

## **Editor's comment**

### **from *Travel Markets* Issue No. 25**

#### **Measuring the impact of terrorist attacks ...**

The escalation of violence in recent weeks – with bomb attacks in London, Turkey (Kusadasi, Istanbul and Ankara) and Egypt (Sharm-el-Sheikh) – have claimed yet more lives among people of all nationalities, races and creeds, causing millions more dollars of damage. This is neither the moment nor the medium in which to comment on the politics surrounding these tragic events – who was to blame or what the implications are for government policies and strategies.

But for the sake of the travel and tourism industry, which contributes significantly to economic growth and generates millions of jobs in the respective countries, it is important to try to assess the damage to tourism and to weigh the risks of future attacks.

#### **... and natural disasters**

It is far too early to make any kind of meaningful assessment, although many economists are attempting to do just that. But the experience of these and other countries after previous terrorist attacks – or, just as significantly, natural disasters such as floods, droughts, hurricanes and earthquakes/seaquakes – can provide useful lessons for the future.

We have therefore decided to devote this Special Issue of *Travel Markets* to measuring the impact of terrorist attacks and natural disasters on tourism, in an effort to assess the risks of such events for tourism development and investment. Among the more recent natural disasters that have affected demand for travel and tourism, the most tragic was last December's Indian Ocean seaquake and tsunami, but this has been followed by subsequent earthquakes in Indonesia, the Indian Nicobar Islands and Japan, as well as by hurricanes in the Caribbean.

This Special Issue uses as a base an article produced by Adam Sacks, Managing Director, Travel & Tourism for Philadelphia-based Global Insight – an organisation that has contributed greatly to the industry's understanding of travel and tourism's importance to national economies, and which provides a country risk assessment service for the travel and tourism industry. An extract of this article was published with Global Insight's permission in a report prepared by The Travel Business Partnership in March 2005 for ITB Berlin. Although written in late-2004, prior to the Indian Ocean seaquake and tsunami, it still contains many valid arguments and recommendations that are extremely useful to countries and different tourism industry players.

We have attempted to update some of the information included in the Global Insight article, as well as to provide additional information on more recent disasters. As always, our sources of information are clearly referenced, but we would like to pay particular tribute to the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) and, notably, its Strategic Intelligence Centre (SIC), for its regular and detailed updates on the tsunami-afflicted destinations in Asia Pacific.

Some 80% of the world's natural disasters occur in the Asia Pacific region and it is undoubtedly thanks to PATA's SIC that the impact of these disasters is

communicated in a clear and timely fashion so as to help minimise the impact on tourism and economic development in the region. After all, the show must go on.