Recommendations - Workshop on Strengthening Tourism Business Resilience Against the Impact of Terrorism

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Submitted by: Indonesia
Recommendations
The APEC Workshop on Strengthening Tourism Business Resilience against the Impact of Terrorism

9-10 May 2017
Bali, Indonesia

APEC Counter Terrorism Task Force

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RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE APEC WORKSHOP ON STRENGTHENING TOURISM BUSINESS RESILIENCE AGAINST THE IMPACT OF TERRORISM

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INTRODUCTION
The tourism industry contributes to job creation, economic growth, sustainable development, and peace in the APEC region. According to the APEC Policy Support Unit (PSU), every 10% increase in tourist arrivals is associated with a 1.2% increase in exports and 0.8% increase in imports (in the destination economy).

Furthermore, a study by the APEC PSU that was conducted in 2016 shows that tourism development has a positive impact on poverty reduction and inclusive growth (i.e., growth in household income coupled with improvements in distribution). Tourism contributes to poverty reduction as every 1% increase of tourist arrivals is associated with a 0.12% reduction in the number of poor people in the region. Data also shows indicatively that tourism contributes to inclusive growth by providing the poor with more opportunities for employment and entrepreneurial activities.

Nevertheless, the continuation of the tourism industry is strongly correlated to safety and security issues. Terrorist attacks will interrupt tourism business activities and impede growth. Therefore, APEC economies have agreed to increase cooperation among economies to foster stronger partnerships through sharing of information and exchange of best practices in countering terrorism that will enhance security, efficiency and resilience of the tourism industry without compromising the flow of legitimate trade and travel in the APEC region.

OBJECTIVES OF WORKSHOP
The workshop was organized by Indonesia National Counterterrorism Agency [BNPT] in collaboration with the APEC Secretariat. The objectives of the workshop were in following:

a. To study the level of resilience toward terrorist attack among economies in APEC
b. To strengthen international cooperation amongst APEC members to provide reliable and rapid information sharing at the time of terrorist attack;
c. To establish standard of crisis management strategies in order to stabilize economies in the aftermath of a terrorist attack and to give guidance on how to recover and recuperate losses;
d. To allow the exchange of information in relation to the movement of suspected terrorists, dangerous materials and capital that can be used in financing terrorist and terrorist attack.

PARTICIPATION
The workshop engaged 13 (thirteen) speakers from APEC Economies, including the Chief of Bali Police, Indonesia and the Regional Counter-Terrorism Coordinator for Southeast Asia, from the United State Embassy in Kuala Lumpur. The speakers shared their expertise and experiences, as well as best practices in building resilience tourism industry against terrorist
attack, where they engaged with 43 (forty three) participants from 14 (fourteen) APEC economies, representing various government agencies and private sectors. (See, Annex 1 for List of Speakers and Participants)

WORKSHOP PROGRAMME
The workshop was held over 4 (four) sessions divided into two days as follows:
Session I – The Impact of Terrorist Attack on Tourism-based Economy.
Session II – Effective Measures and Policies to Prevent Tourism from Terrorist Attack.
Session III – Managing the Effects of Terrorism on Tourism: the Role of Business Community, Media and Civil Society.
Session IV – The Importance of Regional Response and Efforts to Help Recover Tourism Business in the Aftermath of Terrorist Attack in the Region.
(See, Annex 2 for agenda of APEC Workshop)

CONCLUSION
A two-day workshop was hosted on 9-10 May 2017 in Bali by the Government of Indonesia to share experiences and raise understanding on lessons learned and good practices in relation to building tourism business resilience in the aftermath of a terrorist attack. It was agreed during the discussion among APEC economies that a terrorist attack can damage the tourism industry through tarnishing a tourist destination’s image of safety, lowering the number of visitors and revenues, threatening tourism sustainability and endangering long-term economic viability, which are not in accordance with APEC’s vision of stable, integrated and prosperous community in the Asia Pacific.

Although efforts have been made to build resilience, APEC member economies are still facing challenges posed by the evolving threat of terrorism. As a result, economies agree that there is a need to have a crisis management plan in place. It was also reiterated that further cooperation among local communities and tourism sector businesses as well as intelligence and law enforcement agencies is needed in order to prevent terrorist attacks taking place in tourist destinations.

OUTCOMES
Based on the presentations and issues arising from the discussion, participants observed that there are several common challenges faced by APEC member economies in building tourism-industry’s resilience against terrorist attacks, namely:

a. Difficulty to maintain clear and close coordination and communication during the immediate aftermath of a terrorist attack;
b. Guidance developed on managing crisis in the case of terrorist attack is not known or readily available to tourism businesses;
c. Insufficient crisis management information tailor-made specifically for the tourism industry;
d. A need for more strategic post-attack communications strategies that include moving from post-crisis communications to appropriate marketing in the wake of a terrorist attack.

From the workshop and by taking into account the 2011 APEC Consolidated Counter-Terrorism and Secure Trade Strategy, the following are recommendations to all APEC member economies to assist with building a resilient tourism industry against the impact of terrorist attack:
1. To provide political support at local, regional and international levels in strengthening international cooperation and coordination through sharing of information among intelligence and law enforcement agencies in facing possible, during and in the aftermath of a terrorist attack;

2. To align the work of law enforcement, security and tourism agencies in APEC member economies in advocating tourism business resilience in the event of terrorist attacks;

3. To encourage collaboration between APEC and other regional and international organizations on issues related to tourism business resilience;

Specific recommendation in the anticipation of terrorist attack:

4. To establish inclusive crisis management planning into economies’ overall tourism business, including planning, marketing, management and communication strategies, which involve all stakeholders, such as government, business community, media and civil society;

5. To work with professional travel associations to review, build on, and disseminate guidance already developed to manage crisis in the tourism sector (e.g. PATA and APEC’s 2006 tourism risk management guide). Such guidance should be a tangible, accessible reference that includes operational details of managing tourism crisis, and good practices on effective communication, including press release and press conference, as well as steps on how to initiate a crisis management task force and to maintain good relations with media to ensure balance and accuracy of coverage during the crisis;

6. To organize table top exercise within APEC economies involving all the relevant stakeholders, such as policy makers, law enforcement, tourist organization, hotels and airlines; with the aim to highlight the importance of response preparedness and coordination to manage a terrorist attack and provide a framework for developing a best practice crisis management guidebook;

7. To encourage training preparedness for first responders in tourism destination areas to raise awareness and increase the preparedness of the people and business sectors for the possibility of terrorist attack;

8. To recognize that tourists, who most often lack local knowledge and are therefore particularly vulnerable to terror attacks, be a priority for protection. This could happen through the establishment of a division of police officers that is specifically trained to interact with the tourism industry and to improve the capacity of this division on tourism policing or by providing additional training to police officers who come into contact most frequently with tourists;

9. To improve the capacity of media agencies in reporting terrorist attacks in a balanced and accurate manner;
10. To encourage periodic review of transportation risks in the tourism business to inform future crisis management planning;

11. To encourage APEC member economies to disseminate travel safety advice for inbound travelers;

12. To sensitize tourism-focused business on security benefits of sustainable tourism development as outlined by UNESCO that prioritize community inclusion to lower risk of tourists being targeted;

Specific recommendation during terrorist attack:

13. To encourage a better coordination and communication between task force and media agencies in providing balance and accurate coverage of terrorist attack to prevent the proliferation of fake and misleading information;

14. To ensure that the response to terror attack demonstrates best practices for rapid response to victims, law enforcement effectiveness, community unity and resiliency;

Specific recommendation in the aftermath of terrorist attack:

15. To create strategies to facilitate tourism recovery in the aftermath of terrorist attack, including rebuilding tourism destination’s image of safety and attractiveness, reassuring potential visitors the safety of tourist destination, re-establishing destination’s attractiveness and functionality, as well as supporting local tourism industry in the time of economic recovery;

16. To identify best practices implemented by APEC member economies in the field of social media in rebuilding economy based tourism;

17. To provide proper information for travelers that are interested in visiting tourism destinations that may be vulnerable to terrorist attacks, and encourage travelers to stay responsible and vigilant;

18. To encourage economies to provide appropriate localized support to terrorist-affected communities in terms of messaging, incentives, and industry support to support the resilience of the tourism industry;

19. To intensify cooperation and collaboration among APEC member economies counter-terrorism working groups by conducting capacity building programs and trainings;

20. To encourage the establishment of local community support groups to maintain networks and to support infrastructures and economic recoveries of the tourist destination sites;

21. To encourage cooperation and collaboration between CTWG and TWG as well as Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI) in recovering tourism brand and images as well as in countering the disadvantages of electronic news and viral social media posts.

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