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Economic Community of West African States

List the:
Delegate Name
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List the topic

Topic A: Tourism

In 2012, West Africa welcomed 4.5 million tourists, which represented 14% of global arrivals. These arrivals also amassed 3.2 billion US dollars in revenue, which represented 13% of tourism revenues. This clearly shows the potential for tourism in West Africa, however at this time this potential is being masked by issues plaguing the region such as terrorism and disease, and proper protocols have not been established for ECOWAS states to fully embrace tourism. It is for this reason that The Republic of Ghana believes that a 3-step process should be implemented for ECOWAS states to be able to fully embrace tourism today. These 3 steps should be to create preventive measures against the reasons that tourism is hindered such as terrorism and disease, create an organization structure and outline to guide states on how to properly embrace tourism in their states, and lastly promotional measures to actually move tourism in West Africa forward.

First, preventing terrorism and disease is vital. During the time of the Ebola outbreak, airline passenger traffic from West Africa to the rest of the world was reduced to 60%, and since then the fear of disease is still very active. As a result, efforts need to be made in the media sphere and in healthcare that states are not only advocating the safe nature of their states in regard to disease, but because of infrastructure changes states can also truthfully say that. In regard to terrorism, undercutting corruption and creating jobs is vital in assisting the poor so that the terrorist organizations are not able to recruit them. Furthermore, regional cooperation regarding a security database would greatly help each state in their fights against terrorism through the simple sharing of information and intelligence.

Next, states need to have a protocol or guidelines on how exactly they plan on conquering tourism in both the near and far future. The Republic of Ghana, for example, was able to establish their own Tourism Development Plan with the help of the World Tourism Organization and United Nations Development Plan, that has greatly helped organize the state's tourism efforts and has set up the country well for the future. Such an agenda should focus on diversification in the tourist industry, collaboration between public and private entities, and should set goals that should be checked periodically to see the progress being made in the state every 3 years, and beyond.

Lastly, states should implement policies to actively promote tourism in the short and long term outside of a development plan. The Republic of Ghana believes that using micro loans, and generally working between the public and private sectors to create public-private partnerships is something that can be very beneficial in the creation of the proper infrastructure for tourism. Furthermore, an ECOWAS Tourism Conference could be created and hosted under the ECOWAS Transport, Communication, and Tourism Technical Commission for increased media exposure and a greater understanding for the need of tourism in the ECOWAS economy.

By following these steps, The Republic of Ghana believes that success in the Tourism industry is possible for all ECOWAS states. Solving these issues is crucial, and the Republic of Ghana is excited to debate and negotiate on this issue with the rest of West Africa.

Topic B: Maritime Piracy

Since about 2010, the Gulf of Guinea has become the new hotspot for piracy in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2012 alone, there were close to 1000 recorded incidents of piracy attacks in the Gulf of Guinea. While this number has decreased since 2012, it is still imperative to address maritime piracy due to its impact on the economy of West Africa. Maritime trade in West Africa accounts for 2.7% of all global trade. The economies rely heavily on trade and protecting against piracy costed about \$800 million in 2017. The Republic of Ghana believes that the best way to fight piracy is with a three-pillar approach: sharing information and military techniques, enacting legislation prosecuting piracy at its core, and accumulating capacity to fight the threat of maritime piracy. These three pillars will provide a short-term military solution and a long-term economic solution to reduce piracy in West Africa.

First, Ghana believes that ECOWAS member states need to share information and military training techniques. Ghana proposes that ECOWAS creates an official database for its member states, as well as for other relevant actors, with information regarding pirates in West Africa. Examples of such information are the regional movement of pirates and methods of recruiting new members. This database would work with any existing databases in zones E, F, and G of the ECOWAS Integrated Maritime Strategy. ECOWAS states should also hold joint military exercises with one another and non-ECOWAS states such as China and the United States of America. These military exercises will showcase the strength of the Navies in the Gulf of Guinea, deterring any person from committing acts of piracy. Lastly, ECOWAS should hold crisis response trainings simulating pirate attacks and effective responses against them.

Secondly, ECOWAS members should implement effective legislation to prosecute piracy and eliminate the root causes of piracy. ECOWAS states need to update their definition of piracy to fit with the 21st century pirate. If a country has not done so yet, they should enact strict legislation and regulation on sentencing and prosecuting. The two root causes of piracy are economic and corruption. Different international organization such as the UN or the AU have created their own legislative measures to combat corruption, which outline clear steps a state can take. ECOWAS members need to fully implement these legislative measures. Furthermore, more governmental information should be made public for citizens of a country to keep officials accountable.

Lastly, ECOWAS needs to accumulate the appropriate capacity to fight piracy. Several member states have established secure zones near major ports, protecting them against piracy for ships to unload. If a state has not yet done so, they too should create these secure zones. Ghana believes that states should create a framework for job creation, focusing on industries where West Africa has a comparative advantage. Small loan programs should also be used to allow individuals to raise themselves out of poverty. Trade corporations importing to West Africa should take initiative and implement measures to protect their ships. For example, corporations can install non-lethal weapons on ships like nets and fences. Through these measures, ECOWAS will be able to effectively combat the short and long term causes of piracy and solve the issue once and for all.