



**SAĞLIK TURİZMİNİ GELİŞTİRME DERNEĞİ**  
ASSOCIATION OF IMPROVING HEALTH TOURISM

## **II. INTERNATIONAL HEALTH TOURISM CONGRESS FINAL DECLARATION (27 February - 02 March 2009/ANTALYA)**

II. International Health Tourism Congress started with the opening speech of **Ertuğrul GÜNAY**, T.R Minister of Culture and Tourism.

The congress was attended by;

- **Prof. Dr. Sait AÇBA**, President of Budget Plan Commission, Afyon Deputy
- **Mustafa DEMİR**, President of TBMM Ministry of Public Works, Transportation and Tourism Commission, Samsun Deputy,
- Antalya Deputies, Dr **Abdurrahman ARICI** and **Sadık BADAĞ**,
- **Alâaddin YÜKSEL**, governor of Antalya,
- İbrahim YAZAR, Publicity Deputy Director General in TR Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Ali ALBAY, Investments and Enterprises Deputy Director General
- **Kia TABATABAEE**, from General Secretariat of D-8
- Dr. İbrahim ÇETİM, provincial director of Health of Antalya
- İbrahim ACAR, provincial director of culture and tourism of Antalya, many bureaucrats, representatives of the sector, foreign senior officials from ministries, investors and insurance representatives.

Following ideas and opinions were pointed out in our congress which was attended by 285 attendants (70 of them were foreigners) from 33 different countries, (**Afghanistan, Germany, the USA, Albania, Austria, Dubai (UAE), Bosnia-Herzegovina, Algeria, Czech Republic, Indonesia, Georgia, India, Iraq, England, Iran, Spain, Qatar, TRNC, Hungary, Malasia, Egypt, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Portugal, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunus, Umman, Jordan, Yemen, Greece**):



- 1- Health tourism has been one of the most rapidly growing industries.
- 2- It includes several branches such as, medical tourism, thermal tourism, SPA and Wellness, aged-tourism, handicapped-tourism, sports tourism.
- 3- Every country and even every region or province must brand with one of these branches.
- 4- Istanbul has the capacity to be a branded city for medical tourism in Turkey and worldwide.
- 5- To pave the way for medical tourism, legal regulations must immediately be performed for permission for employing foreign doctors in Turkey.
- 6- Turkey must be a leading country among the middleeastern countries and neighbouring countries and there must be health partnerships in this region.
- 7- These congresses offer international cooperation, collaboration and shared information.
- 8- **III. International Health Tourism Congress** shall be held in İstanbul in April, 2010 with extensive number of participants and especially focusing on medical tourism.
- 9- There must be constant instructional meetings on health tourism intended for sector representatives.
- 10- For the worldwide promotion of our country's potential for health tourism, the government should allocate a certain fund and sector representatives and NGOs must be more active.
- 11- Health Tourism Development Association must take on an extensive NGO role in the field of health tourism.
- 12- For the development of health tourism, health of tourists and emergency services must inspire confidence in tourists who come here.
- 13- For the development of health tourism, international accreditation, foreign languages and promotions are essential. Professionals and auxiliary staff who will serve health tourism must be well qualified and with no foreign language problems.
- 14- Global crisis can be turned into an opportunity in terms of health tourism. For instance, there are 50.000 uninsured people in the USA, and also there are many issues not covered by the insurance policies. The ratio of paying out of pocket is rapidly increasing.
- 15- Present advance technology opportunities for health sector must be well evaluated. Turkey must have a leading position in health tourism among D-8 countries.
- 16- A unit must be formed within the body of Ministry of Health for the institutionalization of Health tourism in our country.
- 17- In terms of cooperation, standardization and promotion of agencies involved in Health Tourism, Health Tourism Association (SATBİR) must be organized.
- 18- Losses in tourism income can be compensated with health tourism.
- 19- About 3 million medical tourists can bring much more money than what today's 26 million general tourists bring (20 billion USD). Our country's share from health tourism must be over 1 billion USD/year by 2010.
- 20- Health tourism is a significant factor in improving the total global life quality and in extending the tourism to 12 months.
- 21- Today, we have around 1500 thermal resources and a total bed amount of around 1500 in Turkey. In 10 years time, total bed amount is projected to reach to 250.000.
- 22- The investors should be drawn to our country for thermal tourism, and the government should grant necessary incentives for it. It must always be in mind that the most significant investors are in the middle east.
- 23- With its climate, infrastructure and hospitality, Turkey is ready to serve western countries with an especially aged population. Turkey is very convenient for the aged-tourism.
- 24- An awareness of health tourism was awakened in Turkey with the 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> International Health Tourism Congresses. From now on, it must integrate with the rest of the world, and concrete steps must be taken and legal regulations and partnerships must be executed in the field of health tourism.
- 25- Standards, terms and plans of institutions to be serving in health tourism must be evaluated in order to avoid any future problems and necessary regulations must be set.

