



Report of the twenty-fourth meeting of the

**TASK FORCE
FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN TOURISM**

(ITB Fair, Berlin, Germany, 13 March 2009)

1. The Task Force for the Protection of Children in Tourism held its twenty-fourth meeting in Berlin on 13 March 2009, as part of the parallel events held during ITB. The meeting, which was attended by over 95 delegates, featured three main topics, namely the outcome of the Rio World Congress against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, the update on the UNWTO Protect Children Campaign 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 29 governments, 4 intergovernmental organizations, 5 international and regional tourism organizations, 15 national tourism associations and companies, 21 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), 5 media representatives and 4 other institutions.

3. The Chairman underlined the strong participation at the meeting despite the difficult financial circumstances. Dr. de Villiers welcomed the presence of regular members as well as new participants, and notably the presence of Ministers of Tourism, international and regional organizations, the private sector, and NGOs. Dr. de Villiers reminded that it had been more than a decade since the creation of the Task Force. He pointed out that during those 10 years, a strong network of cooperation had been built; a lot of information had been exchanged on progress made, on campaigns launched, and on best practices about the protection of children in tourism. He commented that this process had led experts to focus on the specifics of the problem, and the Task Force to broaden its focus to include labour exploitation and child trafficking.

4. Dr. de Villiers also announced the plan for the next ten years, starting with the decision of the Executive Committee to settle as a think tank to reconsider the whole Task Force, its composition and operations. He explained that due to financial reasons, the next meeting of the open forum would no longer take place in London, but would instead be held, in a renewed format, once a year at the ITB Berlin.

Reflections and Outcomes of the World Congress III against the Sexual Exploitation of Children.

5. **Mr. Giorgio Berardi**, Program Officer for Combating Child Sex Tourism, **ECPAT International** (Thailand), listed the implications of the Declaration of the World Congress III (Rio, 25-28 November 2008) for the tourism industry, and more specifically of those recommendations related to child sex tourism. The Rio World Congress was attended by 137 official governmental delegations and overall 3500 participants from 170 countries. It dealt with 5 major themes: new dimensions of commercial sexual exploitation of children, legal framework and enforcement, integrated inter-sectoral policies, the role of the private sector and corporate social responsibility, and strategies for international co-operation. Among the recommendations made at the Congress, the focus was placed on the wide disparity of legal frameworks existing at national and regional levels. Sexual exploitation of children should be criminalised in all countries, and institutional collaboration among agencies and between borders reinforced for better responses. He concluded by placing the emphasis on the key role the private sector was expected to play in addressing the issue. [Presentation of Mr. Berardi](#)

UNWTO International Protect the Children Campaign

6. In explaining the campaign spot production launched four months ago at the London WTM, international journalist and broadcasting experts **Nick Easen** and **John Bell** explained their intention of making the campaign as inclusive as possible. When designing the Campaign spot, it was decided to make the message implicit, and avoid being exclusive. Alluding to the topic in a negative way did not involve the public enough, as people did not recognize themselves in this kind of situations. He explained that the first 20 seconds of video spot were about travel, the central part of it being stills of children; while the last 20 seconds focused on the message, which basically drives the audience to the UNWTO website www.unwto.org/protectchildren. He explained that the video spot was very simple, and the voice-over was currently only in English. But he insisted that it could easily be dismantled and adapted to other languages. Interviews of Christine Beddoe (Director, ECPAT UK) and Mr David Jones (Director General, World Youth Student and Educational Travel Confederation-WYSE) were also shown to present reactions both from NGOs and the industry. **Campaign spot**

7. **Ms. Margherita Bozzano**, Regional Minister for Tourism, Region Liguria, Italy, presented the campaign on child sex tourism that the **Italian Ministry of Tourism** deployed in the last months. She explained that the Italian Government used all national media communications (i.e. press and TV) to draw the attention of citizens. The Government also decided to adopt tougher sanctions on child-sex perpetrators abroad. All representatives of national tourism associations adopted a certificate for Responsible Tourism, compelling them to inform the customers about the efforts taken to fight against sexual exploitation of children. She invited all governments to join this campaign. [Presentation of Ms. Bozzano and campaign spot](#)

8. **Mr Francisco Rosario**, Executive Director, **Fundação CTI Nordeste**, Brazil presented a short spot of the campaign supported by the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism. This campaign was made to increase awareness of tourists and the Brazilian society on the issue and to react by reporting exploitation of children to a hotline. He reminded that the same problem was faced by adolescents and that therefore the video included them too. **Campaign spot**

Reporting Session

9. Mr. Pedro Ortún, DG Enterprise, European Commission (Belgium), presented the current and forthcoming initiatives in the EC on children's rights. He reminded the audience that the EC had been working on this issue for almost ten years now, starting with a campaign against child the sex tourism, which it transferred to the UNWTO for coordination, while keeping its financial support until 2004. Since then, the framework had been widened to an overall children rights policy. He announced that the DAPHNE program had increased its budget to 16 million Euros a year until 2013. The European Commissioner in charge of this policy, Jacques Barrot, announced in December 2008 that he would reinforce the framework decisions in particular to facilitate children witness in the legislative procedure and to toughen penalties on Internet child pornography. He concluded by stating that any suggestion on the particular issue of responsible tourism would be welcome.

10. **Ms. Sandy Morales-Herrera**, Adviser to the **Ministry of Tourism Ecuador**, reported on the Plan of Action of the Regional Task Force for the Americas. She explained the actions and the components of the plan. The Regional Task Force works in partnership and alliance with governments, international organisations, the tourism business sector and NGOs. The planed actions consisted principally in creating awareness campaigns and organizing training workshops Its purpose was to create a regional campaign with a positive message of prevention. The focus of the last meeting was the dissemination of the Code of Ethics for Tourism. [Presentation of Ms. Morales-Herrera & Logo & Agreement](#)

11. **Ms. Anneka Farrington**, Program Officer, **Child Wise** (Australia), presented the South East Asian Plan (2009-2013) to combat child-sex tourism. She explained that ASEAN members had been working closely together on this issue. With the increase in tourist arrivals in the region of the last years, she pointed out that ASEAN had to be more vigilant in terms of possible exploitation of children. According to the 2006 ASEAN Child-Sex Tourism Review report, 52 men had been arrested in 2006 in the 10 ASEAN countries thanks to calls reported to a hotline number. She reminded that the ASEAN countries had made significant achievements in terms of campaigns launched and active cooperation with other agents. Finally, she described the ASEAN five year plan to strengthen further the sustainable responses to address sexual exploitation of children. [Presentation of Ms. Farrington](#)

12. **Ms. Rosemary Viswanath**, Chief Functionary, Equations, India, explained that **Equation** was a member of ECPAT and that it had been studying for 24 years the impact of tourism on local communities in India. 440 million of Indian children represented 19% of the world's children population. According to a study of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (2007), of a sample of around 14000 children across India, 53% were sexually abused. Regarding child abuse, she explained that India had weak laws and poor law enforcement. She also explained that most of child abuses were actually taking place in the informal tourism sector. Amongst other things, she urged the UNWTO to engage more directly with the tourism sector to address the problem where it occurs. [Presentation of Ms. Viswanath & Scott Free Equations](#)

13. **Mr. Sujit Banerjee, Secretary of Tourism India**, took the floor to comment on the presentation by Ms. Viswanath. He said that he ignored these aspects of tourism, since he had not been in the sector for long. He further stated that the efforts led by the Task Force for the Protection of Children, the Code of Conduct and the work of NGOs, would not be credible without the support of governments. He admitted that it was part of his responsibility in the Ministry of Tourism to address the issue and committed to take a lead in that direction and to do the best he could.

14. **Ms Elizabeth Bahia**, Sustainable Tourism & Childhood, **Ministry of Tourism, Brazil**, presented an innovative project which had been implemented in the city of Fortaleza. The objective of this program was to train and prepare vulnerable young adults (between 16 and 26) to occupy positions in the tourism sector. The results of this first attempt in the city of Fortaleza were successful and had therefore been expanded to other Brazilian cities. [Presentation of Ms. Bahia](#)

15. **Ms. Fausta Borsani**, Project Manager, **TheCode.org**. The Code of Conduct for the protection of children from sexual exploitation in tourism was established 10 years ago thanks to the initiative of ECPAT Sweden and Nordic tour operators. There are now about 900 signatories to the Code, which was basically a tool of corporate social responsibility. She described both the visible results of the Code project and the difficulties encountered in terms of measuring these results. She concluded by stating the targets of the program for the 2009-2011 period. [Presentation of Ms. Borsani](#)

16. **Mr. Jasper Tautz**, Manager Destination Affairs, **DRV** (German Travel Association), reported some of the lessons learnt from the experiences that DRV had gathered from two training sessions to promote the Code of Conduct to protect children from sexual exploitation in tourism. The DRV signed the Code in 2001, committing itself to train the personnel in Germany and in travel destinations. Two workshops focusing on practical issues took place so far: one in Dominican Republic and the other in Thailand. The main conclusion reached from both experiences was involvement at political level greatly facilitated the promotion of Code of Conduct. The success of these training sessions confirmed the willingness of the DRV to lead similar initiatives in other travel destinations.

17. **Mr. Yoshihisa Togo**, Vice-Chairman, **UNICEF Japan** Committee reported on commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in travel, as well as in cyberspace. With the growing danger of child pornography on the Internet, UNICEF Japan Committee released a campaign "Say no to child pornography" with the aim of reforming law and of criminalising it -where it was not already the case, as in Japan. This campaign has helped to lobby the Japanese Government to change legislation and has encouraged the private sector to take initiatives to introduce "web-safe" activities on search engines such as Yahoo, Microsoft and Google. [Presentation of Mr. Togo](#)

Next meeting

18. 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-fifth meeting of the Task Force was scheduled to take place in a year's time, at the next ITB Berlin fair in March 2010.rch 2011.