

## Morocco Welcomes its 7 Millionth Tourist at the Airport Fès-Saïa

Morocco hosted on Wednesday at the airport Fès-Saïa, its 7 millionth tourist at a ceremony chaired by the Minister of Tourism and Crafts, Mohamed Boussaid, on the occasion of National Day of tourism.

The happy tourist, a father of a French family coming to visit the spiritual capital of the Kingdom, was honored at the ceremony, which took place in the presence of the wali of the region Fez Boulemane, Mohamed Rherrabi, the General Director of the Moroccan National Tourist Office (MNTTO), Mr. Abbas Azzouzi, the General Director of the National Office of Airports (ONDA), Mr. Abdelhanine Benallou, and the chairmen of the Urban commune of Fez, of Prefectural council and of the region.

On this occasion, Mr. Boussaid congratulated members of the French family who will stay in the city of Fez and its regions, by courtesy of the ONMT.

At a press briefing held in conjunction with the ceremony, Abbas Azzouzi, stressed that this initiative is part of the national strategy to accommodate 7 million tourists in 2007, stressing that the organization of this ceremony in Fez shows the importance of the spiritual capital as attractive destination for tourists.

He highlighted the different strategies to enhance the attractiveness of the destination of Fez, recalling the achievements of the MNTTO during the current year.

Mr. Azzouzi quoted, on this effect, the continuing launch of new cultural destinations through the establishment at the national level, of air connections point to point (those of Fez in Spain and of Ouarzazate in France and Belgium). The year 2007, he continued, has been especially prepared for the launch of new seaside resorts (Tetouan, Saidia), the declension of the approach niche products in the main markets and the revival of the tourism policy MRE and internal ,and also the strengthening of e-learning program at travel agents and the implementation of responsible tourism program.

After observing the evolution of tourism which recorded at the end of last September more than 13 pc, or 60 billion of dirhams of tourism revenue, Mr. Azzouzi said that MNTTO is working in common with various stakeholders to raise the major challenges of 2008.

Among the challenges, he said, flow in particular the promotion and marketing through the new tools of information and communication, the need to build strong brands to differentiate themselves from competition, and use services tour operators to avoid losing market share.

As with the guidelines of 2008, the GD of MNTTO noted that it will be within this framework to strengthen the communication in Marrakech to capture individual customers in France, Spain, Italy, England, Belgium and Germany, the support of the scheduling of Agadir in England, Germany, Russia and the Eastern countries, the launch of Saidia in Spain, Italy, Belgium and in France and the revival of the Fez destination in France and Germany and the one of Ouarzazate in France and Belgium.

In terms of markets, there will be further development at the level of promotion in the eastern countries, development of distribution in the United States, strengthening of the direct distribution to the Middle East, the start of marketing in Japan and China through partners and the continued implementation of responsible tourism program.

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