

JOINT STATEMENT

Joint Statement Calling upon Governments to Step Up Extraterritorial Cooperation to End the Sexual Exploitation of Children

We, the undersigned civil society organisations, call upon governments to **systematically address the sexual exploitation and abuse of children in cross-border contexts**, including situations involving travel and tech-facilitated child sexual exploitation and abuse, with perpetrators exploiting loopholes within national jurisdictions.

Cases of child sexual exploitation involving nationals of various countries have been documented, calling for **urgent prevention efforts both online and on the ground**.

Tacteen Naeil - ECPAT **Korea Issue Report** revealed the scale of sexual exploitation of children by Korean nationals overseas.

The report by **the Netherlands** Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement (NSCR) estimated that 20,000 Dutch men travel abroad every year to sexually exploit children.

The Japanese Embassy in Laos warned about the rise of cases of sexual exploitation of children. A recent case of an arrest of a national from **Japan** who repeatedly travelled to **Laos** to exploit children shows that stepping up coordinated action across countries and regions is urgently required to end impunity of offenders.

A recent **German court case** involves a citizen who traveled to 13 countries to exploit children and produce video materials.

In the **United Kingdom**, a national was sentenced for accessing child sexual abuse livestreams from **the Philippines**.

In **Poland**, recent news reports have also exposed Warsaw as a one of the hubs in Eastern Europe for trafficking children to the **USA**, as documented in investigations into the Epstein network.

Sexual exploitation of children is a grave violation of human rights and a crime that knows no borders. Perpetrators are able to continue exploiting children not only as the result of weak extraterritorial enforcement, limited cooperation between states and law enforcement and inconsistent accountability for crimes committed abroad, but also because prevailing social norms and attitudes minimise the seriousness of these crimes and shift blame onto children. Together, these factors **leave children subjected to abuse and exploitation unprotected, and denied justice.**

Yet States already have clear obligations under international law to address these crimes and their cross-border nature. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child calls on States to establish jurisdiction based on active and passive personality, including over habitual residents. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has further recommended that States establish universal jurisdiction for all offences included in the Protocol, particularly in light of the growing use of technologies to commit sexual offences against children.

We therefore call upon governments to urgently strengthen extraterritorial cooperation and take coordinated action to prevent, investigate, and prosecute sexual exploitation of children, regardless of where the crime occurs. This includes, to:

- **Enforce extraterritorial jurisdiction** to ensure both nationals and residents are held accountable for sexual crimes against children committed abroad.
- **Strengthen international cooperation** through timely information-sharing, mutual legal assistance, and joint investigations between law enforcement and judicial authorities.
- **Put children and survivors at the center by investing in survivor-centered justice**, ensuring that children receive protection and access to services, and are not blamed for the exploitation they were subjected to, because it is #NeverTheirFault.
- **Strengthen prevention** through cross-country communication campaigns on child protection.

- **Preventing sexual exploitation before it occurs by regulating business**, including ICT industry, financial services, and travel and tourism industry across the sectors including hotels, restaurants, transport, booking platforms and private accommodation, as well as addressing online facilitation, and holding private actors accountable.

Ending the sexual exploitation of children requires political will, clear legal frameworks, and effective cross-border collaboration. Governments, businesses, and communities must work together to protect children everywhere - in all countries. Governments must act decisively to close jurisdictional loopholes and ensure that no perpetrator can escape responsibility by crossing a border. Children everywhere have the right to safety, dignity, and justice. We urge governments to step up their commitments in the regions as gaps continue to remain, and work across borders to end sexual exploitation of children.

For more information refer to:

- Global Progress Towards Ending the Sexual Exploitation of Children.
- Overview on Extraterritoriality and Extradition Legislation for Offences of Sexual Exploitation of Children and Issue Paper on Extraterritorial Jurisdiction and Extradition Legislation.
- Terminology Guidelines - Language shapes action. Outdated and inaccurate terms like “child prostitute” or “child pornography” shift blame onto children and distort public understanding.
- The Code as a global initiative engaging responsible businesses to protect children.

ENDORISING ORGANISATIONS:

Updated as at 25 February 2026

- **ECPAT International**
- **The Down to Zero Alliance** committed to the protection of children and the prevention of sexual exploitation in 12 countries in Asia and Latin America.
- **Defence for Children - ECPAT the Netherlands**
- **Terre des Hommes Netherlands**
- **Tacteen Naeil-ECPAT Korea**
- **Protect All Children from Trafficking (PACT), USA**
- **Empowering Children Foundation, Poland,**
- **ECPAT France, ECPAT France - Mettre fin à l'exploitation sexuelle des enfants**
- **ECPAT Germany**
- **ECPAT Guatemala**
- **ECPAT Norway**
- **ECPAT Sri Lanka**
- **ECPAT Türkiye**
- **ECPAT Taiwan**
- **ECPAT UK**
- **CHS Alternativo-ECPAT Perú**
- **ChildSafeNet, Nepal**
- **End CSEC Network Malaysia (ECPAT Malaysia)**
- **Fundación Munasim Kullakita, Bolivia**
- **Fundación PANIAMOR, Costa Rica**
- **Association Burkinabé pour la Survie de l'Enfance (ABSE)**
- **Emmanuel Development Association (EDA)**
- **PA Legal Center for Women's Initiatives "Sana Sezim", Kazakhstan**
- **Public Health Foundation of Georgia**
- **Ramola Bhar Charitable Trust, Project: STOP, India**
- **Association for Sustainable Development Livelihood Initiatives ("SUSTAIN Cameroon")**
- **NGO Public Movement "Faith, Hope, Love", Ukraine**
- **Comhlámh, Ireland**
- **PAHCHAAN (Protection and Help of Children Against Abuse and Neglect), Pakistan**
- **Fundación Renacer, Colombia**

- **ECPAT Indonesia**
- **Pakistan Pediatric Association (Child Rights Group),**
Pakistan
- **Ubuchingo Defence for Children -Zambia**
- **Kenya Alliance for Advancement of Children (KAACR)**
- **Africa Inland Child Community Agency for Development**
(AICCAD)
- **Action Now Kenya**
- **Action for Sustainable Change (AFOSC-Kenya)**
- **Kenya Muslim Charitable Society**
- **Baridi Kwa Baridi Women CBO-Busia**
- **Horn of Africa Institute (HAI)**
- **ECPAT Mongolia**
- **Restoration of Life Centre, Kenya**
- **Birth and Beyond CBO, Kenya**
- **Centrs Dardedze, Latvia**
- **Webfala Digital Skills for all Initiative, Nigeria**
- **MECPATHS, Ireland**
- **Protect Us Kids Foundation, United States**
- **Polaris Asso, Dakar**
- **REDO Kenya**