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## Partnership Convention

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### Between

The **International Bureau of Social Tourism** named hereinafter the **BITS**  
Rue Haute, 26-28  
1000 Brussels  
Belgium

Represented by its President, **Mister Norberto TONINI**

And

The **Local and Regional Authorities Network of Social and Fair Tourism** named  
hereinafter the **Network**  
Community of Agglomeration Pays d'Aubagne et de l'Etoile  
932, avenue de la Fleuride  
BP 1415  
13785 Aubagne Cedex  
France

Represented by the President of the coordination committee, **Mister Alain BELVISO**

And on the other hand

The **Assembly of European Regions** named hereinafter the **AER**  
6, rue Obertin  
67000 Strasbourg  
France

Represented by its President, **Mister Ricardo ILLY**

### CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

The **BITS**, a non-governmental organization recognized internationally for the actions it has been carrying out for many years in favour of social, fair and sustainable tourism, has decided to create the **Local and Regional Authorities Network of Social and Fair Tourism**.

This network, established within the BITS, is open to local and regional authorities, members or non-members of the BITS, including regions, departments, provinces and municipalities competent in the field of tourism or in the social sector. The Community of Agglomeration Pays d'Aubagne et de l'Etoile, located in Aubagne, France, assumes the presidency of the coordination committee.

The main objective of this new international network aims at encouraging a partnership and the exchange of good practices among local and regional stakeholders acting in the sector of social, fair and sustainable tourism.

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That relates at the same time to the initiatives which facilitate holiday access to the citizens of the regions and territorial communities concerned; the organization of tourist infrastructure in these territories – whether it concerns accommodation and facilities of social tourism or cultural and environmental activities; and the contribution of social, fair and sustainable tourism in terms of job creation, social cohesion and economic growth.

The Assembly of European Regions – **AER** is the political organization of European regions and their voice at the European and international levels. Its vocation is to defend the regional interests in the political process and to develop interregional co-operation. More than 250 regions from 32 countries and 14 interregional organizations are AER members.

The **AER**, which includes many working groups, notably the one on sustainable tourism, has, for many years, been making the various European regions aware of the development of sustainable and responsible tourism.

The converging actions of the three organizations naturally lead us to the signature of the present convention, which constitutes a framework agreement with the aim of strengthening the partnership between the Assembly of European Regions, the BITS as well as the Local and Regional Authorities Network of Social and Fair Tourism.

#### **ARTICLE 1 :**

The signatories commit themselves to the mutual respect of the organizations and their structures.

#### **ARTICLE 2 :**

The BITS and the Network defend the values of social, fair and sustainable tourism and put forward concrete proposals and activities.

#### **ARTICLE 3 :**

The AER commits itself to and supports the values defended by the BITS and the Network, those of a social and humanist vision of tourism.

#### **ARTICLE 4 :**

The AER commits itself to mobilizing its member regions by the promotion of good practices in the sector of social, fair and sustainable tourism, whose contribution in terms of job creation, social cohesion and economic growth (Lisbon strategy) is often ignored despite its importance.

#### **ARTICLE 5 :**

The AER will inform its members of the BITS or Network activities, inviting them to participate in those activities.

#### **ARTICLE 6 :**

The BITS or the Network, in the framework of the international activities it is organizing, will ask that the AER can actively take part in their meetings

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## **ARTICLE 7 :**

The Network wishes to develop a long-term collaboration with the AER and will invite the AER to promote the implementation, within the AER member regions, of various projects carried by the local and regional authorities members of the Network.

## **ARTICLE 8 :**

The AER supports the three objectives of the network, decided upon during the plenary meeting of Heraklion in May 2007:

### *Objective – Social Tourism:*

- ✓ Set-up of true co-operations of holiday supports for the greatest number and exchanges of families between communities, members of the network.
- ✓ To encourage the establishment of holiday centres for social, family or youth tourism on their territories.

### *Objective – Fair Tourism:*

- ✓ To set-up a true partnership with developing countries in the framework of fair tourism, respectful of the environment and the concerned communities, by encouraging its Regions to offer numerous forms of training, advice and support.

### *Objective – Sustainable Tourism:*

- ✓ To invite its Regions to answer the needs of tourists and those of the host communities while protecting the environment and developing opportunities for the future.
- ✓ To urge its Regions to ensure a viable economic activity in the long term offering a fair distribution of socio-economic benefits to all the stakeholders.

## **ARTICLE 9 :**

The Network defends the values of a social, fair and sustainable tourism and must put forward concrete proposals and activities, notably:

- ✓ To bring examples of good practices of social, fair and sustainable tourism.
- ✓ To encourage the exchange and partnership among various communities giving their respective populations access to holidays.
- ✓ To put forward innovative proposals in aid and access to holidays for the greatest number of people.
- ✓ The Network has the vocation of promoting the right to tourism and the right to holidays for all.
- ✓ To carry ideas and development projects in this sector.



**ARTICLE 10 :**

The three parties assert that the reference documents of social, fair and sustainable tourism are:

- ✓ The Montreal Declaration  
« *Towards a humanist and social vision of tourism* »
- ✓ The Aubagne Addendum  
« *Towards a tourism based on development and solidarity* »
- ✓ The Charter of the Local and Regional Authorities Network of Social and Fair Tourism.

**NB: The AER should submit these documents for discussion and adoption first, before signing up to them. This could be done in Kazan in September 2007.**

**ARTICLE 11 :**

The BITS and the Network will favourably reply to all AER invitations to participate in plenary meetings or commission meetings on the theme of social, fair and sustainable tourism and where the experience and analysis of the BITS or the Network can be required. In particular, the BITS accepts to:

- take part in AER meetings, at the invitation of the AER secretariat, in particular when their presence would bring an added-value to the debate
- adopt common Declarations, at the invitation of the AER.
- cooperate with the AER on surveys and studies. In particular, the BITS will give its support to the promotion and carrying out of the AER Peer Review Project on sustainable and fair tourism. The reference documents on this project are available at the AER secretariat.
- set up a common work programme and develop a common action plan and activities for the regions, in line with article 8.

***Done at Udine (Italy),***

On 8<sup>th</sup> November 2007

*(In 4 original copies)*

For the BITS  
The President,  
**Norberto TONINI**

For the Network  
The President,  
**Alain BELVISO**

For the AER  
The President,  
**Ricardo ILLY**