

## Previous World Congresses and Mid-Term Review

### THE FIRST WORLD CONGRESS (FWC): STOCKHOLM 1996

In August 1996, ECPAT, in partnership with UNICEF and the NGO Group on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (NGO-CRC), organised a World Congress against CSEC in Stockholm, Sweden. Hosted by the Swedish government, the Congress was attended by more than 1,900 representatives of governments, NGOs, international and UN agencies, civil society group, children, and the media.

#### **The Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action (A4A) 1996**

A commitment to a global partnership against the commercial sexual exploitation of children, the Agenda for Action aims to highlight existing international commitments, to identify priorities for action and to assist in the implementation of relevant international instruments. It calls for action from States, all sectors of society, and national, regional, and international organizations, against the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Key action points cover coordination and cooperation; prevention; protection; recovery and reintegration; and child participation. In particular, the Declaration called for:

- National Plans of Action (NPAs) with indicators of progress, specific goals, and a timeframe for implementation, aimed at reducing the number of children vulnerable to CSEC.
- Implementation and monitoring mechanisms or focal points at

and young people, the targets and victims of CSEC, in the proceedings. In preparation for the Congress, ECPAT, in cooperation with UNICEF, and the NGO-CRC, organized six regional consultations to discuss the various aspects of CSEC.

The outcome document of the First World Congress Against CSEC, the Declaration and Agenda for Action, included specific milestones to be achieved by the year 2000 to protect children from the violation of their right to live free from all forms of commercial sexual exploitation. The Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action urges action to ensure the full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It calls for the commercial sexual exploitation of children to be outlawed; greater international cooperation; a renewed emphasis on education and awareness; and new laws aimed at prevention and the protection of victims. The delegates from the 122 governments present at the Congress adopted the Declaration and Agenda for Action and committed to working towards its implementation.

The genesis of the Stockholm Congress was a conference of governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), convened by ECPAT in Bangkok in 1994. Subsequently, the Government of Sweden agreed to support the FWC against CSEC, and to mobilise organizations to plan and facilitate the process. The Congress was groundbreaking in its approach, forming a strong partnership between Government and NGOs, bringing together disparate actors as equals in one forum, and including children

## THE SECOND WORLD CONGRESS (SWC): YOKOHAMA 2001

### The Yokohama Global Commitment 2001

- Underlines the belief in the rights of children
- Is explicitly including all forms of child sexual exploitation and abuse
- Calls for enhanced efforts to tackle the root causes that put children at risk of exploitation (including poverty, inequality, discrimination, persecution, violence, armed conflict, HIV/AIDS, dysfunctioning families and criminality);
- Recommits to the implementation of child-rights based laws and enforcement, including the ratification and implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, Supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000), the Convention on Cybercrime (2001), while noting relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998), the ILO Convention No.182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.
- Reinforces all efforts without criminalizing nor penalizing the child victims
- Reiterates the necessities of sustainable global action to build monitoring mechanisms
- Promotes a closer network among all authorities as well as the young people themselves
- Seeks to ensure adequate resource

The Second World Congress on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, hosted by the Japanese Government, took place in December 2001. Mirroring the partnership format of the FWC, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, ECPAT International, UNICEF, and the NGO-CRC were the organizing partners.

The Yokohama Congress attracted more people (3045) and government delegations (134) than the Stockholm event in 1996, resulting in, among other things, wider governmental recognition of the Stockholm A4A and the SWC outcome document - the Yokohama Global Commitment 2001.

The objectives of the SWC were to enhance political commitment to the implementation of the A4A adopted at the FWC, review progress in its implementation, share expertise and good practices, identify main problem areas and/or gaps in the fight against commercial sexual exploitation of children, and strengthen the follow-up process of the World Congress. One of the main outcomes of the Congress was the re-commitment to the Stockholm Declaration and A4A and the identification of specific targeted work to be taken up in the different regions of the world. The outcome document of the Congress, entitled the Yokohama Global Commitment (YGC), was adopted by consensus and calls on the international community to promote further their

actions towards the eradication of the child prostitution, child pornography and trafficking in children for the purpose of sexual exploitation.



In advance of the SWC, six regional consultations produced documents outlining region-specific commitments in the fight against CSEC. These along with a number of explanatory statements by certain countries and regions were annexed to the YGC.

## **INTERVENING YEARS: MID-TERM REVIEWS**

Following the Second World Congress, work continued around the world at national, regional, and international levels in the fight against the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Midterm reviews were organised for the first time in all ECPAT regions to assess progress on the Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action. With the support of ECPAT International, a series of meetings were carried out in South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East and Africa, Canada, Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the United States between September 2004 and April 2006.

These assessments demonstrated some consistent trends across regions, for example, a positive movement to amend or enact new laws to protect children from different forms of sexual exploitation. However, these developments have still not been matched by improvement in application of the law or providing care for child survivors. Recognizing that governments and other actors have many competing agendas that can draw their attention away from the more complex social problems, which require long-term engagement, resources, and support, those actively involved in the fight against CSEC have underscored the importance of maintaining government attention and action on the issue.