



**ECPAT 25 YEARS:  
RALLYING THE WORLD  
TO END CHILD  
SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**



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**MAY, 2015**

## CHIANG MAI, THAILAND, MAY 5, 2015

**TWENTY FIVE YEARS TO THIS DAY**, the idea of a campaign to ‘End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism’ was launched by a small group of concerned individuals, gathered in the city of Chiang Mai in Northern Thailand, and organisations from across the globe that listened to their call and supported their action.

Twenty-five years later, this campaign, ECPAT, has evolved into a global network of civil society organisations dedicated to ending the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, with member groups and affiliates in 77 countries.

ECPAT International, with its Secretariat based in Bangkok, has obtained Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations since 2003 and has co-sponsored three World Congresses in Stockholm, Yokohama and Rio. Governments and civil society organisations worldwide recognise ECPAT as the only international NGO network solely dedicated to the fight against CSEC.

Many ECPAT members also directly address, advocate for or build the capacity of other organisations that offer assistance to child victims of sexual exploitation, helping them to recover and reintegrate successfully into society. These and other activities are supported by professional staff, within the network and at ECPAT’s International Secretariat, and a unique global pool of experts and advisors.

As the chapters of this book reveal, these achievements were hard-won. They are the fruits of the dedication of the ECPAT founders and the organisations they belonged to, and the many others who joined them, formed national groups and took action to raise public awareness about the fate of millions of exploited children, while advocating for governments to improve and strengthen child protection laws and policies.

Today, ECPAT works to bring government policies into alignment with international child rights agreements and to assist governments to meet the goals laid out at the end of each of the three ‘World Congresses against the Sexual Exploitation of Children’ — primarily through technical assistance and capacity building.

It collaborates with global law enforcement agencies, such as Interpol and local authorities, to find and punish those who exploit children, and with the private sector in key areas, such as travel and tourism as well as information and communication technologies, to keep children and youth safe online and in tourist destinations.

It is a moment to mark, remember and celebrate but not a time to rest. Indeed, the experts consulted by ECPAT in 2014 all concurred that the magnitude and scope of the sexual exploitation of children is actually expanding. This is the reality we face in 2015: the end of the sexual exploitation of children still remains unfinished business.

At a time when ECPAT, its supporters, friends and allies enter this new phase of their history, this book serves as a reminder of the determination of its founders and the incredible power of collective action. With this book, written in the name of ECPAT, as it was yesterday and as it is today, it is our privilege and honour to thank all those — individuals and organisations — who have made this incredible journey possible and will continue to encourage and support us in the future, in the name of the children of the world to whom our action is dedicated.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Dorothy Rozga' with a stylized flourish at the end.

**DOROTHY ROZGA**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
ECPAT INTERNATIONAL

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Carol Bellamy' with a stylized flourish at the end.

**CAROL BELLAMY**  
CHAIR OF ECPAT INTERNATIONAL  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

## NOTE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The idea for this book dates back to 2013 when the compilation of an updated organisational history of ECPAT was undertaken to provide ECPAT members, supporters and others with a document retracing the original experience and the challenges of the two decades that followed the first ECPAT campaign in 1990.

This history seeks to achieve a balance between providing details, recognising the roles and support of individuals and organisations and the story of the ECPAT movement moving forward. It focuses mainly on how the organisation grew and evolved, but also describes the main issues addressed, unique accomplishments and some of the challenges faced along the way.

Inevitably, it does not reflect each and every programme, project or initiative undertaken over 25 years, which would require a much longer document. Also, despite an attempt to list as many as possible, all individuals that played a key role in the organisation's success are not mentioned by name.

The information presented in the following seven chapters is based on a combination of research and interviews. Research and compilation of the information necessary to the writing of this book was conducted by external consultants. A first draft was written by Alison Raphael and each chapter was reviewed internally to ensure accuracy.

Earlier efforts to describe ECPAT's history, including 'ECPAT International, the First Decade — 1990-2000' by Ron O'Grady, the 2002 publication 'ECPAT: A Network for Children' by Jo de Linde, as well as the report 'Caught in Modern Slavery' from the 1990 Consultation in Chiang Mai (edited by Koson Srisang), constituted very useful sources of information about the first decade, and were complemented by the collection of the quarterly ECPAT newsletters.

For the second decade, much of the resource material was available on ECPAT's website (such as annual reports, thematic studies, etc.) or was provided by ECPAT International. Information gaps were filled by web-based research. In addition, a number of ECPAT members and leaders have contributed their views or reviewed various editions of this book, including via face-to-face, telephone and Skype interviews, as well as email correspondence.

ECPAT International thanks all colleagues and friends who have contributed time, memories and materials for the making of this book between 2013 and 2015. Although it is not possible to list all of their names, our most sincere gratitude goes to each one of them.

## ABOUT THIS BOOK

Recording history is a complex mix of remembering, acknowledging and understanding change. Since the creation of ECPAT, finding words and images to capture the rough reality of children's risk and exposure to sexual abuse and exploitation has been a constant challenge. 'The veil of silence' is a major impediment to marshalling protection. 'Words matter because they shape our understanding of the problem and guide our solutions', wrote Karin Landren from UNICEF in 'Semantics or Substance' (2005). When reading this book, especially in the early chapters, the reader will come across language that may no longer be in use at the time of publication, or is now heavily debated, and choices of presentation that have since evolved. While doing otherwise would risk anachronism, this also makes this book a contribution to the important discussion on terminology, which as ECPAT history shows is not a simple nor an inconsequential matter.

Countries listed on the back cover refer to the location of ECPAT members.

A digital version of this book is available for ECPAT network members and friends who wish to print it. A template will also be made available to ECPAT members who wish to include a specific section about their local context and activities before printing.



## 14 1990-1995: A CAMPAIGN AND A MOVEMENT



The original logo of ECPAT was designed in 1991. The image that was selected was a broken rosebud. It was an unusual choice, yet considered appropriate at the time, as it expressed the anger at the violence of the abuse of children that inspired the first campaign of **ECPAT**, which stood for **END CHILD PROSTITUTION IN ASIAN TOURISM**. Amongst many other successes, the campaign convinced the Universal Federation of Travel Agents Associations to pledge to combat the crime and help restore the dignity, physical and mental health of affected children. Some felt that the logo conveyed a sense of hopelessness: once the rosebud is severed from the stem it can no longer flower into full maturity but is inevitably doomed to fade and die. Despite the words that accompanied the picture to balance this negative image ('The small bud is easily broken — from the soil — new flowers are nurtured'), the use of the first logo was eventually dropped in 1996.

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The 1996 First World Congress against the **COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN** was the first formal use of the new terminology coined by ECPAT. The acronym, **CSEC**, is now widely used in the field. It distinguishes between sexual exploitation for financial gain and other forms of sexual abuse. In advocating for the term, ECPAT also argued that terms such as 'child prostitution' and 'child sex tourism' could be construed to imply some compliance by children in these activities, whereas the term 'commercial sexual exploitation of children' clearly expresses the reality that children are victims of the greed or sexual preferences of their exploiters. In later years, the term 'child protection' would include both CSEC and child sexual abuse, as well as other forms of exploitation and violence.

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In 1997, after it was decided that the ECPAT campaign would become an international NGO, it kept the name ECPAT but changed the meaning of the acronym to reflect the broader mandate and enlarged geographical spread of the membership. From then onward, **ECPAT** would stand for **END CHILD PROSTITUTION, CHILD PORNOGRAPHY AND TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN FOR SEXUAL PURPOSES**. A new logo was also created. To ‘better capture the spirit of the organisation, it must convey a positive and hopeful image of the child’ said the text of the international competition for its design. An ECPAT international committee selected the proposition from a graphic artist from the Philippines: the image of a child waving a flower which was a symbol of hope and a strong expression of the organisation’s ethos.

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‘Mouse man says No! No! No! Remember that if you arrange to meet your Net Friends, it should be in an open, public place...’. This message was included in a CD distributed to all elementary schools in Taiwan, and the digital Online characters, E-Baby, E-Girl and E-Mouse, were created by ECPAT.. In 2000, ECPAT became a pioneer in developing tools, campaigning and training for **CHILD PROTECTION ONLINE**, an area that rapidly became central for many members and was the topic of ECPAT’s contribution to the UN Study on violence against children in 2004. As the network of ECPAT members continued to grow, so did its ability to not only recognise the threat of emerging forms of sexual exploitation of children, but also to build new, effective and diverse partnerships to respond to them.

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By the time it reached **THE 10-YEAR MARK** after Stockholm and the launch of the Code, the central role of ECPAT International and its network to monitor the commitments of the 1990s towards ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children had been clearly established. ECPAT had also positioned itself as a key expert organisation on the emerging risks of sexual exploitation of children related to the misuse of **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES**. Meanwhile, it became increasingly clear that the battle that ECPAT was engaged in was not going to be easily won. The discussion of the Rio World Congress in 2008, which had been expanded beyond the commercial sexual exploitation of children to further mobilise ‘against **SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS**’, was an occasion to build up further support, including with new organisations and allies.

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In creating the **SOFT HANDS KIND HEART HAND CREAM**, the Body Shop, ECPAT’s partner in the ‘**STOP SEX TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**’ campaign, opened the doors of its shops to ECPAT campaigners, dramatically increasing the impact of its petition drive. It also announced that during the campaign all profits from the sales of the cream would go to ECPAT, as well as campaign funding. Eventually, the campaign collected a record 7 million signatures, significantly raising the profile of the issue, and raised 3 million US dollars for ECPAT. As such, it became a model of what cause marketing can look like for a renowned brand and the new forms of partnerships with responsible business.

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This picture represents the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to be adopted by Heads of States in September 2015. At the time of writing of this book, ECPAT is hopeful that having **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS** specifically focusing on violence against children can bring about a marked difference in global attention to ending all forms of sexual exploitation of children. This will also bring new opportunities to advocate, mobilise supporters, form partnerships and raise funds. The challenge is to fully grasp and use the opportunities presented by the world's new development agenda to put an end to commercial sexual exploitation of children.

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## ACRONYMS

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>A4A</b>      | Agenda for Action   |
| <b>ACERWC</b>   | African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child   |
| <b>ACRWC</b>    | African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child  |
| <b>AU</b>       | Africa Union  |
| <b>CARICOM</b>  | Caribbean Community   |
| <b>CCA</b>      | Christian Conference of Asia  |
| <b>CHIS</b>     | Children's Charity Coalition for Internet Safety  |
| <b>CMR</b>      | Country Monitoring Report   |
| <b>CRC</b>      | United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child  |
| <b>CSEC</b>     | Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children  |
| <b>CWIN</b>     | Child Workers in Nepal  |
| <b>ECCE</b>     | Ecumenical Coalition against Child Exploitation in Sex Tourism  |
| <b>ECPAT</b>    | Ending Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (1990-1995); Ending Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (1995-present) |
| <b>ECTWT</b>    | Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism   |
| <b>EICYAC</b>   | ECPAT International Child and Youth Advisory Committee  |
| <b>EU</b>       | European Union  |
| <b>FABC/OHD</b> | Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference/Office for Human Development  |
| <b>FCACP</b>    | Financial Coalition Against Child Pornography   |
| <b>GSMA</b>     | Global System for Mobile Communications Association   |
| <b>ICCB</b>     | International Catholic Child Bureau   |
| <b>ICMEC</b>    | International Centre on Missing and Exploited Children  |

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>ICT</b>      | Information and communication technology   |
| <b>IGF</b>      | Internet Governance Forum  |
| <b>IIN</b>      | Inter-American Children's Institute  |
| <b>ILO</b>      | International Labour Organization  |
| <b>INTERPOL</b> | International Criminal Police Organization   |
| <b>IOM</b>      | International Organisation for Migration   |
| <b>ISP</b>      | Internet Service Provider  |
| <b>IT</b>       | Information Technology   |
| <b>ITU</b>      | International Telecommunication Union  |
| <b>NANET</b>    | North American Network on Tourism  |
| <b>NCC</b>      | National Council of Churches (USA)   |
| <b>NCCP</b>     | National Council of Churches of the Philippines  |
| <b>NCCSL</b>    | National Christian Council of Sri Lanka  |
| <b>NCMEC</b>    | National Center for Missing and Exploited Children   |
| <b>NGO</b>      | Non-governmental organisation  |
| <b>NPA</b>      | National Plan of Action  |
| <b>OAS</b>      | Organization of American States  |
| <b>OHCHR</b>    | Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights   |
| <b>OPAC</b>     | Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict                  |
| <b>OPSC</b>     | Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography |
| <b>RNRE</b>     | Regional Network Resource Exchange   |

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>SAYPP</b>  | South Asia Youth Partnership Project                 |
| <b>SECTT</b>  | Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism            |
| <b>SIDA</b>   | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency |
| <b>TECST</b>  | Taskforce to End Child Sexploiation in Thailand      |
| <b>TEN</b>    | Third World Tourism European Ecumenical Network      |
| <b>UFTAA</b>  | Universal Federation of Travel Agents' Associations  |
| <b>UN</b>     | United Nations                                       |
| <b>UNICEF</b> | United Nations Children's Fund                       |
| <b>UNODC</b>  | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime             |
| <b>UNWTO</b>  | United Nations World Tourism Organization            |
| <b>UPR</b>    | Universal Periodic Review                            |
| <b>VGIT</b>   | Virtual Global Taskforce                             |
| <b>WATCH</b>  | We Act Together for Children                         |
| <b>WSIS</b>   | World Summit on the Information Society              |
| <b>YAC</b>    | Youth Advisory Council                               |
| <b>YMCA</b>   | Young Men's Christian Association                    |





1

**1990-1995: A  
CAMPAIGN AND A  
MOVEMENT**

**‘In the space of a few months,** the International Campaign to End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism has become a people’s movement.’

The opening line of the first ECPAT newsletter published in March 1991 captures the essence of how it all started. Before morphing into an influential network, ECPAT was, first and foremost, an international campaign supported by a broad movement entirely dedicated to one objective: ending the violent abuse of children in Asian tourism.

If one wants to find a date for the birth of this movement, one must look to the **5th of May 1990** and a week-long consultation on ‘Tourism and Child Prostitution in Asia’ at the YMCA in Chiang Mai, Thailand. This is where ECPAT history begins.

The consultation was organised by the **ECUMENICAL COALITION ON THIRD WORLD TOURISM (ECTWT)**, an organisation representing faith-based groups concerned with the social and environmental impact of tourism on developing countries. But, as is often the case, the event itself was harvesting the fruits from seeds that had been planted much earlier.

Back in **1980** at a workshop in Manila in the Philippines, church groups had examined what they felt was their common mission: respond to the consequences of tourism growth, especially on indigenous minorities, women and children, from a social justice perspective.

After the Manila workshop in **1982**, a group of attendees — amongst them a New Zealander by the name of **RON O’GRADY**, then the Associate General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in Australia; **PETER HOLDEN**, a Methodist minister; and **BONNIE MENDES**, a Catholic Priest — jointly created the ECTWT, making Asia, where most of its active members were based, its primary focus.

The ECTWT chose Thailand as its base and established an office in Bangkok. **DR KOSON SRISANG**, a leader of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), was its Executive Secretary and **DR PRAKAI NONTAWASEE**, also from Thailand, its Chair.

The focus on Asia and the location in Thailand did not happen by chance. In that region and country, there was ample evidence to sustain what had been the main conclusion of the Manila workshop: that tourism, as it was then practised in most parts of the so-called Third World, had ‘wreaked more havoc than brought benefits’.

Also, in a region that was still living with the legacy of the protracted war in Vietnam (which ended in 1975), the presence of large U.S. military bases had created another concern that in the late eighties and early nineties mobilised many activists throughout Asia and the Pacific: a boom in commercial sex wherever foreign soldiers went.

The Philippines hosted a major U.S. Air Base and Naval Station. Thailand was the nearest country to Vietnam and there, as well as in other countries, a score of middlemen profited from supplying women to meet the demand from foreign soldiers. As the soldiers returned home and relayed their experiences to others, more and more outsiders began travelling to Asia with the express purpose of engaging in the free-wheeling sex that was seemingly open for all. When the soldiers left, another set of visitors began arriving. In the US, Europe, Japan or Australia tour operators began touting Thailand and places like Pattaya as 'the sex capital of the world'. In Sri Lanka, the sexual exploitation of the so-called 'beach boys', children from the impoverished beachside squats, became the other face of the booming tourism industry of the 1980s.

Benefiting from tourism dollars, Asian governments maintained a more than relaxed attitude toward the emerging trend at first. For example, prostitution in Thailand was technically illegal but unregulated massage parlours quickly filled the void. Concern over the fate of children involved in these activities grew amongst teachers, social workers and others working with children as evidence began to appear that very young girls and boys were increasingly being exploited in this sex trade.

In **1984**, a fire broke out in a brothel in Phuket, Thailand. In the basement, the firemen found the charred bodies of five girls between 9 and 12 years of age chained to their beds. In Asian countries, local and international media increasingly reported about gruesome cases of sexual abuses where the victims were very young and the perpetrators had often come from far away as tourists or longer term residents.

Media reports claimed that parents were selling their children for TV sets or electronic gadgets, but this was far from the full story. Scores of articles also documented a constant flow of child abductions from hill tribes in Northern Thailand and neighbouring countries.

Throughout the region, the behaviour of foreigners, acting in ways that would have sent them to jail in their own countries, made the headlines, such as in 1987 when outrage was sparked in the Philippines over the story of **ROSARIO**, a 13-year-old girl who had died as a result of horrific sexual abuse and torture by an Austrian physician.

As concerns mounted in **1988**, the Ecumenical Coalition launched an advocacy and action project on child prostitution and tourism. For the project, it hired two part-time consultants, **SUDARAT SEREEWAT SRISANG** from Thailand and **JUNE ROGERS** from the US, with the explicit task of 'uncovering and documenting the connections between tourism and the increasing volume of child prostitution as a basis for further action'.

Three countries — where the ECTWT had active members — were chosen, and national 'working groups' were formed in **SRI LANKA**, **THE PHILIPPINES** and **THAILAND** to contribute and support the research.

The first outcome of the project materialised in **July 1989** when **FLORENCE BRUCE**, the coordinator of the **INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC CHILD BUREAU (ICCB)**, arranged for the initial research to be submitted to a meeting of the United Nations' Working Group on 'contemporary forms of slavery' in Geneva.

At the UN meeting, June Rogers, Sudarat Sereewat, **AMIHAN ABUEVA** and **RUTH KAO** made the case that tourism, as it existed, was indeed 'very closely linked with the acceleration and in some cases the cause of child prostitution'. Their presentation concluded with a strong recommendation: a call for an 'international campaign to stop slavery in the form of child prostitution'.

This advocacy was directly impactful: as a result of the hearings, **OSBORN EIDE**, the chairman of the UN Working Group, immediately called for tougher penalties against child traffickers and those who abuse children, while also highlighting the fact that many countries did not enforce existing laws. Also, the idea of a campaign was starting to circulate.

When the ECTWT announced that a 'Consultation' was scheduled for in Thailand, following an initiative led by June Rogers, the stage was set and the actors ready to fill their roles, as the unfolding story of ECPAT will attest. Indeed, as soon as the date and location in Thailand were set, the number of interested participants — coalition members, experts, social workers, academics and journalists — started to grow, overwhelming the organisers.

'Perhaps the first of its kind, the Chiang Mai consultation attracted a lot more people whom we could not accommodate due to limited resources', recalled the organiser, Dr Koson Srisang, in his introduction to 'Caught in Modern Slavery', the book later published on the 1990 meeting. 'The seriousness and the urgency of the problem was self-evident for anyone visiting the Pattaya of this world', he added.

As the meeting was in Thailand, a number of Thai experts were enlisted to provide their views. Like for so many other attendees, their presence at the meeting would be only the beginning of a sustained relationship with ECPAT. Amongst them: a prominent child and women rights advocate, DR **SAISUREE CHUTIKUL**, then Inspector General at the Prime Minister's office, and **VITIT MUNTARBHORN**, a law professor from **CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY** in Bangkok, would both become life-long friends of ECPAT.

Their participation turned out to be a good omen. Within a few months of their presence in Chiang Mai, both were able to bring their views to a new level: Dr Saisuree as the minister for Woman and Youth of Thailand, and Professor Vitit as the first **SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR OF THE UN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS ON THE SALE OF CHILDREN, CHILD PROSTITUTION AND CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**.

On the research side, following an introduction by Florence Bruce who placed the work in Asia in its broader global context, Sudarat Sereewat made a presentation very much in line

with what the group had said in Geneva at the UN the previous year, strongly incriminating the global tourism industry for its responsibility in the sexual exploitation of children in her country. 'Child prostitution has become a way of life in Thailand. It has become part of the social and economic structures, ingrained in our cultural values and used as a political tool by the elite', she said. 'The magnitude and complexity of the problem and its connection with tourism demand a concerted effort from all concerned. A collective strategy and consequent concrete programmes of action are the goals of our country studies', she explained.

Other presenters included Amihan Abueva, then Executive Director of the Filipino child rights organisation **SALINLAHI FOUNDATION** with **ADUL DE LEON** from the progressive women's coalition, the **GABRIELA** Commission on Child and Families and **EMMA CANTOR** from the **NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF THE PHILIPPINES (NCCP)**. Together, they framed their findings in the social and political context of poverty and injustice that prevailed in the country.

**MAUREEN SENEVIRATNE**, a journalist and writer from Sri Lanka who made her presentation jointly with **SHIRLEY PEIRIS**, the general secretary of the **NATIONAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF SRI LANKA (NCCSL)**, spoke of the massive scale of the sexual abuse of young boys in a web of drugs, crime and money for which tourism in her country had become notorious. The team of researchers from Sri Lanka also included **MOHAMMED MAHURUF** from Terre des Hommes, the organisation which had in 1980 published the first report on the darker side of the tourism industry in the country; **MANEL NANAYAKKARA**, the Executive Director of the **YWCA**; and **FAITH ABEYWARDENA**, Programme Officer of **REDD BARNA**.

Ruth Kao from the **GARDEN OF HOPE**, an organisation of the **PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN TAIWAN**, talked about the situation in Taipei, which during the decades immediately following the end of the Second World War, had become a destination of choice for Japanese men. In a country where large numbers of girls from indigenous groups in highland regions were being trafficked, she outlined the important role played by women's organisations. **KT SURESH** from the NGO **EQUATIONS** then spoke of the situation in India.

**MARTIN STAEBLER**, a German pastor then with the Center for Development Education of Diakonisches Werk which was a charitable organisation of Protestant churches in Germany, was one key voice from Europe at the event. He was already very active in building up links between groups in his country and those in Asia concerned with the negative impact of tourism. Also from Germany, **MECHTILD MAURER** made a presentation on the documented links between tourism, AIDS and prostitution.

From **JAPAN**, renowned journalist and feminist, **YAYORI MATSUI**, from the newspaper Asahi Shimbun, underlined how the trafficking of Asian migrant women in her country and sex tours in Asia for Japanese men, often organised by their employers, was another, less publicised, side of Japan's economic prosperity.

Of course, as the consultation was taking place in the context of the Ecumenical Coalition, a number of participants, including Father **DESMOND DE SOUSA** from the Federation of Asian Bishops Conference, **ACHARN PRAKAI NONTAWASEE** and **ACHARN RAYNOU ATHAMESARA** from Chiang Mai Teachers College, placed the discussion in the context of the Christian and Buddhist faiths. All participants remember the key role played by June Rogers in this context; her attentive presence and dedication to link up the spiritual engagement of many of the participants with the social cause that had brought them together.

Amongst the other presenters, **PROFESSOR PRAWASE WASI** from **MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY** made a plea for a broad coalition of non-governmental organisations as, for him, the issues at stake were not separable from broader concerns on development, peace, non-violence, education or the environment. **GEORGE KENT** from the **UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII** suggested that a global Conference on Children involving governments, international organisations and NGOs would be the best way to avoid fragmentation and move toward solutions.

Although precise numbers could not be calculated due to the hidden nature of the activities involved, it was estimated that at least 1 million children under the age of 16 were living under such conditions in the five countries researched (India, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Thailand).

The information presented in Chiang Mai was extremely shocking to all the participants. Combined with media reports and the information that they had gathered over the previous decade, the cross-border movement and heavy involvement by foreigners made it clear that 'sex tourism', as it was called then, involving children was a global phenomenon requiring global solutions. A consensus emerged during the conference that dedicated action was needed.

A road map was put on paper on **5 May 1990**. It took the form of a five-page document entitled '**CHILDREN CAUGHT IN MODERN SLAVERY**: Conclusions of the Chiang Mai Consultation on Tourism and Child Prostitution' unanimously adopted by the participants before the meeting ended.

The document included a 'Call for Decisive (and concerted) Action' with the immediate launch of 'a coordinated international campaign to abolish child prostitution in Asia' at its core. It underlined the need for research, documentation and publication as 'the success

of a campaign of this nature is very much dependent upon the quality, accessibility and effective organisation of the material disseminated’.

It also recognised the need for a ‘framework for analysing the problem’ (of child prostitution) to be developed by a ‘research coordinated group’. In addition to the stated importance of advocacy and campaigning at the governmental, policy and industry level with media strategies, it also reflected the importance of prevention, support and rehabilitation programmes and the need to empower children and others, which was clearly a reflection from the input of organisations and individuals active at the community level and social workers concerned with action-oriented activities.

Finally, and most importantly as this would play a big role in shaping the future, the Chiang Mai conclusions insisted on very pragmatic ways of working. For instance, education and campaign strategies, it said, should focus on ‘child prostitution related to sex-oriented tourism’, but the framework for their development ‘should be as flexible as possible so that each country and institution can adapt its own unique national strategy.’

Even though it did not yet include the acronym under which the network would later conduct its activities, the Chiang Mai Conclusions are, in essence, the birth certificate of ECPAT. For some years, it also served as the compass that guided the organisation. Its principles, often reiterated in the following years, would remain deeply imprinted in the identity of ECPAT.

A number of the people present in Chiang Mai turned out to play a major role in the organisation in the years to come. Ron O’Grady, who had joined as a consultant and a facilitator and wrote the preface to the report documenting the consultation, remained a tireless spokesperson and a prolific author on behalf of ECPAT over the following decade. ECPAT later recognised the importance of his contribution in making him its first honorary president.

Sudarat Sereewat, Amihan Abueva, Ruth Kao and Maureen Seneviratne, as well as countless others not mentioned here, provided essential leadership in the setup of the International Secretariat and first national groups and at other key moments in the history of the movement and the network. Martin Staebler, a strong supporter and campaigner from day one, before hosting ECPAT meetings in Germany, would play a decisive role in strengthening the movement in Europe and building solid links with the travel and tourism industry. Saisuree Chutikul, Vitit Muntarbhorn, Florence Bruce and indeed all the others showed in many instances the solidity and the depth of their relationship with ECPAT.

Florence Bruce, on the eve of the 25th anniversary of Chiang Mai, had at least one explanation for this: ‘The ambition and vision of the founders of ECPAT were quite remarkable’, she remembered. ‘There was never any hint of doubt that they would achieve their goals. This was indeed inspiring and contagious’.



# THE LAUNCH OF THE ECPAT CAMPAIGN

Reflecting on the consultation and its aftermath, Maureen Seneviratne later recalled: 'Ron O'Grady simply stood up there in Chiang Mai and said: "So? Let's end child prostitution in Asian tourism". That's all. What more was needed? Let's get down to work. I was overjoyed.'

Figuring out the details of how exactly that would be done took a few more months, but most of what followed was set in motion in Chiang Mai. Before leaving Chiang Mai, the participants also agreed on ways to move things forward. Dr Koson Srisang, the ECTWT director and its small staff in Bangkok were asked to initiate the implementation of their recommendations, and a follow-up committee of about 25 people, composed of a cross-section of the attendees, was created to support them.

In **August 1990**, a number of them met again in Bangkok. It is at this meeting that they agreed to launch the campaign to End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism: the ECPAT campaign was officially born. Five agencies were asked to jointly administer the campaign. In addition to ECTWT, there was the **CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE OF ASIA (CCA)**, the **FEDERATION OF ASIAN BISHOPS' CONFERENCE /OFFICE FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (FABC/OHD)**, the **THIRD WORLD TOURISM EUROPEAN ECUMENICAL NETWORK (TEN)** and the **NORTH AMERICAN NETWORK ON TOURISM (NANET)**.

The representatives from these networks and groups were joined by members of children's service NGOs and community groups in Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and the Philippines, which represented the national coalitions that had come together to support the research that was presented in Chiang Mai by the ECTWT. Two individuals, **CLARENCE SHUBERT** from **UNICEF** where he was in charge of 'Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances' (as it was then called) and Florence Bruce from the International Catholic Child Bureau (ICCB), joined them in their personal capacity.

Together, they composed the Campaign's Executive Committee and selected the acronym ECPAT as its name. As ECPAT was initially not set up legally as an independent organisation but only as a network of autonomous members, their role was not the role of a board, but more of an advisory body to the organisations joining the movement. Still, the people who composed it would operate as the steering group of the campaign from the outset, making in effect all the key decisions related to what would become, from then onwards, ECPAT activities. Although many of its founders came from the activist wings of Christian organisations (and early support was received from both Catholic and Protestant sources), the movement was operating in Asia with its mix of Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist majorities. So, while appointing Dr Srisang, a Christian minister, as its first Chairman, the group decided that ECPAT would be strictly secular, as well as non-partisan.



The committee asked Sudarat Sereewat, whose research in Thailand had been key to the international mobilisation on the issue, to serve as ECPAT's Executive Secretary, and Ron O'Grady was named International Coordinator, working from both Thailand and New Zealand to make up ECPAT's International Secretariat. Meanwhile, ECPAT immediately opened offices in the three countries where the ECTWT had been conducting research and where its local networks were the strongest.

The first office was set up in Sri Lanka by Maureen Seneviratne, and the other attendees from the Chiang Mai meeting had created an organisation called PEACE (Protecting Environment and Children Everywhere). Amihan Abueva similarly agreed to start programmes in the Philippines. Ruth Kao would open an office in Taiwan where children's groups rapidly came together to establish an organisation called **ECPAT-TAIWAN**. In Thailand, a new organisation called the **TASKFORCE TO END CHILD SEXPLOITATION IN THAILAND (TECST)** was formed to provide a network of 18 agencies dealing with child prostitution with a specific focus on rehabilitation and training.

From its very beginning, ECPAT was very careful to ensure that these national offices — which operated under the name of ECPAT National Committees — would not overstep. As stated in one early document, ECPAT 'did not intend to replace the very large number of agencies and community groups working in the area of child protection' but to 'provide them with support and encouragement', enabling some to meet for the first time and developing networks of concern'.

By **September 1990**, the campaign's organization was starting to take shape but more was needed. The ECTWT, having used most of its budget for the May conference, could not afford to hire anyone else, or fund any activities. Most of ECPAT's new 'staff' started as volunteers, which was not sustainable. Converting the ideas of Chiang Mai into action required more than motivation; it depended on active fundraising.

Ron O'Grady offered to use his international contacts — and frequent flyers miles! — to explore the possibility of raising money for the campaign. During a previously scheduled tour of the United States, he spoke with dozens of people about the emerging problem of child sex tourism in Asia. Meanwhile, Sudarat Sereewat and others also pursued their partners in Western Europe, Germany in particular, urging them to offer financial support and become involved.

The efforts paid off. In **November 1990**, the **ECUMENICAL COALITION AGAINST CHILD EXPLOITATION IN SEX TOURISM (ECCE)** was established in the UK as the first of its kind. Its stated objective at its launch was to support the ECPAT campaign, including financially and via research, and to establish an enforceable code of conduct for tour operators.

Other countries followed. By **January 1991**, funding was secured for a three-year period from faith-based and aid organizations based in Europe, including a number who had already supported the Chiang Mai consultation: **BREAD FOR THE WORLD** and **MISEREOR** in Germany, **STICHTING MENSEN IN NOOD/CARITAS** in the Netherlands and the **CHURCH OF SWEDEN** amongst others.

This turned out to be decisive. Without the early support of these and other organisations and scores of individuals who managed to send money to the Bangkok office, ECPAT would not have been able to get off the ground.

In **March 1991**, to oversee the budget and make sure finances were kept in order, the Executive Committee appointed **LAKSHMAN ABEYNAYAKE** as ECPAT's first Treasurer.

Two other key decisions announced by the Executive Committee in **March 1991** in the first ECPAT Newsletter ended up having a big influence in shaping the particular set-up that was being put in place:

- **One was the voluntary short-lived nature of the structure that was created. 'At this stage', announced the launch document, 'the campaign is planned to run for three years — from 1991 to 1993. At the end of that time, supporting agencies and groups will receive a comprehensive report of the results of the campaign and will have to determine whether they wish some continuing activity or not.'**
- **The other important choice that was made was that, to avoid dispersion, the campaign remained absolutely focused on the immediate objective that had prompted its launch: 'The issue of child prostitution is a symptom of the broader oppression which faces people in developing countries but it might be a starting point for this wider debate. We have deliberately chosen the narrow goal for our campaign because we believe this can be achieved. We want to end child prostitution as it is related to tourism in the Asian countries of the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Thailand. This means we are not dealing with child prostitution or child abuse in its broadest context, but only that which is generated by the presence of foreign tourists. Nor are we dealing with the wider issue of prostitution, but only that which relates to younger children under the age of sixteen. Our research indicates that it is escalating in the four countries at an alarming rate.'**

ECPAT's founders were convinced that once the world became aware of the problem in these countries, and its dimensions and impact on children, large-scale efforts would be underway to put an end to the broader exploitation of children in prostitution and sex tourism. But, of course, child sex tourism in Asia was just the tip of the iceberg.

Once the campaign was officially launched, ECPAT leaders sought every opportunity to speak publicly about the problem of child sex tourism in Asia. Indeed, media interest was

building in Australia, Europe, Japan and the United States, and Asia-based ECPAT staff often travelled to these countries, but it soon became clear that few listeners believed that men and women from their country would stoop so low as to travel abroad to engage in sex with children. It simply was not possible!

As Ron O'Grady recalled later, 'In the world of the [early] 1990s there appeared to be a total blindness. No country was willing to look closely at the sexual abuse of children — even in their own community. When it was shown to be present, it would be quickly hidden from sight and ignored'.

So, in parallel to its work in Asia, it became incumbent on ECPAT to deliver the evidence to the rest of the world, especially in the countries where the tourists were originating from, or the so-called 'Sending Countries' in the original ECPAT parlance. In these countries, the ECPAT movement was starting to organise around ECPAT 'Support Groups', as they were then called. Some began when an individual was moved by hearing about the fate of children in Asia. Others were formed by organisations already working on children's issues who felt compelled to add the new issue of child sex tourism to their agenda.

The **ECPAT GERMANY** campaign was launched on **15 March 1991** with an initial membership of 14 organizations joining the German Federal Working Group on Child Prostitution in Tourism. Altogether 57 groups in Germany enlisted as interested parties, 40 of whom were present at the inauguration. In months, with the support of the largest organizations in the country including the largest development NGOs, faith-based and youth groups, ECPAT would become the largest campaign movement in Germany.

By **July 1991**, there was a group in **SWITZERLAND** formed by a coalition of Zürich-based agencies and groups. The same month in **THE NETHERLANDS, CHILDREN AT RISK** and **CARITAS NEERLANDICA** came together to create ECPAT Netherlands.

Also created then, the group in **NEW ZEALAND**, was supported by the **CHRISTIAN WORLD SERVICE** and **OXFAM**. In **AUSTRALIA**, one staff person was coordinating activities and programmes.

In **SWEDEN** in **September 1991**, the **CHURCH OF SWEDEN** mission office organized a national meeting to discuss the national response to the challenges raised by ECPAT: attendees decided to set-up a national network to share information to start.

In **November 1991**, the first ECPAT Committee met in **CANADA**. In **December 1991**, ECPAT USA was launched at a meeting jointly coordinated by the **US NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (NCC)** and the **NORTH AMERICAN COORDINATING CENTER FOR RESPONSIBLE TOURISM** with more than 50 organizations showing interest in supporting the new body.

Also in **December 1991**, ‘La Campagne Française contre le Tourisme Sexuel’ (‘The French Campaign against Sexual Tourism’) was launched in FRANCE with the support of **LA VOIX DE L’ENFANT**, **LE BUREAU INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIQUE DE L’ENFANCE** and **L’ASSOCIATION CONTRE LA PROSTITUTION ENFANTINE**.

From the earliest days, national groups and committees have played a critical role in ECPAT by putting the issue on the public agenda, advocating with governments and international agencies for support, serving as liaisons between the Bangkok-based staff and relevant policy-making entities and raising funds for ECPAT’s work. Some groups had offices and were hiring staff. Others were mainly comprised of volunteers. Coherence was made possible via a multitude of personal and direct links established between the groups and the international structure, either via the Secretariat or the Executive Committee. Most importantly, many of the people involved in ECPAT activities knew each other personally, often having worked together for years, which was an extraordinary asset that allowed ECPAT to develop much faster than it would have been able to if it had started everything from scratch.

As an illustration of this, the ECPAT’s Executive Committee met a number of times outside Thailand, which gave its members what it called ‘first-hand exposure’ to the local issues that the national committees had to face and to meet with others involved in children’s issues. It also made it possible for the entire movement to benefit from a network of relationships that went far beyond the power of the individuals present.

In **TAIWAN**, committee members visited aboriginal settlements and red-light districts, and met with social workers dealing with child victims. It would later become clear that, in both Asia and Latin America, children from minority indigenous groups are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Also, as in Taiwan where the role of Japan had been further documented, it was decided that **ECPAT-JAPAN** would be given an observer status on the ECPAT Executive Committee.

Another meeting was later organised in **SRI LANKA** where civil conflict was raging in the north and sex tourism was rampant on beaches in the south. From this experience, ECPAT found that child predators often established footholds in countries experiencing conflict or disasters where law enforcement is less likely to pay attention to their activities.

Each time these international meetings took place, ECPAT Committee members and staff would take time to visit the tourist areas, collect evidence, talk to and meet a number of people. Working very much like a reporter writing an article would do, they collected information that proved very useful to respond to the many requests ECPAT was beginning to receive from the media interested in reporting about sex tourism and prostitution involving children.

Journalists from around the world arrived in Bangkok to cover the issue, and many were directed by ECPAT to places where they could see the phenomenon with their own eyes — and cameras! To the rest of the world, the dramatic stories and images they published became part of the evidence of the reality of child sex tourism.

But exposing abuse was not an end in itself. In **November 1991**, a meeting of lawyers organized in Hong Kong by the International Secretariat made that very point: if the ECPAT campaign was to be serious in its efforts to promote a legislative environment prohibiting child prostitution, getting a better grasp of the legal status of child sex tourism was key.

The meeting was coordinated by Pakistani human rights lawyer CLEMENT JOHN, then in charge of International Affairs at the Christian Conference of Asia, and was attended by lawyers from Sri Lanka, Thailand, Taiwan and the Philippines. It was an important wake-up call: legislation differed country-by-country, as did terms and definitions. No country had a clear means of dealing with foreigners who committed offences against children in their territory and while local police might be aware of instances of child sex tourism, they lacked the means to do anything about it. The lawyers agreed to develop model legislation protecting children from sexual exploitation and prostitution.

## THE SUKHOTAI INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

To maintain momentum, ECPAT planned an international conference on the sexual exploitation of children for **31 March 1992**. Entitled ‘Children in Prostitution – Victims of Tourism in Asia’, the event was organised at the Sukhothai **THAMMATHIRAT OPEN UNIVERSITY** in Bangkok.

With some 170 PEOPLE FROM 22 COUNTRIES in attendance, most of them paying their own way, the Sukhothai Conference, as it was to be known, was a clear testimony of the growing reach of ECPAT only a year or so after the official launch of the campaign. Acknowledging the number of organisations that had come out in support of the campaign, the foreword to the conference’s report described ECPAT as ‘a new coalition of more than 300 organisations determined to find ways to end the growing sexual abuse of Asian children.’ The event also highlighted the geographic breadth of child sex tourism and the strong international interest in the theme. For example, six German MPs, convinced by ECPAT Germany to come to Bangkok for the occasion, attended the conference, showing their concern for an issue that could no longer be ignored in their country. Opened by Dr Saisuree Chutikul, by then a minister in the government of

Thailand, it was also an occasion for the ECPAT friend to show that, in her new position, she was intending on carrying out the call she had made in Chiang Mai.

Another powerful moment to remember from the opening of the Sukhothai conference were two speeches by children from the region: **BUAKHAM**, a 14-year-old girl from northern Thailand, described her narrow escape from being sold to a brothel, and **THEWAN**, a young boy from the streets of Bangkok, urged foreign participants to tell their countrymen to 'stay away' from Thailand — 'Do not come! And, if you come, do not exploit our people!'

The messages delivered to the attendees by concerned children were more than symbolic and attest to the importance for ECPAT founders for meaningful child participation, which has been a hallmark of the network since this first conference until the present. At the event, children also met in their own groups, elected leaders and spoke out on most of the issues under discussion.

The conference, with its international audience, also underlined the importance of expanding ECPAT's outreach. In preparation for this, Ron O'Grady had published a book entitled '**THE CHILD AND THE TOURIST**' that would then be translated into five languages. In recognition of the importance of this area of work, ECPAT sought and received funding for a full-time staff person to take care of external communications, including a regular newsletter to inform member groups and others about what the organisation was doing.

As the Sukhothai Conference closed, delegates from Asia and elsewhere were asking crucial questions: Why are children being victimised? Why do foreign tourists come to Asia to abuse children? What is happening to our society? The closing statement offered a partial response: 'Materialism and consumerism have undermined community values throughout the world and have promoted a climate in which sexual gratification and the acquisition of wealth have become the goals for many people and the symbols of happiness'.

Sukhothai also strengthened the resolve of all involved in the emerging global movement to campaign in their respective countries. In Asia, ECPAT groups were advocating for legal reform at the national level. This led to early success, such as in 1992 when **ECPAT PHILIPPINES** helped to bring a law making the prostitution of children illegal into effect, and specify that both girls and boys were being victimised. Simultaneously, support groups explored the creation of new laws to facilitate the arrest and prosecution of child sexual abusers from their countries who were travelling to Asia.

Also, realising that few countries in Asia were immune to the trend that had been documented by ECPAT research, the International Secretariat considered including in its work more countries than the initial four. Visits took place and contacts were made in **VIETNAM** and **CAMBODIA**, and an ECPAT group was set up in **MUMBAI**, INDIA.

Affecting policies and changing future laws were not the only tools used by ECPAT when it started. Early on, ECPAT's activist approach often meant getting involved in immediate action, including:

- **Exposing child trafficking**, such as what happened in 1993 when the Bangkok office received information that young girls were being abducted from Burma and trafficked to Ranong (a port town in Thailand just across the Burmese border) where they were being held in brothels to serve as prostitutes for local seamen. ECPAT contacted the police and traveled to Ranong with a team of 35 tourist police to raid the brothels. They found what the lead officer called 'a hell-hole' and rescued 104 women, of whom 40 were underage and two pregnant; most were returned to their families.
- **Collaborating with the media**. Amongst the journalists sent to Bangkok in 1993 to gather stories on 'sex tourism' was **PAUL ROBINSON** of the Melbourne Sunday Age. Sudarat Sereewat and the Bangkok office had begun pulling together dossiers on pedophiles and keeping close track of what was going on around the city. ECPAT gave Robinson the name of a bar where many Australian expatriates tended to congregate. The journalist captured an image of a 30-year-old Australian leaving the bar with the 13-year-old Thai girl he had 'purchased' for the night. The photograph caused a media sensation in Australia, calling attention to the issue of child sex tourism and strengthening ECPAT's credibility. It was later used on the cover of Ron O'Grady's 1994 book '**THE RAPE OF THE INNOCENT**'.

Meanwhile in Europe, more countries became involved: a campaign ran in Switzerland in May 1992, and later in Belgium, a coalition of organisations led by the ICCB, **MEDECINS SANS FRONTIÈRES** and **UNICEF**, examined how to support ECPAT's campaign with a particular focus on the Brussels-based European institutions as a leverage point to influence the political thinking of European leaders.

In Japan in **June 1992**, after Japan-HELP and the Asian Women's shelter had gathered support for ECPAT, **ECPAT JAPAN-KANSAI** was established in Osaka.

Later that year in Australia, the 90 attendees of a conference entitled 'The Child and the Tourist' decided to constitute **ECPAT AUSTRALIA** based in Melbourne.

Meanwhile in Germany, ECPAT was stepping up its campaign towards legal change by targeting, amongst others, the new German minister for Women and Youth, a woman by the name of **ANGELA MERKEL**.



Building upon these first campaigns, ECPAT experimented with its first network-wide petition drive in early 1993. A short statement was drafted, and ECPAT members and supporters around the world were asked to obtain signatures from ‘eminent persons’ in their societies. The statement read simply: ‘I oppose the prostitution of children and view with concern the growing incidence of this practice. The sexual abuse of children by foreign tourists must be ended.’

By the deadline set one year after the Sukhothai Conference for **30 March 1993**, the list of signatories included the Prime Minister of Thailand, **CHUAN LEEKPAI**; the Prime Minister of Vietnam, **VO VAN KIET**; President of the Philippines, **FIDEL RAMOS**; South Africa’s Archbishop **DESMOND TUTU**; the **DALAI LAMA**; former U.S. President **JIMMY CARTER**; and former Australian Prime Minister, **BOB HAWKE**. The petition was also signed by **140 GERMAN PARLIAMENTARIANS** and received wide coverage in the US and German press. In Sweden alone, RADDA BARNEN (Swedish Save the Children) collected **90,000 SIGNATURES**.

For Martin Staebler, who had been an enthusiastic ECPAT leader since its beginning, this was an opportune moment for the movement to project itself into the future. Three years had passed since the Chiang Mai meeting and the three-year mark that was initially set for ending the campaign was fast approaching.

In **May 1993**, he invited the Executive Committee to meet in Bad Boll, Germany where he also set up meetings with several lawmakers. At the same time, ECPAT organised a consultation with local organisations and experts. The consultation was attended by the President of the German Bundestag, **RITA SÜSSMUTH**, who pledged the support of the German government to ECPAT’s efforts to bring to an end the commercial sexual abuse of children.

By the time of the meeting in Germany, the number of national offices established had grown from four to 12, in addition to the 10 support groups. ‘ECPAT’s strategies were seen to be effective and practical’, Information Officer **BERNADETTE MCMENAMIN** — who later would become CEO of **CHILD WISE (ECPAT AUSTRALIA)** — wrote at the time. The secretive world of child sex tourism was splashed across the world’s newspapers, governments were introducing child sex tourism legislation, travel industries were condemning child sex tourism and the world was taking notice.



## EXTRATERRITORIAL LAWS

For a long time, the high incidence of child sex tourism was in part the result of States' failure to investigate and bring to justice foreign perpetrators committing such offences abroad. Laws were not in place to enable police or prosecutors to prosecute perpetrators for crimes committed outside its territory. In other words, an alleged perpetrator of child sexual exploitation could escape prosecution simply by returning home. In the few countries where extraterritorial laws were in place, poor enforcement enabled perpetrators to evade justice.

To address this glaring gap in the law, ECPAT began a campaign in the early 1990s. As with the German law in 1993, ECPAT pushed for laws to be enacted to enable law enforcement and prosecutors to investigate and bring to justice nationals who were perpetrating sexual exploitation abroad. In some cases, States had the legal infrastructure already in place, through 'active personality or nationality' jurisdiction allowing for domestic laws to be applied to nationals engaged in alleged criminal conduct abroad.

In October 1995, four countries adopted extraterritorial laws. Through a national petition and media visibility, ECPAT had been able to influence France (February 1994), Australia (July 1994), USA (September 1994), Belgium (March 1995) and New Zealand (July 1995), to adopt or reform their laws to enable foreign perpetrators to be prosecuted at home.

By October 2007, over 40 countries had enacted or were applying such laws with varying levels of success in their implementation.

A French man was tried in 2001 for having sexually abused an 11-year-old girl in Pattaya, Thailand following an investigation into a child pornography ring. The abuse had been filmed by one of two Swiss men who were with him. It was the first case to be tried under extraterritorial legislation in France.

In 2006, a Belgian national previously convicted of sexual crimes against children in his own country was identified and prosecuted in Cambodia. The man had been sexually abusing a young child for close to three years in exchange for financial support to the boy's family. The case could have moved to Belgium, but was tried in Cambodia under the domestic 'debauchery law', sending a clear message that Cambodia was stepping up enforcement of its domestic legislation against sexual exploitation of children.

# EXTENDING THE LIFE OF THE CAMPAIGN

This was an opportune moment to keep moving forward, not close shop. So, after looking back on the progress made during the first three years, it was decided that much remained to be achieved and ECPAT should continue its work through 1996.

The Executive Committee also made other decisions that would prove crucial to ECPAT's future evolution. The organisation was to retain its name and emphasis on child sex tourism/prostitution, but would also include child trafficking and child pornography in its research and scope, given the close ties between the three phenomena.

Children were often trafficked so that they could be exploited in prostitution for the tourist trade; when photographs or videos of these liaisons were taken, they became the basis for the sale of pornographic images of children. After three years of research, observation and operations, ECPAT had become aware not only that the three issues were closely interrelated, but also that criminal networks were reaping large profits from these forms of exploitation.

Additionally, the Executive Committee agreed that ECPAT should explore the potential for expanding to other regions of the world. The many inquiries, expressions of interest and requests for information and involvement received since 1991 led ECPAT's leadership to understand that the sexual exploitation of children went far beyond Asia, and that developing a wider network of support could only serve to protect more children and strengthen the network.

The meeting in Germany in May was auspicious. In **July 1993**, Germany passed what would prove to be very important legislation, amending its penal code to allow their law enforcement agencies to prosecute, in national courts, German citizens who commit sexual offences against children in other countries.

**Over the next two years**, as a result of persistent advocacy by ECPAT support groups — and national groups in Asia who supplied them with information about the activities of their nationals — similar 'extraterritoriality' legislation was passed in an important step forward for ECPAT's campaign. An important facet of most of these laws was that the act prosecuted did not necessarily have to be a crime in the country where it was committed. Thus offenders could be pursued in countries that still lacked effective child protection legislation.

Later that year an opportunity arose to test the new legal instrument. Sweden already had extraterritoriality legislation in place but never used it in the context of child sexual

exploitation before. ECPAT Sweden worked with police authorities to target a Swedish government official who made frequent visits to Thailand and the Philippines, and while in Bangkok, ECPAT coordinated with Thai police authorities. ECPAT's pincer movement resulted in the man's arrest, extradition and subsequent trial and jail term in Sweden — proving that extra-territoriality laws could effectively combat child sex tourism.

During his trial, the man, in his late sixties, claimed that he was just 'having fun' with a series of Thai and Filipino boys he had molested over the years. ECPAT brought to Stockholm the 13-year-old boy who had been with the offender at the time of the arrest to testify at the trial. When asked about the abuse he experienced, the boy said he felt as if he had 'fallen into a black hole into hell'.

## PLANNING A GLOBAL EVENT

Once the decision to continue was made, ECPAT started planning new awareness-raising activities, activism and advocacy in favour of laws to protect children. The Secretariat developed a 'Strategic Plan' to guide ECPAT's activities through 1996. One of the goals discussed at length was to sponsor a major international event that would draw global attention to child sexual exploitation. At this stage ECPAT had just a handful of member groups, an understaffed international office in Bangkok and very limited funding, making this goal quite ambitious.

In **June 1994**, ECPAT leaders decided to test the waters: to celebrate three years of a remarkably successful campaign and action programme for children in prostitution in the Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan and Sri Lanka, they invited about 70 people based in Thailand at the Bangkok YMCA to join in a new 'International Consultation on Children in Prostitution'.

Participants to this consultation included representatives from several governments, international agencies such as UNICEF and the **INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO)** and NGOs who shared ECPAT's concerns about the value and feasibility of a large-scale international event.

Inaugurating the conference, Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai of Thailand, said: 'Child prostitution is a new form of trade in humans. It is indeed shocking to witness the widespread sex trade and child prostitution around the world. Today, the problem has become a transnational trade involving powerful organisations, which have a close-knit network.'

After two days of debate, the group concluded that ECPAT should pursue the idea of a World Congress dedicated to the topic of 'ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children' to be held in 1996.

This was the first formal use of the new terminology coined by ECPAT. The acronym, **CSEC**, is now widely used in the field. It distinguishes between sexual exploitation for financial gain and other forms of sexual abuse. ECPAT also felt that terms such as ‘child prostitution’ and ‘child sex tourism’ could be construed to imply some compliance by children in these activities, whereas the term ‘commercial sexual exploitation of children’ clearly expresses the reality that children are victims of the greed or sexual preferences of their exploiters.

Unfortunately, despite their enthusiasm, none of those attending the Bangkok meeting were able to offer concrete support for a World Congress, and ECPAT still lacked the high profile and human and financial resources to undertake the challenge of organising such a meeting alone. Most international meetings at the time were sponsored by United Nations (UN) agencies and were led for the most part by government representatives leaving little room for non-governmental groups to influence decisions about the meeting’s design, purpose, agenda or invitees.

ECPAT strongly believed that it was crucial to involve governments in its efforts since ultimately governments are responsible for the well-being of children in their countries. But a UN conference would leave ECPAT and other NGOs out in the cold, as well as exclude representatives from the travel and tourism sector, law enforcement, the legislative branch, psychologists and social workers and especially children. However, the leadership reasoned, if a government were to sponsor the meeting, other governments would surely attend. So it was decided to ask a friendly government to co-sponsor the meeting with ECPAT’s representatives.

After further consultations, ECPAT leaders decided to ask the Swedish government to host the congress and serve as co-sponsor. Sweden had a strong ECPAT support group with ties to the respected Swedish NGO Radda Barnen (Save the Children). In Sweden, **HELENA KARLÉN** was coordinating ECPAT’s activities in the country and also had excellent ties to the government, having served in the Swedish diplomatic corps for 15 years. In addition, Sweden had an outstanding record of support for children’s rights.

In October 1994, Ron O’Grady and Helena Karlén were granted a meeting with the newly-elected Prime Minister of Sweden **INGVAR CARLSSON** who had been a major supporter of the 1990 World Summit for Children in New York during his previous term in office. Upon receiving ECPAT, the Prime Minister enthusiastically agreed that Sweden would co-sponsor and help to finance the Congress, along with ECPAT and UNICEF. He and his staff estimated that the meeting would attract a maximum of 50 governments.

Helena Karlén recalled that at the time the Swedish government — like others in the developed world — viewed child sexual exploitation as something that took place elsewhere and happened to other people. The issue of who creates the demand for

child sex tourism had not yet been placed squarely in the spotlight. From Stockholm, Ron O'Grady flew to New York where he secured an agreement from the UNICEF Deputy Secretary General that it would provide support and some funding.

Finally, by late 1994, the key pieces were in place to hold what would become the 'First World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children'. ECPAT had less than two years to prepare for the Congress, while at the same time continuing to build the organisation.

## RALLYING SUPPORTERS

In **January 1995**, Amihan Abueva was appointed Executive Secretary of ECPAT with the task of overseeing preparations for the Congress, along with International Coordinator Ron O'Grady. As International Coordinator, Ron O'Grady asked knowledgeable ECPAT members to travel to **LATIN AMERICA** (Amihan Abueva), **EASTERN EUROPE** (Helena Karlén) and **AFRICA** (Martin Staebler) to meet with individuals and organizations that might be interested in ECPAT's work.

The visits served several purposes: they contributed to fact-finding on manifestations of CSEC in different parts of the world and they provided occasions for meeting government leaders and lawmakers, NGOs and journalists to promote interest in the upcoming Congress. These regional visits also laid the foundation for the future expansion of the ECPAT network.

Amihan Abueva visited five cities in **BRAZIL**, finding a very receptive environment for ECPAT's work there, as well as in several Central American countries. In Asia, ECPAT member groups were forming in several more countries (Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan and Vietnam). A few groups in India had expressed interest in joining, but given India's size and geographic dispersion, forming a single ECPAT group remained a serious challenge. Consultations with Indian groups, nevertheless, suggested that hundreds of thousands of children were being exposed to CSEC; many were trafficked from Nepal to India, others from India to the Middle East.

Following the 1995 visit by Martin Staebler to East Africa, a coalition of 20 NGOs formed a national ECPAT group in **KENYA**. At the same time, ECPAT France initiated contacts in **WEST AND NORTH AFRICA**, while others began looking at expansion to the Middle East.

The campaign was definitely taking on an international aura. In 1995, a documentary film on ECPAT's work entitled 'Children Are Not for Sale', based on a book written the previous year by Ron O'Grady, was widely distributed and its soundtrack translated into several languages, which raised ECPAT's international profile.

**The year 1995** also brought a move for ECPAT headquarters from a cramped apartment in a distant suburb to a larger and more centrally located space in Bangkok. A faith-based organization offered the space and building, and **THE EMBASSY OF JAPAN** stepped in to cover the cost of renovation and equipping the office with computers. Japan's legislative branch was calling for support to groups and activities targeting child sex tourism and prostitution.

Both acts of generosity constituted an enormous gain for the organisation, which was growing and urgently needed the convenience and visibility offered by the more central location. ECPAT launched a 'Fund for Children' that channelled funding to ECPAT groups involved in helping young girls and boys recover physically and emotionally from sexual abuse, allowing them to meet, exchange ideas and receive training. The Fund also provided seed money to ECPAT groups launching new programmes. Although this Fund was eventually eliminated, it helped many groups to get started during ECPAT's early days.

In **January 1996**, ECPAT followed up on its earlier discussion with lawyers by jointly holding a consultation on 'Enforcing the Law' with **INTERPOL** that brought together more than 50 law enforcement experts from 17 countries, including the President of Interpol, the National Police Commissioner of Sweden, Björn Eriksson. The experts reviewed new laws on child sexual exploitation being passed in different countries and discussed how to refine strategies for monitoring, arresting and prosecuting exploiters. It had become clear to ECPAT that without stringent enforcement, the new laws would simply gather dust.

Growing interest in legal reform and law enforcement led to the formation within ECPAT of a legal advisory service, led by a human rights lawyer, **MUIREANN O'BRIAN**, who was seconded to ECPAT for two years by the German Protestant personnel service **DIENSTE IN UBERSEE** and others offered advice to national ECPAT groups and began compiling case studies of how laws against child sexual exploitation were being enforced around the world.

One of the problems that emerged from the legal research — and remains an issue in many countries — is that laws are as likely to punish child victims of these crimes as they are to prosecute the adult perpetrators. ECPAT convened a meeting in Southern Africa between its consultants, legislators and NGOs from five African countries to compare different laws and define what changes were needed.

ECPAT's work on the tourism industry continued as it commissioned two sociologists, **JULIA O'CONNELL DAVIDSON** and **JACQUELINE SANCHEZ TAYLOR**, to study the

impact of prostitution on children and its links with sex tourism. The results were published in a seven-booklet series covering: Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Goa, South Africa, Thailand and Venezuela.

Support groups also continued their advocacy work with the travel industry; for example, ECPAT Australia produced a travel industry guide called 'Child Sex Tourism, Travel Agents and the Law' that contained helpful documentation for travel agents.

The early 1990s were a busy period for ECPAT; the intensity would only increase as the date of the World Congress drew nearer.





2

1996: A  
PIVOTAL  
YEAR

**A three-year deadline had been set** at the launch of the initial ECPAT campaign in 1990, and in 1993, it had been extended until 1996. After three years, the campaign was to close, so it was thought the institutional set-up that supported it would have to be disbanded.

However, as the date was approaching, it had become clear that the 1996 deadline would have to be pushed further again. Even the idea of such an imperative time frame was now logically questioned by ECPAT supporters: yes, progress had been made, but was it enough to call it quits? In the face of the number of unsolved issues that had been identified over the past six years on which nobody else seemed to be fully dedicated the way the ECPAT network had been, was it realistic to imagine that the energy mobilised over the previous six years would now be put to rest?

The year 1996 itself, which turned out to be a pivotal year for ECPAT, answered these questions very pragmatically. It was marked by two major events that would shape the future of the movement set in motion in Chiang Mai in 1990:

- **The ‘First World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children’ held in August; and**
- **The resultant development of a ‘Code of Conduct’ for the travel and tourism industry, which would eventually be finalized in 1998.**

Combined, these two events in 1996 placed ECPAT in an unequivocal position of global leadership on the issue of the commercial sexual exploitation of children. This visibility and responsibility meant, in effect, that the deliberately ephemeral nature of the original campaign had to be rethought and for ECPAT to be true to its mission, the structure supporting it would then need an extended lifespan.

## WORLD CONGRESS: A NEW CONCEPT

ECPAT’s plan for a global meeting over which it could exert important influence was quite revolutionary and represented a new model: the idea differed significantly from the large UN-driven World Conferences that were one of the hallmarks of the decade in the international policy arena. Yes, ECPAT was keen on having **GOVERNMENTS** and **INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS** attend, but it also wanted **NGOS, LAWYERS, PARLIAMENTARIANS, LAW ENFORCEMENT, SOCIAL WORKERS, COUNSELLORS** and others involved in the day-to-day implementation of work against child sexual exploitation to be present and have a say in the outcome.

For ECPAT, the goal was no longer simply to raise awareness. Rather, it now sought to promote agreement amongst the various sectors involved in what measures were

required to put to an end to the sexual abuse of children, for which ECPAT had been created to eliminate, and obtain commitments from governments and others to take the steps needed to do so.

This multi-stakeholder approach was strategic for ECPAT, and from the beginning of the campaign, it was clear that to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children, change had to happen at multiple levels: behaviour, legal, etc. Civil society organisations had to engage not only governments but also the private sector.

ECPAT also felt strongly that children and youth should be involved in the meeting — another departure from the normal protocol of international meetings.

The agreement by the Swedish Government to host the meeting achieved the first, and very important, goal, which was enhanced by the announcement of popular Swedish **QUEEN SILVIA** that she would serve as the event's patron.

Inevitably, planning a meeting simultaneously from Stockholm, Bangkok and New York (UNICEF headquarters) proved challenging, as did overcoming the differences in approach and style of a government, a UN agency and a tiny organisation supported at the global level by a permanent staff of less than five. ECPAT spoke for very diverse groups and coalitions. It had been set up to be the backbone of a campaign, and as such, it lacked the structure — and the resources — that a larger international NGO could have brought to the table.

To alleviate this concern, the Swedish Government asked a fourth actor to join the preparation team: **THE NGO GROUP FOR THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**, an umbrella organisation based in Geneva which represented many NGOs, including a number of ECPAT members.

Finally, to oversee the preparation of the event, an Executive Committee for the World Congress was set up. Each of the 4 co-organisers had a voice on the Committee, which was chaired by former UNICEF chairwoman, **LISBET PALME**, the widow of Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme. Former UN Special Rapporteur, Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn of Thailand, was designated as head of the drafting committee for the Declaration and Plan of Action.

**In March 1996**, the Congress Committee met in Bangkok to approve a background document reflecting their agreement on the purpose of the World Congress. 'Its primary purpose', it read in its final version, 'is to create awareness and to draw international attention to the problems of commercial sexual exploitation of children and to promote the development of national plans to combat all forms of such abuse in the specific contexts in which they occur. To this end the Congress will consider a Declaration and develop an Agenda for Action.'

A series of research studies were commissioned to serve as the basis for discussion at the event. ECPAT was to provide six of the nine papers to be presented and discussed during the Congress.

Themes covered included: 'Sex Exploiters'; Children in Pornography; Tourism and Sexual Exploitation; Health Matters; Legal Reform and Law Enforcement; Prevention and Psycho-Social Rehabilitation; the role of Education; the Media; and Human Values. The paper on 'sex exploiters' represented ECPAT's first effort to put a spotlight on the offenders whose demand for sex with children was fuelling CSEC and the intermediaries (e.g. recruiters, traffickers, procurers and brothel owners) profiting from meeting this demand.

Preparing these papers for an important international meeting meant making sure that the content was accurate, relevant, comprehensive and up-to-date — which in turn implied considerable ECPAT time and resources.

With the exception of some research in Asia, little had been published on the topic of CSEC, and ECPAT wanted to make sure the issues were couched clearly, accurately and in such a way that solutions could be envisioned. For example, preparation of the paper on laws and law enforcement involved convening at least two major meetings prior to the Congress: one in Bangkok with leading criminologists from around the world, and the other with law enforcement agencies from the US, UK and Australia held in Washington, D.C. Other pre-congress meetings and consultations were organised, throughout what was increasingly a truly global network, from Strasbourg and Stockholm to Calcutta and Kathmandu.

The Bangkok and Washington meetings on crime and law enforcement yielded a conclusion that did not come as a surprise to ECPAT and served to validate its approach: because sexual exploitation of children was increasingly international in nature, coherence amongst laws in different countries and cross-border cooperation amongst law enforcement agencies were central to stopping criminals from simply boarding a plane to escape prosecution and justice.

Surprisingly, considering the topic of the Congress, reaching an agreement on giving children a significant role at the meeting was more of an uphill battle. But after Amihan Abueva forcefully argued in its favour in the name of ECPAT, the idea that youth participation should be more prominent was finally accepted.

Unfortunately, ECPAT was not able to convince the Committee that in order to monitor adherence to the 'Agenda for Action' foreseen in the background document, the Congress should end with the creation of a global mechanism.

With these general principles agreed upon, the co-organisers spent the following months developing a framework for the joint Declaration and 'Agenda for Action' to

which government participants would commit. This, too, required overcoming very different approaches in order to reach consensus. For ECPAT, the commitment to action by governments and others was fundamental. Its leaders fought hard for strong language that required meaningful action, and for a date by which these actions should be undertaken to create accountability. It was very important to ECPAT that the meeting did not conclude with a series of vague statements of support.

**In April 1996**, the ECPAT Executive Committee met in Tokyo, Japan, with a weighty agenda. The meeting was hosted by the Swedish Embassy in Tokyo and opened by Japanese TV personality and UNICEF goodwill ambassador Tetsuko Kuroyanagi, the most famous Japanese woman at the time, which certainly helped raise the profile of the meeting in the media. It was also attended by several members of the Japanese Parliament.

In addition to meeting and advocating with Japanese government officials, there were a number of internal matters for ECPAT that needed to be discussed and decided: ECPAT needed to finalise its own plans and strategies for the World Congress and decide what to do about its own future before the end of the year.

Because of the important decisions in the balance, **REPRESENTATIVES FROM 12 OF THE 17 NATIONAL ECPAT GROUPS** active by then attended the meeting in person, along with members of an internal ‘task force’ of active members and supporters that had been gathering opinions on key issues from all those inside the growing ECPAT network and its key allies.

After two days of discussion, a strong consensus emerged confirming that ECPAT would:

- **Continue its work for another five years through 2001**
- **Officially expand the scope of its work to include child trafficking for sexual purposes and child pornography**
- **Retain the ECPAT acronym, but change the full name to: ‘End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes’**
- **Officially become international in scope and membership**
- **Transform itself from a campaign to a non-governmental organisation (NGO).**

These decisions represented a natural outcome of ECPAT’s growth and experience during the previous five to six years. While reaching agreement on the name was reportedly the most hotly debated of the issues — final decision, as we know, was to keep the acronym unchanged while giving it a new meaning — it was the transition from a campaign to an NGO that would affect ECPAT most profoundly in years to come (see Chapters 3 and 4).

## THERE IS WORK TO DO

‘To me , it is of great importance that the Declaration and Agenda for Action has been unanimously adopted. This document is based upon relevant articles in the legally binding UN Convention on the Right of the Child, ratified by 188 nations. I am also pleased that you have agreed on a deadline for the implementation of the stipulated actions. This reflects the sense of urgency which must accompany our efforts. We have to act now as we have to act forcefully.

In doing so, we shall, according to the Declaration and Agenda for Action, call upon all sectors of society concerned, to join forces and to cooperate on national, regional and international levels. We owe it to the children who have been killed by sex offenders and to the children who are at risk of becoming victims.

This modern form of slavery has to be stopped!

Much has been achieved during this Congress but the most important work remains to be done. When you return home you must make the words of the declaration and Agenda for Action come alive. Implementation units which provide for the broadest possible participation should be established as well as coalitions which builds bridges between NGOs, governments, the private sector and all represented in this great hall today.

As long as there is any child who is being sexually exploited, there is work to do.’

Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden

In Tokyo, a new ECPAT mission statement was approved. 'ECPAT', it said, 'is a global network of organisations and individuals working together for the elimination of child prostitution, child pornography and the trafficking of children for sexual purposes. It seeks to encourage the world community to ensure that children everywhere enjoy their fundamental rights, free and secure from all forms of commercial sexual exploitation.'

Also, illustrating the key role of the media in spreading ECPAT's message to the broad public, a decision was made ahead of the Stockholm Congress to increase the International Secretariat's capacity with new dedicated staff.

And, as a result of an initiative by Radda Barnen in Sweden and ECPAT International to increase the visibility of the issue of the sexual exploitation of children, a pre-congress documentary series was filmed by a UK production company and the Television Suisse Romande.

# THE FIRST WORLD CONGRESS

**On 27 August 1996**, when ECPAT representatives arrived at the conference site, attendance had surpassed all expectations. Instead of the 'maximum 50' governments predicted earlier by a Swedish official, **DELEGATES FROM 122 GOVERNMENTS** were present in Stockholm, along with others elected from **NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS; INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS** promoting child rights; law enforcement fighting against child labour; **NGOS** working on children's issues; **INDIVIDUALS** involved in rehabilitation of both victims and offenders; and a few representatives from the **TOURISM INDUSTRY**. In total, **1,300 PARTICIPANTS** and **500 MEDIA OUTLETS** crowded into the conference centre rented for this purpose more than a year earlier. Some **15-20 YOUNG PEOPLE** working with ECPAT were also at the meeting to speak, debate and advocate for action.

Clearly, ECPAT's patient work over the past five years was bearing fruit. Few were now denying the existence of commercial child sexual exploitation, and a broad array of actors were in place to discuss how the world could address this heinous practice. In the words of **CAROL BELLAMY**, one of the keynote speakers in Stockholm, it was time for the world 'to shine light on the problem'.

In his welcome address, Swedish Prime Minister **GÖRAN PERSSON** exhorted the participants to 'go from words to deeds' in the fight against CSEC. Practically speaking, this was a call to get on board with the Declaration and Agenda for Action that the organisers had been refining for several months.

After the Prime Minister, the second speaker was Ron O'Grady who recognised the initiative of ECPAT for proposing the Congress.

'Over the last two years', he told the delegates, 'we have discussed whether a Congress was enough; whether ECPAT should now close down and leave the struggle to the governments and the many other agencies represented here. When we raised that possibility, there was a cry of outrage from our constituency. "The task is not finished", they said. "The governments need the support of a community movement" said others. As a result, ECPAT has now decided that it will continue at least for another five years after the Congress and we will hope that by that time the agenda we will adopt here will be so well implemented that there will be no need for an organisation like ours'.

Other opening speeches were particularly memorable. One of them was a message from **NELSON MANDELA**, the President of South Africa at the time: 'Our children are our most treasured assets. They are not ours to be used and abused, but to be loved and nurtured. Their well-being is ultimately the well-being of an entire nation. Child sexual abuse is an abuse of power'.



## THE AGENDA FOR ACTION: A NEW MANDATE FOR ECPAT

On 30 August 1996, at the end of the Stockholm World Congress, representatives of 122 Governments, National Parliaments, the United Nations, the private sector, academia and civil society, made a commitment to children to create a global partnership against the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

In front of 500 media outlets, participants adopted the Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action, which laid out specific steps to be taken to address the issue.

ECPAT took up the challenge of monitoring progress towards these commitments in regular country reports. These reports provided a baseline for countries' performances against the commitments made, and became an invaluable resource for those in charge of passing legislation and designing programmes to address the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

But the audience especially held its breath when **ERIC DERYCKE**, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of **BELGIUM**, related the horror that had just occurred in his country. Just two weeks before the Congress, a man was arrested for the kidnapping, torture and sexual assault of six young girls, whom he kept enslaved in a concrete bunker; four of them, **JULIE** and **MELISSA**, **EEFJE** and **AN**, were murdered. **SABINE** and **LAETITIA** were saved. The Dutroux case had shocked all of Belgium, as well as sharpened media interest in the issues being addressed at the Congress.

## THE STOCKHOLM DECLARATION

A skilled negotiator, Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn, who was designated as the Congress Rapporteur General, was an excellent choice for the task of bringing the disparate Congress participants together in support of the Declaration and Agenda for Action. In Stockholm, his skills were carefully applied and by the end of the Congress, both documents were approved unanimously. The year 2000 was chosen as the date by which governments should report back on their progress toward meeting the goals of the Agenda for Action, which came to be known as the A4A.

Adopted unanimously on **30 August 1996**, **THE STOCKHOLM DECLARATION** stated that all participants were hereby committing themselves to a ‘global partnership against the commercial sexual exploitation of children.’

The Declaration defined the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) as: ‘the use of a child for sexual purposes in exchange for cash or in-kind favours between the child her or himself, the customer, intermediary or agent and others who profit from the trade in children for these purposes.’

Acknowledging that children around the world were being subjected to CSEC, it called for ‘concerted action’ in communities, countries, regions and around the globe to bring an end to the phenomenon.

Citing the CRC, the Declaration pointed out that by treating children as both sexual and commercial objects, CSEC violates their fundamental rights as human beings and amounts to a ‘contemporary form of slavery.’

Referring to the causes of CSEC, the Declaration noted that while poverty is one contributing factor that increases children’s vulnerability, ‘a range of other complex contributing factors’ include: economic disparities, inequitable socio-economic structures, dysfunctional families, lack of education, growing consumerism, urban-rural migration, gender discrimination, irresponsible male sexual behaviour and harmful traditional practices, as well as armed conflicts and trafficking of children.

It also identified those who, directly or indirectly, bear responsibility for ongoing child sexual exploitation including: intermediaries, family members, the business sector, service providers, customers, community leaders and government officials, all of whom may contribute to the exploitation through indifference, ignorance of the harmful consequences suffered by children or the perpetuation of attitudes and values that view children as economic commodities.

This point was very important to ECPAT, especially as the issues of demand and social tolerance for commercial child sexual exploitation were increasingly important points of discussion within the network. But as understanding grew of CSEC's global breadth and depth, ECPAT understood that the spotlight must also be placed on society's attitudes toward children and their right to be free of sexual exploitation of any kind.

At the heart of the Stockholm **AGENDA FOR ACTION (A4A)** is an urgent call for all States, societies, and national, regional and international organisations to undertake coordinated actions to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

In countries, the A4A encouraged close cooperation of national governments and civil society to 'strengthen comprehensive, cross-sectoral and integrated strategies and measures, so that by the year 2000 there are national agenda(s) for action and indicators of progress with set goals and a time frame for implementation, targeted to reducing the number of children vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation and nurturing an environment, attitudes and practices responsive to child rights'.

Countries were to develop databases that would shed light on the numbers of children exploited and which children were most vulnerable, as well as on exploiters. Having reliable data would allow for concrete assessments of how each country should proceed.

Those working at the regional and international levels were to promote closer cooperation among the many entities with a mandate to enforce children's rights, including not only UNICEF, but Interpol, the **WORLD TOURISM ORGANISATION**, the International Labour Organization, the **WORLD BANK** and several UN human rights offices, such as the Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children.

The four main areas of operation covered by the Agenda for Action were: protection, prevention, rehabilitation and participation.

In each case, the agenda for action laid out the steps to be taken to address the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) by those actors present in Stockholm and party to the agreement, for example:

- **Devising new laws, policies and programmes to protect vulnerable children**
- **Establishing more targeted cooperation with law enforcement**
- **Creating safe havens for children who escape from CSEC**
- **Working with communities so that they understand how CSEC works and the risks to children**
- **Training social workers and others to work with child victims**
- **Facilitating the recovery and reintegration of child victims**
- **Promoting the participation of children, including CSEC victims, in activities aimed at preventing other children from being victimized.**

Overall, the outcome of the World Congress represented a significant victory for ECPAT. As a result of its hard work and dedication, a large number of influential actors, including 122 governments, had been exposed to the fundamental issues related to the commercial child sexual exploitation and agreed to begin taking action to combat it.

Media coverage had been extraordinary: a binder compiled at the end of the meeting by an ECPAT media officer containing an incomplete selection of articles published was 960-pages long and did not include many of the reprints of newswire coverage, nor an accurate account of how many radio channels and television channels had picked up the news from Stockholm. The world was now listening and, with that level of media attention, governments and others had committed to act.

However, there was a problem. The Declaration was not legally binding, and despite ECPAT's attempts, no unique body had been created to monitor the progress made by countries in their action plans — or any other aspect of the Declaration and Agenda for Action. Without a means to hold governments accountable, the public commitments that ECPAT had so determinedly sought could easily be shelved along with hundreds of other good intentions and the outcomes of the Congress might never lead to concrete action.

So, following the Congress, ECPAT met with UNICEF, which agreed to provide financial support for the construction of a global database capable of monitoring progress toward the creation and subsequent implementation of National Plans of Action (NPAs). ECPAT took up the challenge of creating the database and monitoring results, as well as preparing progress reports. It was agreed that ECPAT would become a 'resource centre' for dissemination of information on the progress of the Agenda for Action.

In the years to come, monitoring the Agenda for Action became a vital component of ECPAT's activities and a central part of its contribution to global anti-CSEC efforts. In addition to preparing detailed progress reports, ECPAT International provided technical assistance to national groups to prepare Alternative Reports when they are not satisfied with government reporting.

Another, indirect, outcome of the Congress announced in Stockholm was the formation of **THE CHILD PROSTITUTION AND TOURISM WATCH TASK FORCE** by the United Nations **WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION** with a mandate to: 'prevent, uncover, isolate and eradicate the exploitation of children in sex tourism'. The Task Force has continued to provide a forum for sharing information and campaigning against child sex tourism.

The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism, which was finalised, and was to become a broadly accepted tool by the travel and tourism industry, was also a result of the 1996 World Congress. Sweden, host of the Congress, would be the first country to promote and sign it.

Also, attention in Stockholm had expanded beyond tourism to include other forms of travel because mass tourism were not the only travellers. By the mid-1990s, ECPAT had become aware that some of those travelling officially for government agencies were purposely seeking to be placed in countries where they might have the opportunity to engage in sex with a child. After the Congress, some governments began to include discussions of child sex tourism in the curricula delivered to those serving overseas in official positions.

ECPAT's prominent role in the Stockholm World Congress contributed greatly to its growth. By the end of 1996 — the official close of the second phase of the 1991 'Campaign' — ECPAT groups had been established IN **27 COUNTRIES** and **INFORMAL NETWORKS** in several others were in regular contact.



3

1997-2000:  
CREATING  
AN NGO OF  
ANOTHER KIND

**Now that the ambition of the Campaign had expanded** to the world stage and ECPAT had announced it was to become a new international NGO joining a rather crowded field of defenders of child rights and protection, the success of the First World Congress brought its leaders new challenges. What was the network's real capacity to make good on the Stockholm commitment to monitor the Agenda for Action? How exactly would the decision made in 1996 in Tokyo to transition from campaign to NGO materialise and how, in the meantime, was the existing ECPAT network going to respond to the new demand and many requests for membership, which had risen sharply after Stockholm?

With an International Secretariat still comprised of less than half a dozen permanent staff, most day-to-day decisions were still made at the country level by national groups. As a rule prior to Stockholm and a consequence of the campaign focus on tourism flows in and out of Asia, ECPAT had divided the world into two categories in relation to their position on the Asian tourism map: so-called 'receiving countries' and 'sending countries.' Groups in the former concentrated more on prevention or community work, while groups in the latter focused more on finding ways to reduce demand for the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The creation and enforcement of relevant laws at the national level was a focus of all ECPAT members. Many also conducted other activities outside of ECPAT's core mission and campaign focus depending on their history prior to joining ECPAT or their own priorities.

The Executive Committee itself, which throughout the early years of the campaign had been steering the international activities carried in the name of ECPAT, had to recognise the key role of these groups. It did so by consulting them regularly and by holding its meetings in a variety of countries. This provided a way to better understand not only the diverse reality of the sexual exploitation of children on the ground, but also the diversity of approaches to address it within the network.

However **in January 1997**, the main concern was with the staffing needs and the governance of the international structure. The issue was especially pressing because many of ECPAT's original international leaders, people who were devoted full-time to the international work for six years, were ready to move on to other roles.

After two years in Bangkok as Executive Secretary, Amihan Abueva was leaving her staff position to continue ECPAT's work in the Philippines. Dr Prakai Nontawasee, who had served on the Executive Committee since 1990 as chairperson, was also resigning for health reasons. Ron O'Grady, who announced after Stockholm that he was retiring from his role as international coordinator, was chosen to replace her as the new Chair of ECPAT International and Helen Karlen, whose role in the Stockholm Congress had been crucial, was appointed Vice-Chair.



The departure of Amihan Abueva from Bangkok and the retirement of Ron O’Grady, who had become the most recognised spokesperson for ECPAT, left a void at the Secretariat that had to be filled in ways that would fit the new organisational project. To prepare for this, it was decided that the Executive Secretary’s job, started by Sudarat Sereewat and Amihan Abueva, and the position of international coordinator, which had been Ron O’Grady’s title since 1991, would be combined into a new position, ‘director of ECPAT International’, for which the Committee would lead an international recruitment process. Meanwhile, to retain some continuity, Ron O’Grady and Amihan Abueva were asked to serve on the Executive Committee. **MUIREANNE O’BRIAN**, who had acted for several years as ECPAT’s legal advisor, agreed to work in the Bangkok office with the twin roles of developing a framework for monitoring country progress on the Agenda for Action post-Stockholm and assisting national groups to do so as well.

The search took some time and it would be another six months until **HERVÉ BERGER**, previously Deputy Secretary General of Amnesty International in London, was appointed as the first director of ECPAT International. His priority, matching the Executive Committee’s vision, was to strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat and develop a strategy to maintain the momentum created by the First World Congress.

This also required an ECPAT network that would fit the ambition of Stockholm. For a collective that had been assembled more by circumstances and encounters than by planning, this was a Copernican revolution: it meant not only strengthening existing member groups, but also considering formal criteria for admitting new members.

Until then, starting with the four original groups in Asia and support groups in Japan, Europe, America and the Pacific, membership to ECPAT had been extremely flexible, but the World Congress and its preparation fundamentally changed this landscape. In addition to the groups that had joined the network between 1990 and 1996, a growing number of organisations were knocking at the door of ECPAT asking to be members.

At the same time, as ECPAT itself was becoming an NGO, the number of NGOs supporting the ECPAT campaign in national networks decreased. In Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands for instance, a number of the NGOs that had initially been involved in the campaign started to take their distance from ECPAT.

**In July 1997**, the committee decided that in making the transition from campaign to NGO, it would maintain the flexibility in membership principles that had worked quite well until then: ECPAT would remain a network of like-minded organizations engaged in collaborative efforts to end the commercial child sexual exploitation. Some would be ECPAT members (such as the groups originally formed in Asia and the early support groups) working only on CSEC, while others could be affiliates collaborating with ECPAT when the opportunity arose.

In another words, ECPAT was creating a new kind of NGO. It was doing so by trying to keep the best of both worlds: the energy of an open activist movement, and the structure and solidity of a global organisation. Clearly, this meant entering uncharted territories.

Unlike many NGOs operating in more than one country but focusing on a single issue (health, education, justice, etc.) and establishing national offices with the sole purpose of working on that issue, ECPAT had never sought to impose a unitary form of organisation on its national groups. These groups, often led by individuals well known to ECPAT's leadership in Bangkok, were also linked to each other by strong personal relationships. This diversity and web of relationships was central to ECPAT's achievements since its launch. Going against it would have endangered the future of the organisation.

This did not mean that no rules would apply. Protecting the integrity of the ECPAT name was important and it was made clear that groups seeking membership had to be approved prior to being able to use the name ECPAT. The vetting process was meant to ensure congruence of goals and objectives. ECPAT could, for instance, accept established NGOs working on other aspects of child rights as members, but they had to be willing to make a commitment to specifically combating the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Later in 1998, **ORGANISATIONS IN 11 NEW COUNTRIES** were accepted as members of ECPAT International, including for the first time three from Eastern Europe: **POLAND, MOLDOVA** and **ALBANIA**.

Another issue required precaution: ECPAT's increased visibility was also a risk as groups or individuals might attempt to use ties to ECPAT to position themselves to exploit children sexually. This was unfortunately a serious possibility and as a global network attracting dozens of organisations in a large number of countries where ECPAT might have no or little contacts, this concern had to be handled with great care.

First, ECPAT formalised the internal code of conduct for its members and their staff and made sure it was implemented. As the issue was also of concern to other NGOs and entities in the area of child protection — a number of high profile cases had revealed that some predators joined humanitarian aid and other groups to approach vulnerable children — ECPAT also started to help these organisations on this important issue.

This work eventually led to the publication of a manual offering guidance for 'Protecting Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Violence in Disaster and Emergency situations', published in 2006.

**In January 1998**, the ECPAT Executive Committee met in EL SALVADOR to determine ECPAT's priorities and mandate for the remaining period leading to the year 2001, which had been set in 1996 as the next milestone for the organisation and the

evolution of its mission towards ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).

The fact that the meeting took place in Latin America for the first time was a symbol of change within the network. Before Stockholm, Amihan Abueva's trip to the region had allowed ECPAT to identify several groups already working on issues related to CSEC. One of these groups in San Salvador was led by ANA KELLY RIVERA, who had recently joined the Committee to represent the region, and she suggested hosting the meeting to mark ECPAT's expansion into Latin America.

The new mandate for the period 1998-2001 was adopted as follows:

- **Strengthen the ECPAT movement so that it can more efficiently monitor the activities of governments, NGOs, the commercial sector and inter-governmental organizations as they seek to implement the Agenda for Action (A4A)**
- **Be a catalyst for actions that will fulfill the goals of the Agenda**

Specific goals included:

- **Strengthening the network and its capacity to monitor the A4A**
- **Placing greater emphasis on 'child pornography' and preventing CSEC**
- **Expanding training for social workers working with child victims**
- **Tightening ties with Interpol and national law enforcement agencies**

Carrying out more research (especially on the two issues ECPAT had added to its mandate: child trafficking and child pornography)

To fulfil this ambitious mandate, ECPAT faced daunting organisational challenges. The days of 'adventurous pioneering', to use Ron O'Grady's words, had to be put behind: the growth in membership and expansion to other continents required a new emphasis on process and administration. But creating a new organisational structure, changing leadership styles, while at the same time trying to produce what was expected from the organisation by its funders — such as the production of A4A reports, a complex and costly endeavour — was draining the energy of ECPAT International staff and network members.

## TOURISM: THE CHILD PROTECTION CODE

In the early 1990s, ECPAT in Bangkok had given tips to 'tuk-tuk' drivers who reported on individuals and venues they suspected to be involved in the exploitation of children through prostitution and sex tourism. While this yielded some practical successes, following the World Congress, it was clear that action had to be taken at another level.



# CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION IN TRAVEL AND TOURISM

An industry driven  
responsible tourism  
initiative



**We protect  
children from  
sex tourism.**

The Stockholm Declaration had stressed the need for multiple sectors of society to play a role in combating CSEC, including the travel industry. Like groups in Australia and in Germany, ECPAT Sweden had been trying to develop an effective strategy for putting an end to tours operated for the purpose of facilitating sex with children.

At one stage, ECPAT convinced the **PACIFIC ASIA TRAVEL ASSOCIATION** to raise issues of global sex tourism at a major meeting of airlines, but the response was not as positive as expected.

Prior to the Stockholm Congress, only **AIR FRANCE**, which had become an ECPAT France partner in 1994, had shown enthusiasm for ECPAT's work and a willingness to become involved. The French flag-carrier airline agreed to take part in several traveller information campaigns, including awareness-raising amongst customers and staff via articles in its in-flight magazine. Eventually, an in-flight video ('A Child is Not a Souvenir') was produced in 1997, which would serve as a model for efforts to combat sex tourism in the airline industry.

Meanwhile, ECPAT Sweden worked on the elaboration of a Code of Conduct in 1997 to be adopted by the travel and tourism industry, for which it sought the advice and comments of the Scandinavian tour operator Star Tours (today, TUI Nordic) and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Following up on commitments made in Stockholm, the UNWTO Task Force engaged in an international awareness campaign seeking to 'prevent, uncover, isolate and eradicate the exploitation of children in sex tourism'.

At its first meetings in March 1997 in Berlin and Chantilly, the Task Force agreed to adopt and use a uniform logo for the international campaign and activities against the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The 'Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism' (the Child Protection Code) was launched in April 1998 by ECPAT Sweden in cooperation with the three main tour operators in Sweden and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

In 1999, it took the form of a project through the collaborative efforts of an additional six ECPAT groups based in Europe. As such, it received financial backing from the EU Commission and support from the UNWTO, which would host its secretariat in Madrid from 2001 to 2004.

In signing the code, the companies commit to:

- **Establish ethical corporate policies and procedures against child sexual exploitation**
- **Train all personnel, in both countries of origin and tourist destination, in children's rights, and how to detect and prevent sexual exploitation and report suspected cases**
- **Include a clause in all contracts that repudiates and demands zero tolerance for the sexual exploitation of children**

- Provide information to travelers on children's rights, the prevention of sexual exploitation of children and how to report suspected cases (through catalogues, brochures, films, etc.)
- Inform and educate key actors in destination countries and engage them in preventing the sexual exploitation of children
- Report annually on their implementation of Code related activities

ECPAT Sweden's initiative was the first successful attempt to define the corporate social responsibility of the travel industry in relation to the commercial exploitation of children particularly and child protection generally. This was precisely the type of measure needed to institutionalise an approach to the problem at a global and industry-wide level.

Amongst other things, The Code provided a point of departure for national groups to undertake outreach and advocacy around child sex tourism. Each tour operator, travel agency or hotel they visited to obtain a signature represented a further step toward letting the industry and tourists know that the eyes of the world were now focused on this issue.

During 1998, Sweden's three main tour operators signed the Code and seeking its adoption became a common goal throughout the ECPAT network.

During subsequent years, many other important actors in the travel and tourism industry joined the effort to prevent tourism for purposes of engaging in sex with children. Organisations such as the International Hotel and Restaurant Association have made public declarations and supported action by NGOs and travel companies to ensure that tourists are not involved in such exploitation. The **INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION (IATA)** made a public declaration 'condemning the commercial sexual exploitation of children', as did the Federation of International Youth Travel Organisations, the **NATIONAL TOUR OPERATORS' ASSOCIATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION** and **UFTAA**.

In countries such as **BRAZIL** and **CAMBODIA**, and many others, tourists are met at the airport and in tourism offices with posters demanding respect for children. The Dominican Republic uses a blunt warning in Spanish and English that the 'use or recruitment' of children and adolescents is punishable by a jail term and fine. Accor hotels all around the world display similar posters and warnings. As the Code took hold over the years, many countries where child sex tourism takes place have followed suit.

Both pledges of action, at the World Congress and to the Code of Conduct, offered ECPAT new tools for ongoing mobilisation against CSEC. As will be described in subsequent chapters, these landmark activities were also fundamental in establishing ECPAT's bona fide reputation as the lead organisation opposing and seeking effective solutions to the commercial sexual exploitation of children globally, far beyond its original roots in Asia.



## WINDS OF CHANGE

During the 1999, International Assembly, Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn, the former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and an early supporter of ECPAT, was asked to sum up the key challenges the new ECPAT was facing. In response he listed what he called the 'winds of change inside and around the organisation'. Below are the main points of his speech.

Since ECPAT first started its work it has been playing major roles: campaigner, reformer, monitor, organiser and implementer. These multiple roles are not mutually exclusive but complement each other. They have ensured a great variety of activities from the organisation and many notable successes. Yet, the path to action is not always easy.

1. ECPAT's transition to an international non-governmental organisation. Professionalisation and capacity-building: there is a need to build a child-responsive global system which is neither too institutionalized nor too personalized. The wind of systematization is necessary and it can be well complemented by a personal human touch in its operations.
2. The geographical challenge. To be a global organisation requires more representation from the countries which are not yet well represented in ECPAT, such as central Asia, parts of Africa and the Middle East.
3. Linguistic and cultural diversity. How many languages ECPAT will include in its work and how it will cater to cultural diversity will depend upon a gradual, inclusive process so that the different corners of the globe feel part of one family with a universal commitment to child rights. And where cultural practices diverge from international standards (such as perpetuating gender discrimination and violence against children), there have to be reformed.
4. Should ECPAT place more emphasis on advocacy and reform work at the international and transnational levels or initiate more local programmes, and be involved in their implementation at the grassroots level? It need not be 'either/or': the two levels of operations — international and local; principle and practice — are complementary, but with limited resources it is not always easy to apportion those resources for both levels.

5. The need for funds is an inevitable challenge. A long-term vision coupled with an effective mission. While the Stockholm Congress demanded national plans of action by 2000, the work against child sexual exploitation will have to be targeted well beyond that year... A strategic plan is obviously important to outline the priority areas.
6. The year 2001 provides a timely opportunity for a review conference as follow-up to the Stockholm Congress: take stock of developments with a view to propelling action against child sexual exploitation into the next millennium.
7. While ECPAT is a very key actor against child sexual exploitation, it is not alone. ECPAT is faced with the challenge of deciding what its comparative advantages are, and where, how to network well with the other key actors.
8. The voices of the children must be heard more strongly in the planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes of concern to their lives. A key challenge will be to ensure that those under 18 are adequately consulted and have opportunities to make their views known through channels which are sensitive and accessible to children.
9. These are the inevitable challenges of growing up and growing together. Inevitably, the next millennium will be tested with and by these winds of change surrounding child sexual exploitation: human rights, democracy, people-centered development, peace, safe and child-responsive environment, and good governance. The place for ECPAT in this setting will depend upon all of us — our commitment, our friendship, and our partnership. At the dusk of the old millennium, whither ECPAT at the dawn of the new millennium?

(Adapted from Vitit Muntarbhorn speech to ECPAT International Assembly, Bangkok 1999)



# FIRST ECPAT INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

How were the geographically and culturally diverse groups joining ECPAT going to function as a whole? What was the most appropriate role for the International Secretariat under the model that ECPAT was inventing for itself? Should ECPAT adopt, like many other international NGOs, the model of a secretariat-driven international advocacy function or direct most of its collective resources into supporting its members and their programmes on the ground? What should a new Constitution look like? What committees, by-laws, financial oversight and other administrative measures were needed to make the organisation function smoothly?

To start answering this long list of difficult questions, European support groups helped by providing free legal assistance to draft a Constitution and address many of the technical issues related to organisational structure. But the choices to be made were mostly not technical and the time seemed right to involve the entire ECPAT network in decision-making, so for the first time since the launch of the Campaign in 1990, an International Assembly of ECPAT members and affiliates was scheduled for September 1999 and made possible by funding received from the Irish government.

**By 1999**, ECPAT had **53 MEMBER GROUPS AND AFFILIATES**. In addition to the need for network-wide consultation and decision-making, ECPAT's leadership felt that it would be important to bring together the many groups and individuals who were carrying out its work around the world: advocating for legal and policy reform, raising public awareness about CSEC, promoting the Code of Conduct, urging countries to develop good National Plans for implementing the Agenda for Action and working with CSEC survivors.

ECPAT held its first International Assembly in Bangkok from **16-20 September 1999**. Thai Prime Minister CHUAN LEEKPAI, a strong supporter of ECPAT's mission, delivered a speech stressing the need for partnership between government and non-governmental sectors in combating CSEC. Representatives from national groups in 23 countries and affiliates from a further 21 attended. Some people in the network met one another for the first time. The Assembly also included observers from other NGOs, representatives from UN bodies and other inter-governmental agencies, as well as law enforcement agencies, social workers, funding organizations and researchers.

Demonstrating ECPAT's expansion, regional reports were made by members from South Asia and South East Asia, Africa, the Pacific, Western and Eastern Europe, and North and South America.

The reporting cited progress toward the goals outlined in Stockholm in several areas, including:

- **Legal reform in several countries**
- **Better cooperation amongst government, inter-governmental and NGO actors on controlling trafficking of children, sometimes including formal Memoranda of Understanding for joint work**
- **More attention to treating child victims, including training for caregivers in two regions**
- **More investigations of the commercial sexual exploitation of children by law enforcement and by national ECPAT members**
- **More research on various forms of CSEC, particularly in Latin America**
- **Formation in Africa of a coordinating committee to work against CSEC and promote National Plans of Action**

Ongoing areas of concern included: increased trafficking of minors for sexual purposes, the failure of governments to prioritise CSEC, corruption within law enforcement and ongoing social tolerance and denial in relation to most forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children.

The regional reports also highlighted emerging issues such as:

- **Increased use of the Internet for both child pornography and prostitution (i.e. escort agencies accepting online bookings for sexual liaisons with children)**
- **The increasingly young age of children being forced into all forms of sexual exploitation**
- **A growing trend toward the sexual exploitation of boys.**

One objective of the Assembly was to strengthen the capacity of ECPAT groups to combat CSEC. This was achieved mainly through workshops, often led by facilitators drawn from the network itself.

A second objective was to put before the membership a new institutional framework to direct the policies and activities of the network in the coming years. A new Constitution was adopted. It was decided that the International Assembly, composed of the members of the ECPAT network, would be the policy-making body of ECPAT, while the responsibility of the Executive Committee, composed of eight representatives from all continents, would be to implement its decisions. In accordance with the new Constitution, the Assembly then elected the new Executive Committee and JO DE LINDE from ECPAT France was chosen to serve as its Chair. Elections for other seats brought many new faces from several regions onto the Board. Ron O'Grady stepped down, but in recognition of the unique role he had played in the early years of the movement, he was given the title of ECPAT International Honorary President.

Finally, strategic directions for the coming three-year period were discussed and priorities were identified and agreed upon. The discussion was largely framed by a presentation made by long-time supporter Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn who offered the participants a list of eight complex issues facing ECPAT as a network; issues that would define how well ECPAT would overcome the internal changes taking place and prepare its future in the new millennium that was just around the corner.

The role of the international staff was also clarified: its primary responsibility was to provide guidance and technical support to national groups and identify opportunities for the network to take joint action. As noted by Professor Muntarbhorn, there had been much discussion within ECPAT about the need for 'professionalisation'. This referred to the perceived need to bring in, at various levels, not only staff committed to the cause with the energy and courage to engage in difficult battles, but also specialists capable of providing technical expertise on the many technical issues that ECPAT was now addressing.

ECPAT remained the premier organisation working on issues of CSEC and was often called upon to attend forums and high-level meetings around the world to discuss the topic. To retain this status, its members, representatives and staff had to respond to the organisation's changing role: from explaining CSEC and convincing others of its existence to helping to develop solutions to address it.

The adjustments at the international level required to move in this direction did not stop national groups from pursuing ECPAT's objectives.

## INFLUENCING LAWMAKERS AND PUBLIC OPINION

Being part of an international network is hardly the only way to characterise an ECPAT member at the national level. Whether an organisation had been set-up as an ECPAT member group or had already existed as a stand-alone organisation before joining ECPAT, it would ensure that the issue was not ignored in their own countries and that the proper laws were in place and enforced.

In France in March 1997, emboldened by the resolve displayed in Stockholm and the initial impact of its own campaigning efforts on sex tourism and children, the French NGO GROUPE DÉVELOPPEMENT convened a consultation 'Five Year Countdown against Child Tourism' in Paris, which was also an occasion to share the latest information on the dire situation in Eastern Europe.

A visit by **QUEEN SILVIA** of Sweden **in May 1997** was an opportune occasion to raise the profile of the issue in Japan. A call was made that did not go unnoticed and led to a commitment by Japanese Prime Minister **RYUTARO HASHIMOTO** to change his country's laws and provide support to ECPAT groups in Japan who had been calling for it since 1991. That same year in the **PHILIPPINES**, ECPAT expanded its presence in the country by opening a new office in Cebu, in addition to the Quezon City office, to expand its presence and grassroots work.

Research by ECPAT in **SRI LANKA** (known locally as Protecting the Environment and Children Everywhere – PEACE) in 1999 found that everyday 100 children were being sexually exploited or abused. Researchers found that some 10,000-15,000 boys aged 8-15 years were involved in the sex trade near beach areas and other tourist sites, as well as in some outlying areas. About one-third had been lured from the interior of the country with promises of jobs. 'Foreign paedophiles were the direct exploiters', said the report which also pointed to 'networks of local agents and pimps profiting from the trade in children'. The research also referred to 'bonded children' who were held captive by CSEC networks from the age of five or slightly older to be used in prostitution or pornography. Abuse of girls was more prevalent within families and communities than in sex tourism. The research decried the near total lack of care or services for child victims of either sex and called on the government and social service agencies to take urgent action.

For three years between 1998 and 2000, ECPAT managed a Prevention Project in **THAILAND** against child prostitution with funds earned by students from **FINLAND** during a national day of service. The project supported local NGOs working in Northern Thailand with children at risk in hill tribe villages, as well as lowland Thais and street children. Through activities such as school sponsorship, informal education, vocational training and income-generation assistance, the children were given alternatives to entering the commercial sex industry. All projects had a community focus trying to influence the attitudes and behaviour of parents and villagers.

The project also provided training for adult facilitators (teachers, social workers) and youth leaders with the aim of strengthening the capacity of the partners to continue the work after it ended. The lessons learned from the first three years were carefully documented, allowing ECPAT to share this wealth of experience on the implementation of grassroots prevention projects.

ECPAT groups in **WEST AFRICA** were still trying to convince national governments to acknowledge the existence of CSEC; it was a sensitive issue and many felt that to do so would damage national reputations and harm efforts to boost tourism. Although a number of civil society groups had begun to address child rights, their understanding of CSEC was weak. Thus ECPAT members focused on raising awareness within governments and societies and building capacity within civil society to collect and analyse national data on

CSEC to serve as the foundation for solid, effective National Plans of Action. Often ECPAT and its partners needed to address other child protection issues (such as child labour and child abuse) in order to work child sexual exploitation and trafficking into discussions with governments. During these years, groups in West Africa successfully developed strategies for the recovery and reintegration of CSEC victims.

Serious efforts were also made to increase membership in Africa. A 1998 visit by board members to Tanzania resulted in ties with a new organisation, **KIWOHEDE**, that became an affiliate in 1999 and then, in 2003, applied for full membership status. Kiwohede represents several Tanzanian NGOs working against CSEC through advocacy with the Tanzanian government and by providing services to child victims.

In **NORTH AMERICA**, where **ECPAT-USA** was still a small and mostly volunteer coalition of individuals, the group undertook some research that pointed to a serious problem of commercial child sexual exploitation in the United States — not simply the involvement of American sex tourists in other countries. While they experienced some of the same denial observed in other parts of the world, ECPAT-USA also came to realise that given the difference between state and federal laws, combating CSEC in the US would require more than advocacy at the national level. The U.S. government had sent a delegation of 10 to Sweden and signed the Declaration, but it was not acknowledging or working to protect U.S. citizens and resident CSEC victims. ECPAT-USA worked extensively to raise awareness that it happens to children in the US too and that legal reform was needed at both the state and federal levels.

In **COSTA RICA**, after **MILENA GRILLO** brought together groups working with her organisation, Paniamor, to describe what she had learned in Sweden, a civil society working group was formed to gather evidence and take action. New elections brought a sympathetic individual to lead the government's Child Protection Agency and, after discussions with the working group, he created a multi-sectoral National Commission to explore CSEC in Costa Rica. Amihan Abueva, Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn, UNICEF and other experts were invited to provide technical assistance to the Commission, strengthening the tie with ECPAT.

# PARTNERING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

In October 1997, three US-based members of the Orchid Club were sentenced to long jail terms. The men, aged 38 and 35, were from different regions of the United States and were jailed for their part in a wide-ranging, Internet-based conspiracy in which several children, aged ten or younger, were used in sexually explicit acts to produce pornographic pictures and videotapes.

The images, including digital pictures made with cameras connected to personal computers, were sent through the mail and transmitted over the Internet to other Orchid Club members in nine U.S. states and four countries, including Australia, Canada and Finland.

At the time of the first arrests, the U.S. Prosecutors said it was the first case involving real-time online transmission of pictures of children being sexually molested.

For ECPAT, this did not come as a surprise. Back in 1996, the organisation had already joined forces with the law enforcement community to explore the serious possibilities of this very scenario. ECPAT, Interpol and others had collaborated on a paper on this topic for the Stockholm World Congress. The paper stressed the lack of a uniform definition of 'child pornography' and the lack of data on the magnitude of its production and distribution.

The rapid development of both computer and video technology were seen as opening new opportunities for sexually exploiting children through thousands — and eventually, millions — of abusive images exchanged online. Those most vulnerable were found to be street children, children living in poverty, juveniles from broken homes and disabled children. Those exploiting children online were understood at the time to be 'largely, but not exclusively, paedophiles'. The paper found that images of boys and girls were used with equal frequency.

**By 1998**, the concern had grown with a speed matching the growth of the world wide web, and the impact of advances in technology and communications were increasingly understood as an important contributor to the sexual exploitation of children. ECPAT and Interpol agreed that the issue that they called 'virtual child sexual exploitation' demanded more profound analysis.

**In May 1998**, the two organizations co-hosted a meeting of experts at Interpol headquarters in Lyon, France, on the topic 'Child Pornography on the Internet' to further explore this emerging manifestation of CSEC. The Orchid Club case and its implications were discussed, as was the recently observed rise in demand for images depicting

the sexual abuse of children. The group focused especially on the changing nature of crime in an increasingly global environment. Laws are generally passed by nations and enforceable within national boundaries, but child pornography was increasingly taking place in cyberspace and law enforcement agencies were forced to consider how to confront this new situation.

At the close of the Lyon meeting, ECPAT and Interpol agreed to work together to: prioritise legal reforms in the area of 'child pornography'; urge governments to develop laws controlling the sexual abuse of children online; and develop more legal, technological and law enforcement options to combat these emerging forms of child sexual abuse. Soon thereafter Interpol created a new sub-directorate dedicated solely to combating crimes against children, including child pornography, child trafficking and exploitation of children in sex tourism. **HAMISH MCCULLOUGH**, a British policeman, was assigned to Interpol headquarters as the first specialised police officer on crimes against children and came to collaborate closely with ECPAT.







# 4

**2001-2004:  
BUILDING AN  
EFFECTIVE  
NETWORK**

**The 1999 International Assembly had made it very clear:** what brought ECPAT members together, beyond their engagement to child rights and the end of commercial sexual exploitation of children, was their common eagerness for results and change. So while ECPAT's annual reports on the implementation of the Stockholm Agenda for Action were certainly appreciated, there was a strong appetite for more. This led to the Bangkok Assembly plans for a 'review conference' to be held in 2001 to follow-up on Stockholm. Strong efforts were made during the next two years to prepare the network for this meeting, announced as the 'Second World Congress', and find a host government.

The purpose of the meeting would essentially be to re-focus attention on CSEC and keep governments on task with their Stockholm commitments five years after the event. The timing was good as well with the final preparation of what would lead into 2000 and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, which emphasises the criminalization of these serious violations of children's rights and stresses the need for international cooperation and public awareness campaigns to combat these violations.

In preparation for the Second World Congress, ECPAT International devoted much attention to bolstering members' capacities to develop and assess the National Plans of Action that governments had pledged to formulate. Events in Japan provided an opportunity to turn these ideas into concrete planning.

Shortly after ECPAT's International Assembly on **1 November, 1999**, Japan took an important step against CSEC in adopting a major package of laws protecting children against sexual abuse and exploitation. This was an important move on which ECPAT had worked for some years, as, despite international pressure and advocacy, the government of Japan had been slow to adopt legislation and enforce existing laws related to child pornography and child sexual exploitation more generally. But, after hard work by a group of women parliamentarians who had been reached by the national ECPAT group and **UNICEF JAPAN**, along with advocacy by Sweden's **QUEEN SILVIA** with Japan's **PRINCESS TAKAMADO**, things were starting to change.

ECPAT had some strong supporters in Japan, including former Prime Minister **RYUTARO HASHIMOTO** who when asked some years earlier why he and the Japanese government were supporting ECPAT's work replied: 'Because I am a responsible human being and a parent'. With friends in the country and new legislation in place, Japan seemed to be a logical venue. The government of Japan offered to host the meeting and the prefecture of Yokohama added its support. In **June 2000**, ECPAT, UNICEF and the **NGO COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD** met in Bangkok, repeating the unique partnership as co-organisers that had proven so successful at the First World Congress. This time

they could also count on the expanded network of allies that Stockholm had generated: individuals and organisations, representatives of NGOs and international organisations concerned with the issue, such as UNESCO, WHO, ILO-IPEC and many others.

## REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS

Prior to the Congress, UNICEF organised a worldwide participatory process involving governments and other stakeholders. Six meetings were held in different regions to assess achievements and failures since 1996, identify regional needs and priorities and seek common ground prior to the Yokohama World Congress.

Regional meetings convened by UNICEF were held in Thailand, Bangladesh, Hungary, Morocco, Uruguay and the United States. Using the Stockholm commitments as a guideline, the regional meetings revealed the differing challenges faced and served to guide those organising the Yokohama event toward a declaration that countries in every region would be willing to support.

Parallel efforts took place within the ECPAT network, such as in Bangkok when ECPAT jointly organised a meeting with the National Youth Bureau of Thailand **in August 2000** designed to focus on 'Best practices in combating the sexual exploitation of children'. Resource persons from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Thailand and the Philippines shared their experiences with governmental and non-governmental participants from Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan and Vietnam. Using a new 'Methodological Guide' that had been developed by Ana Kelly in Central America, national plans from the region were discussed, prevention models and strategies were shared and new issues, such as child pornography, were debated.

The conversation then moved to South America under the leadership of the Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN), which had taken up the task to promote the Agenda for Action and build member capacity in the region.

Other meetings took place in Eastern Europe, often in partnership with the International Catholic Child Bureau 'Right to happiness' project, in the format of multi-disciplinary seminars. Events were held in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia where several new ECPAT members required help developing programmes to combat CSEC.

Other consultations were held in Africa with the same purpose, including **in December 2000** in Togo which was an occasion to learn about Togo's experience in the development of a national plan of action. Another meeting took place in East Africa with participants from Ethiopia, Mauritius, Zambia, Tanzania and Djibouti. The same

year, ECPAT international also carried out analysis of the situation of the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Senegal, Gambia, Ivory Coast, Benin, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, and groups working on the issue were identified in Israel, Jordan and Lebanon. Research missions and additional meetings with local organizations were planned for Northern and Southern Africa.

Organised by **ECPAT-USA**, the North America consultation was attended by groups from Canada, Mexico and the US. In Asia, ECPAT Taiwan convened a meeting of all ECPAT groups in the Asia Pacific region hosted by Ruth Kao, one of the organisation's original founding members.

'In unity we stand against globalised Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children' was the theme of the first ECPAT Asia-Pacific Regional Convention held in Taipei from 26 to 29 August 2001, drawing several new faces from Australia, Bangladesh, India, Japan, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines and Samoa. Participants of the convention were invited by the Taiwanese President Chen at his presidential palace. Acknowledging the excellent work being done by ECPAT, he declared, 'If there is a single child prostituted (in a country) we cannot call that country civilised'. As the honorary president of ECPAT Taiwan President Chen graciously spent a few moments with every participant.

Other preparatory meetings took place in Bangkok, Thailand, and Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Amongst the new issues raised by different regions at these consultations were:

- **Link between child labor and CSEC, particularly for girls serving as domestics, either through 'fostering' arrangements or as a result of trafficking**
- **Need to focus on male victims of CSEC in South Asia, particularly in child sex tourism , and the practice of keeping young boys as 'houseboys' for purposes of sexual exploitation**
- **Links between CSEC and HIV infection**
- **Increased risk of CSEC faced by children in institutional care**
- **Early marriage as a legal loophole camouflaging the sale of children**
- **Use of rituals and 'contracts' to intimidate trafficking victims and their families**

ECPAT groups and affiliates in the various regions found this series of meetings to be extremely useful. In North Africa, taboos about discussing the commercial child sexual exploitation posed a major obstacle. The meeting in Latin America raised issues about CSEC versus other forms of child sexual abuse and stressed the need for more focus on 'demand'. South Asia pointed to poverty as an underlying cause of CSEC and in reference to demand, called for work with men and boys to 'confront the root causes of gender inequality, violence and abuse'. In Eastern Europe, participants proposed the adoption of an international arrest warrant for child traffickers. In North America, designing a

mechanism to track cross-border trafficking and the development of National Plans of Action were high on the agenda.

The quality of the meetings and the wealth of information they generated led to a new institutional practice of ECPAT: the holding of annual regional meetings to promote the exchange of ideas, information and experiences. These meetings became essential to build expertise within the network for taking on ECPAT's most pressing task at the time: monitoring the implementation of the Agenda for Action. The first series of regional meetings contributed to building a solid network, as actors in different countries got to know each other and identify opportunities for collaboration. They also played a major role in providing the substance of the Yokohama meeting.

## EMPOWERING CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Meanwhile, an important project was in the works across the network: reinforcing and empowering the youth within the movement. From the 1992 Sukhothai Conference onwards, ECPAT had made it clear that giving the youth a stronger voice was one of its objectives. To make sure this would not be empty rhetoric, ECPAT launched a two-year youth participation programme in 2000 aimed at developing the skills of young people involved in the network in several countries.

As part of this programme, training modules on facilitating the participation of young people were developed and training in leadership and organisational skills was provided to young CSEC survivors. Trained youth played an active role in promoting broader youth action against CSEC and promoting the implementation of the Agenda for Action.

Other activities included training young people to interact with the media, promote child-friendly practices and coverage of youth activities, as well as training in communication and journalism skills and designing and preparing promotional materials with them.

The programme culminated in a 'Young Peoples' Participation' Conference held in Manila between **21-25 May 2000**, which brought together 180 young people from 29 countries who had been involved in discussing how to create a meaningful model for child and youth participation. Participants made regional presentations, discussed the role of young people in finding solutions and proposed concrete actions for themselves and adults. Workshop themes, which had been selected by the young people themselves, included: helping survivors, combating discrimination and exclusion, mass media, HIV/AIDS, domestic violence and abuse, and child labour.

At the end of the conference, the young people produced the 'Manila Youth Declaration and Agenda for Action' stating: 'We do not believe that this problem (CSEC) can be eradicated without our full involvement. We implore that all measures be taken to

guarantee the rights of children and youth everywhere to participate at local, national and international levels to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children. We demand that young people be empowered to take an active and committed role in decision-making, developing and implementing strategies against the commercial sexual exploitation of children.'

Some within the network had questioned the ability of ECPAT to invest seriously in youth participation while doing its other activities, but the Manila Conference convinced the sceptics.

**KATLIJN DECLERCO** of ECPAT Belgium, who with Amihan Abueva was a prime mover behind the Manila conference, observed that the event was for youth participation what the Stockholm World Congress had been for ECPAT as a whole. Within a few years, ECPAT launched youth participation projects in several countries in Southern Africa and then in South Asia.

These successful initiatives later became the model for ECPAT's 15-country Global Youth Participation Project (see Chapter 6). The work begun in 1997 not only empowered and opened up new opportunities for young survivors of sexual exploitation, but led to their increasingly active and vocal role in ECPAT.

In 2001, a Youth Advisory Council (YAC) was formally constituted, and a coordinator was appointed to support and expand youth participation in ECPAT. The following year, a member of YAC was elected by peers to hold a seat on the Executive Board and the ECPAT International Child and Youth Advisory Council (EICYAC) was formally established in 2002. The Council brought youth input to ECPAT International at the regional level and elected a representative to the global ECPAT International Committee (Board). Since that time the Board has always included a youth representative, elected by peers in the ECPAT network, ensuring that young people have an active voice in organisational policies, directions and programmes.

## THE YOKOHAMA WORLD CONGRESS

This intense preparation was effective. **On 17 December 2001**, when the Second World Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children opened in Yokohama, more than 3,000 delegates, including 134 government representatives and 90 children from all over the world (all significant increases from Stockholm) were present, and ready to bring the spotlight back on the issue of CSEC. Another sign of progress was the fact that, unlike in Stockholm where many participants were new to the issue, in Yokohama most were actively involved in efforts to stop it. Several governments presented their National Plans of Action they had developed since 1996.

## **MANILA YOUTH DECLARATION 2000**

**‘We do not believe that this problem can be eradicated without our full involvement. We implore that all measures be taken to guarantee the rights of children and youth everywhere to participate at local, national and international levels to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children. We demand that young people be empowered to take an active and committed role in decision making, developing and implementing strategy against the commercial sexual exploitation of children’.**

Thematic papers presented at the Congress covered a wide range of topics, such as 'Child Pornography and the Internet', 'The Role and Involvement of the Private Sector', 'Profile of the Child Sex Offender', 'Prevention, Protection and Recovery', 'Trafficking International Legal Framework' and 'Current National Legal Response'. More than 100 workshops were conducted, including 10 directly organised by ECPAT, with themes as diverse as campaigning, extraterritorial legislation, Internet safety and youth leadership.

A relatively new dimension of the global discussion highlighted in thematic papers was the issue of the role of 'demand for CSEC', an issue that **PRINCESS TAKAMADO** placed squarely on the table in her welcoming speech. 'If there were no demand', she said, 'it would not be commercially viable to have a supply. This is a simple fact. If there is anyone around you that is helping to create a demand, then take courage and speak out'.

This concern was indeed increasingly high on ECPAT's agenda, which recognised by then that identifying individual offenders and responding to incidents, one at a time, as was often done in the early days of the campaign, was clearly not enough. Seeking to better understand and reduce the demand for CSEC at its source was also needed. Later, member groups in Canada and Sweden would develop specific programmes aimed at just that (see Chapter 5).

Young people who had also met in Kawasaki prior to the Congress were very present and active at Yokohama. Amongst them were young victims who described their personal experiences and reminded those present of the human impact of CSEC. They called on governments to create a 'CSEC Fund for Youth' to enable them to build a global anti-CSEC network of young people and spoke again of the imperative to punish the offenders — not the children who are the victims of CSEC.

In their final 'Appeal', the young people asked the leaders gathered in Yokohama: '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?'

Simply put, the answer to the question was: 'Not yet'. Yes, the final declaration adopted at the end of the World Congress, the 'Yokohama Global Commitment 2001', was basically a reformulated version of the 1996 goals, objectives and pledges and involved 34 states that had not been represented in Stockholm. However, the document and the final report, which were prepared again by Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn, made it very clear that much less had happened in the previous five years than had been hoped for. 'Much more needs to be done to protect children globally, and we express our concerns at the delays in the adoption of needed measures in various parts of the world,' it admitted.

Trying to refocus the attention of governments on the right of children to be free from sexual exploitation was not easy. The 'need to establish a global mechanism to monitor



## SOCIAL CUSTOMS HIDE CHILD SEX ABUSE

Socially accepted practices are being used to hide the sexual abuse of children in various parts of the world, according to a new report from an international advocacy group.

The Bangkok-based international child protection campaign group, ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes) reserves its harshest criticism for forced marriages of adolescents and children.

It says such marriage contracts can be found all over the Middle East and South Asia and are a cloak for child abuse.

ECPAT notes that in Iran the legal age for marriage is 13, which means that older men can have sex with young girls.

The girls are essentially 'bought, through payment of a dowry, to provide sexual pleasure ... and are then abandoned,' says Carmen Madrinan, the executive director of ECPAT International. And Egyptian children are often given to wealthy older men for a few weeks or months under legal short-term marriage contracts, it says.

The report also describes the problem of prostitution among underage boys in South Asia, which is never discussed openly because of religious and sexual taboos. In Pakistan, it says, the use of boys as homosexual prostitutes for older men is virtually tolerated, but the boys themselves are unable to seek help from the police because they are seen as outcasts.

(Adapted from BBC News, January 2003)

progress toward the Agenda for Action’ for instance was highlighted but nothing concrete was done about it. Finally, in Yokohama the ‘emergence of a broader partnership’ to combat CSEC was applauded and hopes were placed in global monitoring mechanisms, such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the work of the Special Rapporteur.

Was it enough? In his concluding remarks to the participants, Ron O’Grady made little efforts to hide his frustration which was shared by a number of others within ECPAT. ‘Most of the governments gave their reports to an almost empty conference hall’, he observed, pointing to a flaw in the organisation but also to the inherent limits of such gatherings. ‘The media presence was disappointing. There was little sign of the media frenzy which surrounded participants in Stockholm. The Congress did not make the headlines in any front page of the world’s major newspapers outside Japan and international television coverage was negligible’, he noted, a frank admission that when the press was not watching there was little to be expected.

## CALMER WATERS

Prior to the Yokohama Congress, new Executive Director **CARMEN MADRIÑÁN** had come on board to replace Muireann O’Brien, who had served in the post for three years and remained as ECPAT’s legal adviser to support anti-trafficking work in Europe. Under her interim leadership, ECPAT had matured as an organisation by: expanding membership to new countries; strengthening the capacity of new and long-time member groups to take action against CSEC; and appointing regional coordinators through the International Assembly that would build ties within the network. ECPAT had developed a new organisational structure, elected new leaders and made important contributions to the planning of a Second World Congress. In addition, the Code of Conduct developed in Sweden in 1997 had become a tool around which the entire network could join forces to address a critical component of child sex tourism opening the door to greater collaboration with the travel and tourism industries.

As ECPAT opened a new chapter of its history, Carmen Madriñán brought in her extensive experience working with NGO networks, including two decades of living and working with vulnerable children in Asia, and an academic background in educational development. As she took control of the realm of the International Secretariat, the transformation of ECPAT into an international NGO was well underway. The network had a Constitution, an elected Board of Trustees (still called the ECPAT International Executive Committee) with a chairperson and seven members elected from different regions and was formally registered in the Netherlands. The Executive Director heading the International Secretariat in Bangkok was appointed by the Board. Amongst its main tasks were to distil learning and experience from the network’s many independent initiatives and design

broader collaborative action; seek funding for network-wide or regional programmes and initiatives; monitor implementation of the Agenda for Action; continue developing the network; and increase partnerships with organisations working on CSEC.

Much of this work was moving in the right direction. The number of member and affiliate groups had climbed to 60 — a nearly fourfold increase in membership since 1996. The number of staff in the Bangkok office had also grown to 18 people representing 13 different nationalities from every continent, which introduced new language and cultural diversity to the Secretariat and brought new expertise to the network in law, administration and finance, social work, education and training, development, political science and other fields. This had been made possible by the growing recognition of ECPAT's unique role and the resulting willingness of donors to fund its global work. Another sign of ECPAT's maturity was an increased emphasis on research, documentation and publications after ECPAT's new website had been launched in 2001.

By the beginning of its second decade, the publication and diffusion in different languages of relevant materials had massively improved, and ECPAT was reaping the rewards of the persistence and hard work of the whole network during its first 10 years. In most corners of the world, it was now possible to benefit from this work.

Similar to what had taken place in 1999, the Executive Committee, working with Carmen Madriñán and the International Secretariat, drafted a new set of 'Strategic Directions' at the beginning of 2002 for the period leading to 2005. The proposed path drew on input from ECPAT groups and was shared with partners and funders.

Based on this review, UNICEF, Interpol and the **UN WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION** were singled out as the most important allies in the inter-governmental arena. New ties were also being developed with the International Labour Organization (ILO) which approached the exploitation of children from a labour perspective that offered the potential for joint work, and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) concerned with trafficking. Other important allies were international NGOs focused on child rights and human rights more generally, in addition to other groups working against CSEC.

The paper also called attention to effective alliances with the private sector, particularly the travel and tourism industry, that were advancing the Child Protection Code. However, making inroads with the Internet industry to address child pornography was proving difficult, especially in relation to curbing demand for CSEC. Demand in this context referred to 'the end-line exploiters who create a lucrative market for the commercial sexual exploitation of children'. Curbing such demand by acting at the source had been identified as an ECPAT priority before and during the Yokohama Congress, but few concrete initiatives had actually emerged.

The strategy document presented the diversity of the ECPAT network as both a strength and a weakness. Diversity worked in its favour because when the network ‘takes a position, it can speak from the strength and combined wisdom of a diverse international network’ with considerable collective expertise. Yet at the same time, ‘retaining cohesion in a wide and diverse network’, ensuring common standards for anti-CSEC work and maintaining regular communication and sharing of information often posed a serious challenge — especially given the diversity of languages used by ECPAT members around the world.

Since its inception, the goals of ECPAT had broadened — but not essentially changed. Thus the strategic directions proposed in 2002 did not signal any dramatic departure from the earlier steer, but rather suggested ways to deepen what had been started: externally, ECPAT should be focusing on monitoring government actions on the Agenda for Action, increasing the number of countries with National Plans of Action and seeking more signatories to the Code of Conduct; internally, it needed to continue building capacity within national groups through more research, publications and information sharing, as well as via technical advice on legal reform and assistance in promoting youth participation.

Following up on the inputs from Manila, the March 2002 Board meeting was attended by a young woman from South Africa representing ECPAT youth, and even though this was only in preparation to the formal election of a youth board member due for the following September, it was a good early signal to older Committee members of what was to come. ‘For the young person elected, I have no doubt that the experience will be one of the most enriching they have had thus far’, observed one board member at the end of the meeting. ‘From an organisational point of view, I think the addition of a young person to the team provides a fresh perspective, free of any political organisational technicalities that adults sometimes tend to carry with them’.

Later on, as one of many consequences of this changed perspective with youth at the centre of the network, EICYAC members and a group of young people from Mali, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia who had participated in the first two World Congresses, met to discuss how to strengthen participation of young CSEC survivors in such events, and to expand the public outreach work of the network more generally. Sixty youth received training in peer support, campaigning strategies and working with the media.

## SECOND ECPAT INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

As ECPAT was continuing to grow, it convened the second International Assembly in Bangkok in **September 2002**, which brought together **137 REPRESENTATIVES** of ECPAT member organisations and affiliates coming from 64 countries with financial support from

several donors, including the Irish government. Also in attendance were 78 delegates from the **UNITED NATIONS**, **ACADEMIA**, the **PRIVATE SECTOR** and **GOVERNMENTS** as well as other **NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS**, as evidence that ECPAT was now a more structured organisation and was also still a network with a reach that expanded much beyond its formal membership: not only had ECPAT made the strategic choice to embrace multi-stakeholders partnerships in its activities and programmes, but, in giving its partners an occasion to provide inputs on the decision its international Assembly was making, it had also linked them to its governance.

The Assembly elected a new Board and **JO DE LINDE** was re-elected as Chair of the Board of ECPAT International and **AURELIO SUERO** of the **DOMINICAN REPUBLIC** became the first elected Youth Representative to the Board. Other representatives were elected by their regions. During the gathering, member groups shared plans, knowledge and experience, and strengthened links with their counterparts around the world.

Working groups on the themes that were seen as most important by the network were organised, including: 'Child protection standards'; 'Tools and techniques for collaboration with law enforcement'; 'Strategies for working with the tourism sector'; 'Strategies for working with the media'; 'Measures to combat child pornography on the Internet'; 'Fostering youth participation in the network'; and 'Improving caregiving for CSEC victims'. In addition, specific meetings and work sessions were organised amongst members of the same region.

The Assembly also reviewed the network's governance structures and approved the proposed 'Strategic Directions', as well as the tightening and clarifying of the membership requirements it had made. Members were expected to publish 'ECPAT policy guidelines' on their website and promote them in their countries, as well as to have a 'demonstrable commitment' to child rights in their constitution or by-laws.

This, in turn, strengthened the network as delegates returned home with stronger ties to the global organisation and to regional groupings, an enhanced ability to contribute toward the Agenda for Action in their countries and greater awareness about emerging manifestations of CSEC, particularly via the Internet.

The logical next step **in 2003** was for the Board to make sure these new rules were actually followed by network members that had grown used to more informal arrangements. This was made possible by the creation of new standing committees by the ECPAT Board: a Credentials Committee, to review membership issues, as well as Policy Advisory, Fundraising, Finance, Legal and Constitutional committees.

These formal committees and the enforcement of more stringent membership criteria were further indicators of the changes in structure and organisation reflecting the transition from campaign to a permanent child rights NGO network.

# AIMING FOR CHANGE AT ALL LEVELS

To pursue its mission, ECPAT has always operated at multiple levels. Over time, the development of the network had also meant that new positions had to be created at the international level: in 2000, four regional ‘desk officers’ had been appointed to support the work of regional coordinators and individual member groups in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas were building their capacity to address the commercial sexual exploitation of children and support the creation of National Plans of Action.

Regional coordinators, in particular, played a critical role in strengthening the ECPAT network serving as links both amongst groups in the same region and between regional and global activities. They were in a position to inform Bangkok staff of emerging CSEC trends and promising initiatives in the countries of their regions, as well as to ensure that members around the world were aware of ECPAT’s international priorities and strategies.

Following the Yokohama Congress, which had demonstrated the importance of regional gatherings in its preparation phase, they came to know and be known by key players in countries and regions. Their work was enhanced by the institutionalisation of such meetings, eventually renamed ‘Regional Network Resource Exchange’ (RNRE) meetings that served to build solidarity amongst partners in each region and opportunities for exchanging information and strategies for addressing CSEC.

Meetings at the regional level also helped introduce CSEC to important regional-level actors: the regional offices and organisations such as the **AFRICAN UNION (AU)** and the **INSTITUTO INTER-AMERICANO DEL NIÑO (IIN)** in Latin America. European members had already begun to make contacts with the EUROPEAN UNION and the COUNCIL OF EUROPE and other related bodies, several of which began to fund different aspects of ECPAT’s work.

These regional-level initiatives also turned out to be good for ECPAT leadership, positioning the network well in settings where important policy discussions took place but were often neglected by other global actors.

In September 2003, for instance, ECPAT was closely involved in the ‘**PACIFIC REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON COMBATING POVERTY AND COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**’ held in Fiji. ECPAT ended up organising five of the eight technical workshops offered and was instrumental in the decision by two Pacific Region governments (**PAPUA NEW GUINEA AND THE COOK ISLANDS**) to commit to the Agenda for Action.

Similarly, in West Africa in April 2004 at the Second Session of the **AFRICAN UNION** Labour and Social Affairs Commission in Cotonou, Benin, ECPAT was given formal observer status. From then on, representatives of ECPAT were invited to work with AU commissions addressing child protection and human rights, and strengthening the position of ECPAT for engagement in advocacy throughout the continent.

And if ECPAT's core mission — exposing and eliminating CSEC — remained unchanged at the global level, its strategies to achieve this goal often differed by region and country and between new and old groups.

Generally in the early 2000s, national ECPAT groups continued to:

- **Pursue legal reforms to protect children and prosecute offenders**
- **Gain adherents to the Code of Conduct to Protect Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism (i.e. In April 2004, the North American launch of ECPAT's Code took place in New York. Shortly thereafter the Carlson) Companies, with 190,000 employees employed in the travel industry, signed the Code.**
- **Ensure that young CSEC victims had access to quality services and opportunities to reintegrate into society**
- **Carry out research and advocacy to document evolving trends in CSEC, undertake advocacy related to the Agenda for Action and, when requested, provide technical assistance to governments for the development of National Plans of Action (NPAs)**

This last point was crucial because despite the blooming of initiatives that ECPAT was associated with, it was still the production and implementation of NPAs in line with the conclusion of the First World Congress that was the most tangible sign that countries were taking the commitments made at World Congresses seriously. So, no matter what else was happening, continuing these efforts was a critical component of ECPAT's work. As mentioned earlier, the ECPAT International Secretariat was not meant to fund the work of national member groups, but rather to seek opportunities for members to collaborate in broader efforts funded by a variety of donors or agencies interested in the topic. The Secretariat acted more as a catalyst than as the central decision point, which was a vision that would remain one of the strong characteristics of ECPAT as a network and as an organisation.

The examples below demonstrate the type of partnerships and collaborative efforts promoted and supported by ECPAT International between 2002 and 2004:

- **Central America:** Starting in 2002 for a three-year period, ECPAT International provided technical support and helped raise funds for a five-country 'Legal Reform and Law Enforcement Project' aimed at ensuring that national laws addressed child protection against CSEC and related rights violations in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. The early stages involved efforts to document the extent of CSEC and understand its manifestations in the region, as well as the production of information and educational materials. Later, with financial support from the European Union, ECPAT member groups in each country carried out advocacy with parliamentarians and opinion leaders, as well as public awareness-raising about CSEC and the need for legal reform. By 2004, ECPAT was producing training manuals for law enforcement officers who come into contact with sexually exploited children.
- **Africa:** Situation analyses on CSEC were undertaken in several countries. In May 2002, ECPAT completed a nine-month study entitled 'The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of



Children in Southern Africa' covering seven African countries. Later that year, ECPAT met with key actors in Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa to discuss how to put the research findings into action; for example, training police to handle cases involving child trafficking and CSEC victims (Malawi) and technical assistance in preparing NPAs and guidelines for training child services personnel (Mozambique). By 2004, ECPAT's work had stimulated the creation of youth networks that were actively involved in raising public awareness about CSEC in the region and creating channels through which they could provide peer support (schools, community centres, etc.)

- **Asia:** In May 2003, ECPAT played a leading role in working with several partners to organise NGO input at the UNICEF-sponsored 'Sixth East Asia and Pacific Ministerial Consultation' held in Bali. This work helped to ensure that commercial sexual exploitation of children was prioritized in the consultation's outcome document. Similarly, ECPAT's presence ensured that CSEC was on the national agenda in Mongolia when it attended a national forum in 2003 and agreed to provide technical support to the government for developing an NPA.
- **South Asia:** A similar initiative was launched in South Asia in December 2003 in conjunction with the NGO Plan International and local partners in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and Nepal. The South and South East Asia Legal Reform Project started with in-depth analysis of legislation and was followed by consultations with legislators, magistrates, police and others to inform the studies and create the basis for long-term involvement by these actors. Children and adolescents, some of whom had experienced CSEC, were involved in the effort. In Nepal, research in the early 2000s suggested that CSEC was undergoing changes. Since the late 1990s, more and more vulnerable young people had been arriving in Kathmandu and other cities seeking safety from the country's civil strife. This was occurring at the very time that global tourism to Nepal was rising. The result was increased levels of sex tourism, but no laws were in place to prohibit, control or punish it. Maiti Nepal continued its grassroots CSEC prevention and awareness-raising work, both within communities and with policymakers. A second affiliate, **CHILD WORKERS IN NEPAL (CWIN)**, also played an active role in advocacy for child rights undertaking research on trafficking of girls and the impact of the Internet on children; publishing a book on forced child prostitution called 'Back from the Brothels'; and pressing for greater participation by children and youth in Nepalese society.
- **Eastern Europe/CIS:** Research and visits were undertaken in several former Soviet states, and a consultant was recruited to help build the network and strengthen channels of communication to develop a firmer knowledge base for future actions. A mission to Belarus, Russia and Ukraine helped to establish contacts and advance networking possibilities. Finally, research was conducted in Moldova, Russia and Ukraine where CSEC had become a serious issue, particularly the trafficking of girls to Western Europe for purposes of prostitution.



# A GLOBAL RESOURCE CENTRE

As the new 'Strategic Direction' adopted in 2002 positioned ECPAT as a 'global resource centre' on CSEC, there were increased efforts to conduct research and ensure the dissemination of situational analyses with a regional or country focus, as well as studies on specific topics, such as 'the hazards of Internet use', 'prostitution involving boys', 'demand for sex with children' and 'child trafficking' between 2001 and 2004.

By strengthening the technical expertise of its staff and hiring specialists, ECPAT International built its capacity to support member groups across a range of ECPAT activities and consolidated the network's position as the lead NGO addressing CSEC. In addition, ECPAT International staff and others from the network participated regularly in high-level national, regional and global planning sessions and events related to children with the aim of ensuring that CSEC was included in the final plans or initiatives that came from those events. One common thread linking the work of ECPAT International and all members and affiliates was follow-through on the Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action (A4A). Once the global database was operational several short progress reports had been written, but it was only in 2002 that ECPAT was able to produce a comprehensive A4A monitoring report on each region. Improved internal communications, increased research and on-the-ground experience, along with renewed momentum after Yokohama, allowed ECPAT to more easily gather and analyse the information needed to produce meaningful progress assessments.

Published in January 2003, the 2001-2002 'ECPAT Report on the Implementation of the Agenda for Action against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children' covered 37 NPAs in four regions (Africa, Asia and the Pacific, the Americas and Europe) comparing them against 10 indicators. Several countries scored well, with fairly comprehensive written plans. A few countries scored poorly, meeting only a few of the conditions spelled out in the indicators. Youth participation and allocation of a budget for anti-CSEC activities were perhaps the most ignored of the criteria. Moreover, five years after the Stockholm Congress, only 23% of the 159 countries that had pledged commitment to the Agenda for Action (either in 1996 or subsequently) had produced NPAs. This slow movement, ECPAT noted, was 'sobering'. The report insisted that improving A4A implementation 'must remain high on the agenda of child rights activists everywhere'.

In contrast to the lacklustre media performance of the Yokohama Congress, the ECPAT International report generated considerable media interest and was widely read. In the aftermath of its publication and translation into Spanish and French, the number of people accessing the website of ECPAT increased sharply. Subsequent reports were prepared on individual countries, but the 2001-02 report represented the most comprehensive effort yet to analyse and document global progress against CSEC.

Secretariat staff played an important role by researching and compiling ECPAT reports, newsletters and other publications. The website also included a unique database of information on A4A implementation, along with publications by national groups. While ECPAT continued to speak out on CSEC at important international and regional events, the availability of documentation on individual topics, descriptions of ECPAT's response, and guides and manuals for addressing various aspects of CSEC reinforced ECPAT's image as a unique source of knowledge and experience in the field.

During the first decade of the 21st century, ECPAT completed research on a variety of CSEC-related topics and was publishing an increasing array of studies, manuals, child-friendly guides and other unique materials made available on its website, along with in-depth journals on specific topics. The International Secretariat was working with experts from around the world and gaining unique expertise on the topic of CSEC and how to address it.

In 2003 and 2004, ECPAT began in-depth exploration of one topic that had been increasingly raised at meetings during debates about CSEC but not sufficiently documented: the prevalence of sexual abuse of boys in a variety of settings, countries and locations. Studies were undertaken with partners in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, as well as Italy, to examine the nature and extent of commercial sexual exploitation of boys, which had become increasingly evident to partners working in these countries. When completed in 2005, the studies showed that sexual exploitation of boys was far more prevalent than previously acknowledged and that, like the exploitation of girls, it was largely organised for the benefit of those who seek to profit financially from this abuse.

A series of studies were also undertaken to examine the roots of demand for sex with children, conducted in four cities in Peru and in the Amazon region of Brazil.

In 2001, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, created to monitor UN Member States' compliance with the Convention on the Right of the Child, recommended that the United Nations Secretary-General conduct an in-depth study on violence against children and put forward recommendations for action. In 2003, Kofi Annan appointed Brazilian academic **PAULO SERGIO PINHEIRO** to lead the study, which generated a flurry of research and analysis of all forms of violence against children around the world.

In May 2003, the UN Economic and Social Council Committee on NGOs had recommended that ECPAT be given consultative status at the UN, a reflection of ECPAT's growing international profile and its increasingly close working relationship with the UN. Thus ECPAT was amongst the groups invited to provide a submission to the Secretary-General's report. The invitation groups represented a tremendous opportunity to reinforce global knowledge about CSEC, and ECPAT took up the challenge and the responsibility.

## VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN CYBERSPACE

‘Through our work, we can see the ease with which people who are intent on harming children move between the physical and the virtual worlds in order to exploit a child. This report therefore is a response to growing concerns about abuse and exploitation of children via new information and communication technologies (ICTs).

The multiplication in the appearance online of images of sexual abuse of children is a particularly abhorrent manifestation of violence against children in and via cyberspace and new technologies. But many other forms of harm, such as bullying, are also increasingly evident. As technological advances have outpaced our understanding of their social impacts, including negative impacts, there is a critical need to understand the experiences of children in their own use of new ICTs. This need is particularly important as children will likely continue to be the front-runners in the use of new technologies and in the exploration of social life within virtual settings.

As yet, research on the short and long-term impacts on children of engagement and interactions through ICTs is limited... Nevertheless, we do see patterns emerging from work with children on various forms of commercial sexual exploitation, indicating that where a child is sexually abused or exploited in settings such as in the home or the street, image-making of their abuse is frequently involved. These images may then be used to inhibit and silence the child. They also may be widely circulated or traded online or via phone, fueling a vicious cycle of demand for children for sexual purposes.

The recording of abuse against a child advances power and control to the abuser. The impact on the child is profound and cannot be underestimated. It creates a fear that then opens opportunities for the child to be exploited in many other ways. The ease, speed and extent of instantaneous distribution of abuse materials serves further to consolidate an abuser’s power over a child. Often, images of the abuse of one child are then used to lower the defences of another child who is being prepared, or ‘groomed’, for abuse.

Of great concern also are advances in technology that enable sexual violence against a child to be organized to occur live online, in real-time, whereby multiple abusers may participate from different physical locations across the world. Another concern highlighted in this report is that child sexual abuse images and other pornographic materials are commonly used as a sex education tool that induces young people into perceiving human relationships in light of these representations.’

From the presentation of ECPAT’s 2005 submission to the UN Study on the Violence against Children

# ONLINE ABUSE AND ONLINE SAFETY

By then, following up on its earlier work with INTERPOL, ECPAT had developed a good expertise on the latest developments related to child abuse in cyberspace. Also, innovative work on the topic was being conducted by a number of its members including in **THE NETHERLANDS** and **TAIWAN**. Since 1999, ECPAT Taiwan ran a specialised website and had developed a CD that featured a digital character named E-baby, along with his friends E-Girl and E-Mouse, that once installed in a computer, would automatically send a reminder to children of safe rules while surfing the Internet. The CD was distributed to all elementary schools in Taiwan. Also, in 2000, ECPAT published a book entitled, 'Protecting Children Online', which was immensely popular and was translated into many languages. In 2001, ECPAT began a 'Safety for Children Online' project in several countries in Asia, including Thailand, Indonesia, Taiwan and Japan. The topic had become central to ECPAT Taiwan which ran a large project in 2002 called 'Child Safety on the Net' with a four-pronged approach: monitoring, training, law and policy reform.

After internal discussions, it was decided that for its contribution to the UN Study on Violence against Children, ECPAT would focus on this particular aspect that had begun to arise more frequently and consistently in its work. With participation of member groups from several regions, ECPAT developed research tools, commissioned papers and launched a study on 'Violence against Children in Cyberspace', which was completed in late 2004 and submitted as its contribution to the UN report.

The ECPAT cyberspace study also served as a building block for ECPAT's own work in combating child pornography. Given the rapid changes taking place in mobile technology — the widespread use of cell phones by young people everywhere and the emergence of largely unregulated chat rooms and social networking sites, along with innovations that helped those seeking to profit from child pornography, such as advertising, file-sharing and the increasing ease of remaining anonymous online — further research and action was needed and fast.

Both within and outside ECPAT, the impact of global expansion of technology on CSEC was being acknowledged and explored. During 2003-04 ECPAT piloted a project in Thailand to raise awareness amongst school children about the potential dangers of Internet use, developing a teacher training module that, in collaboration with national and local education authorities, was introduced in the Thai school system. Workshops on IT safety brought together representatives from 500 schools, and Bangkok school authorities planned to introduce the teaching material in all municipal schools. Plans were made to translate the module into English and other educational materials produced in Thai in preparation for sharing in other Asian countries and across the ECPAT network. A report, 'Our Children Online: Example of Thailand' was another outcome of this work.

The Thai project and the report on safety in cyberspace for the UN also helped ECPAT to prepare for a role in the 'World Summit on the Information Society' (WSIS), which was scheduled for November 2005 in Tunis. Its research, on-the-ground experience, knowledge of young people's behaviour (through its youth network) and dedication to preventing the exploitation of children through child pornography, would allow ECPAT to bring a clear statement to that meeting about how Internet use poses risks of sexual exploitation to children and adolescents. As a result, important provisions for child protection online were included in the WSIS outcome document. These initiatives and the growing urgency of addressing the issue led ECPAT to launch a global campaign the following year to 'Make IT Safe', bringing together a global coalition of ECPAT groups, like-minded NGOs, IT industry leaders, international organisations and governments.

## CHILD PROTECTION CODE MOVES TO NEW YORK

Also in 2004, with UNICEF's involvement, the secretariat of the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism moved to New York, where it was hosted by ECPAT-USA. A significant yearly financial contribution from UNICEF supported the operational costs for the Code secretariat. Additional support to the Code of Conduct was also provided locally in a number of countries — primarily by ECPAT national groups — towards assisting signatories with the application procedure, the development of awareness-raising material and the training to be undertaken in keeping with the Code of Conduct criteria.



5

**2005-2008:  
FULL SPEED  
AHEAD**

**After the turn of the millennium**, it was often argued that rapidly advancing technology was accelerating history at an unprecedented pace. Certainly for ECPAT and its members, this acceleration was a very concrete reality. Some of its effects were undoubtedly positive: improved communication tools and the expansion of the Internet allowed ECPAT members and allies to better share information leading to important advances toward the monitoring of the Agenda for Action.

Also, now that most organisational issues had been resolved with stable leadership and funding secured, ECPAT was ready to move ahead at full speed. With activists and institutions able to better collaborate across the globe, ECPAT was able to plan with confidence and play a leading role in a Third World Congress. But the progress in technology also had its dark side that would require new expertise for the activists and their allies combating child abuse, as the expansion of ECPAT's work on Internet safety issues will also show.

## MAKE IT SAFE

The 'Make IT Safe' campaign was simultaneously launched **in April 2005** from Bangkok by ECPAT and from London by the UK-based **CHILDREN'S CHARITY COALITION FOR INTERNET SAFETY** (CHIS), as well as several other countries in Africa, Latin America, Europe and Asia.

Internet safety expert, **JOHN CARR**, the spokesman for ECPAT's partner CHIS, summarised the objective of the campaign as follows: 'When dealing with issues such as spam, viruses, phishing and other threats, the Internet and online industries have shown a great willingness and a great ability to come together and develop common technical standards. This has simply not happened in the field of child protection. This must change.'

The campaign was a logical follow up to ECPAT's 2004 study 'Violence against Children in Cyberspace' and the growing expertise on the role played by the Internet in promoting demand for child pornography. It also built upon work already undertaken in schools in Taiwan and Thailand, and members' activities in other countries such as Spain and the Netherlands. A training workshop on the campaign held for ECPAT youth members in Africa ensured strong involvement by young people; amongst other activities, youth held awareness-raising events in communities as part of the campaign and visited cyber cafes and schools to inform adults and peers about the hidden dangers of new information communications tools.



In addition to educating young people, the Make IT Safe campaign was designed to lobby leaders in the information technology (IT) field to create a global child protection body that would:

- **Set and implement global industry standards**
- **Research safety technologies**
- **Fund a global educational campaign**

It also called on governments to adopt IT child protection policies to:

- **Make the IT industry responsible for protecting children's safety online**
- **Enable international legal co-operation against online child abuse**
- **Provide care and protection for children abused, or exposed to harmful images and messages, online.**

The campaign had its own website, offering resources such as lobbying letters, postcards, flyers, stickers and t-shirts. ECPAT's name recognition, intensive media strategy and extensive partnerships ensured a high profile for the campaign.

In three months, the Make IT Safe website received more than 174,000 hits from 9,000 visitors. But more significant was the impact it was having beyond this activist core: 60 organisations and 22 companies from 35 countries had joined the campaign by signing the online petition or sending letters of support.

And it worked: a growing number of corporate and IT companies, prompted to move on the issue, were shifting from the position of being targets to becoming supporters of the campaign. The list of converts included: **AMERICA ONLINE, BRITISH TELECOM, MICROSOFT, VODAFONE, WATCHDOG CORPORATION.**

The campaign also received early backing from **JUAN MIGUEL PETIT**, the UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and from the Subgroup against the Sexual Exploitation of Children of the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which reflected ECPAT's strong working relationship with these entities and the growing importance of the topic.

The campaign's rapid take-off and impact on a new sector confirmed yet again the value of ECPAT's campaigning methods, which involved: a proven ability to work at national and international levels to facilitate youth involvement and a willingness to enter into partnerships within a broad spectrum of like-minded groups, from public institutions to private corporations, and from NGOs to governmental actors.

Meanwhile, the knowledge and expertise built around the preparation of the 'Make IT Safe' campaign within the ECPAT network also translated into another set of activities: in Denmark and Taiwan, ECPAT groups launched hotlines permitting children or parents to

report abuse or suspected abuse. ECPAT Canada (Beyond Borders) worked with partners to initiate a 'cyber-tip' line to report cases of online abuse.

In Sweden, ECPAT had worked in close cooperation with local police, Interpol and the IT industry, including the country's major Internet providers, to create a national hotline that not only received tips about 'child pornography websites', but also about suspected cases of child sex tourism and trafficking of children.

As a result of this, all main Internet providers in Sweden implemented blocking measures by **June 2005**, preventing an estimated 10,000 attempts to access such sites daily.

However, this was far from addressing the growing global complexity of the issue. Speaking at ECPAT's Third International Assembly later in 2005, Interpol's Hamish McCulloch, Assistant Director of the Office on Trafficking in Human Beings, summed up the challenge for ECPAT members: 'Over the last few years there has been a rise in sexual crimes against children, especially Internet-related crimes such as the exchange and sale of images of abuse of children. Most of those involved in the sale of child abuse images do not have a sexual interest in children; they are only interested in the economic benefit', he said.

'The extent to which the Internet has facilitated the sexual abuse and exploitation of children, especially by organised crime and other networks of people exchanging images of child sexual abuse, has come as a 'wake-up call' to law enforcement. In the online world, people feel free to express a sexual interest in children and are even willing to identify themselves by using their credit cards to buy images. Police operations in the UK suggest that 1 out of every 1,000 males is willing to spend money online to purchase images of sexual abuse of children. Multiplied worldwide this represents a huge market'.

'New technologies are making it more difficult to detain those involved in viewing child abuse images, (for example when mobile phones are used for this purpose). Keeping up with technology used for criminal activity is a constant challenge to law enforcement', concluded the representative from Interpol.

In preparation for the **November 2005** Tunis World Summit on Information Society (WSIS), ECPAT focused its research on the issue of 'sexual abuse and exploitation of children through ICTs' to use the expression chosen for ECPAT's contribution.

The problem was worsening daily: online diffusion of pictures of naked children or children made to pose in a seductive manner was spiralling out of control and, not unlike child trafficking and the prostitution of children, it had become a highly lucrative business. Facilitating this trend was the ease of production and rapidity with which abusive images could be distributed. All this, it seemed, with increased anonymity and without the risk of exposure from outside sources required to process films, unlike in the past.

By late 2005, ECPAT's research and activities permitted it to make important contributions to the WSIS, including inputs to the outcome documents, organisation of side events and lobbying to ensure that child protection was included in the final declaration and plan of action. ECPAT subsequently took the lead in convening and chairing a multi-stakeholder group of industry representatives, government officials and non-governmental actors to work together on policy recommendations impacting child safety online known as the 'Dynamic Coalition on Child Online Safety' of the Internet Governance Forum.

Building upon the early success, a growing number of ECPAT members launched the Make IT Safe campaign in their own countries, but as some of these groups had limited resources or were themselves confronted with a number of technical challenges, it was not always easy. Fortunately, thanks to the expertise gained in other countries, the International Secretariat was able to help local groups undertake local initiatives by supporting small-scale projects, mainly in Africa and South Asia.

One such project took place in Nepal where ECPAT worked with a private sector partner, the Forum for Internet Technology, which allowed campaign messages and information to be included as a key component of a national information technology exhibition reaching 300,000 people in the country in a short time.

## PREPARING THE SECOND DECADE

Although the network appeared to have turned all its attention to issues of online safety, this was certainly not 100% of ECPAT activities: ten years after Stockholm and eight years after the launch of the Child Protection Code, ECPAT's vigilance was needed more than ever.

For instance, the compilation of a comprehensive set of individual country reports on A4A progress remained important. Following reviews to assess progress toward the Agenda for Action that had been held in 2004 and 2005 in all regions where ECPAT was active, ECPAT International and network members were able to compile a comprehensive set of individual country reports on A4A progress in the 65 countries that had signed onto the Stockholm agenda, either in 1996 or subsequently after. The monitoring reports, posted on ECPAT's website, enhanced its role as a knowledge centre on the Stockholm and Yokohama commitments.

The 2005 reviews confirmed that, despite the passage of many new laws aimed at protecting children from sexual abuse and other violations of their rights, enforcement continued to be the perennial weak point; once the laws were passed, governments moved on to address other priorities. Once they felt the political gain had been reached by addressing what they perceived as a concern of voters, they stopped investing. For

## ACCOR: 140 000 EMPLOYEES TRAINED SINCE 2002

Since the foundation of its first hotel more than forty years ago, Accor has moved from a family-owned business to a Group present in 92 countries over the world. As Accor grew and global tourism developed, the Group had to face emerging problems and therefore take on new responsibilities. Human trafficking is one of those, especially in the form of child sex tourism. This fight was originated by the commitment of a number of Accor hotel General Managers in 2001, in Southeast Asia. Frequently facing child sex exploitation, they signed an agreement with ECPAT, recognized as leader expert NGO on the fight against child sex tourism.

Child sex exploitation has become a global challenge for societies and an operational risk for the travel and tourism industry. To affirm the Group's moral and legal responsibility to fight this phenomenon, Accor decided to progressively spread these individual commitments to the whole Group. Today, this historical commitment is endorsed at the highest level, by Accor Chairman and CEO, in the Ethics and Corporate Responsibility Charter. Beyond the fight against child sex tourism, "Child Protection" is now one of the pillars of Accor Sustainable Development programme PLANET 21 and a dedicated programme for countries and hotels called WATCH (We Act Together for Children) was launched in 2014. This Group commitment is fulfilled by national headquarters (37 Accor countries signed The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism) and also materialises in the Group's hotels, with the support of ECPAT operational expertise to develop training materials and awareness raising campaigns for our guests.

This long term commitment already demonstrated concrete results: more than 140,000 employees were trained for child protection since 2002 (34,000 employees for 2014 alone); cases of child sex abuses have been detected in our hotels by employees, which resulted in reporting to police authorities and convictions of criminals.

After 15 years of commitment for Child Protection, Accor is determined to continue acting. This implies to keep on working hand in hand with local ECPAT organizations as well as police forces in all countries, whether the local context of child sexual exploitation is widely recognized or hides in less visible shapes.

From: Accor Group message to ECPAT International on the occasion of ECPAT  
25th Anniversary – April 2015

example, training of relevant personnel was typically absent or insufficient, as were budget commitments to support the achievement of goals set by new laws.

Also in 2005, with support from **UNICEF JAPAN** and engagement with Japanese travel and tourism professionals as a direct outcome of the Yokohama Congress, the Child Protection Code was launched in Japan where a committee comprised of industry representatives, UNICEF and ECPAT Japan had been formed to gather support and signatories.

In Gambia, the Child Protection Alliance, an umbrella group associated with ECPAT, held training sessions for taxi and bus drivers, hotel personnel and tour operators.

In Austria, the local coalition created a travelling exhibition on child sex tourism and helped launch the Code in Romania and Bulgaria. In 2007, the staff of 19 ACCOR hotels in Thailand, as well as numerous hotel associations, tour companies and government officials, were trained to implement The Code, which was also adopted by two other large hotel chains in Thailand with 600 additional hotel staff trained in preventing child sex tourism.

ECPAT International, meanwhile, continued to work closely with global and regional organisations and governments to improve laws on child prostitution and trafficking in order to ensure that they prosecuted offenders and not young victims. Amongst other activities, ECPAT International provided training for governments and tourism entities in Thailand and Sri Lanka and prepared a 'Handbook for Discussion' to facilitate training about sex tourism within the industry. Training on combating sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism was also held in Brazil, Colombia, Kenya and Malaysia.

## THIRD ECPAT INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**In September 2005**, when ECPAT members came together for its Third International Assembly, the network counted a total of 60 member groups and affiliates, a significant number of which were by then already well established and experienced in carrying out research and programmes relevant to their country's CSEC context. The Assembly was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and brought together some 200 delegates and observers.

After more than two years of consideration and consultation, as well as modifications to the Constitution, there was a growing insistence that guidelines over membership be finally enforced more strictly under what was then called the Four R's of the ECPAT network: representation, roles, relationships and responsibilities. As a result of this new vigilance, five groups had lost their membership by the time of the Assembly, and new

members from India, Niger, the Russian Federation, South Korea and Ukraine had been accepted.

**JO DE LINDE** stepped down after completing her two terms as Chair of the ECPAT International Board, and Amihan Abueva was elected to replace her. New representatives from each region and the members of the Youth Advisory Council were also elected. Some 18 workshops were held on specific topics related to CSEC, each yielding recommendations for further work.

The 2005-2009 'Strategic Directions' adopted in Rio did not include major changes in course, but rather stressed the need to stay the course by:

- **Providing technical support to national members**
- **Broadening partnerships**
- **Contributing to important global meetings and initiatives**
- **Carrying out original research and documentation on CSEC-related issues**

Members were told that the number of donors providing support to ECPAT International was also growing. As about half of the Secretariat's financial resources were used to support collaborative projects involving members at regional or global level (such as Make IT Safe, Legal Reform and Youth Participation programmes), this was good news for the network signalling that ECPAT could continue to expand. The Assembly also approved a new Vision Statement, inspired by language from the Convention on the Rights of the Child: 'The vision of ECPAT', it said, 'is the realisation of the right of all children to live free of child prostitution, child pornography and child trafficking for sexual purposes.'

## ADDRESSING DEMAND

The leadership came from the US where the **INTERNATIONAL CENTRE ON MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN** had put together the **FINANCIAL COALITION AGAINST CHILD PORNOGRAPHY** (FCACP). The initiative managed to mobilise leading banks, credit card companies, Internet service providers and others to disrupt the profits of Internet-based sales of child abuse material online by following the flow of funds and shutting down the accounts used by these illegal enterprises. Following up quickly on this initiative, ECPAT Sweden requested advice and technical assistance from FCACP to create a Swedish financial coalition the same year.

This was extremely successful, and by 2007, all national banks in Sweden, the ministries of Finance and Justice, the national police and other stakeholders were represented in the coalition. It shared the FCACP goal of preventing, or making more difficult, the use of

## THE DEMAND: IS IT A MATTER OF CONSUMERS RIGHTS?

The complex issue of tackling the demand for commercial sexual exploitation of children had been raised numerous times, at World Congresses, in expert meetings, and in conversations within the movement. During the 2005 Assembly, Marcel Hazeu, coordinator of an anti-trafficking programme in the Brazilian Amazon, made a presentation to the ECPAT network:

‘A belief is created which establishes that we have the right to be consumers above all, even ahead of our right as equal individuals. This overriding concern with the right to consumption ahead of citizenship is encouraged by the media, which now reaches to the furthest corners of the world. This commercialized behavior is not symptomatic of an illness, but representative of a cultural pattern in which all is bought and sold and where men are considered superior to women and girls, and the general population is considered superior to that of indigenous peoples. In these circumstances the encouragement of male demand for sex with women and girls, promoted by media reinforces ideas and images of exploitative sexual practices. With the technology now available, we are more and more encouraged to acquire the desires sold to us, without regulation, and with no social limits.’

In Brazil, he explained, indigenous women and children are depicted as ‘exotic’ and ‘sensual’. Trafficking networks in the region use these constructs to encourage women and children to leave their homes and communities for financial gain. ‘It is important to reiterate that, although large numbers of women and children are caught in this form of exploitation, this is not a reflection of free choice or ‘voluntary submission’ as it is often reported. It derives from a historical legacy of power relationships which operate to the benefit of frontiersmen and result in the sexual exploitation of indigenous women and children in order to meet the demand of the market.’



financial systems to pay for commercial child abuse in the form of online images.

A different approach was taken by **BEYOND BORDERS/ECPAT CANADA** a few years later in the form of a 'Man-to-Man' initiative. Building on research in Canada pointing to the enhanced potential for those abused as children to become adult abusers, the web-based campaign urged men who experienced abuse to seek help rather than repeat the pattern. It features a video of a well-known Canadian baseball player who describes the sexual abuse he experienced as a child and his reactions to it (running away, thoughts of suicide), and reminds others that they are not alone. The website also featured brief quotes from male celebrities (writers, actors, musicians, etc.) urging men to refrain from exploiting children sexually, as well as offering suggestions for getting help and counselling.

Other activities conducted in these years, by a number of ECPAT groups, worked on addressing CSEC development by putting in place specific programmes reaching out to different population sub-groups, such as truck drivers, embassy personnel, ferry staff, airline and hotel staff, and their potential role at reducing the 'demand' for CSEC rather than using generic messages or approaches .

## MEMBERS' ACTIVISM

As was the norm, the international focus on a limited number of global priorities at the network level, such as child pornography, demand for CSEC and the Code of Conduct, did not stop individual members from making progress on other aspects of the ECPAT agenda, including:

**Trafficking:** Starting in 2004, ECPAT groups in Costa Rica, Thailand and Ukraine were engaged in an innovative three-year 'Action Programme' against Trafficking in Minors for Sexual Purposes in partnership with the **UNITED NATIONS INTERREGIONAL CRIME AND JUSTICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE**. The project allowed ECPAT to design activities aimed at strengthening law enforcement, enhancing prevention and providing effective assistance to trafficking victims. In Costa Rica, for instance, the ECPAT national member contributed to a study carried out by **SAVE THE CHILDREN** in three Central American countries to map the migration routes used for child trafficking and CSEC. The research identified social, economic, cultural and gender factors that facilitate child trafficking and revealed two important internal trafficking routes. The information was used to design a complex anti-trafficking awareness-raising initiative. A number of trafficking-related activities were also then undertaken by ECPAT groups in Europe, in particular.

**Youth Participation:** Also conducted between 2004 and 2007, the South Asia Youth Partnership Project (SA YPP) in Nepal, Bangladesh and India had proven extremely



successful in promoting meaningful youth participation in work targeted to prevent, combat and help children recover from commercial sexual exploitation. In total, 200 children and adolescents, many of whom were CSEC survivors, not only received advocacy and media training but also small grants to carry out 'micro-projects'.

A subsequent external evaluation of this work found 'widespread consensus amongst all stakeholders...that the premier achievement of the project is the substantive difference it has made to the lives of the young people involved.'

'Youth themselves', continued the evaluation, 'cited a number of changes which are indicative of a real and tangible empowering effect: increasing levels of confidence, skills and capacities and an improvement in relations with others. There seems to be a correlation between direct involvement in the project and positive psycho-social development, as most impact is seen on youth who are directly and closely involved on an ongoing basis and less on those indirectly benefiting.'

In 2008, encouraged by these results, ECPAT began a second phase of the project that not only built youth capacity for advocacy and outreach to at-risk children and those victimised by CSEC, but also created opportunities for YPP youth to become involved in public education and public policy debates on CSEC-related issues, such as HIV/AIDS, child labour, violence and abuse. In late 2008, ECPAT international decided to scale up the programme to include young people from more countries, creating a '**GLOBAL YPP**' programme (see Chapter 6).

## ALARMING TRENDS

Trafficking tied to the prostitution of children was rising and spreading to more and more countries, as was demand for child pornography. Both phenomena appeared to be increasingly managed by organised criminal groups and facilitated by new mobile technologies. Smugglers of narcotics and arms were also involved in child trafficking, using similar routes and displaying equal disregard for human life — much less human rights.

In the US alone, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) found that reports of all forms of CSEC had increased sharply in 2007, including:

- a 66% increase in online enticement reports
- a 58% increase in child prostitution reports
- a 23% increase in child pornography reports
- a 10% increase in child sex tourism
- a 9% increase in child molestation reports

**NCMEC** also reported very disturbing trends: ‘Younger and younger children are being victimised, and images are becoming more graphic and more violent. Of the offenders identified in a recent study in the US, 39% have had images of children younger than six years old, 19% had images of children younger than three.’

Not only were ECPAT and its partners swimming against the tide, but attempts to prod governments to make good on their 1996 and 2001 commitments were proving exceedingly frustrating. Now that ECPAT had produced some 50-60 country monitoring reports, the gaps had become glaringly clear, as elaborated in a 2007 report:

‘The number of countries that have developed comprehensive National Plans of Action (NPAs) to combat all forms of CSEC is still small (only 25%). Furthermore, many such NPAs contain weak goals and objectives [and] have no assigned resources for implementation.... Although more narrowly focused plans have been developed by several countries, for example on trafficking, the unevenness of action taken against different forms of sexual exploitation seriously compromises the protection afforded to children. Furthermore, a large number of countries around the world remain on the periphery of global efforts to combat CSEC.’

The reports also attest to the relative absence of focus on the exploiter. Besides the lack of early prevention, treatment and management initiatives, only half of the countries examined have child prostitution laws that carry penalties for exploiters, and in most cases, prosecution is constrained by the necessity to prove rape, coercion or corruption of minors. In addition, children are often wrongly blamed for ‘consenting’ to their exploitation’.

In this context, the timing appeared right to once again bring together world governments and other key players in the private sector, NGO community and others — both to remind them of their commitments and bring them up to date on the new ways in which CSEC was taking place globally. Six years had elapsed between the first two World Congresses, and by 2007 six years had already elapsed since Yokohama.

## RIO WORLD CONGRESS

**In 2007**, the Brazilian government agreed to host the third ‘World Congress’ and insisted its focus should be broadened beyond the commercial sexual exploitation of children and mobilize further against the sexual exploitation of children and ‘adolescents’. As had been the case for the earlier World Congresses, ECPAT, **UNICEF** and the **THE NGO GROUP FOR THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD** were co-organizers, along with the government of Brazil as the host, and ECPAT invested considerable time and resources in preparing for the event.

In **late 2007** and **during 2008**, ECPAT's Executive Director Carmen Madriñán and youth Board Member Lotta Segerström attended a number of preparatory meetings, participating in decisions about the themes of the Congress and its planning.

National members participated in meetings on specific topics held prior to the Congress, such as:

- **Global Thematic Consultation on Corporate Social Responsibility against the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents**
- **Engaging Men and Boys in Combating the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents**

ECPAT's regional representatives also played an active role between April and October 2008 in the six UN-sponsored regional meetings held. Amongst ECPAT's goals was to bring the issue of the sexual exploitation of children in cyberspace, that gradually became central to its work, onto the world agenda in a more forceful way, as the sale of child sexual abuse material kept growing in all countries where ECPAT was working.

In **August 2008**, ECPAT convened a 'Preparatory Expert Meeting' on 'Child Abuse Images and Sexual Exploitation of Children Online' in Bangkok to draw together a wide range of expertise and evidence, in preparation for taking a lead role on this topic. The meeting gathered experts in law enforcement, research, rehabilitation of victims, advocacy, technology and other relevant fields who discussed the most urgent actions required to more effectively counter the alarming trend.

An important ally in this work was the **VIRTUAL GLOBAL TASKFORCE** (VGT) of Interpol, which had been formed in 2003 as an alliance of global law enforcement agencies dedicated to combating the commercial sexual exploitation of children, with which ECPAT was often collaborating. At the request of ECPAT, the VGT produced a paper for the Rio Congress outlining how some of the latest technological advances (e.g. social networking, instant messaging, peer-to-peer file sharing and webcams) were facilitating the sexual abuse of children.

In total, ECPAT commissioned seven of the eleven research studies presented at the World Congress III, reaffirming its status as a major source of knowledge about CSEC and its extensive contacts with experts around the world. In addition to exploring both the legal and psycho-social impact of child pornography and online exploitation, topics addressed at the Congress included: child trafficking for sexual purposes; sexual exploitation of children in tourism and child prostitution; corporate social responsibility; and the steps being taken in some countries to block pornographic websites and prevent financial gain by exploiters.

The Congress, which took place from **25-29 November 2008**, was a high-visibility event with opening speeches by Brazilian President **LUIS INÁCIO DA SILVA** (Lula), Sweden's **QUEEN SILVIA** and ECPAT's Board Chair Amihan Abueva. Some 138 governments were represented, participants numbered over 4,000 and nearly 300 children and youth from 94 countries attended.

In her opening speech, Amihan Abueva came right to the point. Noting that the global economy was in turmoil she chided governments for letting enforcement and implementation of child protection systems 'lag far behind'. 'It is relatively inexpensive to pass a law. It is far more challenging to make sure that law can be applied to its fullest. We see more and more governments cutting down on budgets and programmes for children: offloading onto the NGO sector the essential programmes for prevention, protection, recovery and reintegration without the necessary government support for resources, capacity building and ensuring the rule of law. Some in government may believe it is politically expedient in tough economic times to quietly back away from commitments to children's rights. But this sort of short-term thinking compromises our children's safety and security, and therefore compromises fundamental values at the heart of every decent society'.

At the Congress, David Butt, an experienced Crown Prosecutor and member of ECPAT Canada, offered some more insights into demand for child abuse images, much of which was applicable to child sexual exploitation generally. Based on interviews with men he had prosecuted for the possession or sale of large quantities of child abuse images, Butt explained that demand differs from consumer to consumer depending on each individual's particular fetish — ranging from pictures of girls, boys or both; pictures or videos involving pain and humiliation; particular ethnicities or ages, etc. Butt also noted that those obsessed with child pornography often cross the line to engage in real-time child sexual abuse.

'Police statistics indicate that 30 to 40% of consumers of child pornography on the internet also have a credible history of tangible abuse of a child. I suspect this figure is low. We do not know yet what the connection is between the consumption of these images and actual acting out. Someone who spends all their time consuming these images has a dangerous sexual interest in children and should be identified as dangerous in terms of addressing and curtailng demand', he suggested.

# THE RIO PACT

After four days of speeches, thematic presentations, panel discussions, workshops and plenary sessions — in which ECPAT members played a prominent role — the Congress concluded on November 28th with the 'Rio de Janeiro Pact to Prevent and Stop Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents' (commonly known as the Rio Pact), including a declaration and plan of action. The Congress rapporteur was Professor JAAP DOEK, former Chairperson of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child between 2001 and 2007.

The outcome document pointed to several areas requiring urgent attention:

- **Gaps in efforts to identify vulnerable children and knowledge about how to respond to the various emerging trends in child sexual exploitation**
- **Lack of coordination amongst the various stakeholders**
- **Lack of strong laws, law enforcement, training of law enforcement personnel and resources targeted to combat CSEC**
- **Lack of focus on measures to eliminate or reduce demand for sex with children**
- **Failure to educate children about the dangers of CSEC and insufficient resources devoted to services for victims**

While addressing specific matters related to the commercial sexual exploitation of children, the final document also referred to a number of other issues that the previous congresses had failed to address as they often required more actors to get involved: the strategies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, eliminating child labour, greater regional and multilateral cooperation, and a host of other matters related to the general topic of child protection.

Most importantly, as a consequence of the adjective 'commercial' having been dropped from the title of the Congress, at the request of ECPAT partners, the sexual exploitation of children was discussed also in the context of abuse within families and communities, underscoring the link that often exists between abuse and sexual exploitation of children, but also somewhat blurring a distinction that ECPAT had been careful to maintain until then.

Nevertheless, this broader focus indicated the extent to which, following adoption of the CRC in 1999 and the 2002 UN General Assembly Special Session on Children, CSEC was becoming mainstreamed into broader global concerns about children, child rights and child protection.

A subsequent analysis of the Rio Congress done by ECPAT International underlines how much this development should indeed be welcome: 'Anchoring the issue of CSEC

more strongly to existing human rights instruments and standards... opens greater opportunities for systematic and structured monitoring of progress on the [Stockholm and Yokohama] commitments and ensuring accountability of various stakeholders, in particular governments.'

In addition, the Rio Pact addressed a number of cross-cutting issues, such as child labour, and added to the list of those who should take action by urging religious leaders, parliamentarians, academics and families to play a role in ending CSEC.

Once again, ECPAT youth delegates issued a separate statement. 'The work we have begun here', it read, 'must not end here today when the congress rooms become empty and the heated discussions here in Rio de Janeiro become silent. We must not allow the discussion of children's rights, particularly in the matter of sexual exploitation, to ever go silent again but we must evoke calls of change throughout the world like we have never done before'.

Amongst other demands, the young people urged governments to appoint ombudsmen, create local child protection offices and a children's forum to oversee and ensure implementation of children's right to be free of sexual exploitation.

## FOURTH ECPAT INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

As representatives from the entire ECPAT network had come to Rio to attend the World Congress, three years after the previous assembly, it was decided that the Fourth International Assembly would take place immediately after the event. The Assembly elected a new Board Chair, MAUREEN CROMBIE of New Zealand, as well as new regional and youth members. A total of 89 ECPAT delegates attended the Assembly, along with 50 other ECPAT members and observers.

The Executive Director reported that 12 new groups had joined the network since 2005, many from regions where ECPAT had previously lacked a strong presence or where CSEC represented a serious problem, but was not being addressed:

- **3 in the Middle East and North Africa (Egypt, Jordan and Morocco)**
- **2 in Europe and CIS (Albania and Moldova)**
- **3 in the Americas (Argentina, Bolivia and Chile)**
- **3 in Africa (Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Ghana)**
- **1 in South Asia (Bangladesh)**

In her report to the network, **CARMEN MADRIÑÁN** also noted that by 2008 ECPAT had produced Global Monitoring Reports on 76 individual countries, assessing progress

toward the Agenda for Action. The work involved detailed analysis of each country's legal provisions related to all aspects of CSEC. The areas of alignment and remaining gaps between national laws and relevant international standards were outlined, followed by recommendations for legal reform and improved implementation. This comprehensive information had been made available to governments, legislators, the law enforcement community, child rights advocates and other stakeholders, serving as a crucial reference and catalyst for legal and social reform initiatives.

Finally, the Assembly approved the 'Strategic Directions' for the period 2009-12 charted by ECPAT International leadership in consultation with network members. The updated Strategic Directions reflected not only ECPAT's core mandate, but also the increasing sophistication of its work, the growing number of partners engaged in anti-CSEC work and expanded international and regional commitments to children and their rights (CRC, Optional Protocols, WFFC, etc.).

One of the most important challenges facing ECPAT as an organisation and the children it sought to protect was the global economic crisis beginning in late 2007 and worsening over the next few years.

Increased levels of poverty made children more vulnerable to all forms of CSEC, while NGOs such as ECPAT faced severe funding cutbacks, as governments, institutions and individuals tightened their belts in the wake of large-scale financial losses.

During this period, ECPAT was able to focus most of its energy on moving forward with research and programmes, having resolved many of the vexing and time-consuming matters implicit in structuring and managing an international NGO network.

ECPAT International was getting better at using its expertise to facilitate national and regional programme, and at the same time had begun to address, in a comprehensive manner, issues of demand and the commercial sexual exploitation of children through the Internet, through both research and action.

The Fourth World Congress served to re-galvanise multi-sector support for combating CSEC and helped to shape ECPAT's future strategies and programmes. After developing expertise and launching activities related to child pornography and the Internet, ECPAT's spotlight would shine on child trafficking during the next few years.

Finally, for the ECPAT movement, Rio was also when an important new partnership was announced with the promise to rekindle the campaigning spirit from which ECPAT had arisen and keep the organisation busy and focused for the next two years. (See chapter 6.)





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6

**2009-2013:  
EXPLORING NEW  
PARTNERSHIPS**

As the Rio World Congress came to an end in **2008**, 86% of ECPAT network members were engaged in efforts to prevent and protect children from trafficking, especially through legal reform, according to an international survey. This, of course, was the result of the integration of child trafficking and child pornography into ECPAT's mandate and mission back in 1993.

Many ECPAT groups also undertook research to provide the evidence base required to shape better policies, as well as monitoring and evaluation strategies to assess the impact of programmes on children trafficked for sexual exploitation. One of the key gaps noted by ECPAT groups was the need for greater engagement by the private sector in anti-trafficking efforts. But an NGO making that point was not enough; the same message coming from inside the business sector would certainly make an enormous difference.

**THE BODY SHOP**, a privately owned cosmetics company known for its commitment to human rights and ethical practices, was perfectly suited to play this role. The late Dame **ANITA RODDICK**, The Body Shop founder, was an activist who had declared from the start that she wanted her company to 'change the way business is carried out'.

When she and ECPAT Executive Director **CARMEN MADRIÑÁN** had met a few years earlier, they immediately found common ground in their shared goal to explore innovative ways to further combat human trafficking.

So, after her death in 2007, it was only fitting that The Body Shop and ECPAT would meet again to develop a joint campaign. This campaign 'STOP Sex Trafficking of Children and Young People', announced during the Rio World Congress in 2008, was rooted in this vision and honoured her memory.

It was formally launched in mid-2010 and continued through March 2012, involving most of the ECPAT network — especially young people — along with The Body Shop stores serving 300 million customers annually.

## STOP SEX TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The ECPAT-Body Shop campaign shone a spotlight on trafficking of children for purposes of prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation, and sought to raise public awareness and promote government action to prevent and protect children against such crimes. The two partners used their respective advantages to achieve the goal: ECPAT had a large number of 'campaigners' in countries around the globe, as well as technical knowledge and strong research capabilities, while The Body Shop relied on

its commercial presence, marketing and communication know-how and large customer base. High-profile launches were held in The Body Shop stores around the world attracting media attention. Customers were provided with information and asked to sign a petition opposing trafficking in children for purposes of sexual exploitation.

They were also invited to purchase a hand cream tied to the campaign. The money collected via these purchases was then reversed to ECPAT and invested in ongoing advocacy on trafficking and anti-trafficking initiatives being undertaken by the Secretariat, ECPAT member groups and youth. Thus for ECPAT, the campaign served to raise both funds and awareness about what, at the time, was the third component of its mandate: work to end 'trafficking of children for sexual purposes'.

In addition, the unique partnership between a child rights NGO and a socially conscious private sector firm constituted a positive response to the Rio Declaration's call for greater engagement with the private sector in combating CSEC.

During the first half of 2009, the ECPAT International Secretariat developed materials to enable a unified advocacy campaign, including a comprehensive global report on Child Sex Trafficking ('Their Protection is in Our Hands - The State of Global Child Trafficking for Sexual Purposes') and individual country 'Fact Sheets' on child sex trafficking were prepared for distribution at The Body Shop stores and other public events. Posters and other visual materials were also produced, as well as a 'Campaign Advocacy Toolkit', to help ECPAT groups and The Body Shop staff conduct effective advocacy. At the policy level, ECPAT conducted research in the 42 countries where the campaign was centred, which identified the need for legal reform and policies to better prevent trafficking, protect child victims and prosecute child traffickers in each country.

The global report stressed that trafficking was the third most lucrative criminal enterprise worldwide; that 79% of human trafficking is for purposes of sexual exploitation; and, citing data from the **UN OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME** (UNODC), that the percentage of children under 18 involved in or affected by such trafficking was rising (from 15% in 2003 to nearly 22% in 2007).

It also emphasised that trafficking in children was a global problem manifesting in both developed and developing countries. While some trafficking is internal, a large portion involves taking children across borders where they are particularly helpless — lacking valid identification papers, language skills and any means of returning home. Meanwhile, for the exploiters: 'The annual profit per victim per year can be as high as US\$67,200 in industrialised countries or US\$10,000 in the Asia and Pacific region and Sub-Saharan Africa'.

The campaign called upon governments to meet three goals aimed at reducing or eliminating child trafficking for sexual purposes:

## **CAMPAIGN SUCCEEDS IN INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS**

The ECPAT-Body Shop STOP SEX TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH campaign has been very successful in increasing the awareness and understanding of millions of people on the specific issue of child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).

Every year, an estimated 300 million customers visit The Body Shop stores across the world. With the campaign promoted in store windows and at till points, the campaign's exposure and reach has been significant. In many countries, the petition drive set records:

- **2,333,033 European citizens signed the campaign appeal for action, the largest human rights petition ever presented to the European Commission.**
- **Young people involved in ECPAT's Youth Partnership Programme collected more than 150,000 petition signatures in 13 developing countries.**
- **In Sweden, the campaign was the largest petition presented to the government in the past 30 years (325,000 signatures).**
- **In the Philippines, ECPAT and The Body Shop presented 473,489 campaign petitions directly to President Benigno S. Aquino III, making it the largest petition ever submitted in the Asia-Pacific region**
- **In Malta, according to campaign partner Appogg, the campaign reached an estimated 10% of the population.**
- **In the UK, the campaign helped to generate a much greater awareness of child trafficking and the need for guardianship for child victims of trafficking amongst parliamentarians and the public. The significant size of the final petition (735,889 signatures were collected) resulted in a very successful campaign national handover event, which was widely covered by mass media, including CNN's Freedom Project.**
- **In Australia, 225,328 people signed the petition, making it the largest petition in over a decade. According to ECPAT Australia (Child Wise), through the collection of signatures on the petition, the public attitudes survey and exposure in The Body Shop stores, more than a quarter of a million Australians learned about child sex trafficking and Australia's involvement.**

- **Prevention:** Development of community-based trafficking prevention for populations where children are at high risk
- **Protection:** Incorporation of all available international legal standards to protect children against trafficking (CRC, Optional Protocols, etc.) and specially trained law enforcement units for implementation
- **Services:** The integration of specialised government services for child victims of trafficking into national policies (such as shelter, medical and psycho-social services, child helplines)

Over its three years of operation, the ECPAT-Body Shop 'STOP Child Sex Trafficking' campaign yielded major successes in raising public awareness and indignation (more than 7 million people signed petitions worldwide); raising funds (US\$3 million raised); and spurring change. During a period of global recession, when governments and private donors were slashing funds to NGOs, raising US\$3 million for ECPAT's anti-trafficking work was an important advancement. Moreover, the petitions delivered to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva represented the largest number of signed petitions ever received by a United Nations body.

The 'Stop Sex Trafficking of Children and Young People' campaign officially ended with a media event in Bangkok, Thailand, in March 2012. A report by the ECPAT International Secretariat later that year ('Creating Change through Partnership') describes many highlights and results of the campaign.

The 2012 report also details the progress made toward campaign goals, including for example:

- **7% increase in the number of States making notable efforts to stop child sex trafficking and a 50% decrease in the number of countries making insufficient or limited progress**
- **8 countries have revised, or are in the process of revising, domestic legislation related to trafficking**
- **23% increase in the number of governments that conducted general sensitisation campaigns on trafficking in persons or implemented awareness-raising initiatives specifically against child sex trafficking**
- **17% decrease in the number of countries that lack public support services for child victims of trafficking**
- **Nearly 20% decrease in the number of countries with totally inadequate shelters to respond to the specific needs of child victims of trafficking**

By **2009**, the demand for corporate social responsibility had been increasing for some time. In particular, a growing number of consumers were examining product labels for assurances that, for example, no children were involved in production or that the product would not harm the environment. In this context, there is no doubt that The Body Shop benefitted from its association with the campaign and strengthened its reputation as a

socially conscious business. For ECPAT, a little-known brand outside its own circle, the campaign not only met the Rio Pact call for expanded partnerships to end CSEC, but also was a huge boost in visibility. It created a model for similar campaigns that identified and acted upon synergies between an NGO and the private sector to create measurable progress toward the shared goal of promoting government action to protect vulnerable and exploited children.

## MEMBERS' INITIATIVES

Most national ECPAT groups were very active in the anti-trafficking campaign, but also continued to pursue other activities and strategies related to the organisational mission and mandate.

**ECPAT GERMANY** carried out training workshops on combating the sexual exploitation of children in tourism for those preparing to work in the industry. The workshops introduced the problem of child sexual exploitation in tourism, addressed legal aspects and profiles of offenders and included information about The Child Protection Code of Conduct. Almost all German tourism management institutions collaborated with ECPAT Germany enabling it to complete 36 training workshops in 2011 that reached 858 students. The group also conducted training workshops for the tourism industry, such as courses for regional tour guides and destination workshops in different countries. It continues to offer a free E-learning course in several languages that lays out specific ways different branches of the tourism industry can fight the sexual exploitation of children in tourism destinations.

**ECPAT IN BULGARIA** (Neglected Children Society) collaborated with the Mario Project, which began in 2009 as a joint effort by NGOs dedicated to protecting migrant children and others 'on the move' in Central and Southeastern Europe who are at risk of trafficking and exploitation. With funding from the OAK FOUNDATION and the **EU**, ECPAT groups in Bulgaria, Poland and the Netherlands (as well as non-ECPAT groups in other Eastern European countries) produced situation analyses, surveyed at-risk youth, interviewed social workers and examined the fate of child nationals in the countries where they migrated or were trafficked. ECPAT association and support helped the Bulgarian group, composed of 10-15 volunteers and professionals, to lobby Parliament on the need for legal reform and the establishment of crisis centres with trained professionals to treat victims. Participation also helped ECPAT Bulgaria establish contact and partnerships with other ECPAT groups in Europe that support its work. In 2013, for example, through ECPAT ties, a Dutch psychiatrist participated in an ECPAT Bulgaria training session on the reintegration of trafficked and exploited children. Young Bulgarian women who suffered sexual exploitation were actively involved in ECPAT Bulgaria's prevention and education work.

**ECPAT-USA** intensified its work on establishing ‘Safe Harbour’ laws in individual states, as a result of research showing that unlike US federal law (which protects those under 18) state laws frequently allow police and judges to charge children who are victims of prostitution or exploitation with crimes resulting in incarceration. Safe harbour legislation can exempt children from prosecution for prostitution; require training for law enforcement and other first responders on how to identify and assist victims; increase the penalties for traffickers and buyers; or demand the establishment of multidisciplinary teams to develop state-wide systems of care. ECPAT-USA supported partners in several US states that advocated for safe harbour laws.

**ECPAT IN NEPAL** (Maiti Nepal) is one of many successful examples of commitment to providing direct support to young victims for recovery, rehabilitation and social reintegration. From its humble beginnings as essentially a one-person crusade, Maiti was able to house 500 young victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation in a large facility and manage three prevention homes, two hospices, nine transit homes and a high school by 2012. Trafficking of children to India is one of the main issues faced in Nepal, and Nepalese youth were heavily involved in the ‘Stop Sex Trafficking’ campaign collecting over 38,000 signatures — more than all but one ECPAT youth group worldwide. In addition to its ongoing rescue, recovery and rehabilitation work, Maiti Nepal was active at the policy level by producing an Alternative Report to UN agencies monitoring international commitments and pointing to weaknesses in government child protection systems. In 2010, **ANURADHA KOIRALA**, Maiti founder and Executive Director, was named ‘Hero of the Year’ by CNN for her work against the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

ECPAT’s Argentine NGO partner, **CHICOS.NET**, collaborated with ECPAT International to develop and implement an online course on ‘Building Strategies to Protect Children’s Rights through Responsible Use of New Information and Communication Technologies’ (ICTs). The course was delivered free of charge to stakeholders in the region with the objectives of: promoting initiatives to protect children using ICTs; building knowledge of how violence occurs in cyberspace; encouraging participants to integrate what they learned into the work of their institutions; and developing programmes to prevent sexual violence through ICTs. The first group of participants took the online course from June to July in 2009 and a second group from May to June in 2010. Participants came from 14 Latin American countries, as well as Portugal and Spain.

# KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE ONLINE

ECPAT continued to approach the issue of online safety from several vantage points. Network members and the International Secretariat supported the youth-led Make IT Safe campaign in a number of countries. For example, a teacher training course in online safety piloted in Thailand was subsequently reproduced in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine. Educating young people and adults alike about how to protect themselves against the dangers of online exploitation was a key goal.

However, ECPAT was convinced that protecting children in cyberspace requires more than education, but also cooperation amongst governments, law enforcement, educational institutions, the private sector and NGOs. Protection measures should be incorporated in national policies, and governments should create mechanisms for reporting harm or potential harm and assisting victims, as well as unambiguous laws defining child pornography and its harm.

By 2012, ECPAT was cooperating with a variety of regional and global organisations in both the public and private realms on the issue of online safety.

ECPAT continued its membership in the Virtual Global Taskforce, the coalition of law enforcement entities, industry partners and NGOs seeking to end the exploitation and abuse of children online. ECPAT was able to provide: information on reported incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation; methodologies for effective engagement with children and young people; field-based knowledge; information on trends and patterns; and insights into the behaviour of offenders and specific vulnerabilities of children.

As a result of this long-term investment in the issues, it was the only child rights agency represented in the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Working Group, which recommends telecommunications protocols and standards for cyber security. ECPAT recommended clearer guidelines for internet and mobile phone providers regarding child protection.

ECPAT International attended the WSIS forum in Geneva in May 2011 where it chaired the 'dynamic coalition' of special interest groups concerned with online safety for children, and became a member of the World Summit on the Information Society advisory group on Internet governance. ECPAT was a core member of the Financial Coalition against Child Pornography for the East Asia Pacific region, which included Microsoft, Yahoo and members of the finance and banking sector and law enforcement agencies. The coalition's objective was to eradicate the profitability of commercial child abuse images and videos by tracking payments and shutting down accounts used by illegal enterprises. ECPAT provided coalition members with information and input to ensure that their



services incorporate a child-centric approach and addressed the protection rights of children and young people.

Collaboration with the **GLOBAL SYSTEM FOR MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION (GSMA)** aimed to raise awareness and encourage mobile phone operators worldwide to address the safety and protection of children and young people when using mobile phones. ECPAT and GSMA produced a toolkit for Internet hotline operators around the world.

ECPAT also partnered with **NETCLEAN**, a technology firm that develops products to detect and remove child abuse images from the Internet that are used by Internet service providers (ISPs) and law enforcement agencies. ECPAT International encouraged use of Netclean filters by the hotel industry in parts of Asia and regularly provides Netclean with advice on ways to improve the tool and encourage wider implementation.

Membership in the **INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM (IGF)** facilitated ECPAT's involvement in a workshop outlining technical standards for national policymaking related to children and cyberspace at the Fifth IGF Forum in Vilnius, Lithuania in September 2010, as well as leading a session on child protection issues at a special IGF forum.

## ALWAYS MONITORING COMPLIANCE

As a core element of ECPAT, the development and publication of 'Country Monitoring Reports on the Status of Action against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children', which tracked the compliance of individual governments with the commitments made in Stockholm, Yokohama and Rio, continued and was coordinated by the International Secretariat but often delivered by members. The reports served as an important tool for informing the advocacy and programming of ECPAT network members, since they were the only available country — and issue-specific reports on progress and gaps in national efforts to end CSEC. Between mid-2011 and mid-2012, ECPAT produced 23 new Country Monitoring Reports (CMRs) and held launches in four countries to draw public attention.

New opportunities for monitoring compliance with international commitments arose between 2007 and 2011 when the **UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY** created one important new addition to its framework for protecting children's rights (and human rights in general) with a process known as the 'Universal Periodic Review' (UPR) — requiring an inter-governmental review of countries' implementation of human rights conventions and other agreements every four years.

The UPR process offered a means to pinpoint gaps in government efforts to protect children from CSEC, and the process also allowed for NGO participation. In late 2010, ECPAT International submitted reports on the status of children's right to protection

against sexual exploitation, including analysis of the legal frameworks for Mozambique and Nepal and assisted member groups in Belgium and Denmark to prepare UPR reports.

Given ECPAT's expertise, its observations were often cited in final reports by the **HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**. By 2013, the ECPAT International Secretariat supported the preparation and submission of 34 UPR reports by ECPAT member groups.

ECPAT was already playing an active role within the UN treaty monitoring and enforcement system by, for example, suggesting inputs to annual child rights resolutions, the 'Day of Discussion of the CRC', organising side events on CSEC issues at sessions of the Human Rights Council and assisting with the preparation of Alternative Reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child to complement government reports on progress toward ending CSEC.

In 2010, for example, the Secretariat helped groups in Bangladesh, Mexico, Mozambique and Nepal to prepare such independent reports and undertook capacity building in several regions to assist local ECPAT groups to prepare Alternative Reports on governments' compliance with the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

In December 2011, the draft of the third Optional Protocol (OP) to the CRC on a communications procedure was finalised following consultations in which ECPAT and other NGOs took an active part. The purpose of the new Optional Protocol is to allow children to submit complaints regarding specific violations of their rights once other legal remedies fail to produce relief. The ECPAT International Secretariat shared these developments widely within the ECPAT network, provided information and training in the new procedures at Regional Network Resource Exchange meetings as well as at its 2011 International Assembly and continued to urge governments to ratify all Optional Protocols to the CRC.

## GLOBAL YOUTH PARTICIPATION PROGRAMME (YPP)

### HOW DID IT WORK?

The Global YPP aimed to ensure children's active and meaningful participation in social change and work against CSEC.

Children and youth were involved in the YPP through: **Youth-Led Training** to increase their knowledge, skills and capabilities to carry out their roles and responsibilities as **Youth Motivators**, **Peer Supporters** and **Youth Advocates**; **Peer-Support Programmes** where trained youth shared information and provided support to their peers to help prevent them from getting trapped into CSEC; and Youth-Led Micro-Projects designed and run by young people to raise awareness about the sexual exploitation of children and advocate for laws that protect children from exploitation and abuse.

The YPP has been implemented in 15 countries by ECPAT network members and their local partners (e.g. schools, shelters, and other institutions caring for some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children). Groups of children and youth taking part in the programme included CSEC victims, trafficking victims, victims of domestic violence, homeless children without parental care, those in conflict with the law or those affected by HIV and AIDS.

ECPAT International supported the YPP country teams to ensure the protection of young people involved in the project through established **Child Protection Frameworks**.

# EXPANDING THE YOUTH PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

In addition to the anti-trafficking campaign that was mobilising its members ECPAT launched a second multi-year initiative in 2009 and 2010 that mobilised its young supporters, activists and other young people: the '**GLOBAL YOUTH PARTNERSHIP PROJECT FOR CHILD SURVIVORS AND YOUTH AT RISK OF COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN**' (**GLOBAL YPP**) expanded the programme piloted in Africa and South Asia to 15 countries across four regions where the sexual exploitation of children was a major problem.

The Global YPP shared the same goal as the original efforts: to build the capacity of children and youth who had experienced sexual exploitation and those at risk to play an active role in the fight against CSEC to ensure that their voices were heard in debates, discussion and actions around the world. ECPAT launched a Global YPP website as a hub for resources and communication. Participants carried out peer-support programmes and small-scale community-based projects. In March 2010, ECPAT International organised a gathering of all Global YPP participants to allow youth from all regions to share experiences and strategies for protecting children against sexual exploitation.

The Global YPP expanded quickly. By 2011, it was working with 210 local partner organisations (97 schools and 113 shelters) and 381 Peer Supporters, and supporting more than 40 youth-led micro-projects. Since the project began, YPP peer support schemes had reached an estimated 320,000 at-risk experiential youth in schools and shelters, while another 11,000 had been trained to conduct lobbying and advocacy on behalf of their peers. YPP youth were involved in radio programmes and TV talk shows, producing comic books on child protection and organising marches, as well as actively working to raise awareness about CSEC in communities and collect signatures for the 'Stop Sex Trafficking' campaign.

Between **2009** and **2012**, ECPAT also released several youth-friendly publications, including 'Youth Power: a Manual on Youth-led Advocacy' as well as a 'Youth Journal'. The latter is a collection of articles written by YPP youth from around the world demonstrating the power of young people to design and implement awareness-raising and advocacy activities against CSEC. These publications and other 'child-friendly' guides, tools and reports available on ECPAT's website also confirm its ongoing commitment to and expertise in involving children and youth in its work supporting the transition for many youth from victim to survivor and activist. Very few, if any, global organisations have achieved a comparable degree of meaningful child/youth participation.

Greater knowledge and skills combined with access to child-friendly prevention information and support services have greatly increased their capacities for self-protection and prevention. Involvement in YPP helped many young people make the transition from victim to survivor.

# LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

Starting in 2008, many NGOs were badly hit by the global financial crisis and budget cuts in many countries were having an impact on most traditional funders. This also affected both ECPAT International and the ECPAT membergroups around the world with income reductions and reduced programming.

Initially, as shown by the high visibility of the joint campaign with The Body Shop, which demonstrated the ability of ECPAT to innovate and explore new forms of partnerships to further its mission, the organisation was able to resist the storm: the decision of important donors to maintain their support for ECPAT made it possible for the network to continue to pursue its main objectives during this period and undertake two large-scale, multi-year programmes. Meanwhile, national groups continued to tackle sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism, legal reform and improving care for child victims, and research had continued as more relevant reports, analyses and documents were published and circulated by ECPAT.

But when it held its Fifth International Assembly in Paris in November 2011, ECPAT International was struggling with economic difficulties. **JEAN-MARIE JOLY**, Secretary of the Board of ECPAT France, was then able to secure new funding that made the Paris meeting possible. Over time, alongside its regular donors, ECPAT France has been a frequent contributor to the International Secretariat and the activities of the network.

On the positive side, the Assembly showed the vitality of the network and how much ECPAT had remained the key global organisation in combating the commercial sexual exploitation of children, as the participants were reminded by **DR NAJAT MAALLA M'JID**, UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, who delivered the keynote address. Dr Najat provided an overview of the current situation of CSEC in the context of international agreements, protocols and legal frameworks for the protection of children's rights that showed how much ECPAT's work was crucial to this area. A number of working/learning sessions held during the Assembly covering the three main areas of ECPAT's work, as well as new developments such as the Optional Protocol on Communication and the growing trends toward consumer demand for corporate social responsibility, confirmed the importance of ECPAT's role.

Maureen Crombie was re-elected as Chair of the Board. The Assembly also welcomed eight new groups from several regions. New ECPAT groups or affiliates came from: Burkina Faso, India, Kazakhstan, Peru, Poland, Turkey, Uruguay and Vietnam, joining over 90 ECPAT delegates and some 50 others (including representatives from the tourism and Internet industries, the UN and The Body Shop) at the Assembly.

**KATHLEEN SPEAKE**, Canadian by birth, replaced **CARMEN MADRIÑÁN** who had stepped down in March after serving for ten years as ECPAT's leader. Her successor brought experience of international development issues, particularly child labour in Asia.

Despite internal challenges, ECPAT's membership continued to grow. By mid-2012, there were 82 members or affiliates in 75 countries.

In April 2013, new Executive Director **DOROTHY ROZGA** was appointed. A former UNICEF Country Representative with on-the-ground experience in Africa, Central America and the Caribbean, and South Asia, she arrived at ECPAT with her life-long commitment to children and many years of leadership and fundraising experience, she arrived at ECPAT with her life-long commitment to children and many years of leadership and fundraising experience. Soon afterwards, in December 2013, **CAROL BELLAMY**, the former Executive Director of UNICEF (1995-2005), became Chair of the Board of Trustees. Carol Bellamy joined ECPAT after completing a three-year term as the Chair of the Global Partnership for Education and previously, as President and CEO of World Learning, a non-profit organisation promoting international understanding through education and development in over 70 countries.

## STAYING THE COURSE

The challenges faced at the Secretariat had not prevented ECPAT from continuing its global-level activities. Between 2009 and 2013, it participated in or sponsored multiple regional activities, such as training for care of child victims of CSEC in Peru and Guatemala; a high-level forum on trafficking in the Middle East; a symposium in Japan focused on the need to revise child trafficking laws; and the development of a Code of Conduct for Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in Ukraine and the Mario Project in Eastern Europe. ECPAT held Regional Network Resource Exchange meetings in East Asia and Africa to strengthen local capacity for the implementation of the Code of Conduct for travel and tourism and other CSEC-related issues. Similar meetings were also held for ECPAT groups in the Americas and the Europe/CIS region.

Amongst ECPAT International's new publications in 2009 was an A-Z manual for the preparation of National Plans of Action: 'Guide for National Planning to Prevent, Stop and Redress Violations of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children'. It also launched a new Journal series, featuring in-depth comparative analysis and critical examination of key CSEC issues and emerging trends. Also in 2009, ECPAT Sweden completed a book entitled 'The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children', which offers a comprehensive overview and description of CSEC; an English-language edition was published in 2011.

## LANZAROTE CONVENTION

Developed by the Council of Europe, the 'Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse' (also known as 'Lanzarote Convention'), which came into force in 2010 is considered by ECPAT to be the most advanced international legal instrument against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

The Convention's aim is to prevent and combat the sexual exploitation and abuse of children; protect the rights of victims; and promote national and international cooperation against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children.

It offers clear definitions of the terms 'sexual abuse of children' and 'sexual exploitation of children' and requires that their different manifestations be treated as criminal offences.

It was developed to fill gaps, ensure coherence in European legislation and ensure equal protection of all of children by establishing clear common standards and definitions that are applicable in all European countries, in particular by harmonizing criminal law and other relevant measures.

A Committee of the Parties to monitor implementation (the Lanzarote Committee) includes representatives of civil society as observers. ECPAT international is an observer and, in light of its specialized expertise, is considered a key stakeholder and partner to this process.



Other research efforts included follow-up on the issue of HIV infection amongst sexually exploited children. Ground-breaking studies in Togo and Nepal revealed strong linkages in the form of alarmingly high prevalence levels of HIV infection amongst child victims of CSEC. Through a partnership with the **CENTRE FOR GLOBAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT** at Thammasat University and relying on the reach of ECPAT's youth networks, this collaborative research project offered insights into a previously neglected area. A number of priority actions were identified to halt this little-recognised phenomenon with a strong emphasis on support for safe avenues for HIV testing for vulnerable groups of children and improved access to free counselling and testing services, as well as reducing stigma and discrimination against child victims of CSEC and those affected by HIV.

Two comprehensive CSEC research projects were undertaken in Latin America: 'Child Trafficking for Sexual Purposes' in Chile, Colombia, Guatemala and Mexico; and 'Participatory Analysis of Care Models for Child Victims of Sexual Exploitation' in Chile and Colombia. In 2010, ECPAT Mexico produced a situation analysis of CSEC in several Mexican states, which found that young Mexicans from rural areas and immigrants from neighbouring Central American countries are particularly vulnerable to CSEC, and that many boys experience sexual exploitation. The Mexico study facilitated a clearer understanding of trafficking routes and showed strong connections between drug trafficking and trafficking in children for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

Research was also ongoing throughout 2012 and 2013. In June 2012, ECPAT published a youth-led study on the use of ICTs by young people in Latin America, which recommended such steps as greater support for peer-to-peer education and support and education of parents and teachers about online safety, as well as government requirements that ISPs and banks participate in monitoring and blocking unsafe sites and other steps. This study was followed in early 2013 by a similar youth-led effort in Africa devoted to understanding African children's use of ICTs as a key step in offering them protection from online predators.

During 2013, ECPAT also published regional analyses of the state of CSEC and how member groups were addressing the challenges in all continents. In August, it produced a regional overview of CSEC in Europe pointing to the increased vulnerability of children in a region strongly affected by political change (with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and growing influence of the European Union) and sharp disparities worsened by the economic crisis. The study noted that 20 years after ECPAT's beginning, and despite legislative changes and other initiatives in Europe, reducing demand for child sex tourism remained a serious problem and trafficking in children affected the entire region. It also pointed to changes for the better: the European Union (EU), with its 26 member states, had adopted two new directives on trafficking and on sexual exploitation of children that



oblige member states to uphold legal standards and incorporate these directives into national legislation. Similarly, the study underlined the importance of several groundbreaking steps that the Council of Europe had taken, such as the Lanzarote Convention.

A similar regional overview was produced the same month for Latin America pointing to the significant influence of larger socio-economic and political issues and violations such as neglect, abuse, exploitation and violence arising from intersecting vulnerabilities rooted in poverty, discrimination, power imbalances, exclusion and inequities on children's vulnerability to CSEC. After exploring progress to date, the overview concluded that, despite widespread ratification in the region of pertinent child rights conventions and modifications in national laws aimed at child protection, preventing children from falling victim to CSEC required a new culture' dedicated to protecting all children without exception, and suggested how ECPAT can continue to contribute to such efforts.

In addition to these reports, ECPAT sponsored a 'Regional Consultation on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Africa' in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in early August 2013 to assess and strengthen ECPAT's work against CSEC in Africa. Joining ECPAT members, ECPAT international staff and regional youth representatives at the meeting were representatives from the UN and the Oak Foundation. The meeting in Addis is also an important milestone in ECPAT history because after starting in Asia, rapid development in Africa was now making it clear that it could not ignore the emerging threats to children referenced by the African Child Policy Forum and the African Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The event closed with a series of recommendations and commitments to guide an overarching regional strategy.

# RECOGNITION OF ECPAT'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Symbolically, it was in Addis Ababa that the announcement was made of a new and particularly prestigious prize recognising ECPAT's work in significantly alleviating human suffering: it had been selected by **THE CONRAD N. HILTON FOUNDATION** as the winner of its Humanitarian Prize for 2013.

Since the mid-1990s, ECPAT had received awards and prizes from a wide variety of sources. In his speech at the 21 October 2013 award ceremony, **STEVEN M. HILTON, CHAIRMAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE FOUNDATION** established by his grandfather and hotel industry entrepreneur Conrad N. Hilton, explained the reasons of this choice as follows:

‘For more than 20 years ECPAT has been working tirelessly at global, regional and national levels, not only to save vulnerable children who would otherwise fall through the cracks, but to enact policies and legislation that will put an end to an industry whose existence thrives on the abuse and suffering of children. ECPAT has brought to the table both governments and civil society, building partnerships with law enforcement agencies, nongovernmental organisations, private sector companies and young people themselves. However, it will take all of us to keep the pressure on governments to be sure the laws are enforced and perpetrators brought to justice’.

The brochure distributed by the Foundation at the ceremony also included accolades for ECPAT from former U.S. President Bill Clinton, Queen Silvia of Sweden, UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children Dr Najat Maalla M’jid and Princess Takamado of Japan.

The prize came with a generous award that constituted a major contribution toward resuscitating organisational finances in the wake of the global recession. ECPAT was represented at the ceremony by Executive Director Dorothy Rozga and several long-time ECPAT leaders whose dedicated work over the previous two decades had laid the foundation for the new award.

ECPAT concluded 2013 as an international NGO network in a strong position to fulfil its vision and mandate with an infusion of energy from new leaders and an infusion of funds to support ongoing initiatives, programmes, research and publications.





# **THE GLOBAL GOALS**

For Sustainable Development

7

**2014-2015  
AND BEYOND:  
UNFINISHED  
BUSINESS**

**In 2015, as ECPAT celebrates its 25th anniversary,**  
children around the world continue to be sexually exploited.

Chiang Mai was a call for action; Stockholm was a global commitment to child protection and prevention of exploitation. Again and again, from Bangkok to Yokohama, from Rio to Addis or Geneva, ECPAT members and their allies and friends have relentlessly repeated the message, informed and documented, proposed solutions and effectively **RALLIED THE WORLD TO END CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION.**

As a result, twenty-five years later, thanks in large part to the vigilance of the ECPAT network, the commitment has indeed been kept, but the promise has not been fulfilled. Quite the opposite even: to use the sobering title chosen for ECPAT's new strategic framework adopted in December 2014, ending commercial sexual exploitation of children still remains 'unfinished business'.

Carol Bellamy, the Chair of the Board of ECPAT International, made it very clear in her introduction to ECPAT's new three-year Strategic Framework (2015-2018): 'With the perpetrators of this crime aided by expanding online opportunities and the sense of anonymity and impunity these create, the sexual exploitation of children is a growing scourge, in rich and poor countries alike', she said. Ms Bellamy added later for ECPAT members and their partners: 'If we are to stop the commercial sexual exploitation of children that is fuelled by the speed and power of the internet, we need a step change in effort, collaboration and focus to get ahead of the curve. Police and other agencies do not have enough resources to address the full scale of the abuse; prevention is absolutely critical and requires far more advocacy and pressure from all quarters, from national leaders to civil society and from government ministries to local communities'.

At the time of writing of this book, ECPAT has just adopted a new Strategic Framework for 2015-2018 and is getting ready to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the First World Congress in 2016. World leaders adopted the Sustainable Development Goals in September 2015, which include the highest possible commitment to ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children by 2030. The opportunity is unique and ECPAT's ambitions are high to rally all our members and partners, old and new, and demand a final push to end CSEC.

Planning for this momentous period began in 2014 with a year of consultation, scoping and serious examination of how much the landscape has changed in 25 years.

After the success of the African consultation that had taken place in Addis in August 2013, ECPAT International organised similar three-day regional gatherings in six other regions (South Asia, East Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Western Europe).

Each of these consultations, which took place throughout **2014**, was informed by a Regional Overview of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. These overviews included a mapping of the key socio-economic factors impacting the protection of children and the continuing manifestations and emerging trends related to CSEC; pinpointed in each region major obstacles to progress in child protection; and recommended measures to be taken by governments and civil society to strengthen child protection systems and combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

The consultations were attended by representatives of ECPAT groups, regional experts and representatives of regional bodies and civil society organisations working against CSEC. They enabled ECPAT to identify regional priorities and strategies that, in turn, would help shape the development of its new Strategic Framework (2015-2018), as well as provide a crucial platform for sharing good practices and building capacity at the regional level. Also, comprehensive Regional Overviews touched on diverse causes, manifestations and impacts of child sexual exploitation.

The research revealed that in most regions, more laws or programmes exist to prevent child trafficking than initiatives to address other manifestations of CSEC. Several reports highlighted that the prostitution of children was moving from the streets to less visible locations more difficult to identify and police. Another common point was the increasing perils to children resulting from expanded information and communication technologies.

As stated in the Africa Regional Overview: ‘The advent of new technologies and growth in Internet access in African countries, while bringing many benefits, has greatly facilitated online child sexual abuse and exploitation perpetrated by networks of commercial buyers, traffickers, child sex tourists and other sexual predators.’

Amongst the main priorities identified across regions were: the need for better data on all manifestations of child sexual exploitation, including those least explored to date such as boys’ involvement in forced prostitution; the importance of developing strategic partnerships and strong working relationships with relevant regional and international organisations; and deepening and developing innovative methods to ensure that the voices of CSEC victims are heard. The Latin America consultation suggested expanding relationships with groups dedicated to ‘Sustainable Tourism’ to help address child sexual exploitation in tourism. In Africa, one priority was the development of an alliance with the ITU Africa branch and Terre des Hommes to combat online child exploitation.

In **August 2014**, the information collected in the regions, complemented by additional stakeholder consultations and interviews, was reviewed and discussed by ECPAT International staff at a strategic workshop organized in Bangkok, and followed by a two-day expert group meeting in Paris facilitated by Jeremy Hobbs, former Executive Director of Oxfam International.

Around the table between **21-23 September 2014**, ECPAT was able to gather a cross-section of the best available experts available on CSEC at the time, who, not surprisingly, also had personal relationships with ECPAT and a good understanding of the challenges the organization faced. Participants included: Amihan Abueva, the former Chair of the ECPAT Board of Trustees, who was recently appointed Philippine Government Representative for Children's Rights to the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children; **ERNIE ALLEN**, President and CEO of the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children; **DR ASSEFA BEQUELE**, Founder and first Executive Director of the African Child Policy Forum; **FLORENCE BRUCE**, Director of the Child Abuse Programme of the Oak Foundation; **JOHN CARR**, a member of the Executive Board of the UK Council on Child Internet Safety which is the British government's principal advisory body for online safety and security for children and young people, and a Senior Advisor at ECPAT International; **DR NAJAT MAALA M'JID**, former UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography; **DR JULIA O'CONNELL-DAVIDSON**, Professor of Sociology at the University of Nottingham; and **MICHAEL MORAN**, Assistant Director of Interpol's Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation team.

Katlijn Declercq, Vice-Chair of the ECPAT Board, represented the Board at the meeting, and ensured its outcomes, as well as the results of the regional consultations, were shared with the full board. The documents were then shared with the entire ECPAT network membership who were requested to give additional feedback.

Such an undertaking was neither a light exercise, nor risk-free. For Dorothy Rozga, it was a priority when she joined ECPAT in 2013 to challenge all assumptions on the evolving and complex context of CSEC. Identifying new trends, lessons learnt and diverse perspectives in the overall sector was a prerequisite to setting the new directions for the organisation.

This massive effort turned out to be very worthwhile and by the end of 2014, ECPAT could confidently consider that it had a solid base to build the future of the organisation: it had identified the necessary prevention, protection and recovery needs for child victims globally that were not sufficiently addressed and gathered a solid understanding of the external environment in which it operated.

Lessons learnt, proposed recommendations and strategies were then put together into a synthetic report ('Unfinished Business') that served as a preparatory document for ECPAT's Sixth International Assembly in 2014 and was published by ECPAT in February 2015.



## ARE WE WINNING THE BATTLE ?

Widely circulated figures on the global scale of CSEC are frequently little more than 'guesstimates' accepted as 'fact', despite the lack of references, verification and explanations on how they were calculated. Amongst estimates frequently are statistics contributed by the ILO, which in 2000 estimated that 1.8 million children were 'exploited in commercial sex or pornography globally'. In 2002, another report suggested that 1.2 million children worldwide were 'trafficked every year'. UNICEF reports have frequently used this figure. In 2005, the ILO estimated that 'at any given time' 1.39 million people were victims of commercial sexual exploitation and that 40-50% were minors.

In more recent years, other agencies have avoided making global estimates, focusing instead on trends and changes over time. For example, in 2012, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODOC) detected a 7% increase in the number of children trafficked globally, with a specific increase noted in girl victims.

The root causes of child prostitution have also become worse in recent years. Amongst factors often mentioned: the early or over sexualisation of children and the dissemination of sexualised images of children through new ICTs (often by young people themselves); the growth of the internet and the misuse of evolving technologies; consumerism and the attractiveness of some goods for children as an incentive for 'transactional sex'; peer pressure or a 'desire to conform', which sees young people aspiring to purchase goods and services that they cannot normally afford. An increase in migration, conflicts and violence, as well as natural disasters have all contributed to heightening the risk for children to be sexually exploited.

What would seem indisputable therefore is that the vulnerability of children to sexual exploitation has increased in recent years. For many children in the margins, the family's ability to provide a protective environment is being eroded. Growing economic disparities has negatively impacted the well-being of many children putting more at risk of sexual exploitation. Vulnerability and economic, gender and ethnic inequity are increasingly linked in certain groups of populations. Adding a growing urban — rural supporting (some argue increasing) social tolerance, complicity and impunity and the under-reporting of sexual violations of children.

In the coming years, ECPAT will also invest in a stronger analysis of the demand for sexual exploitation of children, which is likely persistent and growing.

(Adapted from 'Unfinished Business' ECPAT International 2015)

# LOCAL TO GLOBAL LEVEL ADVOCACY

While this forward looking exercise was mobilising a lot of energy at the Secretariat and within the network, it did not stop ECPAT from continuing its external work, which was the very reason for its existence: its website was revamped to increase its user-friendliness in an effort to improve ECPAT's communications outreach, and ECPAT International strengthened its presence and efforts to increase the visibility of its members on social media such as Facebook and Twitter. The Secretariat also continued to produce a monthly internal E-bulletin describing ECPAT's activities at the Secretariat and in different countries by network members, as well as providing tips on new publications, tools and best practices, all of which served to strengthen the network. Also, ECPAT continued to play its role in global institutions and initiatives tied to children's right to protection where its input was valued and often expected.

ECPAT's voice was also heard in the discussions within the international community about the post-2015 development agenda: ECPAT joined those advocating strongly in favour of including violence against children and child protection — particularly protection against all forms of sexual exploitation — in the Sustainable Development Goals and targets which governments and civil society will strive to achieve in the next fifteen years.

ECPAT members continued to prepare reports for global and regional entities charged with protecting child rights, such as Alternative Reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on the implementation of the CRC and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

During 2014, ECPAT members in Cambodia, Madagascar, Switzerland and Uruguay submitted Alternative Reports to the Committee, while ECPAT Sweden submitted its own report and the member group in Colombia contributed to a joint submission by a national coalition of child rights NGOs. The International Secretariat also helped nearly 20 network members prepare documentation for the 'Universal Periodic Review' process undertaken by the UN Human Rights Council, which, amongst other topics, addresses governments' progress toward guaranteeing children's rights.

At the global level, ECPAT continued its close partnerships with groups like the ITU — especially its International Child Protection Initiative — by contributing to new industry 'best practices' guidelines for disrupting the transmission of child sexual abuse material. Together with Interpol, ECPAT organised a briefing session on sexual exploitation online for the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. It also maintained a flow of activities with ECPAT's other global partners, including: the Internet Governance Forum, the Virtual Global Taskforce, the UN World Tourism Organization, UNODC, OHCHR, the ILO,

the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence against Children, the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children and the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

ECPAT continued to participate in numerous global and international meetings and conferences to put forward its recommendations for better laws, policies and programmes to protect children from all manifestations of CSEC.

These included amongst others, the Third Global Conference on Child Labour in Brasilia, Interpol meetings on Crimes against Children, a CARICOM meeting on children and the Council of Europe 'Octopus Meeting' on the Budapest Convention. Finally, in December 2014, ECPAT joined the #WeProtect children online global summit on online sexual exploitation of children convened by British Prime Minister **DAVID CAMERON** with the participation of representatives of more than 50 countries, the private sector, the UN and civil society organisations.

## REGIONAL FOCUS AND RESEARCH

By late 2014, ECPAT had 85 member groups in 77 countries. While falling short of a member in every country, ECPAT did have representation in all regions of the globe, facilitating access to important regional organisations and strengthening the voices of individual members on CSEC issues. ECPAT's strategy was to rely on this strength to generate regional advocacy that would, in turn, generate political will amongst regional leaders to take on CSEC through strategies and programmes for which there is a sense of regional ownership and accountability. The extensive Regional Overviews on the status of CSEC were an opportunity to fine tune the organisation's regional strategy and engage in policy discussions at that essential level.

To galvanise this work, ECPAT hired two Regional Coordinators for Latin America and Africa based in Panama and Ethiopia, respectively. ECPAT also collaborated with regional initiatives and organisations, such as the South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Council of Europe, the African Union, European Union and the Organization of American States, in their efforts to combat CSEC.

In Latin America, a strategic alliance with the **INSTITUTO INTER-AMERICANO DEL NIÑO (IIN)**, a specialised body of the Organization of American States (OAS), facilitated an important intervention at the XXI Pan-American Congress of the OAS in December 2014. To call attention to the gravity of CSEC in the region and the failure of a majority of member states to take the steps required to address it, ECPAT made sure the evidence was on the table in the form of 10 recent Country Monitoring Reports (CMRs) of Latin

American countries and brought together a panel of experts to comment on the findings during the XXI Congress.

In addition, emerging information from regions, particularly South Asia and Africa, resulted in a new focus area for ECPAT: child marriage. In these regions, young girls are frequently sold as ‘brides’ to older men in what is little more than a veiled and ‘socially acceptable’ form of child sexual exploitation. Girls may be sold by traffickers or parents, but in either case the result is abuse and exploitation of young girls. So, in these two regions, the plight of child brides and the practice of child marriage were placed on the ECPAT research and advocacy agenda and a research paper was commissioned on the ties between child marriage and CSEC.

Finally, the regional consultations underlined the importance of the regional dimension of ECPAT’s research work: most participants kept repeating that CSEC had become more and more prevalent in their respective regions, but without baseline data it was difficult to prove this hypothesis — and thus convince policymakers to address it. For sure, in most places, the factors that underlie children’s vulnerability to all forms of CSEC were on the rise, such as household poverty, exclusion from education, increased migration, disruptions resulting from natural disasters and ease of access to the Internet combined with sophisticated software favouring anonymity for CSEC perpetrators. However, listing these factors was not enough; documenting the link is what was needed.

Another theme that ECPAT found to be recurring throughout the globe was the multiple obstacles to access to justice for child victims of CSEC. To examine this question in-depth, ECPAT decided to conduct a major research project that studies this issue in diverse national situations through ECPAT international and network members in Moldova, Nepal, the Philippines, Tanzania and Thailand. Launched in 2014, this multi-country study will gather and assess the experiences of child victims of sexual exploitation in accessing justice and remedies with the expectation of generating practical tools that can be widely used for advocacy in this field.

## ICT AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

In line with the very disturbing trends that ECPAT had monitored closely over the previous decades, the threat to children from technology-based forms of child sexual exploitation had grown exponentially. By 2014, it was considered to be playing a central role in increasing other well-known forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution and sexual exploitation in travel and tourism. Use of the

Internet, mobile phones and new software made it easier for offenders to find and contact children in other countries, as well as to produce and distribute abusive child images.

ECPAT had raised this issue early on at World Congresses and numerous other arenas, as well as through research and publications starting as early as 1996, but as the misuse of technology for sexual exploitation had continued, the children were increasingly at risk, while the predators were often ahead of the curve. ECPAT considered itself responsible for galvanising widespread support to rally others in the fight to end the sexual exploitation of children online.

In 2014, ECPAT published ‘Stay safe from online sexual exploitation: A guide for young people’ to raise the awareness of young Internet users about risks online and help them to protect themselves, especially those most vulnerable to exploitation.

Input from the Regional Overviews and discussions at the Regional Consultations had reinforced ECPAT’s perception of the urgency of this risk and overwhelming reality of this crime; Therefore, a decision was made to expand work in this area coordinated by the Secretariat and to further develop partnerships in the sector. Like for other forms of sexual abuse of children, the sexual exploitation of children through the misuse of ICTs far exceeds the capacity and reach of any single organisation or agency. Partnerships were the key to success, so ECPAT formalised its working relationships with its allies — Child Helpline International, INHOPE and the Internet Watch Foundation amongst others — to jointly combat online forms of child sexual exploitation.

As part of these efforts, ECPAT contributed to the Day of the General Discussion of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2014 with a presentation on ‘Digital Media and Children’s Rights’. ECPAT’s position was that while Internet access is a fundamental right for children, protecting them from risk does not conflict with this right.

The new expanded programme was underway in 2014, mainly through web-based seminars and the development of advocacy tools to build network capacity in this area, supported by a grant from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

Given the rapidly evolving nature of child sexual exploitation through online platforms and tools, ECPAT anticipated that this programme would be ongoing for a number of years, gaining partners and improving members’ expertise to address the threat.

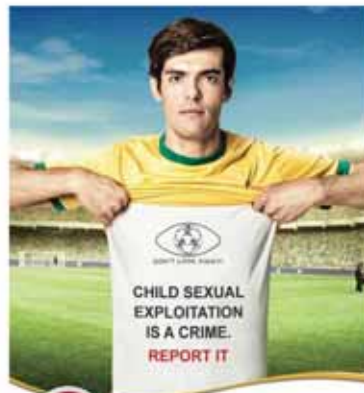
Witness of a  
suspicious situation?

**Don't look away!**



The sexual exploitation  
of children...

**"Don't Look Away!" during the World Cup**



Let's act together against child sexual exploitation.  
Witness of a suspicious situation? In Brazil call 188.  
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[www.reportchildsextourism.eu](http://www.reportchildsextourism.eu)



# TRAVEL AND TOURISM: THE FIRST GLOBAL STUDY

While the production of seven comprehensive Regional Overviews was in itself a major research effort, this was not the only ambitious endeavour that ECPAT had decided to invest in. Looking back at the 25 years that had passed since the Chiang Mai Consultation and the stated goal of the early founders of ECPAT to ‘End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism’, it was about time for a reality check. How much of the initial objectives of ECPAT had been realised? Travel and tourism had increased exponentially since the 1990s, and in many countries they had become major factors of economic growth. So what had happened with sexual exploitation of children in the meanwhile? What was the real situation?

To answer these crucial questions, in 2014 ECPAT initiated the first-ever ‘Global Study on the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism’. The study, which became a joint undertaking of more than 20 partner organisations — based on research by ECPAT member groups, professional researchers, partners and experts — is designed to describe current and emerging trends, along with progress and obstacles tied to the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism, in an effort to once again raise awareness of this crime.

The resulting report is expected to mobilise concerted, comprehensive and coordinated action from governments, civil society and the tourism industry to end the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism.

‘This study will identify the gaps and challenges that remain, and enable world leaders to chart a bold, new course to eradicate child sexual exploitation’, said Ernie Allen, founder and former CEO of the International Centre on Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC) and a member on the eight-person Task Force of experts that will guide the research, at the announcement of the study in London in November 2014.

The other members of the Taskforce, which is chaired by Dr Najat Maalla M’jid, former Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, are: Marilyn Carlson Nelson, former Chair and Chief Executive Officer of global travel and hospitality company Carlson; Corinne Dettmeijer-Vermeulen, National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children in the Netherlands; Jean-Cyril Spinetta, former Chief Executive Officer of Air France-KLM SA; Dr Benyam Dawit Mezmur, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and Chairperson of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC); Dr Taleb Rifai, Secretary General of the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

'It is ECPAT's conviction that countries of origin and destination need to work together to put a halt to the growing crime of commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents linked to travel and tourism. The Global Study aims to present these countries and other interested parties at global and regional levels — mainly the tourism industry, international cooperation agencies and the NGO community — with state-of-the art, reliable information to inform a multi-country and sustained commitment to ensure that this exploitation is not only punishable, but socially unacceptable. We owe this to the children of the world', underlined Milena Grillo, director of Paniamor, ECPAT's member group in Costa Rica and ECPAT's representative on the Taskforce of experts.

In addition to reports for the UN and other CMRs produced in 2014, ECPAT members and affiliates from 14 countries in five regions began research on the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism, the results of which will be incorporated into the Global Study to be launched in 2016.

The 2014 'Don't Look Away' campaign — involving ECPAT groups in 15 countries, the government of Brazil, institutions and private sector entities, and supported by the European Union — was developed to raise awareness about child sex tourism and reduce the risk of child sexual exploitation during the Football/Soccer World Cup (and other mega sporting events). The increased number of tourists in the 12 Brazilian host cities where matches were scheduled heightened the risk for children. The campaign publicised local hotline numbers, included a video from well-known Brazilian player Kaká and warned potential offenders of Brazil's strict laws and punishment for those committing sexual offences, including extraterritorial legislation. For ECPAT, the 'Don't Look Away' campaign represented an especially good example of a multi-sectoral approach combining support from public institutions, NGOs, the tourism industry and sports figures in the fight against the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism.



# SIXTH ECPAT INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

From **2-3 December 2014**, as every three years since ECPAT's inception, ECPAT members gathered for their International Assembly, which took place in Paris.

Amongst the special invitees to the Assembly were the new UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, Maud de Boer-Buquicchio; John Carr, Senior Expert Adviser to the UN and ECPAT on online safety; and Jaap Doek, Deputy Justice at the Amsterdam Court of Appeals, a long-time ECPAT ally and now an ECPAT Senior Advisor. Like previous assemblies, the 2014 event offered an opportunity for members from around the world to meet and exchange ideas, experiences and best practices, while nurturing solidarity and debate.

Attending the Assembly were **168 PARTICIPANTS, INCLUDING 140 DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS FROM ECPAT MEMBER ORGANISATIONS**. New national members from eight countries were welcomed, including groups from **SAMOA, ARMENIA, AZERBAIJAN, GEORGIA, NIGER AND MOROCCO**.

A review of network membership on the eve of the 25 year mark found that 47% of member groups were part of coalitions, while 66% were 'affiliates', rather than national members. But this scoping did not nearly answer the question that had been recurring at every single assembly since 1999: How should the network development strategy be shaped?

The prevalence of coalitions and affiliates over national members had emerged as a concern during the year suggesting a need to look closely at the Network and discuss membership criteria.

The questions on membership and governance of a global network that had been on the table immediately after the Stockholm Congress and the decision for ECPAT to shift from a campaign to an NGO were again being asked: Should membership be limited to national groups working exclusively on CSEC, or were there advantages to maintaining ties with broader national child rights coalitions? What was needed to encourage more groups to apply for national membership? How should ECPAT deal with member groups with minimal participation in network activities? Building and strengthening the network over the next three years would be closely tied to these and other decisions about membership, as well as strategies for internal capacity-building. Also, as had always been the case, members would adopt ECPAT's 'Strategic Directions' over the next three-year period — in this case from 2015-18.

The International Assembly adopted the new Strategic Framework, concluding the one-year consultation exercise. The new framework is not only a new three-year path to 2018, as required by the constitution, but a deeper rethink about how to realise ECPAT's mission.

Recognising the activist roots of the network, Board Chair, Carol Bellamy insisted in her introduction to the Strategic Framework that ECPAT 'will retain its unique role, monitoring the progress of governments to implement their CSEC commitments, and will be tougher and more vocal, with stronger campaign work that focuses on the need to address the availability of online material that harms children.'

Most importantly, she said, in what could be seen as a return to the origins of the early days of ECPAT, the Framework envisioned a new 'Global Campaign that will cover as many countries as possible, addressing all forms of CSEC, through a combination of high-level lobbying, a coherent network-wide media strategy, strong alliances and a focus on results'.

The Strategic Framework presented at the International Assembly was built around four overlapping and interdependent 'Change Goals' for ECPAT to achieve within the next period. The 'Change Goals' have concrete objectives and 'measures of success' that focus on improving the lives of child victims and survivors by campaigning and advocating for a much stronger preventative approach against all manifestations of the commercial sexual exploitation of children, which must be grounded in cutting-edge research and knowledge, made possible by a stronger network.

The framework Change Goals are:

- **Goal 1: Put children's voices at the heart of the ECPAT network**
- **Goal 2: Build a Global Campaign to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children**
- **Goal 3: Convene, broker and lead cutting-edge research, knowledge creation and dissemination**
- **Goal 4: Develop the ECPAT International network (more countries, higher capability)**

In her own conclusions of the consultation exercise and her first 18 months with ECPAT, Executive Director Dorothy Rozga told members that the organisation needed to further prioritise its activities.

'We need to move fast. Faster than the perpetrators of abuse, who move with frightening speed to outpace every effort to bring them to justice', she said. 'But to do so, we must acknowledge that we cannot do everything that we might like to do and recognise that no organisation can address CSEC alone. Collaboration with others has to be central'.

For the order of priorities for ECPAT, she insisted in particular on the following points:

- **ECPAT needs to strengthen its own expertise on emerging issues. Research and data collection had to be improved to provide a solid foundation for advocacy and programming. This could include new or expanded collaboration with academic institutions, regional bodies and other institutions.**
- **The organization must find better ways to advocate to keep children front and centre in the minds of policymakers and the public, and enhance a more meaningful involvement of children and young people, particularly CSEC victims, in its own activities and advocacy.**
- **An improved work and collaboration at the regional level, coupled with enhanced research is required to provide the reliable data and evidence about CSEC that will support this advocacy, such as the planned Global Study on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism and the expanded programme on sexual exploitation of children and ICTs represent some of ECPAT International's responses to the needs expressed during Regional Consultations and discussed at the Assembly.**

In order to do this, the ECPAT network can rely on the support of a strengthened International Secretariat, which now employs approximately 25 staff. The organisation's operating budget totalled US\$3.2 million in financial year 2014/2015. Amongst the most significant donors were the Swedish International Development Agency, Irish Aid, the Government of the Netherlands, the Oak Foundation and Air France — all long-time partners who share ECPAT's goals.

# LOOKING AHEAD

How has ECPAT survived and thrived for the past 25 years? Those with the longest history with the organisation point to ‘the network’ for the answer. First and foremost, it takes a global network to combat a problem that has no borders. The network structure also provides the flexibility needed to make the most of opportunities and weather difficult periods. At the best of times ECPAT has been able to provide leadership from the Board and its International Secretariat in support of the work of highly committed member groups around the world. Yet when ECPAT International suffered setbacks, member groups around the world continued to function, maintaining organisational momentum. In short, the network structure has provided ECPAT with the reach required to address CSEC globally and the resilience required for sustainability.

Because ECPAT member groups are very diverse — including large NGO coalitions and small groups of individuals; groups working in capital cities and others at the grassroots level; groups that cover a wide range of CSEC issues and others that focus on just one — a flexible approach has always been imperative. As Ron O’Grady noted in the 1990s: ‘A campaign must be open to everyone who shares the same goals. ECPAT does not “own” the issue of child prostitution and it has welcomed participation from an enormous variety of people who have a commitment to working on this issue within their own organisations and professional fields’.

Despite the transition from campaign to international NGO, ECPAT has retained this open approach, encouraging participation by diverse groups. It does not impose organisational mandates, but rather works by consensus — through regular consultations and International Assemblies — permitting members and affiliates to put forward their views and express their concerns. The fundamental goals are shared, but strategies and programmes for achieving them often differ by country and region or in accordance with the approach of a given member group. ECPAT respects these differences and seeks to maximise the synergy between the assets available through ECPAT International, with its global perspective and contacts, and the on-the-ground knowledge and experience of member groups. The joint campaign with The Body Shop is a prime example of the effectiveness of this approach.

ECPAT members interviewed as part of the preparation of this history book mentioned other attributes of the network that have kept them active and involved over the years. They appreciate the ability of fellow ECPAT members to understand the problems they face, given that many others, even partners, may not grasp all the dimensions and nuances of CSEC. Another spoke of the shared passion. Reinforcing the importance of the strong personal commitment of most ECPAT members, one long-time member applauded the way the organisation has ‘used the ECPAT structure to push the world

forward'. Others appreciate ECPAT for its lack of bureaucratic procedures and processes. It simply 'does what needs to be done in each country', one member observed.

In addition, ECPAT, born in Asia but now a global organisation, recognised early on the value and importance of taking a regional approach. Countries in the same region often experience similar manifestations of CSEC; such as trafficking of girls from Eastern to Western Europe, or child sex tourism and prostitution in Southeast Asia. By appointing regional coordinators, organising regular regional meetings and working with regional organisations, ECPAT was able to encourage other synergies, as member groups learned from and taught one another, and were increasingly able to exert influence on decision-making on CSEC and child protection at the regional level.

Thus, ECPAT's network has been an effective structure giving member groups and affiliates important say over policies and directions that, while prepared by the leadership, are subject to discussion and modification at International Assemblies.

ECPAT's network structure also facilitates collaboration with a wide range of partners, a constant feature of the organisation since its inception. Addressing CSEC calls for joint efforts with diverse, like-minded groups to build policies and strategies that will facilitate the achievement of shared goals. Inevitably, some partners will have different ways of doing things and diverse priorities. This is true of ECPAT affiliate coalitions and partners in thematic areas, such as hotels, airlines, other NGOs and the private sector, as well as regional and international organisations, such as UNICEF, Interpol, Child Rights Connect (formerly the NGO Group for the CRC), the OAS and the African Union. ECPAT has successfully partnered with all of the above. Creating and maintaining such effective partnerships is vital to its mission; by remaining open to any partnership that furthers the goal of ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children, both ECPAT International and national groups have made the most of opportunities for collaboration and progress toward goals.





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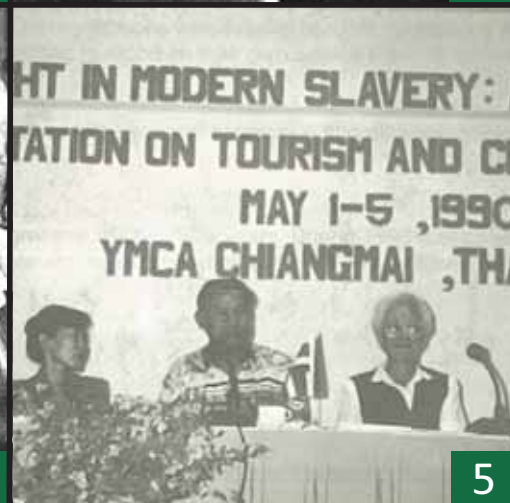


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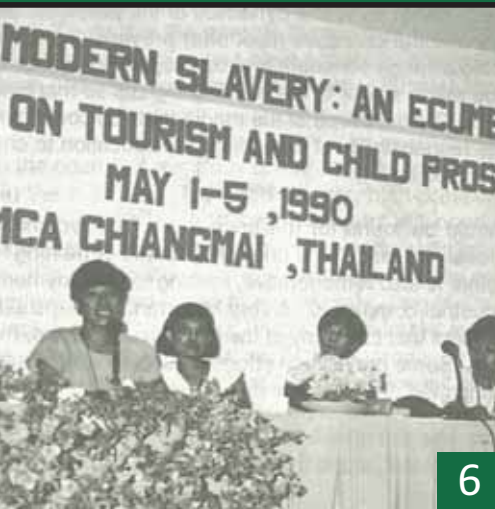
- 1 Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn, Chiang Mai Consultation, 1990
- 2 Dr Koson Srisang (left), Ron O'Grady (centre) and June Rogers (right), Chiang Mai Consultation, 1-5 May 1990
- 3 Saisuree Chutikul (right), Senior Inspector at the Office of the Thai Prime Minister, with Clarence Shubert (left) from UNICEF, 1990
- 4 Martin Staebler (left) and Fr Desmond de Sousa (right), Chiang Mai Consultation, 1990
- 5 Sudarat Sereewat (left), Dr Koson Srisang (centre) and June Rogers (right), Chiang Mai Consultation, 1990
- 6 Representatives of the Philippines steering committee, Chiang Mai Consultation, 1990
- 7 Ruth Kao (left), Maureen Seneviratne (centre) and KT Suresh (right), Chiang Mai Consultation, 1990
- 8 KT Suresh (centre), Chiang Mai Consultation, 1990



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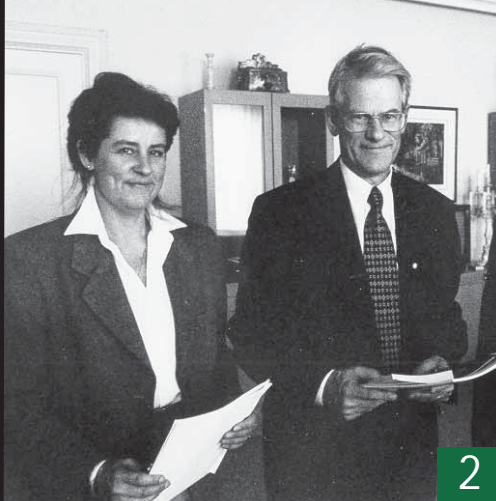
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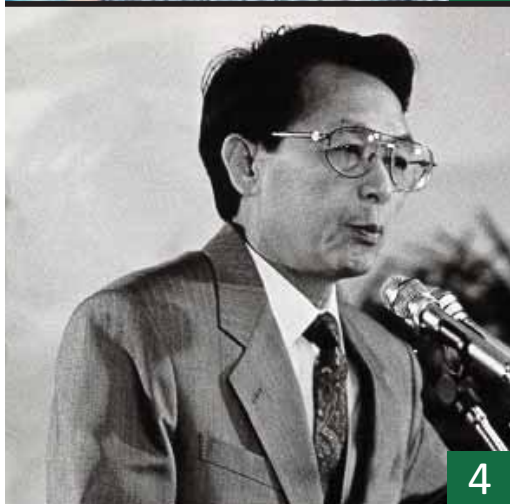
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- 1 Sudarat Sereewat, first ECPAT International Executive Secretary, at the Bangkok Office Opening
- 2 Helena Karlen (left), ECPAT Sweden, with Swedish Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson (right), 1994
- 3 Amihan Abueva, Executive Director of ECPAT Philippines and Executive Director of ECPAT International
- 4 Chuan Leakpai, Thai Prime Minister, at the ECPAT International Committee, 1994
- 5 Ambassador of Japan (right), Bangkok Office Opening
- 6 Dr Prakai Nontawasee (right), Chairwoman of ECTWT, Bangkok Office Opening
- 7 Group photo with Pope John Paul II (centre), Rome, 1999
- 8 Maureen Seneviratne, ECPAT Sri Lanka – PEACE



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1 Supporters outside of the Stockholm World Congress, 1996

2 Queen Silvia of Sweden at the Stockholm World Congress, 1996

3 News reporters outside of the Stockholm World Congress, 1996

4 The World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Stockholm, 27-31 August 1996

5 Chuan Leekpai (left), Thai Prime Minister, with Liz O'Donnell (right), Irish Minister of State for Overseas Development Assistance and Human Rights, at the First ECPAT International Assembly, Bangkok, 1999

6 First ECPAT International Assembly, Bangkok, 16-20 September 1999

7 Liz O'Donnell (left), Irish Minister of State for Overseas Development Assistance and Human Rights, with Sudarat Sereewat (centre) and Muireann O'Brien (right) at the First ECPAT International Assembly, 1999

8 Liz O'Donnell, Irish Minister of State for Overseas Development Assistance and Human Rights, at the First ECPAT International Assembly, 1999



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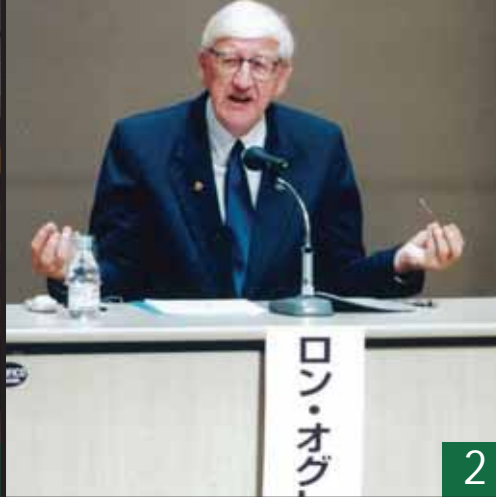


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- 1 The Second World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Yokohama, 17-20 December 2001
- 2 Ron O'Grady at the Yokohama World Congress, 2001
- 3 Participants at the Yokohama World Congress, 2001
- 4 Youth participants at the Yokohama World Congress, 2001
- 5 Korn Dabbaransi, Thai Minister of Health, at the Second ECPAT International Assembly in Bangkok, 2002
- 6 Norbert Fanou-Ako, Executive Director of ECPAT Member organisation ESAM/CLOSE in Benin, and Cleophas, Executive Director of ECPAT Member organisation WAOA Afrique in Togo, at the Second ECPAT International Assembly in Bangkok, 2002
- 7 (From left to right) Carmen Madriñán, Korn Dabbaransi, Ron O'Grady and Jo de Linde at the Second ECPAT International Assembly, 2002
- 8 Maureen Seneviratne (right), ECPAT Sri Lanka, at the Second ECPAT International Assembly, 2002



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1 Jo de Linde (left), Chair of the International Board of Trustees, and Carmen Madrinan (right), Executive Director of ECPAT International, Rio de Janeiro, 2005

2 Participants at the Third ECPAT International Assembly in Rio de Janeiro, 2005

3 Mark Capaldi, Deputy Executive Director and Head of Programmes, at the Third ECPAT International Assembly in Rio, 2005

4 Youth representatives at the Third ECPAT International Assembly, 2005

5 Paulo Pinheiro (left), Independent Expert for the Secretary-General who wrote the World Report on Violence against Children, and Hamish McCulloch (right), Interpol's Assistant Director of the Office on Trafficking in Human Beings, 2005

6 Kouakou Ossei (left), delegate from SOS Violences Sexuelles in Cote d'Ivoire, and Norbert Fanou-Ako (right), Executive Director of ECPAT Member organisation ESAM/CLOSE in Benin, 2005

7 Members at the Third ECPAT International Assembly in Rio, 2005

8 Tufail Muhammed, delegate from Pakistan, at the Third ECPAT International Assembly, 2005



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- 1 Jaap Doek, former Chairperson of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, at the Rio World Congress, 2008
- 2 Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva at the Rio World Congress, 2008
- 3 Youth representative at the Rio World Congress, 2008
- 4 Youth at the Rio World Congress, 2008
- 5 Amihan Abueva, Chairperson of the International Board of Trustees, at the Fourth ECPAT International Assembly in Rio de Janeiro, 29 November 2008
- 6 David Ould (left), member of the International Board of Trustees, and Maureen Crombie (right), ECPAT New Zealand, at the Fourth ECPAT International Assembly in Rio, 2008
- 7 Scarves sold at the Fourth ECPAT International Assembly in Rio, 2008
- 8 Victoria Ofhiambo, Youth Representative to the Board, at the Fourth ECPAT International Assembly and a new campaign with The Body Shop is announced, 2008



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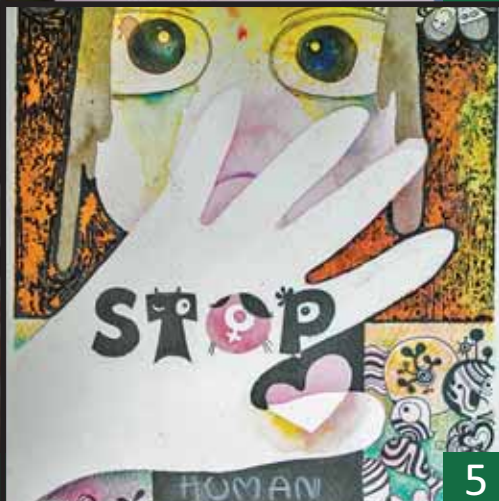


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In June 2014, the ECPAT Foundation in Thailand hosted an art camp for Peer Supporters of the Youth Partnership Project (YPP) to increase understanding among children and youth of their rights and the risks posed by commercial sexual exploitation. The camp was held at Nattipon Resort, Maejan District. Approximately 45-50 children and youth between the ages of 13-20 years participated. The participants came from 12 partner organisations, which included schools and shelter homes in the provinces of Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai and Phayao.



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- 1 Former U.S. President Bill Clinton recognises The Body Shop and ECPAT International's campaign to stop sex trafficking of children and young people, 2009
- 2 A group working on The Body Shop and ECPAT International campaign in New York, 2009
- 3 Former U.S. President Bill Clinton (left), ECPAT Executive Director Carmen Madiñán (centre) and CEO of The Body Shop Sophie Gasperment (right), 2009
- 4 ECPAT Executive Director Kathleen Speake officially hands over 65,175 signatures to Thai authorities for the Stop sex trafficking campaign, 2011
- 5 ECPAT Executive Director Carmen Madiñán (left) with Former U.S. President Bill Clinton (right) at the Clinton Global Initiative in New York, 2009
- 6 ECPAT International staff launch the 'Stop sex trafficking of children and young people' campaign in Bangkok, 2009
- 7 Supporters of The Body Shop and ECPAT campaign in Germany, 2011
- 8 Over 250,000 signatures are presented to authorities in France, 2011



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1 Dr Najat Maalla M'jid, former UN Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, child prostitution and child pornography, at the Fifth ECPAT International Assembly in Paris, 2011

2 Helena Karlen (left), ECPAT Sweden; Marta Santos Pais (centre), United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence Against Children; and Ron O'Grady (right) in Paris, 2011

3 Jonathan Ssembajwe, Youth Representative to the Board, at the Fifth ECPAT International Assembly in Paris, 2011

4 New members of the International Board of Trustees at the Fifth ECPAT International Assembly in Paris, 2011

5 Participants at the Fifth ECPAT International Assembly in Paris, 2011

6 Junita Upadhyay, Deputy Executive Director of ECPAT International and Head of Programmes, and Erwin Mom, Deputy Executive Director of ECPAT International and Head of Operations, Paris, 2011

7 Youth representatives at the Fifth ECPAT International Assembly, 2011

8 ECPAT International Board of Trustees members Ingrid Liao (left) and David Ould (right) in Paris, 2011



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- 1 Judy M. Miller, Vice President and Director of the Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize, in New York, 2013
- 2 2013 Hilton Humanitarian Prize awarded to ECPAT International in New York
- 3 ECPAT members at the 2013 Hilton Humanitarian Prize in New York
- 4 Anuradha Koirala (left), ECPAT Members from Maiti Nepal, at the Hilton Humanitarian Prize ceremony.
- 5 Lesly Zambrano, ECPAT Colombia, at the Sixth ECPAT International Assembly in Paris, 2014
- 6 New members of the International Board of Trustees and youth representatives at the Sixth ECPAT International Assembly, 2014
- 7 Carol Bellamy, Chairperson of the International Board of Trustees, at the Sixth ECPAT International Assembly in Paris, 2014
- 8 All the participants of the Sixth ECPAT International Assembly in Paris, 2014



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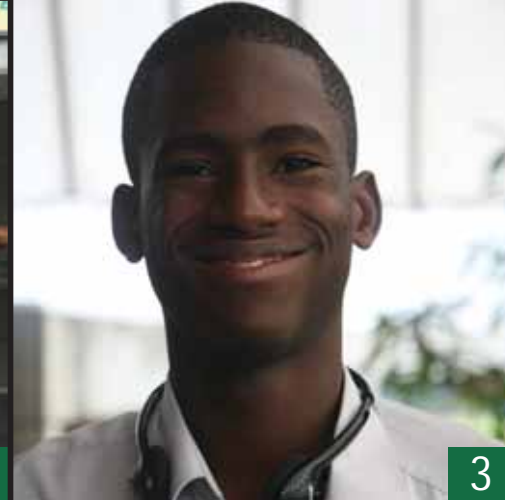




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- 1 Rayra Santos (left), delegate from Brazil, , 2008
- 2 Youth at the Rio World Congress, 2008
- 3 Youth participant, 2008
- 4 Youth participants, 2008
- 5 Youth Partnership Project in Bangkok, 2010
- 6 VidyaSelvamony, country delegate, 2008
- 7 Youth participate in forums, 2008
- 8 Lotta Segerstrom, Youth Representative to the Board, 2005



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- 1 Regional Consultation on East and Southeast Asia in Taiwan, 2014
- 2 Catherine Mbengue, Regional Coordinator for Africa
- 3 Regional Consultation for Eastern Europe and CIS
- 4 Regional Consultation on South Asia in Nepal, 2014
- 5 Regional Consultation on Africa in Ethiopia, 2014
- 6 Regional Consultation for Latin America, 2014
- 7 Fabio Gonzalez, Regional Coordinator for Latin America
- 8 Regional Consultation for Western Europe, 2014





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1 ECPAT Executive Committee Meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka, 1992

2 ECPAT Executive Committee in Germany, 1993

3 ECPAT Executive Committee Meeting in Bangkok, 1997

4 ECPAT International Board Members, 2002

5 ECPAT International Board visit to ECPAT Foundation, Chiang Rai, 2006

6 ECPAT International Board Meeting in Taipei, 2010

7 ECPAT International Board of Trustees in Bangkok, 2013

8 New members of the ECPAT International Board of Trustees, 2014



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- 1 Sudarat Sereewat, ECPAT International Executive Secretary, 1995
- 2 Amihan Abueva, ECPAT International Executive Secretary until 1997
- 3 Ron O'Grady, ECPAT's International Coordinator until he retired in 1997
- 4 Herve Berger, ECPAT Executive Director, 1997
- 5 Muireann O'Brien, ECPAT Executive Director, 1998-2001
- 6 Carmen Madriñán, ECPAT Executive Director, 2001-2011
- 7 Dr Najat Maalla M'jid (left), former UN Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, child prostitution and child pornography, and Kathleen Speake (right), ECPAT Executive Director, 2011-2012
- 8 Dorothy Rozga, ECPAT Executive Director, 2013-present



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1 Mohammed Mahuruf, ECPAT 25th Anniversary, 5 May 2015

2 Participants of the Chiang Mai Consultation in 1990 gather for ECPAT's 25th, 5 May 2015

3 Dr Vinit Muntarbhorn, ECPAT 25th Anniversary, 5 May 2015

4 ECPAT 25th Anniversary, Chiang Mai, Thailand, 5 May 2015

5 Dr Koson Srisang, ECPAT 25th Anniversary, 5 May 2015

6 Sudarat Sereewat, ECPAT 25th Anniversary, 5 May 2015

7 Mechtild Maurer (left) and Muhammed Mahuruf (right), ECPAT 25th Anniversary, 5 May 2015

8 Amihan Abueva, ECPAT 25th Anniversary, 5 May 2015



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## SEMANTICS

As said from the beginning of this book, words matter, but there is no simple way to get them right. In that sense, it is particularly timely that the publication of this history of the first 25 years of ECPAT coincides with the 'Interagency Terminology and Semantics Project on Sexual Exploitation of Children', an important project mobilising dozens of people and organisations throughout the world. Launched in September 2014 by ECPAT International with the support of ECPAT Luxembourg at the request of members of the ECPAT network as well as other NGOs working on the sexual exploitation of children, the project, to be completed by the end of 2015, is a follow-up to an earlier initiative which was concluded in 2005. It is aimed at fostering consensus among key stakeholders on terminology to be used in programming, legislation, policy, and advocacy regarding the sexual exploitation of children. ECPAT International, with its global network of member organisations in over 80 countries, is facilitating this dialogue.

The book in your hands, because it goes to the roots of the movement ECPAT started in the 1990s, offers a unique travel through the evolving use, over time, of words and concepts to name the reality it wants to change. This clearly shows how much such a collective exercise is essential: thanks to the absolute resolve of its founders, twenty five years ago, and, energized since by the unshaken determination of its members and supporters, ECPAT has achieved a lot to combat the unbearable exploitation and violation of children rights it was set to end. Yet, ECPAT, like all its peers, is facing semantics and conceptual difficulties to describe the issue to which it is dedicated and speak about it.

'Words matter because they affect how we conceptualise problems, prioritise issues, and forge responses. Inconsistent use of language and terms can lead to inconsistent laws and policy responses on the same issue', says the introductory note to the Interagency Terminology and Semantics Project. 'To date, it also observes, there has been no consensus at the international level on the terms or language that should be employed to describe conduct amounting to sexual exploitation. The absence of any such agreement has significantly impacted the global fight to eradicate sexual exploitation of children: levels of protection afforded to children at the national level are inconsistent; data collection and identification of different modalities of sexual exploitation and abuse suffer from inaccuracy and imprecision; and advocacy work is undermined by confusion in the use of language and terms.'

At a moment when the new terminology and semantics debate opening today is prompting a new series of questions on every single concept, ECPAT history tells us that even the notion of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) that has become so central to ECPAT advocacy and the activities of its members since 1996 was itself the result of a transitory and imperfect decision. The choice, we were reminded earlier, was

made out of practicality and sensitivity because ‘it was felt that terms such as “child prostitution” and “child sex tourism” could be construed to imply some compliance by children in these activities, whereas the term “commercial sexual exploitation of children” clearly expressed the reality that children are victims of the greed or sexual preferences of their exploiters.’ In dropping — or starting to drop at least — some of the popular expressions that had been so apt at grabbing the attention of the general public, or had found their way into legal instruments. The ongoing debate over the term ‘child pornography’ is another good example. The use of the term is rejected by many law enforcement agencies, including INTERPOL, on the basis that it is not victim-centred language and can inadvertently legitimise child sexual abuse material by using the term pornography. However, ‘child pornography’ is the word used in the core international instruments prohibiting sexual exploitation images and as such favoured by UN Treaty-monitoring bodies, State governments and other institutions. The ongoing disagreement and confusion over the term to define ‘sexual abuse images of children’ has not only led to confusion in advocacy as well as State policy responses to the issue, it has consumed significant resources and time, which could have been better allocated for the promotion and protection of children’s rights.

Fortunately, there is much hope. And this is not only limited to the choice of words in English. Organisations from around the world have now joined the International Working Group chaired by Professor Jaap Doek, senior legal advisor to ECPAT International and former Chair of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. And, as many have volunteered to engage in the translation of terms and engage further discussions on semantics in a set of languages, turning the project into a multilingual exercise, the only way surely to address this global issue with accuracy and sensitivity.



ALBANIA ARGENTINA ARMENIA AUSTRALIA AUSTRIA  
AZERBAIJAN BANGLADESH BELARUS BELGIUM BENIN  
BHUTAN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA BRAZIL BULGARIA  
BURKINA FASO CAMBODIA CAMEROON CANADA CHILE  
COLOMBIA COSTARICA DOMINICAN REPUBLIC ESTONIA  
ETHIOPIA FRANCE GAMBIA GEORGIA GERMANY  
GHANA GREECE GUATEMALA INDIA INDONESIA ITALY  
IVORY COAST JAPAN JORDAN KAZAKHSTAN KYRGYZSTAN  
LEBANON LUXEMBOURG LIBERIA MAURITANIA MEXICO  
MOLDOVA MONGOLIA MOROCCO MOZAMBIQUE NEPAL  
NETHERLANDS NEW ZEALAND NICARAGUA NIGER  
NIGERIA NORWAY PAKISTAN PARAGUAY PERU PHILIPPINES  
POLAND ROMANIA RUSSIA SAMOA SIERRA LEONE  
SOUTH AFRICA SOUTH KOREA SPAIN SRI LANKA  
SWEDEN SWITZERLAND TAIWAN TANZANIA THAILAND  
TOGO TURKEY UGANDA UKRAINE UNITED KINGDOM  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA URUGUAY UZBEKISTAN  
VIETNAM ZAMBIA