



Centre Mondial d'Excellence des Destinations
World Centre of Excellence for Destinations
Centro Mundial de Excelencia de Destinos

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mexico City and the CED sign ground-breaking agreement

Acapulco, Mexico, April 15 2008 – In an official ceremony held during the *Tianguis Turístico de Acapulco*, Latin America's largest trade show for tourism and travel, Mr. André Vallerand, president of the CED, and Mr. Alejandro Rojas Díaz-Durán, Secretary of Tourism for Mexico City, signed a letter of intention for cooperation between the two organizations to perform the first evaluation using the System of Measurement of Excellence of Destinations (SMED) in an urban destination.

This international first for the UNWTO's World Centre of Excellence for Destinations (CED) clearly shows the Centre's commitment to sustainable development, using this innovative tool to promote the pursuit of excellence in tourist destinations around the world.

Mexico City positions itself as a destination concerned with the constant improvement of its tourism industry for the benefit of the local population. In signing this agreement, Mexico City's Ministry of Tourism demonstrates the key role the destination plays on the international tourism scene by being the first urban destination to participate in this joint effort with the UN-affiliated organization. It should be noted that the knowledge and experience obtained through the application of the SMED in Mexico City will be an example for subsequent studies that will be conducted around the world.

The SMED is a system to evaluate destinations from a holistic perspective. It takes into account the perception of all stakeholders within the destination, from promotional organizations, local authorities and private companies related, directly or indirectly, with tourism, to the population and, of course, tourists themselves. Through the application of this exhaustive analysis tool, and using the global knowledge existing within UNWTO, the SMED offers innovative solutions for destinations seeking to improve their competitiveness in an ever-growing and competitive world tourism market. It prioritizes the protection of three basic aspects of society: economic development, protection of the local culture and preservation and improvement of the environment.

About the World Centre of Excellence for Destinations (CED)

The CED is a non-profit organization dedicated to the research and creation of tools that promote the sustainable tourism development of destinations throughout the world. In fulfilling this mandate, the CED is also implementing the mission of the Destination Council and departments of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) by bringing added value and expertise to innovative policies and practices on tourist destination management. The UNWTO is the United Nations agency for tourism and is comprised of 153 member countries and some 300 affiliate members from the tourism industry. The CED

has signed partnership agreements with Canada Economic Development and Quebec's *Ministère du Tourisme* and *Ministère des Affaires Municipal and des Regions*.

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