



The Mediterranean Travel Fair

Third Successful Year

London - Islamic Tourism

The Third Mediterranean Travel Fair was held at the Cairo International Conference Centre from 17-19th September, 2002, under the auspices of Dr Atef Obeid, Prime Minister of Egypt, who appointed Dr Mamdouh El-Beltagui, Minister of Tourism, to inaugurate the session, together with a number of other Egyptian and Arab ministers of tourism, from Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Yemen, Kuwait, and Slovakia.

130 participants took part in the session from 31 Arab, Islamic, European and Asian countries, 19 Arab international airlines, 3 charter airlines, 30 Egyptian travel agencies, 31 hotel administrations and tourist villages, 7 Egyptian tourism governorates working outside Egypt, 200 well-known tour operators, and 500 members of the Meridian Club.

Conference & Symposium

Many press conferences and tourism meetings were held, including press conferences for Marsa Alam Airport, and the Conrad Egypt Hotel and Beach Resort. On the 2nd day, a press conference was held on *Peace and Tourism*, in which a number of travel writers from both Mediterranean and Arab unions took part. There was also a press conference on the Millennium Hotel and Snow City, the first of its kind in Egypt.

On the last day, a press conference was held for Mr Roland Latsco, head of ASTA, about the modern development of computerisation and its impact on travel agencies and ASTA members.

A symposium was held on, "Into Egypt", and another for "World Apart" company where Mr. Blair talked about supporting tourism in the Middle East and Africa was given. The Third symposium was organized by "CIMPA". Mrs Nora Singler gave a lecture on the marketing activities of American societies and foundations, and there was also a symposium on using



The Egyptian Stand

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technology to promote incentive tourism. The number of visitors from abroad was increased by 40% from the previous year, and the attendance of the tourist press was up by a staggering 92%. Participants were up to 31 countries compared with 23 countries in 2001 and 15 countries in 2000. The participants offered precious gift items and free presents to visitors to their stands. For example, Saudi Arabia offered three free air tickets for the Hajj; Production & Media city organised free tours and trips in the city, and Snow City offered free invitations to attend its performances. The Egyptian Arab Group for Insurance (EAGINS) offered free insurance policies (for one year) to attendees of its markets. Particularly remarkable was the obvious continuing increase in the numbers of tourists to Egypt: in 1982, it was less than 1 million, at the beginning of the 2000 it was exceeding 5.5 million, with a duplication of hotels' capacity, from 18,000

rooms to 130,000. The income of tourism was around 4.3 million (11.3% of the total national income of Egypt) and one of the most important resources for attracting tourists due to its internationally renowned status as a focus of culture and civilisation, not to mention its vast history, its beautiful beaches, coasts, monumental sights, harbours, river, desert, oases, lush delta, and holy places of interest, including famous mosques and churches. Dr Beltagui also confirmed Egypt's deep interest in environmental care during his meeting with a delegation from the Ukraine. Recently Egypt celebrated International Tourism Day with the motto, *Environmental Tourism is the Key of Everlasting Development*, expressing the country's intention to do her utmost to develop tourism by avoiding the old faults, increasing efforts and improving performance in this great sector in order to reach the desired aims. ■

