

**PETITION BY TRAVEL INDUSTRY JOURNALISTS ATTENDING THE ASEAN TOURISM FORUM 2003 ON THE NEED TO AVERT WAR IN IRAQ**

We, travel industry journalists covering the ASEAN Tourism Forum in Phnom Penh, the Kingdom of Cambodia, in January 2003, declare our opposition to conflict in Iraq.

The ASEAN travel & tourism industry has been severely affected by a number of local, regional and global catastrophes ever since the 1997 economic crisis. Many of these have been sudden, unexpected and out of the industry's control. They have had a huge impact on jobs, income and economic development.

A war in Iraq will only add to the uncertainty and instability, sending the industry into yet another downturn that it can ill afford. The regional and global travel & tourism industry needs lasting peace. As pointed out in the statement issued at this ATF 2003 by the ASEAN Tourism Association, "Further conflict will create more uncertainty by affecting oil prices, currencies, transportation systems and costs and insurance premiums. More travel advisories will also be issued."

The deep-rooted heritage and culture of Asia says very clearly that violence and bloodshed only begets more bloodshed and violence. The global and regional travel & tourism industries have suffered enough from the many months of violence since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. There is no guarantee that a conflict in Iraq will do anything to alleviate the scourge of terrorism; on the contrary, there is every possibility that it might worsen the situation.

The ASEANTA statement says: "The travel & tourism industry is referred to as an industry of peace, a contributor to and builder of international friendship and cultural understanding. In addition to the tragic loss of life that has resulted from the months of conflict, our industry has been the first to be affected, and arguably the worst affected. The impact of further conflict on human life and beyond that on jobs, income and livelihoods as well our business relationships, economies and societies will be incalculable, and take years to rebuild."

In addition to stepping up security and safety measures, ASEANTA also calls for "equally strong and forceful measures" to be directed towards averting conflict and building peace.

We wholeheartedly endorse and support this statement. For unless the root causes of terrorism and violence are addressed, and sustainable political solutions achieved, such violence will continue, regardless of what safety and security measures are applied.

In the last few days, the voices of peace have become increasingly louder and widespread. ASEANTA has become arguably the first travel & tourism industry association to join these voices of peace. We support this bold ASEANTA initiative and invite our fellow travel & tourism industry journalists regionwide and globally to follow our lead and urge our leaders to work to prevent conflict rather than mount recovery campaigns after the fact. Prevention is always better, and cheaper, than cure.

Signed, Phnom Penh, the Kingdom of Cambodia, 27 January 2003



EMIL HAGER	SCHWEIZER TOURISTIK, SWITZERLAND
Fred Gebhart	Meeting News, USA
Peter Mierzwa	Touristik Aktuell, Germany
Jekha J. Shankar	India (Freelance)
<del>Alison</del>	
Tim McIntyre	NGUYEN CONG BINH (Vietnam)
<del>John Kates</del>	TRAVEL ASIA (Singapore)
SAPUDDIN ISMAILI	Madhura Katti (India)
BILL MOULD	FREELANCE TRAVEL JOURNALIST PAKISTAN
ELANSE OH.	BBC WORLD, UK.
JENNIFER WALKER	RBC WORLD SIN
REINHARD HOHLER	TRAVEL WEEKLY, HK AMERICAN
PRILE NORTHAM	GOOD MORNING CHANG MAI, THAILAND
URS HIRT	AMERICAN DETOUR, USA
Daisy (Daisy Yin)	TRAVEL INSIDE SWITZERLAND
WIRSHNEY TAN	TTG China Taiwan
PAULINE TAN	TTG ASIA Singapore
Elena Vetrova	TTG Russia
LUKE CLARK	TRAVEL WEEKLY, SINGAPORE.
Brad Owen / USA	Travel & World Explorer
NAZIR KESHVANI	WHEELS TRAVEL, SINGAPORE
MARCO MASCIULLO	M&M MASTER MEETING CONGRESS 1994
Wu Yukuang	Travel Trend News ROC
HANS VAN LEEUWEN	BUSINESS TRAVEL BENELUX - HOLLAND.
FIM. HOLTUIS	REISREVUE - HOLLAND.
Lars Mathsson	ETURBO NEWS - Thailand
Ridwan Bieir	Adlib Productions - Singapore
CITRINOT LUC	VOYAGES D'AFFAIRES, FRANCE
G. VERONA @ New	TOURISM & WILDLIFE, N. Delhi.
DWI DWI SM	BUSINESS BACE, INDONESIA
DAREN NG	TTG ASIA.
Yang Yong	The Commercial New Cambodia
Caroline Bally TTG Asia	Singapore
Joyce Wong TTG ASIA	HONG KONG
IAN JARRETT	Jarrett
PAUL DAVIES	Paul Davies
Robert Mar Tin	Extreme Garden
Cornel Wou	Travel Weekly

Yeoh Siew Han

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Travel weekly Malaysia

She White  
 Intiaz Maslet  
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Action Asia, HK  
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