

3 December 2008

### **UNWTO Secretary General speaks at PolyU**

Mr Francesco Frangialli, Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) gave a public lecture on the prospects of the hospitality industry amidst the current global financial crisis on 26 November at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU).

Organized by the School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) of PolyU, the theme of the lecture was “Prospects of World Tourism and Opportunities for Hotel and Tourism Management students”. Professor Kaye Chon, Chair Professor and Director of SHTM, said, “It is our pleasure to have invited Mr Francesco Frangialli, a leader in the world tourism industry, to share his invaluable insights with us.”

During the lecture, Mr Frangialli said, “As the head of a world body of tourism, we are concerned about the deteriorating economic situation because it will certainly affect the tourism sector worldwide. However, we firmly believe that tourism is a sector which is highly resilient and highly anti-crisis. The need to travel, the desire to take leisure and the entitlement to have holidays are so much ingrained in the mind of people. International tourism will be affected, but our conviction is that tourism will survive and it still has a bright future ahead of it!”

Mr Frangialli also stressed one of the UNWTO’s missions was to fight against global warming and extreme poverty in the world. UNWTO thus established the ST-EP Foundation (Sustainable Tourism Elimination of Poverty) which has utilized tourism as an effective means to fight against poverty, particularly in the least developed countries. SHTM students had fruitful discussions with Mr Frangialli after the lecture.

Mr Francesco Frangialli was elected Secretary General of UNWTO in 1997 and has held the post for more than 10 years. The main achievements of Mr Frangialli during his term of tenure included the creation of a universally accepted system Tourism Satellite Accounts which assess tourism’s economic importance to national economies, and the adoption of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism to encourage responsible and sustainable tourism.

Mr Frangialli has an extensive background in public administration and served from 1986 to 1990 as Director of the Tourism Industry in the French ministry responsible for Tourism. He has a degree in economics from the Paris School of Law and Economics, studied at the National School of Administration, and is a graduate of the Paris Institute of Political Studies, where he was a lecturer from 1972 to 1989.

SHTM has a long-standing affiliation with UNWTO, a specialized agency of the United Nations and a leading international organization in the field of tourism. Since 1999, the School has been designated by UNWTO as one of its Education and

Training Network Centres around the world – the only one in Asia. The School also serves on UNWTO's Education Council Steering Committee.



Mr Francesco Frangiali, Secretary General of UNWTO, delivering the Chair Professor's Distinguished Lecture to SHTM students.



Professor Kaye Chon, Chair Professor and Director of SHTM, presenting a commemorative plaque to Mr Francesco Frangiali in appreciation of the inspiring lecture he delivered.

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