

CONCEPT NOTE

Adolescent Participation in the World Congress III

31st May 08



INTEGRATING AND STRENGTHENING ADOLESCENT'S PARTICIPATION IN THE WORLD CONGRESS AGAINST SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENT III

“The importance of the participation of children and young people cannot be overemphasized, with particular reference to the experiential young people who really are the experts on the issue at hand. This is therefore a giant step in the right direction for those who feel they know it better. However, there is still the need for the voices of the children and young people present here today, and of those who cannot be here physically, to be fully considered and incorporated in all agendas for action.”
Children and Young People’s Statement¹ at the 2nd World Congress, 2001

1. BACKGROUND

The purpose of this Concept Note is to illustrate the strategy for adolescent participation at the World Congress III against the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. This document builds on the experiences and the recommendations of the young delegates at the past Congresses I in Stockholm and II in Yokohama and other related or relevant processes and events. This is intended that with a clear mandate and adequate preparation processes, the adolescent participation to the Congress III can be fully maximized by enabling them to discuss and present their experiences and perspective on the Congress thematic issues, especially focusing on solutions to the issue rather than their personal experiences of abuse and exploitation.

Further, their participation to the World Congress III will provide an opportunity to focus on the mechanisms for follow-up on the recommendations and the outcomes of the Congress as well as from their own participation to this global advocacy event. Minimum Standards on consulting with children will be agreed upon to ensure safe and meaningful participation of adolescent at the World Congress III and related processes.

(i) Introduction to Adolescent and Youth Participation in Previous Congresses

The World Congress I was organized in August 1996 in Stockholm, hosted by the Government of Sweden. This attracted the world attention by bringing together for the first time leaders, governments, UN Agencies, NGOs and young people together for a global meeting on CSEC and resulted in the adoption of the Stockholm Declaration and an Agenda for Action² by 122 States committing to “review and revise, where appropriate, laws policies, programs and practices to eliminate the commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in all its forms and in accordance with the relevant international instruments, while not

¹http://www.csecworldcongress.org/PDF/en/Yokohama/Outcome_documents/Young%20People%20Final%20Appeal%20in%20Yokohama.pdf

² The Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action, 1996

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criminalising or penalising the child victim. The State Parties also committed themselves to actively involve children and adolescents in this process.

A total of 17 young delegates participated in the 1st World Congress. Despite the small number this was a significant step as for the first time young people were invited to participate in this type of global meeting together with governments, NGOs and UN Agencies. This set the precedent for others to invite children in consultations concerning them. Prior to the World Congress, national/regional workshops had been organized for the young delegates to prepare them for the “Youth Panel” which was the main event for the young people at the Congress.

At the end of the World Congress I, “Child Participation” was included in the final Congress Declaration and the Agenda for Action as a specific point of action:

“Child Participation:

- a) *Promote the participation of children, including child victims, young people, their families, peers and others who are potential helpers of children so that they are able to express their views and to take action to prevent and protect children from commercial sexual exploitation and to assist child victims to be reintegrated into society; and*
- b) *Identify or establish and support networks of children and young people as advocates of child rights, and include children, according to their evolving capacity, in developing and implementing government and other programmes concerning them.”*

The World Congress II against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children was held in Yokohama, Japan in 2001 to review developments and follow up the process to strengthen the commitments to protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse. Seven Regional Preparatory meetings were organized which not only helped to identify regional priorities actions against sexual exploitation but also resulted in 161 States (increase from 122 in the World Congress I) committing to the Stockholm Agenda for Action. It reaffirmed previous commitments on children’s participation **“greater participation by children and young people in promoting and protecting their rights, notably through young people’s networks and forums, and the involvement of young people as peer communicators and counsellors;”**.

Nearly 100 young delegates were invited to participate at the World Congress III including for the first time, participation of young survivors of CSEC in a global meeting. There were regional preparation and planning processes for children’s participation leading up to the World Congress comprising of wide ranging activities in addition to their participation at the Regional Meetings (such as “Letter Writing Campaigns”, Art Competitions/Exhibits” etc). Children’s voices came out very strongly at the World Congress II and concluded with young

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people coming up with their own Declaration and the Yokohama Youth Appeal. (See annex for children and young people's statement at Yokohama)

Mid-Term Reviews (MTRs): Between 2004 and 2005 the MTRs were organized in various regions to follow-up on the progress on the Yokohama Declaration and the Agenda for Action. Young people were invited to these MTRs as part of the delegations and significantly contributed towards the meeting deliberations and outcomes.

Since then, there have been many efforts that have led to supporting and strengthening of adolescent's participation in programmes/ projects that aim at ending sexual exploitation including their participation in the development and implementation of the NPAs on CSEC and Trafficking. Adolescent's participation gained momentum and received support in the UN Secretary General's study on Violence against Children. Adolescent participation is crucial for deliberations and outcomes of the World Congress III to motivate and further support adolescent's participation to fight sexual exploitation and institutionalize these processes at the local and national levels. Further, their participation to the World Congress III will also provide an opportunity to reflect on these accomplishments and to work towards bridging the gaps such as the establishments of the follow-up mechanisms on the recommendations and outcomes of the adolescent and youth's participation to these important global advocacy events.

(ii) World Congress III

After an unavoidable delay which resulted in almost two added years of mobilization for a host, the government of Brazil agreed to host the "World Congress III against the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescent" in November 25-28th, 2008 in Rio de Janeiro. The global organizing committee consists of the Government of Brazil, UNICEF Brazil and International, ECPAT Brazil and International, NGO Group Brazil and International, Government of Japan and Sweden as advisors (as past host governments of the World Congress).

In support of adolescent participation at the World Congress III a Commission is to be set up to support adolescent participation. The age range of the young people has been decided as 12-18 years for adolescents.

These participating adolescents will be selected through the regional processes at the regional preparatory meetings as explained below.

2 PARTICIPATION OF ADOLESCENTS AT THE WORLD CONGRESS III

'Adolescent' participation' means adolescents (12-18), thinking for themselves, expressing effectively, and interacting in a positive way with other people. It means involving boys and girls in the responses/decisions that affect their lives, the lives of their family and community and the larger society in which they live.

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Meaningful adolescent's participation is characterised by³:

- *An ethical approach and a commitment to transparency, honesty and accountability (impact on decision-making).*
- *A safe approach in which adolescent's protection rights are safeguarded.*
- *A non-discriminatory approach that ensures that all adolescents (regardless of their class, gender, disability, language, ethnicity, sexual preference, religion, economic or other status etc.) have an equal opportunity to be involved.*
- *An 'adolescent-friendly' approach which enables adolescents to contribute to the best of their abilities (adequate information, availability of venues, procedures and support that encourage rather than hinder adolescent's involvement).*
- *Commitment to support follow-up and continuity of adolescent's opportunities to strengthen their endeavours and realize their actions.*

As in the past World Congresses, adolescents will play an important role in the World Congress III. They will be provided with various opportunities to feed into WC III processes as *active participants*; some suggested processes may include:

- *Adolescent voices and recommendation will be incorporated in development of thematic papers and outcome document of the WCIII*
- *Adolescents actively engaged in regional level processes and/or thematic meetings leading to the World Congress III*
- *Adolescents actively engaged in local and national level processes leading to the World Congress III*
- *Adolescents actively engaged as active participants at the World Congress III (including a preparatory forum for the adolescents)*
- *Adolescents actively engaged in the follow up of the World Congress III at sub-national, national, regional and global level*

A key focus will be linking up with existing adolescent initiatives in each region to ensure more meaningful participation within the Congress itself as well as better possibilities of follow-up after the Congress. The aim is for greater representation and substantive participation of a core group of adolescent who are either at-risk or survivors of sexual exploitation and directly involved in advocacy work, rather than having large numbers of adolescent participating from all countries. Priority will be given to those adolescent and young people who are already actively involved in various projects and programmes against CSEC and Trafficking within their shelters, schools and wider communities. The objectives and the process for adolescent and young people's participation will be clearly defined and they will have a clear mandate to discuss and present young people's experiences and perspectives on the issues of CSEC, focusing on solutions to the issue rather than their personal experiences of abuse and exploitation. A

³Adapted from the *Workshop Report On Child Participation in the UN Study on Violence against Children, International Save the Children Alliance*

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robust Child Protection Framework will need to be put in place to promote safe and meaningful participation of children including upholding of ethical issues (such as confidentiality issues etc.) related to their participation at the regional processes and at the World Congress III.

Adolescent representatives will be selected from on-going initiatives, including the Regional Preparatory Consultations in each of their regions. Their participation at these Regional Consultations will be crucial in contributing their inputs into the Regional Issues and Priorities which will further be brought forward to the World Congress III. The Regional Consultations can also be the platform for the selection process for the few that will actually represent their regions at the World Congress III.

3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the adolescent girls and boys participation in the World Congress III and related processes:

- **To strengthen the institutionalization of meaningful adolescent participation within the participating governments, civil society and private sector partners, through the establishment of child-friendly structures and processes for their consistent and substantive participation in public policy decisions that can enhance realization of their right to protection against sexual exploitation and in analysis, planning and implementation of the Agenda for Action**
- **To provide an opportunity for adolescents to share their experiences, good practices and models of successful adolescents led interventions against sexual exploitation in their regions/globally**
- **To facilitate adolescents to contribute to the formulation of measurable targets (specific targets/goals with indicators) against sexual exploitation with government, planners, policy makers, civil society organisations, young people's organisations and networks, etc. in the WC III processes.**
- **To ensure follow-up mechanism (in terms of sharing of outcomes and implementation of the recommendations of the Regional Consultation, thematic consultation, and the World Congress III) with wider groups of policy makers, CSOs, adolescents back in their countries/regions, and to see follow-up institutionalized in relevant organizations, adolescent networks and projects**

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4. ADOLESCENT PARTICIPATION IN WORLD CONGRESS III

One of the key outcomes of the WCIII is to integrate and strengthen adolescent participation in action against sexual exploitation. During the 2nd WC in Yokohama in 2001, adolescent themselves prioritised their participation as a key factor to contribute to ending sexual exploitation in their statement (*Annex 1 or http://www.csecworldcongress.org/PDF/en/Yokohama/Outcome_documents/Young%20People%20Final%20Appeal%20in%20Yokohama.pdf*).

Following are some suggested components to strengthen adolescent participation and inclusion of adolescent's voices based on the above objectives:

4.1. PRIOR TO THE WORLD CONGRESS III

4.1.1. Research Paper on Adolescent Participation to end sexual exploitation: It is important prior to the WCIII to document some of the commitments made by the governments in implementation of the Stockholm agenda in support of adolescent participation. This is to be complemented with a compilation of adolescent's recommendation to end sexual exploitation from recent initiatives like the UN Study on Violence against Children, etc. It is crucial to show evidence of adolescent's collective actions to fight sexual exploitation. This will be useful both for the adult participants but also for adolescents to learn and inspire from each others work. (ECPAT has done considerable work on this, young people within the network/EICYAC could feed into this process Similarly, ECPAT is planning to publish a Journal on CYP against CSEC which will include contributions from young people from various regions on different aspects of their involvement against CSEC such as Research, Advocacy, Programme Intervention, Peer Support, CYP in NPA development, CYP in OPSC Reporting etc.). This will feed also into the various thematic papers being developed

4.1.2 Developing Adolescent Friendly Material,

- Adolescent friendly information material on the World Congress against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescent III (Concept note, Thematic paper for preparation for the WCIII, etc.)
- Adolescent friendly material (publication and/or video) on adolescent action to end sexual exploitation.
- Adolescent friendly report from their participation in the processes related to the WCIII
- ECPAT International Child and Youth Advisory Committee (EICYAC) Child-Friendly Version of a Congress Consultation Tool which can be linked to UNICEF's Voices of Youth website: an on-line tool (also can be used to facilitate workshops on WC III for those who do not have access to the internet) for adolescent to provide their inputs on the process of CYP participation and also on the thematic issues of the Congress

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At the same time the existing child-protection materials will be shared with the adolescents to understand their protection rights⁴

- *United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children. Adapted for Children and Young People*
- *ECPAT International Youth Partnership Project against CSEC Good Practices publication*
- *Our Right to be Protected from Violence. Activities for Learning and Taking Action for Children and Young People*
http://www.violencestudy.org/IMG/pdf/Our_Right_to_be_Protected_from_Violence-2.pdf
- *Safe you and Safe Me, Save the Children (2005)-*
www.violencestudy.org/IMG/pdf/safeyoufinal.pdf
- *Save the Children (2005): Children's Actions to End Violence Against Girls and Boys* <http://www.rb.se/NR/rdonlyres/FAAC13B4-D0E9-43FF-859F-DCD148A554D2/0/3293Actionrapportwebb.pdf>

In addition to disseminating and producing paper material, workshops and other forms of interactive preparations are needed and should be part of the process plan. The preparation should take place some time before the WCIII, and not just immediately before the congress.

4.1.3 Adolescent Participation in the Regional and Thematic Consultation,

- Encourage and support adolescent participation in the regional and thematic consultation
- Ensure that children and adolescent concerns and recommendation raised in the regional and thematic consultation are incorporated in their respective final documents which then feeds to the development of the thematic background paper and the outcome document

4.1.4 Out Reach for Adolescent Participation

- Adolescent friendly information material on the World Congress against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescent III (Concept note, Thematic paper for preparation for the WCIII, etc.)
- Ensure use of progressive technology like Voices of Youth and Wikkipedia, social networking in brining the children and adolescent concerns and recommendation are incorporated in development of the thematic background paper and the outcome document

4.2. DURING THE World Congress III

4.2.1. Adolescent Preparatory Forum for Adolescent Effective and Meaningful participation at the WCIII:

It is strongly recommended that a preparatory platform for young people need to be prepared in order for their effective participation through out the WCIII. This preparatory platform is not a parallel forum for young people instead its main

⁴ <http://www.unviolencestudy.org/>

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objective is to prepare adolescents for the WCIII. This will enable adolescent to prepare collectively for the WCIII as a whole, plus also for side events and key advocacy/ media opportunities for voices their recommendation to end sexual exploitation of children and adolescents (*a separate concept paper will be developed for this*).

Adult participants are to support the creation of an adolescent friendly environment, spaces and structures which will ensure that adolescents are fully, ethically and meaningfully participating in all processes and sessions at various forums including the WC III itself creating opportunities for them to influence and take the lead

Selection of Chaperones and Translators: To facilitate cost and logistics, the supporting/host agencies of the participating adolescents will provide the necessary chaperones and the translators.

Ensuring Minimum Standards on Adolescent Participation: The Congress Organizing Committee will endorse and adapt the Minimum Standards on Children's Participation for the WC III which will provide a robust framework for addressing the child protection issues during the regional processes and the WC III. This will help towards maximizing their participation by facilitating safe and meaningful participation and minimizing any potential risks to abuse and exploitation during the process of their engagement at the WC III.

Venue of the Preparatory Meeting (needs to be close to the Congress site with adequate security)

4.2.2 Adolescent Participation in the World Congress III

Adolescents will be actively participating throughout the WCIII. There should be opportunities for them to influence:

- Drafting of the outcome document
- Opening and closing sessions
- Panels
- Workshops
- Side events (Media/ Exhibits/Cultural Programmes)
- Action plan and outcome document of the WCIII
- Follow up plans

Recreation, cultural and fun activities for the adolescent (there needs to be adequate time to get over jet lag, also break of 1 or 2 days between the preparatory meeting and the actual congress to allow time for recreation)

4.2.3. Communications for and with Adolescents

Different communication tools, developed by and for adolescents on the themes of the Congress in different languages will be developed. This will contribute to the mobilization process leading up to the Congress, engaging the adolescents in

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the fight against sexual exploitation and gathering their opinions and views. It also contributes to the reporting on the Congress proceedings and side events

Use of innovative technology and communication tools for processes leading to the WC III and its follow up. Progressive technology platforms designed for the adolescents will serve as a work space through which they can get to know each other, share ideas, and work together on their comments and statements for the World Congress IIIrd. *A separate document will highlight the communication for and with adolescents at the WC III.*

4.3. AFTER THE WORLD CONGRESS III

4.3.1. Follow up

There is much evidence to suggest that the lack of systematic follow up with adolescents on matters that concern them and in which they were involved, can result in de-motivation and disinterest which may even reflect in their lack of trust and belief in processes that promise to honour adolescent voices and their actions. It may also discredit organisation's desire to promote meaningful adolescent's participation for social change. At the same time evidence also suggests, that where there is a systematic follow up, which takes adolescents own opinions and actions into account in the follow up process, it generates their active engagement and continued interest to be involved as young citizens to make positive contributions to their respective communities and at local and national levels to end sexual exploitation.

Systematic follow-up to adolescent participation in an international advocacy forum is a vital part of the process of engaging adolescent in the development of their communities and countries. This is a prerequisite for meaningful and ethical participation of young people and an integral part of the accountability of the organisers and supporters.

It is crucial to generate ideas, recommendations and action plans from young people themselves on follow up processes. Following up on developments made is crucial for demonstrating results on WCIII and its continuity and its impact on the lives of girls and boys who actively participate both in the processes leading up to the WC III and in the WC III itself. What is crucial in the overall picture is continuity and to sustain their interest and motivation in the follow up stage.

Along with the process of institutionalizing the processes for the participation of adolescents, follow-up mechanisms need to be considered and built in. Regional Preparatory Consultation will be a good platform to develop and agree upon these. At the World Congress III, global commitments on follow-up mechanisms can be made such as:

- To ensure follow-up mechanism (in terms of sharing of outcomes/implementation of the recommendations of the Regional Preparatory Consultations/World Congress III - Dissemination of a summary of events/decisions/commitments to other youth and/or adults) with wider

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groups of adolescent and young people in the region, and to see follow-up mechanism institutionalized in relevant organizations, adolescent network and projects in each of the regions

- Allocation of Resources to support adolescent participation at the national/regional levels (e.g. the idea of a global fund for CYP)
- Child and adolescent friendly structures and mechanism for adolescents participation at the national/regional level on public policy decisions that can enhance realization of their right to protection against sexual exploitation
- the analysis, planning and implementation of the Agenda for Action
- Adolescent participation in all government reporting procedures to the CRC related to the Sexual Exploitation (such as the CRC and OPSC)

4.3.2. Monitoring and Evaluation

It is crucial that an evaluation of the impact assessment of adolescent participation in the WCIII process is carried out together with adolescents on their participation in the processes leading to the WCIII and its follow up. Adolescent also want to evaluate how they were treated; taking into account the surrounding environment It is important to be consistent with the evaluation criteria and process in all regions and at the WCIII

5. SUGGESTED ADOLESCENTS PROFILE:

Adolescents will NOT be invited as 'victims' of sexual exploitation who are expected to share their own painful experiences. Rather, they will be active and resourceful participants with valuable insights to share in understanding the issues and in providing solutions to these problems based on their own knowledge and work. The selection criteria will particularly target adolescent who are already active in advocacy work against sexual exploitation within their shelters, schools and wider communities. Priority will be given to those adolescents and young people who are most at risk or affected by sexual exploitation and those who are already active in advocacy work against sexual exploitation within their communities, schools and shelters. Focal organizations will be identified (e.g. ECPAT, Save the Children, Plan International) for the selection and preparation processes of these adolescents. Regional Consultations will be a good platform for the selection of adolescents.

5.1. Suggested Selection Criteria for Adolescents (12-18 years of age) to be engaged in the WCIII processes: (see above)

It is important that a gender and diversity balance maintained in the group of young people who participate in this consultation..

- As defined under CRC, the suggested age group is adolescent below the age of 18 years. A balance is needed in gender (appropriate number of boys and girls to be identified with different ethnic backgrounds, disabilities etc); age of participant; place of residence (urban/rural); in & out-of school
- Adolescents who are working in their own organisations, adolescent led organisation and initiatives (e.g. adolescent protection committees in schools,

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adolescent's community surveillance committees, etc.) against sexual exploitation.

- Adolescents identified will be girls and boys who have been/are actively working as partners with NGOs and in collaboration with other adolescents against sexual exploitation of girls and boys.
- Adolescents identified should be able to speak on behalf of a broad cross-section of adolescents groups/ networks..

It is suggested that adolescents are selected/elected through their groups/ organisation to attend the regional consultation, to be coordinated by the country level. Also, once the selection is done at the regional level, these selected adolescents and young people can be part of the government delegates of their own countries (accompanied by appropriate chaperones/translators). Adolescents will be encouraged to feedback to groups that they belong to and support follow up activities.

5.2. Following is the suggested number of participants per region that may attend the proposed Adolescent's Preparatory Meeting. It is hoped that 300 adolescent will attend the WCIII.

Regions ⁵	Girls	Boys
North America	5?	5?
Latin America and Caribbean	5?	5?
Western Europe	5?	5?
Eastern and Central Europe/ Central Asia	5?	5?
Middle East and North Africa	5?	5?
West Africa	5?	5?
East and Central Africa + Southern Africa ⁶	10?	10?
South Asia	5?	5?
East Asia and the Pacific	5?	5?
Others	50	50
Brazil (proposed)	75	75
Grand Total		

Adolescent's local media group will also be invited separately to cover the event and bring out daily news through different means such as a wall newspaper, updating a webpage etc.

6. STRUCTURAL SUPPORT FROM THE CENTRAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE MEETING

In order to ensure meaningful adolescent participation in the Congress, a special group is being set up to mobilize different adolescent networks around the world, and to determine an appropriate methodology for adolescent participation in both

⁵ Regional allocation based on the UN Study on Violence against Children categories

⁶ 4 from East and central Africa and 4 from Southern Africa

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the preparatory process as well as during the Congress. Partners with strong experience in this area will lead this work including the Save the Children Alliance, Plan International, ECPAT and UNICEF, with its focus on Adolescent Development, is in a position to contribute to this process. This proposal is being made to avoid some of the errors of the past and learn from successful experiences in engaging effective adolescent participation in such events.

The central organizing committee meeting has recommended the establishment of an Adolescent Participation Commission comprising of representatives from Government of Brazil, ECPAT, Save the Children and UNICEF (others CSO and UN agencies with experience in this area will be invited to join this group). This working group will meet regularly to support the adolescent participation process leading up to the WCIII and most importantly in the follow up process.

8. SUGGESTED TIME LINE

Month	Suggested Activities
Jan – March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Central organizing committee meetings and discussion on adolescent participation
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• preparing a concept note on adolescent participation• presentation of key ideas at the central organizing committee meeting in Florence• agreement and finalisation of the concept note and budget (fund raising)• Establishment of the commission on adolescent participation comprising of representatives from Government of Brazil, ECPAT, Save the Children, and UNICEF, (others as recommended by the committee)
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop clear work plan with support plan for the regional, technical and country initiatives and consultations• Development of adolescent friendly material on Yokohama to Rio (4.2)• Adapting guidelines for adolescent participation based existing material• Research on adolescent participation (4.1)• Preparation with Commission on Child Participation for the WCIII• Developing, orientation and distribution communication tools with adolescent• Report to the Central Organising Committee• Preparation and technical support for Involvement of adolescents in Regional Consultations and thematic consultations.
June	
July	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach with adolescent for their voices and recommendations
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement of adolescents in Regional and thematic Consultations continued. Technical support to regional and thematic consultations • Preparation with selected adolescent groups for the WCIII • Report to the Central Organising Committee
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing adolescent friendly version of the research paper • Technical support to regional and thematic consultations • Preparation with selected adolescent groups for the WCIII • Outreach with adolescent for their voices and recommendations • Report to the Central Organising Committee • Finalisation of the adolescent friendly version of the research paper
October	
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation with adolescent groups for the WCIII • Adolescent preparatory forum at the WCIII • Adolescent participation at the WCIII • Outreach with adolescent for their voices and recommendations • Prepare a report on adolescent participation in WCIII including a adolescent friendly version
December on wards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a TOT for the working group for follow up to the WC recommendation on strengthening adolescent participation post WC III • Organizations involving youth in Congress processes and sponsoring adolescent delegates will follow up with children and adolescent/ youth groups • Monitoring and reporting of the action plan • Outreach with adolescent for their voices and recommendations on follow up • Report to the Central Organising Committee

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ANNEX 1:

**“Statement by Children and Young People at the 2nd World Congress,⁷
Yokohama, Japan**

Final Appeal of Children and Young People

At the end of the 2nd World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, the whole world still has a gigantic question to answer: when shall we have a world in which life is based on a sense of caring, sharing, true love and the protection of all societies and individuals from all forms of abuse, discrimination and exploitation? A world free from commercial sexual exploitation of children.

The importance of the participation of children and young people cannot be overemphasized, with particular reference to the experiential young people who really are the experts on the issue at hand. This is therefore a giant step in the right direction for those who feel they know it better. However, there is still the need for the voices of the children and young people present here today, and of those who cannot be here physically, to be fully considered and incorporated in all agendas for action.

As mentioned by many speakers, those affected directly or indirectly are waiting to hear, see and believe in what actions we are going to take as we leave those very comfortable chairs we are currently sitting on. Where do we go from here? It need not be a question for pondering for anyone now. We expect that every one is leaving Yokohama with a clear sense of direction as to how we, together, are going to make this world a better place to live.

As the Congress is declared closed, as we leave this room, as we hug each other, as we shake hands, as we pack our luggage, as we depart for our various destinations in the planes and cars, as we arrive, as we report to our governments, NGOs and agencies, as we draw our budgets, as we plan our activities, as we implement, monitor, evaluate and re-plan, please, for the sake of the children and young people of the world -- consider the following points:

- 1. Education, life skills development, awareness raising and advocacy about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and CSEC for all sexes and age groups should be one of the most important components of all prevention efforts.*
- 2. Government support for children and young people’s participation in terms of funding, legislation, and human resource development brings us one step closer to finding solutions that are more effective, more appropriate, and more sustainable.*

⁷http://www.csecworldcongress.org/PDF/en/Yokohama/Outcome_documents/Young%20People%20Final%20Appeal%20in%20Yokohama.pdf

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3. *There is a need to address gender issues in CSEC, because the way we raise boys and girls in our communities creates male-dominant societies that allow the commercial sexual exploitation of both girls and boys, including children who identify as homosexuals, transgendered or transsexual.*
4. *Governments and communities must begin to seriously fight corruption, as it is not only a barrier in our struggle to eliminate CSEC but is also a contributing factor to the continued growth of CSEC.*
5. *Multi-sectoral cooperation in the fight against CSEC is invaluable. The sharing of knowledge, resources and skills of government agencies, NGOs, community organizations, children and young people's organizations allows us to increase our reach and multiply our strength.*
6. *The causes of CSEC are multiple and have an interactive and dynamic relationship. Decisions and actions are better informed by comprehensive research efforts especially on the demand factors (people who buy sex from children).*
7. *Efforts must be made to ensure that exploiters are the ones punished, not children and young people who have been exploited.*
8. *There is a need for better harmonization of national legislations in line with international treaties, and cooperation between law enforcement agencies at all levels, as well as strict enforcement, monitoring and evaluation of these laws.*
9. *The media have a crucial role to play in the eradication of CSEC. Media personnel should endeavour to make provisions for airtime, print space or Cyberspace that would educate the general public about CSEC and related issues, and facilitate the effective participation of young people.*
10. *Positive cultural, traditional and religious values should be used in the fight against CSEC, and the practices that are harmful or that make children vulnerable to CSEC are eliminated.*
11. *Our cultures are wellsprings of creative ideas and effective means for fighting CSEC. Programmes that aim to combat CSEC should be made with the consideration of this cultural, political and economic diversity, as well as individual differences.*
12. *There is a need for relevant, long-term, comprehensive and accessible services for those who experience commercial sexual exploitation and who need exiting points and healing.*

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13. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child must be used as a guiding tool for all legislation, plans of action, and services related to fight against CSEC. We believe that, if children's rights to survival, development, protection and participation are not ensured, we can NEVER eliminate CSEC.

This appeal is on behalf of all the children and young people of the world to governments and agencies all over the world, including those who could not be here with us; and we expect the governments and agencies to exhibit their political will to implement the commitments to fight CSEC.

***We commit** ourselves to share the outcomes with other countries, NGOs, other young people and children that are not present here.*

***We promise** to exert efforts to build a network of children and young people across the globe, and initiate a fund to facilitate the implementation of CSEC-related activities worldwide.*

*As we finally **appeal** for the recognition of the above points, **we encourage** all parties to donate to the fund and consider the possibilities of observing a day in recognition of the worldwide struggle against CSEC.*

Thank you for your attentive listening.

CONCEPT NOTE

Adolescent Participation in the World Congress III

31st May 08



References

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- *Minutes from the Central Organizing Committee Meeting, Florence (April 2008).*
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- *Final Appeal of Young People. 2002 Yokohama World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. 2002. http://www.csecworldcongress.org/PDF/en/Yokohama/Outcome_documents/Young%20People%20Final%20Appeal%20in%20Yokohama.pdf*
- *Workshop Report On Child Participation in the UN Study on Violence against Children, International Save the Children Alliance*