Report of the fifteenth meeting of the

TASK FORCE
FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN TOURISM

(London, 8 November 2004)

1. The Task Force to Protect Children from Sexual Exploitation in Tourism held its fifteenth meeting in London on 8 November 2004, as part of parallel events held during the World Travel Market (WTM 2004). The meeting, which was attended by over 70 delegates, featured a Special Session on the Role of the Travel Media in the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation of Children in Tourism (SECT).

Opening Remarks

2. The Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Task Force, WTO Deputy Secretary-General Dr. Dawid de Villiers, opened the Task Force meeting by welcoming participants from 22 governments, three intergovernmental organizations, eight international or regional industry associations, four national associations and companies, fourteenth nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and three education institutions.

3. The Chairman mentioned the two regular annual meetings of the Task Force in Berlin (ITB) and in London (WTM) to which participants are invited to review the latest developments in the fight against the sexual exploitation of children in tourism. He also reminded the support received from major role players in the tourism sector, such as governments, private sector and other organizations, in coordinating activities and sharing experiences in this field.

4. Dr. de Villiers further invited participants to attend the Seminar on "Sustainable Tourism and Childhood" scheduled to take place on 2-4 December 2004 in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil, in the framework of the First World Tourism Forum for Peace and Sustainable Development, and in conjunction with the forthcoming WTO Executive Council.

5. Moreover, he announced the upcoming vacancy of the government seat at the Executive Committee of the Task Force and encouraged interested NTAs of Member States to send in their applications for the elections which would take place at the next meeting in Berlin.

6. Finally, with regard to the selection of the theme for the next Task Force meeting in Berlin, Dr. de Villiers presented two possible options: (a) government policies, and (b) actions taken by the hotel industry to combat the sexual exploitation of children in tourism. The second topic was selected by the participants.

Special Session:
The Role of the Travel Media in the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation of Children in Tourism

7. Mr. Neal Baldwin, Deputy Editor of Travel Weekly, United Kingdom’s leading trade newspaper, reported about the magazine’s 2004 campaign to raise awareness on “child sex
tourism”. As first stage, a general background piece was run about the issue with a full page magazine-style image with just one photograph and a headline. He also pointed out how the travel industry was playing a role in changing consumer attitude to Child Sex Tourism (CST) in countries and regions such as Australia, Scandinavia and the Far East. In an effort to involve industry stakeholders, a meeting was set up with senior representatives from UK’s major travel retailers, including the four big vertically-integrated travel companies and representatives from major independent groups.

8. Travel Weekly subsequently created a CST training programme addressed to the travel industry, which was further supported by the Home Office through studies into consumer attitudes on CST. The survey results revealed that 46% of respondents knew ‘little or nothing’ about Child Sexual Tourism, and 34% said that they would be more likely to book with operator that took positive action on CST. Finally, Mr. Baldwin announced a pilot scheme to be launched in Africa in conjunction with The Travel Foundation, a UK charity running sustainable tourism projects. Presentation of Mr. Baldwin

9. Mr. Mike Jempson, Director of The PressWise Trust, presented one of the early campaigns by Mediawise consisting in looking at ways of reporting children’s issues in the media, especially in the context of Children Sexual Exploitation. He said that his organization had been working in collaboration with the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) in many training workshops in Latin America, Africa and South East Asia. The IFJ had provided, over the last 8 years, a wide range of ideas, training and discussion that helped to raise interest of member unions, by producing reports and guidelines and encouraging unions to develop their own version.

10. IFJ is trying to make journalists more sensitive to the problem and to the various campaigns carried out by UNICEF, ECPAT and WTO. Mr. Jempson explained that at local level, many stakeholders of the tourism industry -policy makers, tour operators, local journalists and hotels- are beginning to talk about how to gather information and how they could publicize what they had discovered. These little communication networks could therefore be linked across borders with other people doing similar work, thus starting to create patterns and to have an impact on both ends, where the tourists come from and where the sexual exploitation is taking place. He mentioned that the challenge for the future would be how to build real practical networks at the various ends of this activity, through the cooperation of all the people involved. In this field, journalists could provide the information that otherwise would be difficult to get out.

Reporting Session:
Second Meeting of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics

11. The WTO Deputy Secretary-General Dr. de Villiers reported on the Second Meeting of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics, held in Madrid on 4-5 October 2004. The Committee was entrusted by General Assembly to promote the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and make it a living document. He emphasized the importance of its implementation and the continuous awareness that is taking place in several countries. At its second meeting, the Committee adopted procedures for consultation and conciliation for the settlement of disputes concerning the application of the Global Code of Ethics. He further mentioned the proposal made by the Brazilian Government for the drafting of an additional Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the protection of children against sexual exploitation in tourism. Finally, Dr. de Villiers made reference to the offer made by the Italian Government to host the permanent headquarters of the World Committee in Rome, which would be discussed and probably accepted at the next meeting of the Committee.
Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism

12. **Ms. Camelia Tepelus**, Secretariat Coordinator of the Steering Committee of the **Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism**, explained the main issues of this Code that engages the tourism private sector in preventing and combating sexual exploitation of children. It is a global project implemented at national level through ECPAT Groups, with the support of several international organizations such as UNICEF, WTO and the European Commission. She mentioned the Code criteria that consist of a set of six practical measures to be taken by the private sector in the tourism industry (tour operators, travel agencies, hotels). Finally, Ms. Tepelus reported on the results of the implementation of the Code of Conduct adopted by over 54 companies in 17 countries, and about the launch of the Code in North America. **Presentation of Ms. Tepelus**

Reports on actions/measures taken by governments and organizations

13. **Mr. Gabriele Guglielmi**, National Officer of FILCAMS – Federation of Italian Workers in Trade, Hotels, Catering and Services- made a presentation at the meeting on behalf the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers’ Associations –IUF-. His colleague **Ms. Anna Quartucci**, reported about the several documents adopted by IUF to fight the sexual exploitation of children in tourism. She said that the commitment of the Federation included both origin and destination countries, and presented various actions carried out in collaboration with the Unit of Development Cooperation of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She further explained the Italian collaborative experience called EBIT (Ente Bilaterale Industria Turistica), which was formed by trade unions and tourism enterprises associations, and which included different aspects of corporate social responsibility. **Presentation of Mr. Guglielmi and Ms. Quartucci**

14. Representing the hotel industry, **Ms. Charlotte Thouvard, Accor Corporate Communications**, reported about the major actions of the ACCOR/ECPAT partnership for the protection of children from sexual exploitation in tourism. The commitment to the Code of Conduct led to training and awareness programs targeting clients and employees in Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia and other countries, as well as fund-raising events for ECPAT educational activities in Thailand. She underlined specific actions to combat this practice included by her company in its corporate policies, throughout the ACCOR brands and the countries. **Presentation of Ms. Thouvard**

15. **Ms. Susan D’Arcy**, Carlson Wagonlit Travel Global Brand Delivery Manager, gave a brief description of her company which represents the second largest business travel agency globally, with a wide presence and operation in more than 140 countries. She mentioned the several steps taken to support the ECPAT Code of Conduct, starting with building awareness among business travel employees. She referred to a recent announcement made to company employees introducing ECPAT to them with a view of increasing their commitment to the initiative. Among the awareness actions taken by CWT, Ms. D’Arcy mentioned a ticket jacket distributed worldwide in support to the Code of Conduct. The aim of this initiative was to communicate to tourism industry key players that the company had addressed the issue of the protection of children through the Code of Conduct. **Presentation of Ms. D’Arcy**

16. **Mr. Prathap Ramanujam**, Permanent Secretary of the **Ministry of Tourism of Sri Lanka**, presented a report titled “Review of progress, challenges and way forward towards Yokohama Global Commitment 2001”, which reflected his country’s actions against the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) in his country. He mentioned that due to the fact that child prostitution had assumed serious proportions, the government of Sri Lanka was
committed to reverse this trend and to protect its children from all kinds of abuse, and encouraged all sectors of society to join efforts in this cause. Mr. Ramanujam mentioned some good examples and actions and their achievements and positive impacts, such as legal reforms, National Plans of Action and law enforcement. The Sri Lanka Tourist Board had taken various steps to inform tourists entering Sri Lanka of the zero tolerance of his country to child abuse, and that every case would immediately be reported to police and dealt with according to the law. Report of Mr. Ramanujam

17. On behalf of France, Ms. Jacqueline de Rey, UFTAA Honorary Chairperson and Vice Chair of the Executive Committee of the Task Force, started congratulating the initiatives taken by Sri Lanka to tackle the problem of sexual exploitation of children in tourism (SECT), which represented a perfect example of good practices in this field. She reported about the large consultation made in France to boost and enlarge the international campaign against SECT with the participation of many stakeholders such as the Ministries of Justice, Foreign Affairs, Education, representatives of the French Police, Interpol, Europol, UFTAA, WTO, ECPAT and other institutions and NGOs involved in children’s welfare. The conclusions of this consultation, which were presented to the French Government, called for a mobilization against the problem not only by the tourism sector but by the whole French society, the strengthening of procedures to arrest abusers and a compulsory education and training for all expatriates through embassies, chambers of commerce and enterprises. Ms. De Rey also mentioned that a Watching Committee was being set up to ensure the sound follow-up of all these proposals.

18. From the NGOs point of view, Mr. Luc Ferran, Tourism Coordinator at ECPAT International, informed about measures taken by various national ECPAT groups around the world against sexual exploitation of children in tourism. In Costa Rica, an Information System was developed consisting of a database programme that allows the collection of information on victims and offenders. The objective of this project is to increase the overall efficiency of judicial process in tackling CSEC cases. Mr. Ferran further mentioned the on-going collaboration between ECPAT Germany, ECPAT Switzerland and Hotelplan, a Swiss tour operator implementing the Code of Conduct through several initiatives: after launching the Code, information was distributed to staff members and travelers, and various staff training sessions conducted. He also presented the fundraising and awareness activities jointly carried out between ECPAT and Accor hotels in Thailand, with prevention programmes being funded in the north of the country, and awareness-raising activities carried out in Bangkok (destination area). Presentation of Mr. Ferran

19. Ms. Treva Braun, Director of The Future Group, represented a Canadian-based NGO founded in 2000 dedicated to combating human trafficking and the child sex trade. She mentioned the major findings of the report “The Future of Southeast Asia: Challenges of Child Sex Slavery and Trafficking in Cambodia”. She presented the Responsible Tourism Campaign whose goals were to deter foreign paedophiles from exploiting children, to communicate existing laws prohibiting child sexual exploitation, and to encourage responsible tourists to report offenders and help enforce existing legislation. Ms. Braun also mentioned the support received by the tourism industry and the creation of the website http://www.youwillbecaught.com, where responsible tourists could report offences. Presentation of Ms. Braun

Next meeting

20. After thanking participants for their attention and contributions to the meeting, Dr. de Villiers announced that the sixteenth Task Force meeting was scheduled to take place at ITB Berlin, on 12 March 2005.