1. The Task Force to Protect Children from Sexual Exploitation in Tourism held its sixteenth meeting in Berlin on 12 March 2005, as part of parallel events held during ITB. The meeting, which was attended by almost 80 delegates, featured a Special Session on the Role of the Hospitality Industry 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 24 governments, three intergovernmental organizations, seven international or regional organizations, seven national associations and companies from the tourism industry, fifteen non-governmental organizations (NGOs), two education institutions and one from the media.

3. The Chairman mentioned the relevance of the Task Force meeting as an important point of reference at the ITB fair every year. The structure of these meetings consists of two sessions: the first part is focused on the discussion of a specific subject, and the second one contains an exchange of ideas and information through presentations from participants. He underlined the fact that the Task Force is an open meeting where no membership is required, and in which tourism stakeholders, including governments, the tourism industry and organizations dealing with the problem of child sex tourism, are represented. The role of WTO in this regard is to act as clearing house and to provide the Secretariat for the meeting.

4. With respect to the designation of the government representative in the Executive Committee of the Task Force whose position became vacant, Dr. de Villiers explained that in order to avoid an election, he agreed with the Brazilian and the Sri Lankan candidates running for the seat, that the outgoing member, Brazil, would continue on the Committee for a third term, and that Sri Lanka would be invited to sit in the Executive Committee in the capacity of Permanent Observer.

5. The Chairman requested, nevertheless, that the composition of the Executive Committee be revised in the near future, and also asked participants to put forward their suggestions concerning any changes they would propose with regard to the Committee’s functions and activities.

6. Finally, Dr. De Villiers introduced the three speakers of the Special Session on the Hospitality Industry, and gave the floor to the moderator of this session, Ms. Lyndall de Marco, Task Force Adviser on Corporate Responsibility.
SPECIAL SESSION

THE ROLE OF THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN THE PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN IN TOURISM

7. Ms. Elizabeth Carroll-Simon, Director for Industry Affairs at the International Hotel & Restaurant Association, explained the overall mission of this non-profit organization, which consists in providing a platform to form industry positions/views to take to international organizations, and to disseminate information. As a global network organization, IH&RA is the only international trade association devoted to defend and represent the interests of the hotel industry worldwide. It has two core categories of membership: (a) chains, and (b) national hotel and/or restaurant associations around the world. She mentioned that the Association was actively involved in the three dimensions of sustainable development of tourism, and that it encouraged environmental best practices and the fight against SECT. IH&RA has worked with national associations in raising awareness of the problem of SECT by producing guidelines and pamphlets in several languages. They are also supporting the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism and the Youth Career initiative, which was officially launched in Bangkok.

8. Ms. Carroll-Simon made reference to the contract language developed by Carlson, whereby suppliers and licensees may agree to: (a) provide the knowledge that SECT is a criminal offence, giving staff the proper training in order to identify possible instances of this crime and to know how to report to local police and, (b) prohibit the use of company’s materials and equipment for the viewing, storing, distributing or promoting of SECT. In this regard, she added, it is also important to establish procedures to reinforce these policies and to prohibit the use of images or concepts in marketing related to SECT. Finally, Ms. Carroll-Simon suggested that suppliers should refrain from being involved themselves, or engaging, in business with companies involved in SECT. Presentation of Ms. Carroll-Simon (IH&RA)

9. Mr. Kurt Strohmayer, General Manager, JW Marriott Bucharest, reported on the Youth Career Initiative aimed at providing a six month education program in his hotel for high school graduates from disadvantaged backgrounds. This pilot program started in August 2004 and finished in March 2005 including theoretical education and practical training within all areas of the hotel. The sessions were delivered by the hotel management team, including all supervisory levels, from department heads and executive committee members to line managers and supervisors.

10. Mr. Strohmayer mentioned that the YCI program had been incorporated in Marriott’s internal training plan, which has also integrated existing training materials on such subjects as hospitality skills and customer service excellence. The YCI students were actively engaged in several internal events organized on special occasions for their associates, such as the traditional JW Marriott Bucharest Halloween Pumpkin contest or the Christmas Kids Party. He pointed out the partnerships established with ECDL Romania (European Computer Driving License), as well as other companies that sponsored the program in Bucharest by offering their services and products. Presentation of Mr. Strohmayer (Marriott)

11. Ms. Charlotte Thouvard, Accor Corporate Communications and External Relations, reported about Accor’s Sustainable Development Policy, where the combat against child-sex tourism was under the responsibility of a member of the Management Board as part of the company’s Commitment to Sustainability. She mentioned 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 for the Travel and Tourism Industry led to establishing
an ethical policy regarding commercial sexual exploitation of children and to training the personnel in countries where the company is settled. ACCOR has also conducted several information and awareness campaigns in France and Thailand, and most recently in Brazil, which included an Ethical Charter and specific bar and restaurant displays in all Novotel, Mercure and Parthenon Hotels.

12. Moreover, the training and awareness program has targeted over 5000 staff members in 45 hotels situated in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia and other countries. It is expected that these activities would be implemented in Senegal and Romania in 2005. As part of fund-raising events, Ms. Thouvard said that they organize the Annual Accor/Ecpat Charity Walk in Bangkok. ACCOR also makes in-kind contributions providing free of charge accommodation to ECPAT staff members during General Assemblies or other major meetings. She explained that her company would extend its partnership with ECPAT by progressively signing the Code of Conduct in each country where they have already implemented some of the actions mentioned above, such as Dominican Republic, Mexico and French Guyana. Presentation of Ms. Thouvard (ACCOR)

13. Ms. Lyndall de Marco, Executive Director of the Youth Career Initiative (YCI) at the Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum, and moderator of the session, reminded that the sexual exploitation of children did not happen in isolation, and that it was a consequence of a bigger problem. She said that there still were 120 million children around the world who will never go to school, of whom 80 million were girls. Unless everybody worked together, children will continue to be put in danger. When a hotel is established in a new area, she said, it should be everybody’s responsibility that the community that surrounds that hotel is looked after. It is a holistic problem, which is about sustainable investment and sustainable development. Ms. De Marco asked government representatives not to let any hotels operate in their country unless these fulfil the conditions set out in a short document she presented, called Commitment to the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation. Government representatives attending the meeting agreed on the feasibility of this commitment and accepted to support this initiative. Commitment to the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation

THEME FOR NEXT SPECIAL SESSION

14. After closing the Special Session on the Hospitality Industry, Dr. de Villiers asked Task Force participants to select a new theme for the special session to be held at the next Task Force meeting in London (WTM, November 2005) and proposed two possible options:

(A) government policies to combat the sexual exploitation of children in tourism, and
(B) child pornography produced by tourists travelling to certain destinations.

Participants selected option A.

REPORTING SESSION

SITUATION OF CHILDREN AT RISK IN ASIAN COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY THE TSUNAMI DISASTER

15. Mr. Thamrin Bachri, Deputy Minister for Capacity Building and International Relations, Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Indonesia, reported about the actions taken by his
government for the protection of children in the aftermath of tsunami. He explained that this natural disaster affected 2 out of 33 provinces in the country, causing thousands of victims as well as an estimated damage of US$ 4.5 billion in infrastructure, lands and residence. Mr. Bachri mentioned that a Recovery Program for Children Protection was build up on three different stages: (a) Emergency Relief, to ensure the fulfillment of their basic needs; (b) Rehabilitation, to recover public service standards and to continue treatments for children, and (c) Reconstruction, to rebuild all systems of society (economical, educational, organizational, etc.). He thanked the support of ACCOR group in the publication of training manuals related to SECT, which were also translated into Indonesian and distributed in four hotel schools in the country. **Presentation of Mr. Bachri (Indonesia)**

16. **Mr. Luc Ferran**, Tourism Coordinator at ECPAT International, informed about measures taken by various national ECPAT groups in countries affected by the tsunami. He reminded the vulnerability of children in Indonesia prior to the disaster, along with the existence of trafficking of girls from rural areas and a high incidence of child prostitution. The Centre for Study and Child Protection (PKPA), which is the ECPAT group in Indonesia, drafted an Action Plan involving the development of a database to record information about child survivors, as well as their re-enrolment in education programmes and/or schools and the establishment of small community-based care centres and youth support centres. Mr. Ferran also explained the situation of Sri Lanka where child sex tourism was already a major problem prior to tsunami. He underlined the activities carried out by the NGO “Protecting Environment And Children Everywhere” (PEACE) which works with the poor in coastal communities of Colombo to fight against commercial sexual exploitation of children. They have conducted several programmes providing basic aid materials, packages of dry food and school materials. He also referred to traumatised children in close proximity to tourists as a major vulnerability in Thailand. Finally, Mr. Ferran mentioned that one of the necessary steps to deal with child sex tourism would be to promote a sustainable redevelopment of tourism which incorporates child rights. **Presentation of Mr. Ferran (ECPAT)**

17. **Ms. Stella Schuhmacher**, Programme Officer at UNICEF, presented the situation of child protection in tsunami affected areas. The major actions undertaken by UNICEF in response to the disaster were emergency immunization to prevent fatal childhood diseases, supply of clean water and provision of basic sanitation, as well as the protection and placement of unaccompanied and separated children. After these emergency relief efforts, Ms. Schuhmacher explained that they were in process of planning the rehabilitation and long term reconstruction of the countries affected. UNICEF has also provided information on psychosocial support in Thailand and the Maldives. She focused on some of the future concerns that include continued risks of child exploitation; support to single parent households; programs to address domestic violence; and training of UN staff on their own Code of Conduct. Finally, she gave a detailed report on the situation in specific countries affected by tsunami disaster and on the particular actions taken by UNICEF in the context of commercial sexual exploitation of children. **Presentation of Ms. Schuhmacher (UNICEF)**

18. **Dr. Dawid de Villiers** reported about the WTO Emergency Task Force meeting hosted by the Thai Government in Phuket on 31 January 2005, and which was attended by all the major role players in tourism industry. Although the tsunami caused damage to tourism only in a relatively small area, international arrivals immediately dropped by 80% in countries affected, as tourists’ perception of a whole area in danger still remained. The Phuket Action Plan was drafted as a result of the event, including short-term activities to be introduced focusing on marketing and communications, community relief, professional training, sustainable redevelopment and risk management. In addition, several steps were also taken in order to provide funds to small and medium-sized operators to resume their business and to encourage
people to visit the countries again. Dr. de Villiers remarked that, through the full cooperation of national governments and international organizations, this problem could become an opportunity to build a long-term recovery program following the principles of sustainability and those included in the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

19. **Dr. Prathap Ramanujam**, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism of Sri Lanka, mentioned in this regard that a Children Protection Authority had been set up in his country and that all the orphan children had been taken care of by the Social Welfare Department. Mr. Patrick MATLOU, Deputy Director General of Tourism of South Africa, said that most of the presentations of the meeting were focused on the supply side in developing countries, but a more global view of the problem was necessary to include the main issues of the demand coming from developed countries. He further remarked that the tsunami also affected some African countries, and the big challenge was to get aid to these areas while a more balanced outlook of the disaster was needed.

**REPORTS ON ACTIONS/MEOASURES TAKEN BY GOVERNMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

20. **Ms. Angela Bähr**, Project Team Leader for the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), made a brief presentation on the project she was carrying out whose objective was the implementation of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on trafficking in children, child prostitution and child pornography. The duration of the project, she said, would be from April 2004 until December 2007, and involved specific countries and regions where German cooperation is particularly active, i.e. Dominican Republic, Viet Nam, Cambodia, Kenya and Tanzania. Target groups of the project were the judiciary, the police, the health, education and tourism sector; as well as children and adolescents in partner countries, victims of sexual exploitation. Along with the supply side, the project also expected to reach the demand side through the cooperation with German NGOs and the German Ministry of Family Affairs. Ms. Bähr said that the project included some advisory services to governmental and non-governmental players in selected partner countries on the development of codes of conduct within the tourism sector. Moreover, several training and education programmes for police staff, justice departments and educational institutions were also planned. Presentation of Ms. Bähr (GTZ)

**CODE FOR THE RESPONSIBLE TOURIST AND TRAVELLER**

21. **Dr. de Villiers** made reference to the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism as a useful and comprehensive tool for tourism development, and to the activities carried out by the World Committee on Tourism Ethics related to the Code’s application and dissemination. He explained that a draft version based on the Code of Ethics, but exclusively addressed to tourist, entitled The Responsible Tourist and Traveller would be submitted to the World Committee at its next meeting to be held in Tunis, Tunisia, on 16-17 May 2005. The aim this new document was to make tourists aware of the principles stated in the Code of Ethics, in a simplified and user-friendly manner. Ms. Christine Beddoe, Director of ECPAT UK, read the text of the draft.

22. Finally, under “other matters”, Ms. Christine Beddoe made reference to a joint initiative carried out between ECPAT UK and the British Police immediately after the tsunami, which consisted in setting up an intelligence gathering focal point to work with the NGOs and the tourism industry to bring together any information on child trafficking out of the region, as well as the likelihood of British sex offenders going to the region to work as volunteers. She added that Britain had a well-organized system of registering sex offenders when they leave and enter the country.
23. Mr. Sebastian Baumeister from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) informed that his Organization has been promoting the Code of Conduct for the Travel and Tourism Industry, in Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and Montenegro in cooperation with GTZ.

**NEXT MEETING**

24. After thanking participants for their attention and contributions to the meeting, Dr. De Villiers announced that the seventeenth Task Force meeting was scheduled to take place at WTM London, on 14 November 2005.