



Report of the twenty-fifth meeting of the
TASK FORCE
FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN TOURISM
(ITB, Berlin, Germany, 12 March 2010)

1. The *Task Force for the Protection of Children in Tourism* held its twenty-fifth meeting in Berlin on 12 March 2010, as part of the parallel events held during ITB. The meeting, which was attended by over 90 delegates, featured **three main topics**:

1. training tools for the prevention of child exploitation in tourism,
2. the new concept and future format of international cooperation for the protection of children in tourism
3. and a general reporting session.

OPENING REMARKS

2. The Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Task Force **Dr. Dawid de Villiers** opened the Task Force meeting by welcoming participants from 25 governments, 6 intergovernmental organizations, 6 international and regional tourism organizations, 9 companies and associations from the tourism industry, 13 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), 4 media representatives and 3 other institutions.

3. Dr. de Villiers welcomed the regular members who have been actively supporting the work of the Task Force over the past decade as well as new participants, and particularly the presence of Ministers of Tourism, international and regional organizations, the private sector, and NGOs who were willing to collaborate and thus contribute to the mission of the Task Force. Dr. Dawid de Villiers gave the floor to UNWTO Secretary-General, Mr. Taleb Rifai, whose support for the cause of the protection of children in tourism and his presence at the meeting were much appreciated.

4. **Dr. Taleb Rifai** reiterated the importance of unselfish support for important causes, such as the protection of children, which was particularly important in the times of the economic downturn by which the entire world had been affected during the past 18 to 24 months. Mr. Rifai pointed to the conclusions of the last session of the Resilience Committee held at ITB that same morning, according to which the first half of 2010 was about to bring some positive changes. However, he underlined that the optimism should be taken with reserve since its effects would not be even around the globe. He reminded the audience that children and women were particularly vulnerable to the negative consequences of the crisis and that the same negative trend could still be observed in the near future.

5. The UNWTO Secretary-General informed that despite the forecasted recovery, the unemployment would still be on the rise, even as far as 2012, as well as the reduced level of social care provided by governments as a result of serious economic deficits. While expressing his fear of social tensions that might arise, Mr. Rifai stressed the potential negative consequence of having more children thrown into the labour market and subjected to all forms of abuse.

6. Dr. Rifai praised the efforts of the Task Force and its Chairman in expanding its commitment from the protection of children of sexual exploitation to the protection of children of all forms of exploitation. Despite that engagement, he admitted that the Task Force could still make a greater difference in fighting this major issue by developing more specific and practical actions; the commitment of the Task Force should go much farther beyond awareness raising. He pointed to the necessity of implementing the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism at much higher extent than it had been done in the previous ten years, not only in the field of the child protection but as a framework of the UNWTO's actions in general.

SPECIAL SESSION

USEFUL TRAINING TOOLS FOR THE PREVENTION OF CHILD EXPLOITATION IN TOURISM

7. **Ms. Yoshie Noguchi**, Senior Legal Officer, **ILO, Switzerland** explained some facts about the child protection and about the aspects of child labour and child trafficking. ILO Declaration on “Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work” declares the effective abolition of child labour as a social pillar of the global economy. She said that urgent actions had to be taken against child labour, such as determining hazardous work, as well as presenting monitoring mechanisms and programmes of action and international cooperation. All ILO members committed in 2006 to the common global goal: the elimination of all worst forms of child labour by 2016. Finally Ms. Noguchi described the forthcoming actions for the prevention of child labour. [Presentation of Ms. Noguchi](#)

8. **Mr. Giorgio Berardi**, Program Officer for Combating Child Sex Tourism from **ECPAT International**, with its Headquarters in Thailand, and **Ms. Marion Kreissl**, Project Coordinator from **ECPAT International Germany** discussed the modes of training for the prevention of child sexual tourism and the new tools aiming to achieve this objective. They informed on the project entitled “Protecting Children from Sexual Exploitation in Tourism” which had been started by the ECPAT Secretariat in 2007 and completed at the World Congress III against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. They pointed out that seven ECPAT groups around the world commented on and contributed to the draft material of that project. Mr. Berardi and Ms. Kreissl also shared information on the new ECPAT e-learning course on how to protect children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism. [Presentation of Mr. Berardi and Ms. Kreissl](#)

9. **Ms. Alice Macek**, Information Officer, **ECPAT UK** reported on child protection training in the travel industry and on a new e-learning course - Every Child Everywhere – Child Protection Training in the Travel Industry. The course aims at gaining a better understanding of the issues regarding child protection in the travel industry, recognizing possible child abuse and knowing how to take action to prevent it. Ms. Macek concluded by commenting on the ways of implementing the child protection policies and procedures. [Presentation of Ms. Macek](#)

POLICY SESSION

NEW CONCEPT AND FUTURE FORMAT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN TOURISM

10. **The Chairman** announced the beginning of the Policy Session during which a proposal on the future structure and work of the Task Force made by the Executive Committee was going to be presented. He said that after 12 years of functioning, 24 meetings and a series of significant results, the Task Force needed to connect more with the tourism industry and make more difference regarding the child protection in tourism on the ground. He questioned the denomination “task force” which he thought was not really an appropriate name since the real task was been carried out by NGO’s working with governments and different organizations. He informed that the ExCom suggested two new names: “The World Tourism Network against the Exploitation of Children in Tourism” or “The World Tourism Network on Child Protection”, with some obvious differences in wording between the two proposals.

11. While presenting the second proposal, Dr. De Villiers said that the ExCom suggested finding a way to bring closer participants and members of the Task Force so they could feel that they belong to some established structure. Some of the ideas that have been raised were signing a commitment or binding concept partners from different constituent sectors of the Task Force, without undermining the fact that it was still an open-ended network.

12. The Chairman also informed the audience that due to budgetary constraints affecting both the Task Force and the tourism sector, as well as the ever increasing audience at ITB Berlin, it had been decided at the WTM in London in 2009 that from 2010 onwards the Task Force meetings would be only organized for the occasion of ITB Berlin. He added that an innovative structure of the meetings should be pondered as well. One of the proposals was to have panellists reporting on different subjects just like at the present meeting. Mr. De Villiers welcomed any comments and additional suggestions a propos.

13. During the discussion that followed, several partners made a number of interesting suggestions with regard to the new name to be given to the Task Force, issue that appeared to be relevant and could imply in some cases that some partners are more or less willing to be part of this grouping. The suggestions included: (a) World Partnership for the protection of children in travel and tourism; (b) World Tourism Committee on the Protection of Children; (c) World Alliance for Child Protection in Tourism; and (d) World Council for Child Protection in Tourism.

14. Another proposal (from the delegate of the NTA of Bahrain) was that of appointing UNWTO Ambassadors -similar to the concept of UN Good Will Ambassadors-, and to build a network of voluntary ambassadors in every member country, so as to get the message out to the communities. From the representative from India came the idea of involving the trade associations and the travel and tourism trade associations, which would support the concept of Ambassador; especially through their membership to the PATA India Chapter, which would back an Ambassador from India.

15. A final decision on the transformation of the Task Force could not be reached in Berlin on that occasion. Only the reduction of the frequency of the meetings to one meeting a year (at ITB Berlin) and the theme (i.e. the protection of children in tourism planning and development) for the next panel session scheduled to take place in March 2011, were agreed upon. The final structure and name of the future Task Force will be announced at the next meeting.

REPORTING SESSION

GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

16. **Mr. Rakesh Mathur**, President, **Welcome Heritage**, represented the **Government of India**. He explained how a “Draft Code of Conduct” was formulated for Tourism Service Providers and the processes behind the concept. The “Code of Conduct” for the prevention and protection of people against commercial sexual exploitation in tourism was finalized and presented to the Ministry of Tourism of India in February 2010. He informed that the Code would cover hotels, travel agents, transporters, airlines and other stakeholders in the tourism sector. Finally Mr. Mathur mentioned the plans for further implementation of the Code and reported on the intentions to convert the Code into actual tourism act. [Presentation of Mr. Mathur](#)

17. **Mr. Firmansyah Rahim**, Director General of Tourism Destination Development, **Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Indonesia**, explained about the efforts done to prevent sexual exploitation of children in Indonesia. Among other things he talked about the national laws to protect children and the international conventions ratified by the Indonesia. He also mentioned the activities presented since the year 2003 to prevent the exploitation of children. These activities consist, for example, of composing and distributing of information both in electronic and printed medias and forms, launching of more than 50 workshops in 45 cities, cooperation with ECPAT Indonesia and International Organizations to hold “South East Asia Conference Against Child Sex Tourism” in Bali (2009) and composing the “Bali Commitment”. [Presentation of Mr. Rahim](#)

18. **Ms. Elizabeth Bahia**, General Coordinator, Sustainable Tourism & Childhood, **Ministry of Tourism, Brazil** presented a program for sustainable tourism and childhood which aims to prevent and fight against sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in tourism sector. These objectives are to be achieved by using the principles of sustainable development and corporate social responsibility. The actions taken to promote the goals of this program consist of organizing awareness raising seminars, communication campaigns, projects of social inclusion and training of multiplier agents. [Presentation of Ms. Bahia](#)

19. **Ms. Anita Dodds**, Child Protection Adviser, **Vietnam**, reported on recent child sexual exploitation issues linked to tourism in South East Asia. She reminded that the global economic crisis has had a minor impact on tourism figures but a significant impact on child vulnerability. Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines still have the highest rates of child sexual exploitation offences committed by tourists, she reported. Ms. Dodds also commented on the recent government initiatives to protect children in South East Asia. These include the French National Police who are working to build a greater cooperation between law enforcers in South East Asia, the UK National Police who expanded their regional child protection work also to Vietnam with the establishment of the

Vietnam CEOP Advisory Panel and, finally, the Australian government which is working towards a multi-year, multi-stakeholder program to protect children in tourism destinations in South East Asia. She concluded by providing an overview of the recent recommendations by Mekong Law Enforcers to protect children in tourism.

[Presentation of Ms. Dodds](#)

TRAVELLER'S RESPONSIBLE ATTITUDES AND TRAVEL AGENTS' SUPPORT

20. **Ms. Alice Köstler**, Advisor, **ChildSafe Network, Germany** presented a best practice model to protect children and introduced the ChildSafe Network managed by Friends-International. The network reaches every year over 500,000 children and youth in urban areas in 12 countries. Ms. Köstler also reported on the problems affecting Cambodia and how the ChildSafe Network had responded to these challenges by training over 3,000 local people in Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia and Switzerland. In addition, over two million international tourists have been reached and informed about the issues of child abuse using a variety of different media and means of communication. [Presentation of Ms. Köstler](#)

21. **Ms. Sietske Gras-Dijkstra**, **NHTV Breda University of Applied Science**, the Netherlands, briefed the audience on the Dutch campaign entitled "Travellers Can Report Child Sex Tourism" which encourages Dutch citizens on holiday who suspect that other Dutch tourists are committing child sexual abuse to report this crime to the police and the judicial authorities back in the Netherlands. She added that the campaign had been launched in January 2010 by the Dutch Minister of Tourism, H.E. Mr. Hirsch Ballin, during the Holiday Fair in Utrecht.

22. **Mr. Michael Gebhardt**, Head of Community Management, **Counter Energy - the travel agent's community**, Germany explained the reasons for gaining travel agents' awareness and support and the best modus operandi to accomplish that. Among other measures, Mr. Gebhardt recommended enforcing multichannel campaign in the travel trade media and establishing a travel agents panel at UNWTO. The presentation mediated findings from Counter Energy's "Protect the Children in Tourism" work group. [Presentation of Mr. Gebhardt](#)

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS' CONTRIBUTIONS

23. **Ms. Joanna Benfield**, Adviser, Office of the Special Representative for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)**, Austria, presented the OSCE's research project focused on the use of "Codes of Conduct" to combat human trafficking. Ms. Benfield stated that the "Codes of Conduct" provided an important instrument to follow the Organization's commitment to combat human trafficking, targeting both its employees and general public. She reminded the audience that it had been six years since the adoption of the OSCE "Code of Conduct", four years since the elaboration of the ILO's "Ten Principles for Business Leaders to combat Forced Labour and Trafficking", nine years since the launch of the "UN Global Compact", five years since the launch of "The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism", and finally six years since the NATO endorsed its zerotolerance policy on human trafficking. The OSCE is undertaking a project to keep up with such policies as well as to identify best practices in developing, financing and implementing "Codes of Conduct" to combat human trafficking.

24. **Mr. Yoshihisa Togo**, Vice-Chairman, **UNICEF Japan** Committee reported on the historic background of cooperation of the Japan's Travel Trade to protect children in the field of travel and tourism and their encounter with "The Code of Conduct" via the Japan Committee for UNICEF Code of Conduct" to combat against commercial sexual exploitation of the children was established on March 2005 with 62 travel and tourism enterprises (currently 95 enterprises). Mr. Togo also commented upon the consequences of the recently introduced member's fee of "The Code". As a conclusion he described the future aim to establish a solid body as Local Code Representative for the smoother landing of the issue in Japan. [Presentation of Mr. Togo](#)

OTHER PRESENTATIONS

25. **Ms. Sandy Morales-Herrera**, Adviser to the Minister of Tourism of **Ecuador** and a Regional Representative for the **Task Force for the Americas**, was not able to report during the meeting due to the

unfortunate lack of time. However her presentation on the regional Task Force for the Americas can be found on our web page. [Presentation of Ms. Morales-Herrera](#)

NEXT MEETING

26. After thanking participants for their attention and contributions to the meeting, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Task Force, **Dr. Dawid de Villiers** announced that the twenty-sixth meeting of the Task Force was scheduled to take place in a year's time, at the next ITB Berlin fair in March 2011.