



America - Georgia Business Council

&

SW Associates, LLC

Sustainable Development through Tourism

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Scott Wayne or Mamuka Tsereteli

Tel: 1-202-463-7394, SW_Associates@verizon.net or 1-202-416-1606, MamukaGT@aol.com

***The Georgian Way* -- New Tourism Strategy Forecasts**

2.5 million visitors for Georgia – More than Double 2007

Washington, DC and Tbilisi (March 22nd, 2008) – The Georgian Department of Tourism & Resorts has introduced a new tourism strategy for the country called *The Georgian Way*. Developed and presented by the Washington, DC-based America-Georgia Business Council (AGBC) and tourism consulting firm SW Associates, the strategy is forecasting an increase of 150% in international tourism arrivals, and over US\$1 billion in export earnings by 2015.

Otar Bubashvili, Chairman of the Georgian Department of Tourism and Resorts, said that “*The Georgian Way* provides the most comprehensive strategy we have ever had. Launching this strategy is a boost to Georgian tourism and will really help place us solidly on the map of international destinations. We have already begun implementing several of the recommendations.”

The Georgian Way, which was funded by the US Trade and Development Agency, sets several performance targets for tourism growth. In the strategy, the AGBC and SWA forecast 2.5 million international visitors to Georgia by 2015 – an increase of 150% over the 1 million visitors in 2007. “We see tourism as a engine for growth all across the economy,” said Mamuka Tsereteli, Executive Director of the America-Georgia Business Council. “With implementation of *The Georgian Way*,” he said, “we believe that 33,000 direct new jobs can be created in tourism and over US\$1 billion in export earnings can be generated. And an additional 60,000 jobs would be created in the sectors that supply the tourism industry, such as in furniture, construction, food and beverages, security systems and many others.”

America-Georgia Business Council and SW Associates Press Release



The Georgian Way

“Georgia has a lot to offer visitors,” said Scott Wayne, President of SW Associates (SWA). “In the strategy, we emphasized tourism that makes the most of Georgia’s cultural and natural assets, a National Geographic Geotourism type of approach that provides ideas and guidance for developing and marketing Georgian tourism.” Geotourism is tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place.”

Wayne also explained that a central part of the marketing approach recommended in the strategy is to encourage long haul and European visitors to Turkey to extend their visits into Georgia. Turkey received, for example, more than 600,000 Americans in 2007. By persuading 2.5% or 15,000 of this total to extend their visits from Turkey to Georgia, the number of Americans visiting Georgia would double.

Tourist expenditures are expected to grow 351% by 2015 based on arrivals growth of 167%. Overall expenditures per visitor will increase from €308 in 2006 to €443 EUR by 2015 – a 44% increase.

To implement *The Georgian Way*, the Strategy offers six key Objectives with extensive recommended immediate and long term strategies and actions covering attractions and experiences, marketing and promotion, destination management, workforce development, leadership and management, and financial resources and investment.

For further information, contact:

Scott Wayne, President, SW Associates – SWAssociates@verizon.net
www.sw-associates.net

Mamuka Tsereteli, Executive Director, America-Georgia Business Council –
AGBDC@aqbdc.com
www.aqbdc.com