



Report of the twelfth meeting of the

TASK FORCE FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN TOURISM

(Berlin, 8 March 2003)

1. The Task Force for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Tourism held its twelfth meeting in Berlin on 8 March 2003, as part of parallel events held during the ITB. The meeting was attended by over 70 delegates.

Opening Remarks

2. The Deputy Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (WTO), **Dr. Dawid de Villiers**, opened the Task Force by welcoming participants from 23 governments, ten international organizations, ten industry associations, and 12 non-governmental organizations (NGOs). He welcomed the increase over the years of participants to the Task Force, as an indicator of the importance of its work.

3. Dr. de Villiers spoke briefly about the current situation of world tourism, especially in the light of recent fears of war and terrorist attacks. He described a picture that, although mixed, indicated positive signs in certain countries in Asia, such as some evidence of recovery shown by the industry in Bali. Medium and long-term prospects for tourism are good and tourism remains one of the driving forces for economic development in the next few decades.

4. Tourism is a major factor in poverty alleviation, notably in developing countries, and a significant contributor of job creation and foreign currency earnings. WTO has launched an initiative, called STEP (Sustainable Tourism for the Elimination of Poverty), with the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to create a statutory structure that will coordinate research in the field of poverty and provide funding for small and medium size initiatives at the grass root level to build up the tourism industry in developing countries.

5. Dr. de Villiers further informed participants that the upcoming UN General Assembly is expected to see the completion of the transformation process of the WTO into a UN specialized agency. This is a major development which -along with other developments, such as the UN implementation of the WTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, through the appointment of a World Committee now being selected in the regions- will contribute to the strengthening of the work of the Task Force.

6. Dr. de Villiers welcomed the participation in the meeting of Mr. Reinhard Klein, Head of the Tourism Unit of the European Union, who was instrumental in mobilizing a grant of one million Euros for the first phase of a project which included the implementation of a series of awareness raising actions against SECT. The project has been followed up with a grant from the EuropeAid Cooperation Office of the European Commission, whose representative, Ms. Irene Corcillo, he also welcomed.

7. Finally, the WTO Deputy Secretary-General informed participants that in its meeting of the previous day, the Executive Committee exchanged views about the need for progress on projects relating to increasing the number of airlines showing in-flight videos addressing SECT

on board their planes. Suggestions have been made, including from the representative from IATA, that greater success may be achieved if a video was produced, coordinated by the WTO Task Force, and then approaches made to airline passenger distribution services in order to convince them to air the spot. The WTO will like to follow this strategy and then explore ways for funding such an endeavour.

Election/Renewal of Tourism Industry Seat in the Executive Committee

8. Dr. De Villiers informed participants that the "Industry Seat" on the Executive Committee of the Task Force was up for re-election. The three-year term corresponding to a tourism industry representative was held so far by Ms Jacqueline de Rey, Honorary President of the United Federation of Travel Agents' Associations (UFTAA).

9. Following the call for nominations made prior to the meeting, UFTAA submitted a new nomination for its outgoing representative Ms. De Rey, nomination which was supported by the representative of IATA. In the absence of other nominations, Ms. Jacqueline de Rey was re-elected Representative of the Tourism Industry at the Executive Committee of the Task Force until ITB Berlin 2006.

Progress Report of the European Union-funded projects for 2002-2003

A. Report by the World Tourism Organization (WTO)

10. **Ms. Marina Diotallevi**, WTO/EU Project Manager and Coordinator of the Task Force, informed participants about the second grant agreement signed last year between the WTO and the EU, by which the WTO and four NGO partners committed themselves to carry out, under the International Campaign against the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Tourism (SECT), a series of interrelated projects co-funded by the EU. The projects are designed to raise and maintain awareness worldwide on this global problem, which not only affects the most vulnerable groups of the population, but can also destroy the image of a tourism destination if not properly handled. These projects focus on building capacity among the tourism sectors, both public and private, as well as among travellers, so that they are ready to react if confronted with cases of SECT.

11. Among WTO's part of the activities for the project is the organization of four regional consultations to provide appropriate platforms for discussion and interaction for national tourism administrations and other government bodies, law enforcement agencies, travel and tourism industries, NGOs, the media and other tourism stakeholders. The main objective of these consultations is to review and propose measures to tackle SECT from a regional perspective and to allow for efficient cooperation between, regional, national and local partners. Discussion topics at these regional consultations will include common government and policy strategies, legislation and law enforcement, training and education programmes for tourism professionals and for young people (aged 12-16) and best practices. The consultations will be held throughout 2003: the consultation for Europe will be held in Rome, Italy, on 3-4 April; for the Americas, in San Jose, Costa Rica, on 7-8 May (changed from previously announced date of 4-5 May); for Asia in Bali, Indonesia, on 26-27 June; and finally, for Africa in Dakar, Senegal, on 29-30 September. WTO invites and encourages all representatives from the government, the tourism industry and from NGOs who have taken specific measures to combat SECT to participate and share initiatives at these consultations.

B. Reports by Project Partners: ECPAT, FCCC, IFJ and TDH

12. On behalf of the **ECPAT Group, Ms Camelia Tepelus**, Steering Committee Secretariat of the Code of Conduct, provided an overview of the project carried out by the six ECPAT partners, from Austria (Respect), Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom, who work together with TOs in their home countries to promote the adoption of the Code of Conduct (CC) for the tourism industry. Achievements so far include the commitment by 19 large European Tour Operators (TOs) to the implementation of the Code and an agreement by 23 members to a Tour Operators Initiative for sustainable tourist development.

13. The CC refers to the implementation of six precise criteria, which are considered as having an impact on the supply chain of TO's activities, with the ultimate goal of reducing the exploitation of children at destinations. These criteria are: (a) the establishment and promotion of a corporate policy against SECT at destinations and at HQ; (b) the provision of training for staff on SECT, as part of regular service quality training for staff at HQ, at management level and at destinations; (c) the provision of information to tourists about the occurrence of SECT and what they can do to avoid its occurrence and how to report it; (d) agreements governing the relationship between TOs and suppliers (hotels, travel agents, etc) through the inclusion of clauses in contracts between them that acknowledge that both partners reject SECT and repudiate any connection or support for activities related to it on their premises; (e) accountability of TOs to implement CC with need to report back to ECPAT on an annual basis about their initiatives.

14. An International Steering Committee was set up two years ago, as a multi stakeholder committee composed of international organizations (such as the WTO, Interpol, ECPAT International), national tourism organization (from Brazil and Thailand), and a number of tourism associations. Projects have focused on actions carried out in Southeast Asia, which include the ECPAT Sweden project in Goa, India, on awareness raising activities with TOs; the Respect Austria and ECPAT Germany projects in Thailand; the ECPAT Italy project in the Dominican Republic on training local representatives of the tourism sector; the ACCOR agreement with ECPAT International; and the establishment of national versions of CC in Costa Rica and Brazil in collaboration with their tourism industries.

15. ECPAT looks forward to working with other stakeholders in order to continue the project. As SECT is a phenomenon related to different aspects of tourism, actions against SECT should be integrated into the broader context of sustainable tourism development initiatives, which take into account the social, economic, ecological and environmental impacts of tourism.

16. **Mr. Oliver Money-Kyrle**, Director of Projects, **International Federation of Journalists** (IFJ), provided an overview of the work done by his Federation -which represents national journalist organizations, associations and unions in the world- to promote professional standards of journalism. IFJ commenced involvement in children's issues about five or six years ago, initially with the development of guidelines for media on how to cover and improve the quality of the coverage of children's issues by avoiding sensational or exploitative reporting. It has developed guidelines for journalists, less to provide a strict set of rules, than to offer a framework for them to debate and discuss ethical dilemmas, such as balancing freedom of expression against the right of the child, or balancing the rights of child with public interest.

17. Initial guidelines were established in 1998 and formally adopted by IFJ members in 2001. IFJ has been involved in the first phase of European Union-funded project, through the development of a Handbook for journalists and media professionals and for NGOs. During this second phase of the project, IFJ is developing regional versions of the handbook through the

conduct of regional surveys in South and Southeast Asia and in Latin America; developing case studies, especially on child prostitution; and trying to understand the quality of media coverage by obtaining the assessment from local journalists of the current situation regarding coverage of children's issues. This part of the project is almost completed and IFJ is now focusing on the organization of meetings and journalist training workshops.

18. Workshops have already been held in Sri Lanka and Cambodia and there will be regional meetings in Thailand in June and a workshop in India, followed by two workshops in Cambodia in June. The aim of the workshops is to promote and discuss the guidelines, including dilemmas journalists face in the newsroom, to raise awareness of the campaign, and also to examine the general background to the issue, including its economic and social aspects, such as the situation of crime and corruption, that may lead to child prostitution. There is also discussion of more positive aspects of the issue of coverage, such as how to provide positive images of children, for example, by not always portraying them as victims.

19. IFJ is pleased that the campaign has led to further the development of training material and to organize spin-off events, with support from such organizations as UNESCO. IFJ has increasingly incorporated the issue into general training programmes and mainstream the question of child rights by journalists.

20. **Ms. Marcia Waldron**, WTO/EU Project Coordinator, provided an overview of project activities implemented by two non-governmental organizations, the Family and Child Care Centre (FCCC) in Greece, and Terre des Hommes (TDH) in Germany.

21. FCCC's part of the project aims to raise awareness of tourists to the problem of SECT through direct dissemination of information to tourists at selected airports. Preparatory work included discussions with authorities and staff from the National Tourism Organization in Greece, as well as with the public relations department of airport authorities; translation of campaign material received from WTO into Greek and publishing of posters and brochures for distribution. The distribution of the information material to tourists at departure and arrival points of airports in Greece and Cyprus was done in December 2002 over a two-week period. Information desks were set up initially for the month of December only. However, permission was then granted by airport authorities to display the material for an indefinite period. The airports concerned are Athens and Salonica, in Greece, and Larnaka and Pafos, in Cyprus. Negotiations with Turkish airports are still under way.

22. **TDH's** project activities intend to raise awareness among youth and young adults, an often neglected group in the battle against the sexual exploitation of children in tourism. This segment of the population is an important group and comprise a large portion of long-distance tourists who are often confronted with the problem of sexual exploitation of children. TDH produced a 30-second information spot to be shown on youth-oriented TV programs, such as MTV in Italy, Germany and Denmark, and hopefully also in Switzerland, Spain and France. The spot will be premiered at a press conference and available to the public at the end of March or in April. Ongoing media relations round out the project, which includes the existing Internet platform www.child-hood.com

23. A writing competition for young journalists in three countries (Denmark, Germany, Italy) completed the project of TDH. Competition entrants wrote about child rights and SECT. Winners received research trips to Asian countries: the German winner flew to the Philippines, the Danish winner travelled to India and the Italian winner went to Bangladesh. Summaries and publications of the respective travel reports will be published. Selection of theme for the next special session of the Task Force in London

24. **Ms. Cynthia Messer**, Executive Director and Associate Professor, **University of Minnesota** Tourism Center and Academic Advisor to the Task Force, informed participants that a vote would be held to select the theme for the next special session of the Task Force to be held in London in November during the World Travel Market 2003. The Executive Committee proposes the two following options: (a) the role of the business travellers in SECT: this category represents a segment of the travel and tourism industry that needs to be focused on; it would include not just those who travel by air, but also truck drivers and the army personnel; (b) legislation and law enforcement issues related to SECT: this would involve looking into legislation, such as extra-territoriality and local laws, involvement with industry, the role of Interpol and law enforcement issues. These aspects can be examined through case studies from destination and sending countries.

25. Task Force participants, by a show of hands, voted for second option, legislation and law enforcement.

New Communication and Training Tools

26. **Ms Sendrine Fabié**, in charge of the Tourism Desk at **ECPAT International**, stated that tourism has contributed to development, but there is still a lot of work to do to achieve a more sustainable development of tourism. Although poverty is a major factor for the commercial sexual exploitation of children, it is not the only one. It does not just occur in poor countries, but exists in developed countries as well. It is fed by both domestic and international tourism. We need to recognize, raise awareness and talk about the problem.

27. Ms. Fabié presented the new CD Rom of ECPAT International that compiles, in one format, 200 documents produced by various organizations, industry associations and governments aiming to prevent SECT. Documents can be accessed by various categories, by country, by language, etc. Those interested, can obtain a copy from ECPAT International. For copyright purposes, the organizations that produced the documents should be contacted directly in order to request their authorization for reproduction. ECPAT is creating a website, now close to completion, to make this tool more interactive. Documents can be sent in for inclusion on the website.

28. **Ms. Marina Diotallevi** provided a brief overview of the training video produced by **Ms. Chris Beddoe** of **Child Wise** Australia, with the sponsorship of the WTO. Although initially meant to complement the Child Wise Tourism Training Program, this 19-minute video can be used to accompany any training workshop or seminar on SECT. Those who are interested in obtaining a copy of the video can contact Child Wise in Australia. "Parcours civique", French civics education project on how to become a responsible traveller.

29. **Ms. Jacqueline de Rey**, Honorary President of **UFTAA** and Vice-President of the Executive Committee of the Task Force, presented a report on a civic education programme in France aimed at raising awareness of SECT among primary school children. The basis for the programme is recognition of the problem of sexual exploitation of children in tourism, with the conviction that the problem must be addressed through early civic education of children. The programme, scheduled to commence in French schools in September, will form part of a weekly course, *parcours civique*, which deals with the abuse of children generally. Implicit in this project is the idea of the need for learning about all forms of respect: respect of nature, respect of monuments, respect for others, and by extension, respect for oneself.

30. The programme will cover aspects on how to become a responsible tourist and traveller. The 8-14 age group is an ideal group for imparting such an education, since it is a category of the population which is most receptive to new ideas, and can easily get involved and act.

Today's children will travel more in the future than other generations, as travel becomes more and more accessible.

Reports by Task Force participants

31. **Ms. Rosa Marta Brown**, President of **FIASEET**, informed participants about the new campaign that has been carried out in Mexico, with the result of an increased recognition of problem of exploitation of children, child pornography and trafficking. A video information spot was presented as part of the Mexican public information campaign, which commenced in January 2002, with a second and a third phase launched in July and December 2002, respectively. The campaign is aimed at raising awareness of the existence of child prostitution and pornography by means of an emergency hotline, and encourages the reporting of incidence of sexual exploitation of children, encouraged by the slogan "open your eyes, but please do not close your mouth".

32. With the assistance of UNICEF and ILO-IPEC, there has been the development of a brochure (3 million printed), which provides information on different types of commercial exploitation of children, including SECT. These brochures were distributed to passengers travelling by bus between December 2002 and January 2003. An evaluation of the project impact was carried out through a poll conducted among the public, with the result that 96 per cent of those polled recalled the material.

32. It is estimated that approximately 16,000 children are involved in CSEC in Mexico. Poverty is a causal factor, but there are regional variations to patterns of child prostitution, such as differences between border areas and beaches. Abuse occurs through both domestic and international travellers and tourists. Continuous work to address the issue has made a difference in Mexico, as the government and society now recognize the existence of the problem of child prostitution and pornography. New positive developments have occurred, such as police manning the Internet for child pornography.

33. **Ms. Lotta Sand**, Manager of Market Research, **TUI Nordic**, presented a five-minute inflight video on responsible tourism produced by her company. The video provides information to tourists about SECT, as well as other aspects of responsible tourism, such as respect for the environment and for cultural heritage. It was designed in collaboration with the World Wild Life Federation and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

34. TUI Nordic developed this spot on the basis of an evaluation carried out on customer reactions to an earlier in-flight spot developed by Austrian Airlines. TUI Nordic produced the video in order to provide a more adequate context on SECT to its customers, ensuring that it is presented within a framework of responsible tourism development. The spot will be shown on the TUI Nordic charter airline, Britannia, which serves 60 per cent of the 1.5 million tourist packages arranged every year.

35. TUI has worked on the issue of SECT since 1998, and recently it has carried out with ECPAT Sweden a survey to measure awareness of the Swedish public on CSEC. Among the results, the survey shows that awareness of the existence of CSEC is high and has increased over the last few years. It is perceived as occurring not only in developing countries, but also in Sweden. Results also show an absence of consensus as to the age at which a child becomes an adult. Countries primarily associated with CSEC are Thailand and the Philippines, followed by Russia and Eastern Europe. Poverty is considered to be the prime cause of CSEC. The most disturbing result of the survey is the perception that a reason for the occurrence of CSEC is a more allowable climate in countries that have a tradition of accepting sex with minors. This last view indicates that customers from sending countries may be more accepting of sex with

children when abroad, and may not perceive it as as bad as when carried out with children in one's home country. Reasons for the increase of CSEC include the increase in use of the Internet and child pornography, social and cultural focus on sex, psycho-social problems and immigration.

Other Matters

36. Three existing in- flight videos -by Air France, Lufthansa and Austrian Airlines- were shown to the audience.

General Discussion and Questions

37. Throughout the meeting, Task Force participants raised a number of points:

38. **Mr. Reinhard Klein**, Head of Tourism Unit of the **European Commission**, stated that it is important to include participation in regional conferences of those who are not necessarily from the same region, especially tour operators (TOs) from sending countries, to share experiences. This is important for two reasons: firstly, to further raise awareness of TOs regarding the specific conditions in the destinations; and secondly, for those in the destinations, to be aware of where there might be limits or, in a positive sense, particular approaches to be followed that can benefit from the support of the companies from sending countries.

39. Dr. Reinhard Klein further argued in favour of the need to broaden the scope of the Task Force activities and of the actions taken in the field of tourism: the issue of the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) should be closely linked to the sexual exploitation of children in tourism (SECT). WTO should encourage collaboration with UNICEF, as well as with international NGOs, such as ECPAT International and Terre des Hommes, and propose a joint strategy over a 5-year-period to combat this global phenomenon. A joint project in these lines would be extremely efficient to protect children from exploitation worldwide.

40. **Mr. Theo Noten**, **ECPAT Netherlands** reiterated the need to invite participants from sending countries to regional consultations, and it would be informative to know if any have been invited and what positions they hold. Ms. Diotallevi responded that so far, WTO had sent out invitations to a broad spectrum of invitees, including governments, tourism industry representatives, INTERPOL agents in the different countries, NGOs. Mr. Noten requested a list of those invited from the Netherlands and Dr. de Villiers noted this request, with Ms. Diotallevi stating that the list of invitations could still be expanded and welcomed suggestions.

41. **Mr. Martin Nureku**, Chief Executive of the **Ghana Tourist Board**, requested a description of the profile of child sex abusers in order to sensitise TOs and hoteliers. Ms. Fabié from ECPAT International responded that child sex tourists have no particular profile, they come from various walks of life, and from all nationalities. A distinction must be made between situational child sex abusers who seize opportunities encountered while abroad, and paedophiles who are persons especially looking for sex with young children. Dr. De Villiers affirmed however that hotels must clearly inform visitors of the severe penalties for participating in this practice.

42. **Mr. Anis Ahmad Bajwa**, Managing Director, **Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation**, urged a focus on domestic tourism as opposed to international tourism. In the case of Pakistan there is more of child sex tourism related to domestic travellers, and thus the need to create awareness among and address domestic tourists. Unfortunately, this practice is too often accepted. Merely having laws will not adequately tackle the problem. Factors as

taboos, may prevent the reporting of incidences. What can be done to combat this type of child sex tourism? Dr. de Villiers responded that this issue needed to be addressed in partnerships with countries and with the assistance of local NGOs in order to create a climate of awareness. WTO provides guidelines, training programmes and best practices, but governments must solve the problem.

43. **Ms. Lyndall de Marco**, Executive Director, **Youth Career Initiative**, Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum, stated that as the child is the victim, we need to have a campaign that targets children, so as to create awareness among them. Her organization has done this in Thailand.

44. **Mr. Johnny Bernal Franco**, President, **National Hotel and Restaurant Association of the Dominican Republic** (ASONAHORES) said that in his country initially the problem was ignored. With help of UNICEF, a Code of Conduct -based on the CC from Italy- is being finalized and will be applied to local context. His organization has also worked with ECPAT and UNICEF on the promotion of the campaign at airports and with the media, as well as with the hotel industry. The root cause of this problem is poverty. There are sufficient laws to address this issue, but poverty appears to be the causal factor. There remains, however, the need for our government to develop the will to address the issue through the application of the laws.

45. **Ms. Bridget Katsriku**, Chief Director, **Ministry of Tourism, Ghana**, urged the need for technical assistance for her country to uncover, through a study, the extent of the problem. Dr. De Villiers stated that WTO is not a funding organization and has no funds to provide technical assistance, but other agencies, such as UNDP, could perhaps provide this assistance. Ms. Fabié said that ECPAT has affiliates in Africa that can provide technical assistance for conducting research, although no financing can be provided.

46. **Mr. Israel Tsir Cohen**, Director of Legal Services, **Ministry of Tourism, Israel**, asked for a definition of child, and Ms. Fabié responded that under the Convention of the Rights of the Child, a child is considered any person under 18 years of age.

47. **Mr. Jim Power**, Secretary General of **SKAL**, argued that poverty is a cause of this problem and as long as developed nations pour money into other areas, such as fighting terrorism, and not to alleviating poverty the problem will continue. Should not the Task Force be widened to take this into account? Dr. de Villiers affirmed that WTO promotes tourism not just for the economic benefit, but recognizes the social and environmental aspects of its development. WTO may consider stretching the resources of the Task Force to widen the scope to address poverty.

48. **Mr. Johnny Bernal Franco**, from **ASONAHORES**, stated that the World Bank, IMF and the Inter-American Development Bank have a high degree of involvement in poor countries and must devise incentive programs for countries that show a will to combat this problem. Dr. de Villiers affirmed that all governments and international organizations of this world recognize poverty. It is linked to other issues, such as health and the environment. Tourism can make a financial contribution to the alleviation of poverty, and is a major force for job creation. The private sector needs to invest in the infrastructure in order to develop it.

Next meeting

49. The thirteenth Task Force meeting will take place in London on 10 November 2003 in connection with the World Travel Market.