Madrid (AEHM), as representative of the Affiliate Members (CE/DEC/2(CXX)).
 - (d) For the Committee on Tourism and Sustainability (CTS), the Council elected the following members until 2027: Kenya and Zimbabwe (Africa), Costa Rica and Uruguay (Americas), Fiji (East Asia and the Pacific), Sri Lanka (South Asia), Croatia and Portugal (Europe), Egypt (Middle East), and further elected, until 2025, Flanders as representative of the Associate

Members and Asociación Empresarial Hotelera de Madrid (AEHM), as representative of the Affiliate Members (CE/DEC/2(CXX)).

- (e) For the Committee on Online Education, the Council recalled that Morocco and Central African Republic (Africa), Chile and Brazil (Americas), Republic of Korea (East Asia and the Pacific), Iran (South Asia), Greece and Portugal (Europe), Saudi Arabia (Middle East) were elected until 2025, and Macao as representative of the Associate Members and Asociación Empresarial Hotelera de Madrid (AEHM), as representative of the Affiliate Members (CE/DEC/2(CXX)).
7. At its 121st session, the Executive Council approved the reform of the Programme and Budget Committee (PBC) and the transitional measures proposed under Annex V of document [CE/121/3\(b\)](#). As main results,
 - (a) all PBC Members are now to be designated by their respective regional commissions, and
 - (b) all current Members are maintained until 2027 [\(available at this link\)](#).
8. Since the 25th session of the General Assembly, the Council has decided to provisionally admit a total of 85 candidates to affiliate membership, pending ratification by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session:
 - 121st session: 39 applicants
 - 122nd session: 27 applicants
 - 123rd session: 19 applicants
9. Further information on the above candidatures is available in documents CE/121/6(b), CE/122/5(b), CE/123/6(b) and A/26/10(b),

III. Secretary-General's reports on the activities of the Organization

Programme of work

10. With regard to the general programme of work, the Council took note of activities summarized in the Secretary-General's reports (CE/DEC/3(CXXI), CE/DEC/3(CXXII) and CE/DEC/3(CXXIII)) and took the following decisions.
11. At its 121st session it approved the proposal for a reform of the election of the members of the Programme and Budget Committee (CE/121/3(b)), the Implementation of the Pilot Phase of the Tourism for Rural Development Small Grants Programme (T4RD-SGP) (CE/121/3(b)), requested the Secretary-General to report yearly on the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) (CE/121/3(b) RC-1).
12. At its 122nd session, the Council also approved the amendment to the Terms of Reference of the Committee on Statistics to better reflect its scope of work, mandate and governance, including guidance for the election of the co-Chairs and the exercise of their functions (CE/122/3(b) RC-1).
13. The 123rd session welcomed the proposal to advance towards setting up a Global Partnership for Enhanced Climate Action in Tourism as part of the legacy of COP29, where tourism was included in the Action Agenda for the first time and the significance of the COP29 Declaration on Enhanced Climate Action in Tourism and approved the composition of the Technical Committee for the International Code for the Protection of Tourists (CE/123/3(b)(i) rev.2).
14. This session also endorsed the general framework of the Draft Programme of Work for 2026-2027 and requested the Secretary-General to complete this framework with concrete deliveries taking into account the 2026-2027 budget approved at its 123rd session, and to submit the revised draft to its 124th session for information and to the General Assembly for final approval (CE/123/3(b)(i) rev.2).

Administrative and statutory matters

15. The Council received the Secretary-General's reports on administrative and statutory matters dealing with subjects such as the Organization's financial situation and membership
16. At its 123rd session, the Council requested the General Assembly to endorse Executive Council decisions CE/DEC/4(CXIX) and CE/DEC/4(CXXI) on the approval of the UN Tourism Audited Financial Statements for the years 2022 and 2023 respectively and approved the UN Tourism Financial Reports for the years ended 31 December 2022 and 2023.
17. It also decided, after examining the draft budget for the period 2026-2027 (CE/123/3(c)(v)), to defer the decision on an increase in Members' assessed contributions to the next scheduled session of the Council and requested the elected nominee for the post of Secretary-General to work together with the Secretariat on a new proposal (CE/DEC/4(CXXIII)).

Membership status

18. The Council at its 121st session, noted with satisfaction that Benin and Congo were no longer subject to the provisions of paragraph 13 of the Financing Rules, having settled their contribution arrears in full, and appreciated the gesture made by the State of Libya in partially reducing its arrears.
19. At its 122nd session, it endorsed the request made by the Full Member Sierra Leone and recommended a favourable resolution by the General Assembly at its forthcoming twenty-sixth session. It also noted that the Islamic Republic of Iran was no longer subject to the provisions of paragraph 13 of the Financing Rules, having partially settled its contribution arrears, and noted with appreciation that Burundi had also partially settled its arrears.
20. At its 123rd session, the Council also noted that Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados and Burkina Faso were no longer subject to the provisions of Paragraph 13 of the Financing Rules, having partially settled their contribution arrears either partially or in full, and noted with appreciation that Libya was no longer subject to the provisions of paragraph 13 of the Financing Rules and Article 34 of the Statutes, having settled its arrear contributions in full (CE/DEC/4(CXXIII)).

Human resources

21. At its 121st, 122nd and 123rd sessions, the Council took note of the reports on the human resources situation of the Organization (CE/DEC/5(CXXI), CE/DEC/5(CXXII) and CE/DEC/5(CXXIII)).
22. At its 121st session, the Council endorsed the structure change, acknowledging their alignment with the Organization's strategic objectives and the need for enhanced capacity to fulfil its mandate and endorsed the finalization and implementation of policies across key areas for the biennium 2024-2025, recognizing their importance in promoting a conducive work environment and ensuring adherence to best practices.
23. At its 122nd session, the Council took note of the internal analysis carried out highlighting the need for additional personnel to manage its growing activities and projects effectively and at its 123rd session, the Council supported the implementation of the Human Capital Management (HCM) system and encouraged further digital transformation initiatives to enhance operational efficiency within the Organization's human resources function and welcomed the Organization's participation in UN system-wide learning and development initiatives.
24. During its 123rd session, the Council endorsed the development of human resources policies, ensuring alignment with the United Nations best practices and system-wide accountability frameworks and supported the implementation of the Human Capital Management (HCM) system and encourages further digital transformation initiatives to enhance operational efficiency within the Organization's human resources function (CE/DEC/5(CXXIII)).

World Tourism Day

25. At its 123rd session, the Council proposed to the General Assembly the following themes for World Tourism Day 2026, “Digital Agenda and Artificial Intelligence to redesign tourism”, and for World Tourism Day 2027, “Transforming tourism through education” (CE/DEC/10(CXXIII)).

IV. Other initiatives

26. The 121st session of the Council ratified the Rules of Procedure of the Working Group for the Agenda for Europe and approved its work plan for 2024 prepared by the Working Group and adopted by the Regional Commission for Europe, requesting the Working Group to work closely with the UN Tourism Secretariat on further defining the work plan (CE/121/3(b) RC-2).
27. Subsequently, at its 123rd session, the Council also requested the Secretariat to engage with potential donor institutions in order to secure extra-budgetary funding for ongoing and upcoming projects in the framework of the Agenda for Europe (CE/DEC/3(CXXIII)).
28. Furthermore at its 121st session, the Council welcomed the initiative proposed by the Secretariat and endorsed by the Committee to introduce an application fee for new applications for affiliate membership and requested the Secretariat to present a formal proposal to the next session of the Committee ([CE/DEC/9\(CXXI\)](#)).
29. The Council also approved the proposal of Uzbekistan to establish an Intergovernmental Committee for the development of an International Safe Tourism Code, following the methodology applied for the development of the International Code for the Protection of Tourists as approved by the Executive Council, and requested the Intergovernmental Committee to present a report to the 122nd session of the Executive Council and a progress report to the 26th session of the General Assembly.
30. The Council approved, at its 123rd session, the establishment of the Interinstitutional Working Group on Tourism and Climate Action and Committee on Merit and Excellence proposed by Brazil and requested the Secretariat to communicate the final terms of reference to the members of the Executive Council for information (CE/DEC/12(CXXIII)).

V. Recommendation of a nominee for the post of Secretary-General for the period 2026-2029

31. At its 122nd session, the Executive Council adopted the rules and procedure, including the calendar, for the appointment of the Secretary-General for the period 2026-2029, invited Member States to propose candidates for the post of Secretary-General, requested candidates to submit their candidature together with all other information as specified in the established procedures (document CE/122/6 rev.2), and confirmed that at its 123rd session, the Council would consider the candidatures containing all information requested by the Council and proposed by the Member States within the approved deadline, with a view to recommending a nominee to the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly for the post of Secretary-General for the period 2026-2029 (CE/DEC/9(CXXII)).
32. At its 123rd session, after the conclusion of the presentations of the four eligible candidates, the Chair convened a restrictive private meeting and thereafter a normal private meeting in order to proceed with the vote by secret ballot. The candidate of the United Arab Emirates, Ms. Shaikha Al Nowais, received in the second ballot the required majority of the votes, and so the Council decided to recommend the General Assembly to appoint her to the post of Secretary-General for a term of office from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2029 (CE/DEC/6(CXXIII)).

VI. Functions entrusted by the General Assembly to the Executive Council

33. This section covers the follow-up actions carried out by the Executive Council with a view to the implementation of explicit mandates and recommendations issued by the General Assembly.

Task Force on Redesigning Tourism for the Future

34. At its 25th session, the Assembly encouraged the Task Force on Redesigning Tourism for the Future to present for approval at the 121st session of the Executive Council a plan for deliverables, milestones and timetable, cost and funding requirements of the body and a budget.
35. At its 121st session, the Council approved the roadmap, milestones, deliverables, budget and funding requirements, as presented by the UN Tourism Secretariat during the second Task Force meeting held on 20 May 2024.
36. The Council also recommended all UN Tourism Members (a) to join the efforts of the Task Force in working towards a Strategic Plan for the Organization and (b) to approach the UN Tourism Secretariat to formalize their commitments, whether financial through voluntary contributions or in-kind, at their earliest convenience before the end of June 2024, and further decided that if the Secretariat did not secure a minimum of EUR 500,000 of funding by the end of June 2024, it would report such situation to the 26th session of the General Assembly to decide on the dissolution of the Task Force (CE/DEC/7(CXXI)).
37. The Council hereby reports to the Assembly that the funding for the Task Force was unfortunately not secured by the mentioned deadline and, as such, requests the General Assembly to decide on the dissolution of the Task Force.

Regional and Thematic Offices

Working Group

38. The 25th session of the General Assembly took note of the Terms of Reference of the Working Group on UN Tourism Regional and Thematic Offices and encouraged the working group towards the improvement of the legal and operational framework and to report to the Executive Council so that a final report may be examined by the 26th session of the General Assembly (A/RES/763(XXV)).
39. At its 122nd session, the Council took note of the First Report of the Working Group on UN Tourism Regional and Thematic Offices and urged the Working Group to continue implementing its work plan in a timely and high-quality manner.

Brazil

40. The 122nd session of the Council also congratulated Brazil on the completion of the conditions for the entry into force of the Host Country Agreement for the establishment of the Regional Office for the Americas in Rio de Janeiro, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 763(XXV).
41. At its 123rd session the Council welcomed the inauguration of the Regional Office for the Americas in Brazil.

Morocco

42. At its 123rd session, the Council approved the proposal of the Kingdom of Morocco to change the Office from a Regional Office for Africa hosted in Marrakesh to a Thematic Office on Innovation for Africa to be hosted in Rabat.
43. At the same session, the Council further approved the Host Country Agreement concerning the legal framework for the Thematic Office on Innovation for Africa in Rabat and the supplementary agreement on the financial and administrative arrangements for the Office, as signed by UN Tourism and the Kingdom of Morocco, and requested the Secretary-General to submit it for ratification by the 26th session of the General Assembly pending completion by Morocco of the internal procedures necessary for the establishment of the Office in accordance with the legal and operational framework adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 740(XXIV).

44. The Council has encouraged the Government of Morocco to complete all other procedures required to allow the entry into force of the Host Country Agreement and the opening of the Office.

Uruguay

45. At its 121st session, the Council approved, subject to the ratification of the 26th session of the General Assembly, the establishment of the Thematic Office on the Tourism Law Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean in Montevideo, Uruguay, provided that it is in compliance with the legal and operational framework governing UN Tourism Offices adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 740(XXIV).
46. It also authorized the Secretary-General, subject to ratification by the General Assembly at its 26th session, to conclude an agreement between UN Tourism and Uruguay to apply, on a mutatis mutandis basis, the provisions of either the UNDP or the UNOPS Agreement to the Observatory on Tourism Law for Latin America and the Caribbean in Montevideo and for such time until a Host Country Agreement is entered into with Uruguay.
47. Subsequently, at the 123rd session, the Council took note that the Government of Uruguay and the Secretariat have agreed to conclude an agreement through an exchange of letters to apply the Agreement signed between the Government of Uruguay and UNDP to the Observatory on Tourism Law for Latin America and the Caribbean, for such time until a Host Country Agreement is entered into with Uruguay.

Uzbekistan

48. At its 123rd session, the Council approved the Host Country Agreement between UN Tourism and the Republic of Uzbekistan concerning the legal framework for the Thematic Office on Tourism on the Silk Road in Samarkand and authorized the Secretary-General to sign the Host Country Agreement, further requesting that it be submitted for ratification by the 26th session of the General Assembly, pending the conclusion of the supplementary agreement between UN Tourism and the Republic of Uzbekistan on the financial and administrative arrangements and completion by Uzbekistan of the internal procedures necessary for the establishment of the Thematic Office in accordance with the legal and operational framework adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 740(XXIV).
49. Further information on the work of the Working Group on UN Tourism Regional and Thematic Offices and the progress on the establishment of Regional and Thematic Offices has been reported separately in General Assembly document A/26/8 for appropriate decisions to be taken thereon by the General Assembly.

VII. Enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Executive Council's work

50. In 2024, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia served its second consecutive term as Chair of the Council and continued to implement the three-step process it had initially proposed during its 2023 term of office, with three main objectives: consensus-building, inclusive agenda-setting and long-term strategic focus.
51. The three-step process consisted of:
 - (a) Agenda Setting: Collecting input from all Member States to develop an inclusive provisional agenda, ensuring it represents the varied perspectives of our global community.
 - (b) Decision Drafting: Conducting online preparatory sessions, aiming for robust debates, constructive discussions, and achieving consensus. These sessions pave the way for informed decision-making at the Executive Council session, and
 - (c) Decision Adoption: Discussing final points and promptly transition to decision-making, emphasizing efficiency and the attainment of our objectives.
52. In this regard, preparatory sessions were held prior to the 121st session of the Executive Council, on 4 June 2024, with the participation of 32 Member States.

53. Preparatory sessions were also held prior to 122nd session of the Executive Council, on 31 October 2024, with the participation of 32 Member States.

Annex I: Members of the Executive Council for 2024 and 2025



SG/020-EC Rev. 63
December 2023

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Officers for 2024

Chair:	Saudi Arabia
First Vice-Chair:	Democratic Republic of Congo
Second Vice-Chair:	Jamaica

Members

1. Argentina	(2025)	19. Iran (Islamic Republic of)	(2025)
2. Armenia	(2025)	20. Italy	(2027)
3. Azerbaijan	(2025)	21. Jamaica	(2027)
4. Bahrain	(2025)	22. Japan	(2027)
5. Brazil	(2025)	23. Lithuania	(2027)
6. Bulgaria	(2027)	24. Morocco	(2025)
7. Cabo Verde	(2025)	25. Mozambique	(2025)
8. China	(2027)	26. Namibia	(2027)
9. Colombia	(2027)	27. Nigeria	(2027)
10. Croatia	(2025)	28. Republic of Korea	(2027)
11. Czechia	(2027)	29. Rwanda	(2027)
12. Democratic Rep. of Congo	(2027)	30. Saudi Arabia	(2027)
13. Dominican Republic	(2025)	31. South Africa	(2025)
14. Georgia	(2025)	32. Spain	(Permanent Member)
15. Ghana	(2027)	33. United Arab Emirates	(2025)
16. Greece	(2025)	34. United Rep. of Tanzania	(2027)
17. India	(2025)	35. Zambia	(2025)
18. Indonesia	(2027)		

Representative of the Associate Members

Flanders (2025)¹

Representative of the Affiliate Members

Chairman of the Affiliate Members Board (2025)
Asociación Empresarial Hotelera de Madrid (AEHM), Spain

Note: Year in which term of office expires shown in brackets

¹ Shared mandate with Puerto Rico (2023-2025)



SG/020-EC Rev. 64
November 2024

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Officers for 2025

Chair: Brazil
First Vice-Chair: South Africa
Second Vice-Chair: Czechia

Members

1. Argentina	(2025)	19. Iran (Islamic Republic of)	(2025)
2. Armenia	(2025)	20. Italy	(2027)
3. Azerbaijan	(2025)	21. Jamaica	(2027)
4. Bahrain	(2025)	22. Japan	(2027)
5. Brazil	(2025)	23. Lithuania	(2027)
6. Bulgaria	(2027)	24. Morocco	(2025)
7. Cabo Verde	(2025)	25. Mozambique	(2025)
8. China	(2027)	26. Namibia	(2027)
9. Colombia	(2027)	27. Nigeria	(2027)
10. Croatia	(2025)	28. Republic of Korea	(2027)
11. Czechia	(2027)	29. Rwanda	(2027)
12. Democratic Rep. of Congo	(2027)	30. Saudi Arabia	(2027)
13. Dominican Republic	(2025)	31. South Africa	(2025)
14. Georgia	(2025)	32. Spain	(Permanent Member)
15. Ghana	(2027)	33. United Arab Emirates	(2025)
16. Greece	(2025)	34. United Rep. of Tanzania	(2027)
17. India	(2025)	35. Zambia	(2025)
18. Indonesia	(2027)		

Representative of the Associate Members

Flanders (2025)¹

Representative of the Affiliate Members

Chairman of the Affiliate Members Board (2025)
Asociación Empresarial Hotelera de Madrid (AEHM), Spain

Note: Year in which term of office expires shown in brackets

¹ Shared mandate with Puerto Rico (2023-2025)