Cuba Expects to Receive Three Million Foreign Tourists this Year

Havana, September 8 (RHC) –- Cuban Tourism Minister Manuel Marrero stressed the commitment of workers in the sector to receive three million foreign visitors before the end of 2014.

Marrero met over the weekend with youths who are taking the new university course on Tourism in the eastern province of Camaguey, where he insisted that the country has all the conditions to receive three million tourists, although a recent decrease of arrivals from some specific markets could thwart the objective, he admitted.

The minister said that the current international world crisis caused a slump in the arrival of European and Argentinean tourists to Cuba and he said that the U.S. blockade also prohibits the visits here by U.S. citizens, which represent 50 percent of the tourist market in the Caribbean.

The Cuban government official also addressed aspects to be improved in the island's tourist sector, which counts on over 61 thousand hotel rooms and he called for the enhancement of the non-state tourist sector, particularly accommodation, gastronomy, transportation and craftwork.

Cuba must increase its offer beyond sun and beach tourism with a variety that empowers local culture, historic heritage and city tours, he said and added that the new university tourist specialty aims at having skilled labor for new investment projects to be implemented particularly in the eastern city of Camaguey and the keys to the north of that territory.

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