

World Tourism Organization Horrified By Latest Terrorist Attacks in Egypt

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The World Tourism Organization (WTO) Secretary-General Francesco Frangialli said he was 'shocked and horrified' by the terrorist attack in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh on Saturday, the worst in Egypt since 1981.

'I wish to express on behalf of the WTO our earnest compassion and ask you to transmit sincere condolences to the families of victims of Egyptians and foreigners and those injured in the attack,' said Mr. Frangialli in a letter to Egyptian Minister of Tourism Ahmed el Maghraby.

As occurred after the recent terrorist attack in Taba, WTO has offered the Minister full support in helping Egypt to surmount the negative impact of the bombings on its flourishing tourism industry.

'WTO has gained extensive experience in crisis management in the last few years, especially due to the work of our Recovery Committee, which for a long time was chaired by the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism', said Mr Frangialli.

'Despite the brutality of this attack, I have no doubts that Egyptian tourism will be capable of overcoming this shock, just as it has on other occasions in the past.' With the support of the international tourism community.

In 2004, Egypt recorded the biggest increase in international tourist arrivals in the Middle East and North Africa, by more than 2 million arrivals (+34%). They amounted to almost eight million. The country, which was only barely affected by the attacks in Sinai last October, benefited from the strength of the European currency.

'We have to try and make sure that terrorist attacks and threats do not spoil people's holiday plans, wherever they may be going, and that Egypt is not abandoned as a destination,' added Mr. Frangialli. 'As we have seen just recently, terrorist attacks can happen anywhere, even if they are not travelling abroad. People should not be discouraged from travelling.'

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