Siem Reap to host UN’s world tourism conference

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Government officials and professionals from around the world will come together at the first World Conference on Tourism and Culture to be held in Siem Reap in February.

The event, co-organised by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and UNESCO, aims to bring together experts from both fields – tourism and culture – to explore joint opportunities, according to a December 17 announcement from the WTO.

“This milestone event will provide a unique opportunity for tourism and culture stakeholders from all regions to discuss how to further harness the power of tourism and culture to alleviate poverty, create jobs, protect heritage and promote international understanding, contributing to the post-2015 development agenda,” UNWTO secretary-general Taleb Rifai, said in the statement.

Running from February 4 to 6, discussion will touch on how to enhance partnerships between the two fields as well as cultural and urban preservation issues.

Thong Khon, minister of tourism, told the Post on Thursday that the two-day event would consider how cultural heritage tourism and conservation can come together to boost the tourism industry.

“This is a historic event for Cambodia. Siem Reap was selected because our Angkor Wat is a good example of a culture and tourism partnership model,” he said.

Khon said more than 800 participants from countries represented in UNWTO and UNESCO are expected to join the event.

His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni and Prime Minister Hun Sen are expected to speak at the conference, Khon said.

King Simeon II of Bulgaria, UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser and Elizabeth Becker, author and former correspondent for the New York Times, have also been confirmed.

Comments