



PRESS RELEASE

TRAVEL & TOURISM INDUSTRY TAKES A LEAD IN ENDING HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

**World Travel Market, London
4 Nov 2019, 16.00 – 17.30 South Gallery 14**

Representatives from Travel & Tourism and civil society organisations are coming together at the World Travel Market in London to raise awareness and expand globally the “Don’t look away!” reporting platform to end human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children.

As the UNWTO has highlighted in the Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics *“the exploitation of human beings in any form, particularly sexual, especially when applied to children, conflicts with the fundamental aims of tourism and is the negation of tourism”*.

Despite continuous efforts of the industry, as Travel & Tourism expands, the opportunities for traffickers and child sex offenders to commit crimes have increased, also due to technology and other new platforms. No country or child is immune to this ever-growing risk. States have taken important steps to build child-friendly hotlines and reporting mechanisms, but these methods need to be better known and more widely used.

Although there is increasing collaborative action, many victims remain unidentified. A new “culture of reporting” these crimes must be generated to increase the number of reported and prosecuted cases.

Representatives of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTTC), Carlson, TUI GROUP, ECPAT and the IEG are coming together to launch the Don’t look away! reporting platform to become a global initiative, with the support of Grupo de Acción Regional de las Américas for the prevention of sexual exploitation of children in Travel & Tourism – GARA will bring in existing regional mechanisms and good practices.

The www.dontlookaway.report has been successfully used in 20 countries, involving the Travel & Tourism companies and reaching out to travellers and tourists, holidaymakers and others to encourage them to report anything suspicious they see whilst travelling; anything that may raise concerns of sexual exploitation or trafficking of children.

Speaking before the event, Robbert van den Berg, Executive Director of ECPAT International said: *“Reporting is the first step towards justice for victims, but because incidents are often not reported, sexual exploitation of children continues to be an under prosecuted crime. Reporting by bystanders – travelers, tourists as well as professionals from the industry is key to protecting children”*.

In preparation of the event, Jorge W. Morandeira, Coordinador de la Secretaría Ejecutiva del Grupo Acción Regional de las Américas - GARA said: *“To prevent the sexual exploitation of children in travel*



Grupo de acción regional de las
AMÉRICAS

Protejamos a las niñas y niños de la explotación en viajes y turismo.

and tourism and to fight this crime at local level, we need to work on safe environments, socially responsible tourist destinations and protective networks. Technological advances should cease to be a threat and become an opportunity – the incorporation of the international reporting platform will enhance the work of each of the states, being a valid tool that add to the campaigns that are running in each country.”

Rochelle Turner, VP Research, World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) said: *“The Travel & Tourism sector is in a unique position to identify the most vulnerable, to prevent human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children. The Human Trafficking Task Force, that was set up by WTTC, represented today by Carlson and TUI GROUP is joining forces with ECPAT and GARA to increase industry and consumer awareness on how to act and report these crimes”.*

Helen Marano, Co-Chair of the Independent Experts Group on Child Protection in Travel and Tourism, Founder and President, Marano Perspectives commented on the importance of this event at WTM, *“This is the best opportunity to widen the campaign for ‘Don’t Look Away’ as WTM is a major venue for all of the top Travel and Tourism destinations, suppliers and buyers to stand up for deterring human trafficking, especially in relation to child protection.”*

Agenda

16.00 – Opening – Robbert van den Berg, Executive Director, ECPAT International; Benjamín Liberoff, Subsecretario del Ministerio de Turismo de la República Oriental del Uruguay, Secretaría Ejecutiva del Grupo de Acción Regional de las Américas (GARA) and Rochelle Turner - VP Research, The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)

16.15 – How is the travel and tourism sector taking the lead to end human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children? – Natalie Volin Lehr, Senior Director of Corporate Affairs, Carlson and Arantxa Garcia, Head of Sustainable Development, TUI GROUP

16.30 – What are the different and most effective modalities across countries that enable reporting of cases of human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children – Ludivine Piron, Project Coordinator, ECPAT France and Katherine Mulhern, Chief Executive Officer, ECPAT UK

16.45 – What are some of the successfully reported cases of trafficking and sexual exploitation of children and the preventive role of the platform – Dorothea Czarnecki, Vice-Chair on the Board of Trustees of ECPAT International and Theo Noten, Defence for Children - ECPAT The Netherlands

17.00 – How can we accomplish a global expansion of the reporting platform? – discussion with the contribution from ECPAT International, GARA, WTTC and Ann-Kristin Vervik, ECPAT Norway

Moderator: Katlijn Declercq, focal point on European Institutions, ECPAT International, ECPAT Belgium

More about the event: www.protectingchildrenintourism.org/event

<p>For media enquiries for ECPAT: Josefin Hagstrom info@ecpat.org +66 (0)2 215 3388 Bangkok, Thailand</p>	<p>For media enquiries for WTTC: Jamie Wortley jamie.wortley@wttc.org +44(0) 207 481 8007 London, UK</p>
--	---

ABOUT ECPAT

ECPAT International is a global network of organizations dedicated to ending the sexual exploitation of children. With 109 members in 97 countries, ECPAT focuses on the sexual exploitation of children



through prostitution, the trafficking of children for sexual purposes, online child sexual exploitation and the sexual exploitation of children in the travel and tourism sector. The Secretariat is based in Bangkok, Thailand. ECPAT members from Austria, Switzerland, Germany, Luxembourg, France, Poland, and the Netherlands partnered in the Don't Look Away Campaign that promotes the reporting platform. Representatives of **ECPAT France**, **Defence for Children – ECPAT The Netherlands**, **ECPAT Norway** and **ECPAT UK**, will speak at the event. For more information go to www.ecpat.org/about-ecpat/where-we-work

ABOUT GARA

Since 2006, the Regional Action Group of the Americas (GARA – Grupo de Acción Regional de las Américas) has enhanced cooperation and coordination efforts in the region, focusing on raising awareness and delivering trainings to prevent the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism.

It is currently composed of 14 Ministries, Institutes and Secretariats of Tourism from: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. During GARA's next meeting, El Salvador will become a full member. The Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN) - the Specialized Organization of the Organization of American States (OAS) on children and adolescents - and ECPAT International have an observer status.

ABOUT THE WORLD TRAVEL & TOURISM COUNCIL (WTTC)

The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) represents the Travel & Tourism sector globally. Our Members include over 170 CEOs, Chairpersons and Presidents of the world's leading Travel & Tourism companies from all geographies covering all industries. WTTC works to raise awareness of Travel & Tourism as one of the world's largest economic sectors, supporting one in ten jobs (319 million) worldwide, and generating 10.4% of global GDP. For the past 30 years, WTTC has conducted research on the economic impact of Travel & Tourism in 185 countries. In 2019, WTTC established the Human Trafficking Task Force to help the industry prevent and combat human trafficking, including the sexual exploitation of children. Both **Carlson** and **TUI Group** are members of the WTTC Human Trafficking Task Force. For more information: www.wttc.org/priorities/sustainable-growth/human-trafficking

ABOUT THE INDEPENDENT EXPERTS GROUP ON CHILD PROTECTION IN TRAVEL AND TOURISM (IEG)

The IEG was formed as an independent advisory body on child protection in travel and tourism, facilitating further implementation of the [Global Study](#) recommendations and the [Call for Action](#) from the first International Summit on Child Protection in Travel and Tourism, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. Natalie Volin Lehr, Senior Director of Corporate Affairs, Carlson and Helen Marano, President of Marano Perspectives serve as Co-Chairs of the Group. See [here](#) for the list of the IEG members.

Background documents to the discussion:

- Comparison of European low-threshold reporting mechanisms, available [here](#).
- The Global Study on the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism, that was the result of inputs from 67 global partners, read the recommendations [here](#).
- The Call for Action from the International Summit on Child Protection in Travel and Tourism, [here](#).
- The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) - Human Trafficking Task Force, read more [here](#).