1. The Task Force for the Protection of Children in Tourism held its twenty-sixth meeting in Berlin on 11 March 2011, in conjunction with the year’s addition of the ITB Tourism Fair. The meeting, which was attended by over 70 delegates, centred on a special session on the “Protection of Children in Tourism Planning and Development”, discussion on the restructuring and renaming of the Task Force, and a reporting session which afforded representatives of national tourism administrations, international organizations, the tourism industry and NGOs the opportunity to share information on new projects concerning the protection of children in tourism.

OPENING REMARKS

2. Dr. Dawid de Villiers, moderator of the meeting and Chairman of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics (WCTE), welcomed the participants and introduced the Secretary-General of UNWTO.

3. Dr. Taleb Rifai thanked Dr. de Villiers and began by stressing the importance of combating child exploitation. Sensible of the rapid pace at which global tourism is expanding, with 935 million people crossing international borders in 2010 alone, he noted that alongside its immense positive ramifications, – 1 of every 12 jobs worldwide, for instance, is created by tourism – are potential negative consequences. He recalled that this understanding had spurred the formulation of the Organization’s guiding principle, the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET), in 1999. He informed the gathering that the Code had been nominated for Spain’s Prince of Asturias award as one of the achievements associated with UNWTO, and felt that such prestigious recognition was positive for the industry at large.

4. Referring to Article 2 of the GCET, which dubs the human exploitation the very “negation of tourism”, the Secretary-General expressed UNWTO’s unequivocal message that the abuse of children in any form – sexual exploitation, trafficking or child labour – cannot be tolerated anywhere in world. Global challenges, he urged, must be faced with a global collective response. He mentioned the campaign launched in 2008, “Don’t let child abuse travel”, as an example of what we have been achieved by the Task Force’s partnership with other tourism stakeholders. He lamented the fact that the world was not yet championing this slogan, and thus delivered an additional message: Let awareness travel. This, he stressed, is an achievable goal. The aspects of tourism infrastructure co-opted for illicit purposes can be reclaimed to raise awareness. He called for literature, signs, and slogans on preventing child exploitation in every seat on every aircraft, every room in every hotel, and every brochure of every tour operator. In closing, Dr. Rifai thanked UNWTO and the Task Force’s partners, including UNICEF, ILO, UN Women, the European Commission, the Council of Europe, IHRA, UFTA, IFTA, SKAL, tourism workers and unions, IUF, and UITA. He further thanked universities, media agencies, and above all NGOs which have worked with UNWTO, expressing special gratitude to ECPAT, Terre des Hommes, Save the Children, ChildWise Australia, Tourism Concern and Infantia. Dr. Rifai concluded his remarks by wishing the Task Force the very best in its future endeavours.

5. Dr. de Villiers thanked the Secretary-General and UNWTO’s personnel for their support of the Task Force. He instigated proceedings, introducing the topic of the Special Session: “The Protection of Children in Tourism Planning and Development”, and invited the first speaker to take the floor.
6. **H.E. Dr. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh**, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities of Jordan, mentioned her work on Jordan’s first national CRC report before joining the cabinet. She highlighted international and regional milestones in children’s rights, including the first high-level Arab conference on the subject in 1992. She emphasized the need for governments to protect children from violence and abuse, especially by providing a reasonable quality of life for their populations, and said that tourism stakeholders must also be part of this effort. The Minister spoke of child labour in Jordan, drawing attention to its causes and consequences. In 2007, Jordan’s Department of Statistics’ estimated that 36,000 children, concentrated in Amman, between the ages of 5 and 14, were economically active. She stated that their earnings account for nearly a quarter of household earnings, since more than half of child workers hand over their wages to their parents. The Jordanian government sought to improve child welfare via numerous projects, working in cooperation with NGOs and using local media to raise awareness. She referred to its National Plan of Action, launched in 2004, and its National Agenda, as well as initiatives underway with ILO and UNICEF, and mentioned that legislation on child labour was being formulated. She asserted the importance of awareness raising campaigns targeting tourists, the general public, families, teachers and children. The Minister also informed the gathering that a major program to stop child labour was ongoing in Petra. [Presentation of H.E. Dr. Abu Ghazaleh]

7. **ECPAT UK Training Manager Ms. Karen Sizeland** reported on how the preparations for the London 2012 Olympics and Para-Olympics are taking child protection into account. Evidence collated by law enforcement authorities, she said, indicated that the largest number of children trafficked into the UK are brought in for the purposes of sexual exploitation, followed by domestic servitude, forced labour in cannabis farms, employment in hazardous conditions in restaurants, enforced criminality (i.e. petty crime and begging), and forced marriages. She noted police reports indicating that there will be a surge in child trafficking during the Games and mentioned other groups of children who will also need protection, including child athletes, audience members, and volunteers between the ages of 16 and 18. Referring to “local safeguarding children boards”, she spoke of her involvement in two subgroups: Training and Rapid Response. The former is a partnership involving NGOs, the Red Cross, children and families across borders working alongside local authorities and police forces. She asserted that latter presents more of a challenge in light of UK public spending cuts. The lack of empirical data unequivocally confirming figures of child exploitation at mega-events, she stressed, presented ECPAT with their biggest challenge. Maintaining the project’s momentum was problematic precisely because the lack of data prompted difficulties in securing funding. Despite commitment from public authorities, she felt that complete commitment from the tourism industry was lacking. The aspiration of the Olympics’ organizers was for London 2012 to be remembered as “a safe Games”, providing a model which other countries could use to safeguard children at future events. What was now needed, she urged, was to place exploitation at the forefront of public consciousness. [Presentation of Ms. Sizeland]

8. **Dr. de Villiers** asked that ECPAT UK and its partners record the success stories of the Olympics, so that the best ways of safeguarding children at major events could be replicated in future.

9. **Ms. Maribel Piedra**, Coordinator of GARA of Ecuador’s Ministry of Tourism, asserted that children are not just our future, but rather, our present. She stressed the primary role of the state in child protection, as the entity which guarantees the rights of children. She held that states need to be sensitive to this issue and provide funding for relevant operational plans, programmes and projects. State signatories of international conventions, she stated, must apply the content of such documents in their own territories, taking into consideration their nation’s specific reality. She also spoke of the obligation of Tourism Ministries to place child protection on their agendas and integrate the issue into tourism policy making. In her opinion, they should seek to benefit from the financial and technical resources assigned to existing programmes on child protection. She reminded the gathering that all government levels needed to work together to ensure the safety of tourism destinations, provide good quality services and guarantee respect for human rights. She stressed that verbal commitment and concrete actions must go hand in hand, since the prevention of exploitation was not possible in an environment of impunity. [Presentation of Ms. Piedra]

10. According to **Ms. Alessia Altamura**, Europe Associate of ECPAT International, the NGO holds that tourism’s growth must be planned and managed so as to avoid negative repercussions like the victimization of children. She agreed that mega-events may increase children’s exposure to exploitation, as do other situations,
such as the opening of new travel routes. Highlighting the importance of involving communities in child protection, she underscored the need to adopt a holistic approach. In her opinion, “Impact Evaluation Studies” involving communities should be conducted to gauge the social repercussions of building new resorts, etc, recalling a study carried out by Equations on the effects of tourism development in pilgrim sights in India and presented at the 25th Task Force meeting. Where development is accompanied by local action plans, Ms. Altamura reiterated the need to include components on child rights therein. She acknowledged that resources are needed to implement and monitor these plans, and strongly recommended training and capacity building. She cited the example of ECPAT’s group Renacer in Colombia, which completed its first course on tourism management at the community level in collaboration with the private sector and the University of Cartagena. Crucially, they involved the informal tourist sector – ex: bars, restaurants, etc, since child sex offenders mainly use informal channels to facilitate their crimes. She concurred with ECPAT UK on the importance of local coordination and the creation of local child protection networks, and informed the meeting that ECPAT was to fund a micro-project in Poland focused on awareness raising and community education. She concluded by emphasizing the importance of involving young people as key actors in initiatives aimed at preventing their exploitation. Finally, she stressed the importance of securing funds for child protection, since investing in children entails a “double investment” in both the present and the future. **Presentation of Ms. Altamura**

11. **Ms. Nohora Vargas Castro**, Director General of Colombia’s Instituto Distrital de Turismo de Bogota, spoke of the District Institute of Tourism of Bogota’s (IDT) role in promoting tourism while managing the development of Bogota. She cited ECPAT Colombia’s data identifying 35,000 child victims of sexual exploitation, acknowledging that this is an estimate, since the crime’s illegal and covert nature obscures its real scale. She indicated that Bogota’s public institutions are organizing themselves to approach the problem in a comprehensive way. In 2008, an official commitment was signed between tourism service providers to combat child sexual exploitation in Bogota. IDT is involved in awareness raising, as well as in motivating businesses to develop corporate social responsibility practices and apply the principles of the GCET. To this end they distributed 1000 copies of the Code in 2009 alone. Their fight against child exploitation is oriented under the broader framework of sustainability, with prevention associated with positioning Bogota as a sustainable tourism destination and attracting socially responsible tourists. The Tourism Master Plan initiated two years ago, she said, was used as a tool to plan development and curb illegal activity. She also asserted that IDT has incorporated the concept of tourism ethics, and the prevention of child exploitation, in its two main fields of action: marketing and destination management. **Presentation of Ms. Vargas Castro**

**RESTRUCTURING OF THE TASK FORCE**

12. **Dr. Dawid de Villiers** thanked the panellists for broadening the understanding of the audience. Before the commencement of the **Reporting Session**, he referred to a discussion initiated in November 2009 in London, concerning the possibility of changing the Task Force’s name. He recalled that the Executive Committee (ExCom) discussed the issue during their 2010 meeting, questioning whether the title “Task Force” truly reflected the nature of the body.

13. **Dr. de Villiers** proposed the following:
   a. **World Tourism Network on Child Protection**, he suggested, would be a more appropriate name for the Task Force, since the body was truly a “network”, and since the acknowledgement of this fact would open up possibilities to work with new partners.
   b. In order to give some profile to its participants, Dr. de Villiers introduced the idea of the network having “members”. He stressed that it would remain an open forum, but indicated that some form of membership would foster a sense of belonging.
   c. He confirmed that, as in the last two years, only one meeting would be held annually in Berlin, due to financial costs.
   d. Dr. de Villiers stressed that this did not mean that members and others couldn’t communicate with one another during the rest of the year. For this reason, he said, the Executive Committee had decided it best to set up an online forum. He mentioned that Mr. Jürgen Thomas Steinmetz of eTurbo News and a Member of the ExCom was willing to aid this initiative, as well as the creation of a web portal. Dr. de Villiers acknowledged that it was a question of time and money but noted the importance of such an undertaking.
14. The Ex Comm’s proposals presented by Dr. de Villiers were accepted by those present.

15. Dr. de Villiers announced the Executive Committee’s decision that the subject for next year’s meeting would be Child Protection and the Cruise Industry. He related concern that, just as cruise ship passengers disembarking in harbours may procure the services of prostitutes, some may be involved in the exploitation of children. The meeting would focus on child protection measures currently in place in this sector, challenges encountered and recommendations for future action.

REPORTING SESSION

16. Ms. Rosa Martha Brown, Founder and President of Fundación Infantia Mexico, began by acknowledging the support of IAFET and UNWTO, especially mentioning Ms. Marina Diotallevi, Programme Manager of the latter’s Ethics and Social Dimensions of Tourism Programme. She explained that the Foundation, with ILO’s cooperation, had developed a manual to help train workers in the tourism industry, and reported that it was being updated with the help of ECPAT and the Body Shop. Ms. Brown elaborated on Infantia’s work with the Youth Career Initiative (YCI), entailing a 6-month training programme for vulnerable adolescents in eight 5-star hotels in Cancun and Puerto Vallarta, in fourteen areas of the hotel. According to her, the objective thereof was not to ensure that young people work in the hotel industry, but rather to give them abilities for life. This year a pilot programme was instigated with Starbucks Cafes, giving participants the option to work in a different field, and another project was underway with the Sabre Travel Network to train adolescents in skills useful for employment in the industry. With the support of the USA, a “halfway house” was also opened for YCI graduates to promote their social inclusion. Ms. Brown pointed out that, after 14 years, Fundación Infantia now had the support of Mexico’s Department of Tourism and thanked the current Secretary of Tourism for backing of their efforts. Presentation of Ms. Brown

17. Mr. Henk Mulder, Managing Director of the Millennium Foundation, asserted that the gravest risk children face today is exposure to health problems. The Millennium Foundation, founded to raise funds to combat these diseases, found its origins in a programme founded by President Chirac of France, who oversaw the implementation of a ‘health tax’, according to which anyone travelling into France would donate a small sum to fight diseases. Mr. Mulder explained that MASSIVEGOOD was a fundraising programme of the Millennium Foundation, by which micro-donations by travellers accumulated to generate sums used to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, and to improve the health of mothers and children. As a private-public partnership, many different entities are represented on the Foundation’s board: states, communities, the private sector and other institutions. The system of donations, he explained, was created by Amadeus, one of their core partners. He also highlighted the campaign against malaria, pointing out that every 45 seconds a child dies of the disease in Africa, that 247 million cases of malaria were reported globally in 2007 and that it caused nearly 1 million deaths in Africa in 2008 (constituting 20% of all childhood deaths). Presentation of Mr. Mulder

18. Mr. Francisco Empis, Media Officer of the Council of Europe spoke of its transversal Programme of “Building a Europe for and with Children”, which supports the implementation of global standards on children’s rights, as well as the mainstreaming of their rights in all the Council’s activities and policies, and those of its member States. He recounted that their strategy as of 2009-2011 places emphasizes an Action Plan to eradicate all forms of sexual violence against children through promoting relevant Council of Europe legal instruments, developing European policy guidelines for national integrated strategies, exchanging experiences on effective measures for protecting children, and raising awareness on abuse. He elaborated on the Lanzarote convention, i.e. the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, which seeks to stop abuse, protect victims, prosecute perpetrators of violence, and promote partnerships, including with young persons. He also described the “One in Five” campaign to promote the ratification and implementation of the Convention, drawing attention to awareness raising materials promoting the “Underwear Rule”. According to Mr. Empis, the “One in Five” campaign seeks to equip children, their guardians, and societies with the knowledge and tools to prevent and report sexual violence against children. Presentation of Mr. Empis

19. Mr. Thomas Mayr, of Austria’s Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth, and Ms. Julia Scherman, of the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, spoke of the tri-national campaign against the sexual exploitation of children in tourism in Austria, Germany and Switzerland. The objective thereof is effective coordination and cooperation on the issue within German-speaking countries.
Various government ministries, stakeholders in the tourism sector, and NGOs, like ECPAT, Kinderschutz, and Terre des hommes, are participating in the initiative. Instigated simultaneously by the State Secretaries of the three countries, the campaign involves high levels of media coverage, ongoing consultation on progress made, as well as on the exchange of ideas and experiences, and the significant use of web-based tools. New partners, the presenters said, were being acquired and the project was potentially open to other countries. Awareness raising initiatives include audiovisual materials, notably leaflets and a video entitled “Witness”, which is distributed and shown along the tourist supply chain (aircrafts, hotels, trade fairs, etc), as well as in other more unconventional places, ranging from doctor offices to public transport. The presenters pointed out that awareness raising materials drew attention to the emergency hotlines/e-mail addresses in place (interpol@meldestelle.at, stopp-missbrauch@bka.de, and www.stopchildsextourism.ch, in the case of Austria, Germany and Switzerland, respectively. Presentation of Mr. Mayr and Ms. Scherman

20. The presentation of Mr. Amitava Bhattacharya, Founding Director of the NGO Contact Base - banglanatak.com, focused on strategies to protect children from sex tourism and trafficking, notably via the creation of an alert society. Using Goa, India, as a case study, he shared his observation that its community was initially in denial of the issue, referring to it as a "migrant's problem", and generally perceiving any intervention against the phenomenon as "a threat to tourism". The NGO worked to sensitize multiple stakeholders using theatre based methods, thereby helping the community to comprehend the issue and seek possible means of remedying it. Stakeholders included grass-root health workers and CBOs, members of self-help groups, teachers, faith-based organizations, local legal aid cells, educational institutions, and law enforcement agencies. He noted that a Workshop undertaken with police in Goa had helped them to appreciate the issue and begin to address it. The NGO also trained college students in developing theatre shows addressing key issues and challenging the myths surrounding CST, thus enabling them to raise awareness. Although Contact Base was unfortunately unable to work directly with many tourism stakeholders and the Panchayat (locally elected three-tier government), Mr. Bhattacharya noted several positive outcomes of its 10-month long initiative. Among the most significant were the conversion of collective denial to acknowledgment (CST came to be seen not as a “migrant’s problem” but as “our problem”), the prioritization of issue by law enforcement agencies, the implementation of corrective measures by teachers, FBOs dovetailing their work regarding the protection of children, NGOs recognizing the importance of fostering dialogue to challenge entrenched attitudes and remedy problems, and the increased vigilance of grass-root health workers in terms of creating social awareness. Presentation of Mr. Bhattacharya

21. Ms. May Chaperon, Project Manager of Sustainable Development of Accor Hotels, introduced the partners of the project: the hotel operator Accor, ECPAT France, DCI, France’s international cooperation body in the area of domestic security, and OCRVP, a part of the French central police. She noted that child protection is one of the eight priorities of Accor’s sustainable development programme, and that the group has signed a Child Protection Code in 33 countries. In 2007, the experiences of the Accor division in sub-Saharan Africa prompted a global project to outline procedures for identifying cases of child sex tourism (CST). The first version of the Manual for the Implementation of Reporting Procedures was published in 2010, based on ECPAT France’s and Accor’s 2009 study of experiences in Mauritius, Ivory Coast and Senegal. Having been successfully tested in five hotels globally to extend its competence to an international scope, the final version of the Manual is now being finalized and will be deployed in all Accor hotels by the end of 2011. Its overall objectives, she stated, are to respond to the needs of tourism professionals involved in combating CST, and to promote better reporting of cases to the police and judicial services. Ms. Lucie le Bordais, of ECPAT France, outlined the content of the manual, including its advice on identifying appropriate contacts for the reporting of tourists suspected of CST, on creating procedures for reporting on verified or suspected cases, and on the appropriate ways of reacting towards the abuser and the child. Regarding their collaboration with DCI, she referred to the three-fold partnership as a step forward since DCI officers could prove useful advisors, and could liaise with their international counterparts to great effect. Presentation of Ms. Chaperon and Ms. le Bordais

22. Mr. Gabrielle Guglielmi, International Policies Coordinator of FILCAMS CGIL, Italy, explained that the EBNT Observatory was a UNWTO affiliate member made up of employer organizations and sector workers. He cited Law 269 of 1998 and the Code of Conduct developed by ECPAT Italia in 2000 as two features which have benefited Italy in terms of child protection in tourism. The Law punishes crimes of prostitution and pornography even if committed outside the country, and stipulates that clear warnings to this effect must be included in the advertisements, catalogues, brochures, and travel information of tour operators. The Code of Conduct, meanwhile, has been incorporated into the tourism sector employees since 2003. In both 2009 and
2010, he said, questionnaires were sent to tourism companies on their compliance with the obligation to inform clients on child sex tourism (CST). A significant percentage did not reply and results indicated that many do not fully comply with their legal obligations. He also that scarce information was available on tour operator websites about CST. Mr. Guglielmi explained that in 2010, the observatory enlarged its survey panel to French, German and British tour operators, and discovered similar results. Presentation of Mr. Guglielmi

23. Ms. Yoshi Noguchi. Senior Legal Officer, International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC), gave an overview of child labour in light of the report the published by the Organization last year. She mentioned that the phenomenon is declining modestly –more notably in the case of girls, perhaps due to the relative success of campaigns to promote their education. She pointed out that one quarter of child labour occurs in the service sector, and that many are involved in tourism given the sizable informal economy that surrounds the industry. Hotels and restaurants, she asserted, have the highest proportion of young workers who may be exposed to hazardous conditions. Ms. Noguchi said that ILO’s policy is to combat child labour not just by advocacy but through mobilization and action. She emphasized that the tourism sector was ideally situated to participate in accelerating these efforts and stressed the importance of social dialogue, especially between employers and workers. She also highlighted the need to mobilize children, making them aware of their rights and prompting them to influence policy makers. Combating child labour, she argued, did not necessarily mean excluding all workers under the age of 18 from tourism, but it did require that decent work be guaranteed for all the sector’s employees – whether adults or adolescents. According to Ms. Noguchi, a link exists between ending child labour and the empowerment of children and women, observing that children benefit if their mothers are empowered. She also mentioned ILO’s Global Action Plan on eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016. Presentation of Ms. Noguchi

24. Dr. De Villiers thanked the speakers and opened the floor to questions from the audience.

25. Ms. Lyndall de Marco asked Ms. Noguchi if she knew of any hotel chains employing child labour. Ms. Noguchi clarified that some hotels may employ young persons between the ages of 15 and 18, and reiterated the need to protect them from hazardous conditions.

26. Mr. Jürgen Thomas Steinmitz of eTurbo News commented that an e-mail address to alert authorities to cases of child sex tourism, mentioned in presentation of Mr. Mayr and Ms. Scherman, did not seem efficient. He suggested an emergency telephone number as an alternative. Ms. Scherman responded that there had been logistical impediments to the establishment of such a number, and that an e-mail address was a compromise solution agreed to by Austria, Germany and Switzerland.

27. Mr. John Bell asked Mr. Bhattacharya whether the police in Goa had not previously afford the issue of child exploitation in tourism a high priority and whether this caused conflicts between law enforcement and NGOs. Mr. Bhattacharya replied that the police were involved in combating the phenomenon and clarified that his presentation had meant to emphasize how important it is for civil society to bring a particular issue, such as CST, to the forefront of the police’s priorities. Mr. Bell then asked Ms. Chaperon whether Accor considered removing sex channels from the pay-per-view televisions in their hotels. Ms. Chaperon responded that Accor was considering this issue but was presently more focused on developing the Manual and training their employees.

28. Dr. de Villiers expressed his gratitude to the participants for highlighting the progress made in so many fields. In his closing remarks, he underscored the need for active involvement in eradicating child exploitation. Evil, he recalled, expands when good people do nothing. He concluded with the message that efforts to ensure a safe future for all the world’s children must never be abandoned.