

APPF26/RES/08

## 26<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING ASIA-PACIFIC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

(Sponsored by Australia, Canada, Russia, the Philippines, Viet Nam)

### RESOLUTION ON FOSTERING CULTURAL AND TOURISM COOPERATION

The 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum:

**Recalling** resolutions adopted by APPF Member States at past Annual Meetings, including: Promoting Intercultural and Interfaith Dialogue (2017); Ensuring an Optimistic and Prosperous Future for Youth (2016); Education, Culture, Science and Technology (2015); Promoting Cooperation in Education, Culture, Science and Technology in the Asia Pacific Region (2014); and Green Economy and Sustainable Tourism (2014);

**Reaffirming** the APPF 2001 Valparaiso Declaration's principles of respecting the cultural richness of the Pacific Ocean Basin and promoting its diffusion and cultural exchanges in order to contribute to building mutual knowledge, appreciation and friendship in the region; as well as **reaffirming** the APPF 1997 Vancouver Declaration's recognition that exchanges are the most effective way to foster mutual understanding, in particular youth exchanges as they will build the next generation of parliamentary leaders;

**Recalling** the Declaration on Culture of Prevention for a Peaceful, Inclusive, Resilient, Healthy and Harmonious Society adopted at the 31<sup>st</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit on 13 November 2017;

**Noting** progress by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum's Tourism Working Group and at the ASEAN Tourism Ministers Meeting in establishing tourism standards for the Asia-Pacific region and facilitating cooperation with various stakeholders to foster sustainable and responsible tourism in the Asia-Pacific region;

**Recognizing** that cultural exchanges and tourism strengthen mutual understanding and respect between peoples and societies;

**Committed** to working together to build a ‘common house’ in the Asia-Pacific region that embraces its diversity;

**Mindful** that tolerance and respect for the diversity of religious, philosophical and moral beliefs are both the foundation and consequence of responsible and sustainable tourism;

**Recognizing** that culture and tourism are major economic engines and employment generators with strong potential to contribute to the improvement of livelihoods in the Asia-Pacific region;

**Cognizant** that international tourism shows an annual steady growth and that the total number of international visitors to the Asia-Pacific region has doubled over the last decade, according to the World Tourism Organization’s October 2017 *World Tourism Barometer*;

**Noting** that countries need robust policy and regulatory frameworks to manage mass tourism, to ensure sustainable tourism, to protect heritage sites and to prevent degradation of natural habitats;

**Recalling** that several UNESCO Conventions already provide an international legal framework for the protection of heritage and culture, such as the Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001), the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003), and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005);

**Observing** that information and communication technologies have been the catalyst for global integration and are deepening mutual dependence in the Asia-Pacific region as well as creating opportunities for virtual exchanges;

Also **observing** that Web 2.0 applications are creating efficient and effective channels to exchange information;

**Concerned** about the uneven access to information and communication technologies in the Asia-Pacific region, with individual usage being one of

the lowest in the world, according to the Global Information Technology Report 2016;

**Recognizing** that some individuals, groups, or communities in the Asia-Pacific region may have restricted capacities to contribute and participate in cultural life and may lack access to tangible and intangible cultural heritage; and that individuals may also face financial and logistical obstacles to travel within their own countries or to other countries in the Asia-Pacific region;

**Welcoming** the adoption of the UN General Assembly Resolution 72/6 "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal", recognizing the valuable contribution of sport to the promotion of education, culture, humanitarian cooperation, solidarity, fairness at the local, regional and international levels;

**Noting** that sport shall contribute to the creation of an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding among peoples and nations and confirming the fundamental position of the APPF Member States on the inadmissibility of using sport as an instrument of politics and pressure on individual countries;

**Recognizing** the cultural rights of Indigenous people and create opportunities to disseminate indigenous knowledge according to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

**RESOLVES TO:**

1. **Develop** robust national policy and regulatory frameworks that promote sustainable tourism as well as protect heritage sites and natural habitats by establishing technical cooperation programs and sharing best practices;
2. **Call upon** APPF Member States to invest adequate public funds to implement policy and regulatory frameworks related to sustainable tourism;
3. **Strengthen** partnerships among APPF Member States that identify heritage sites and natural habitats in the Asia-Pacific region experiencing destruction or damage due to mass tourism; outline steps to prevent further destruction or damage to these sites and for their restoration; ensure cooperation with other international, regional and

national stakeholders responsible to maintain heritage sites and natural habitats; establish a network of sustainable tourism destinations in Asia – Pacific;

4. **Identify** and promote creative means to improve access to information and communication technologies to a greater number of individuals in the Asia-Pacific region;
5. **Develop** legal frameworks required to improve access to internet and information and communication technologies, in particular for individuals, groups or communities that currently lack such access;
6. **Strengthen** the development of robust national tourism industries by promoting labour and skills development training programs which integrate best industry standards;
7. **Support** regional efforts to improve the mobility of visitors and tourists in the Asia-Pacific region by improving, among other elements of regional transportation, air connectivity; developing traveler-friendly airports and smart travelers programs; while taking into account national security and other national and regional concerns;
8. **Enhance** regional air and sea connectivity through direct flights and shipping services, including cruise shipping by encouraging investment in infrastructure;
9. **Urge** APPF Member States to use information and communication technologies in order to design innovative youth exchange models that foster intercultural understanding, improve language skills and increase exposure to the diversity of cultures and point of view in the Asia-Pacific region;
10. **Reiterate** the APPF's commitments made in the 1997 APPF Vancouver Declaration to create a "Program on Youth Friendship for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" in order to promote youth exchanges as well as to establish a "Comprehensive Joint Research Centre" on culture and education in the Asia-Pacific Region;

11. **Recognize** the cultural rights of Indigenous people and create opportunities to disseminate indigenous knowledge according to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
12. **Create or expand** cultural exchange programs that allow arts professionals, groups and organizations to travel to other countries as ‘artists in residence’ and to support exhibits to travel in the Asia-Pacific region; as well as use information and communication technologies to promote virtual cultural exchanges and diffusion of cultural products in the Asia-Pacific region;
13. **Urge** APPF Member States to identify communities who have restricted access to culture and to design innovative programs that increase their exposure to cultural products;
14. **Confirm** that the sport should be free of politics, and call upon APPF Member States, in accordance with the Olympic Charter, to resist any political or commercial use of athletes and abuses in sport;
15. **Support** the initiative of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to hold the World Conference on Interfaith and Inter-ethnic Dialogue that may be organized by the UN with the engagement of state leaders, speakers of parliaments and leaders of world religions
16. **Improve** public understanding about safeguarding of cultural and tourism heritages from theft and illegal export; ensure that tourism resources are effectively managed and utilized; that museums, libraries, and national agencies of one state do not possess illegal cultural assets of another. Encourage voluntary cultural asset restoration and return of artifacts and manuscripts to countries of origin.