

PRESS STATEMENT ON THE ECPAT – BODY SHOP CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN FOR SEXUAL PURPOSES

ECPAT Philippines. Manila, 20 august 2009 – On the occasion of the press launching of the Body Shop Anti Child Trafficking Campaign in partnership with ECPAT Philippines, a child rights group working to suppress the commercial sexual exploitation of children, ECPAT affirms its commitment to combat child sex trafficking and related issues such as Child Pornography, among others. ECPAT Philippines is part of a global network (consisting of more than 80 members in over 70 countries) which aims to raise awareness on:

- Child Protection and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)

To combat the trafficking of children for sexual exploitation, ECPAT Philippines implements the following programs and services:

- Policy, Legislative Advocacy and Networking
- Information and Educational Campaigns
- Children and Young People Empowerment
- Recovery and Reintegration of CSEC Survivors
- Legal Assistance to CSEC Survivors

WHY CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHILD TRAFFICKING?

“Once a child has been trafficked, the child has lost their protective environment and has fallen into the hands of those that will compromise his/her dignity, violate her rights and shatter his trust. Change is only possible when the world wakes up to the fact that trafficking and sexual exploitation of children is happening all around us, in every country of the world and that we all have a part to play to stop it. We have launched this campaign with The Body Shop because it will make a real difference, raising awareness, inspiring and mobilising those with decision-making power to effect change with due urgency.” --- Carmen Madriñán, Executive Director, ECPAT International

Human trafficking is the third largest and fastest growing criminal activity in the world (source UNFPA 2006, UNGIFT 2008) and it is estimated that approximately 1.2 million children are victims of trafficking each year (UNICEF 2007). Contrary to popular belief, human trafficking is an issue that affects every country in the world, not just developing countries. No country is immune to the problem and depending on the reason for trafficking, some countries may become a sending country for trafficked victims while others might be origin or transit countries. It is also possible for countries to be all three.

While there are numerous types of exploitation associated with human trafficking, this global campaign will focus specifically on trafficking of children and young people for sexual purposes. Children are often targeted by traffickers because they can be easily deceived, intimidated controlled, and because even when they appear to be in difficult or harmful situations adults will

often hesitate to question or intervene assuming that they are under the authority of other adults. Violations against children thus happen all around the world and although child trafficking for sexual exploitation is one of the worst types of human rights abuse, it can be prevented.

We hope that you decide to join the campaign which calls for measures that will ensure the protection of children from these crimes and which will support concrete interventions for children and young people.

WHAT WILL THIS CAMPAIGN DO?

The campaign has the following three basic goals: (a) To mobilise concrete and long-term change and action against trafficking of children for sexual exploitation; (b) to ensure that public awareness turns into a global voice that is heard by ordinary people and those with power to make the changes needed to better protect children and young people from sex trafficking; (c) and to use the contributions raised, for prevention and awareness programmes for children and young people at risk, and to bring immediate relief to children who have been affected.

The ECPAT-The Body Shop led campaign advocates for three specific goals that it asks all governments to prioritize as tangible steps towards fighting child sex trafficking and for improving services provided to child victims. These goals are: (a) To implement community-based prevention programs to stop child trafficking reaching at-risk populations; (b) to adhere to international legal standards for protecting children from trafficking and incorporated these in the national legal framework; (c) and to establish specialized government services for child victims of trafficking which are integrated by national policy or decree.

For more information on the ECPAT-Body Shop Campaign against Child Sex Trafficking, please log on to the ECPAT International site: <http://www.ecpat.net> and the Body Shop site at <http://www.bodyshop.com/stop>

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