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History: Our Work against the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents

As a result of the First World Congress against Child Sexual Exploitation held in Stockholm, Sweden in 1996 and the outcomes of consultations with worldwide NGOs, IBCR identified the protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation as a priority. Thus, the IBCR resolved to devote the first cycle of hearings (1997 to 1999) at the International Tribunal for Children's Rights to the international dimensions of the Sexual Exploitation of Children. The Global Report entitled *International Dimensions of the Sexual Exploitation of Children* contains a consolidated account of the deliberations of these hearings as well as the conclusions and adopted recommendations. The IBCR Program on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation was established, *inter alia*, to implement these recommendations.

A Dynamic Actor

On the 25th and 26th of September 2008, IBCR was part of the Organizing Committee for the thematic *Consultation on Corporate Social Responsibility* which took place in Winnipeg, Canada, in preparation for the 3rd World Congress against the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil).

IBCR participated in the Second and Third World Congresses against the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents (Yokohama, 2001 and Rio de Janeiro, 2008). In Rio de Janeiro, IBCR had the opportunity to make a presentation on the *Guidelines on Justice for Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime*, in partnership with UNODC, Brazil.

At present, the IBCR is actively working to fight the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, with a focus on two manifestations of this problem: Child Trafficking and Child Sex Tourism. We consider that there exists a clear link between both modalities and accordingly, choose to prioritize and concentrate our efforts on them.

IBCR Activities on Child Trafficking

The IBCR's struggle against child trafficking was firmly concretized in 2004 through a series of evaluations and consultations concerning the situation in Canada. Following these initial evaluations, from January 2006 to October 2007 the IBCR prepared a detailed study of the phenomenon in Canada, with special attention given to Quebec. This study was prepared for the Department of Justice and Public Safety Canada and permitted the elaboration of a *Strategic Action Plan for the Protection of Victims of Child Trafficking in Quebec* to best respond to this phenomenon.

This experience both inspired and permitted the IBCR to carry out a bilingual training program for front-line community workers working with children in Quebec, in September 2009. Financed by Status of Women Canada, this training program focused on the capacity building of trainers to better identify youth at risk of trafficking and to provide adequate interventions.



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The Link Between Child Trafficking and Child Sex Tourism

“The existence of a relationship between trafficking in children and CST is common: trafficked children are particularly vulnerable as they are removed from their communities, cultural context and have a fragile legal status that forces even greater dependency on those profiting from child sexual exploitation (pimps, brothel owners or even clients). Furthermore, tourism destinations are often economic magnets, making both adults and children more vulnerable to false promises of employment or other forms of trickery and coercion employed by traffickers.”

It is also possible that children are trafficked for reasons other than sexual exploitation, such as child labor in the informal tourism market or for begging purposes, only to end up in sexually exploitative situations. It has been observed that some Khmer children on the streets of Bangkok and Pattaya, in Thailand, may have been trafficked for begging purposes, only to become the targets of child sex tourists who are able to approach them directly, without the need for a third party or intermediary.

Finally, it should be noted that traffickers and their victims may be users of the same transportation services as tourists. Indeed, with taxis, buses, boats and planes being used to transport tourists and travelers to numerous destinations at increasingly inexpensive costs, it is not surprising that these same services can be used to bring children to places where they can be exploited by tourists. It is important that tourists and tourism professionals are aware that tourism services can be used by both child sex offenders and child traffickers and that children utilizing transportation or accommodation services may be trafficking victims. Accommodation venues and transportation companies must have child protection policies and procedures in place which allow them to recognize report and act on a situation in which a child is being trafficked or sexually exploited.”

Information taken from ECPAT International. Combating Child Sex Tourism. Questions and Answers: http://www.ecpat.net/EI/Publications/CST/CST_FAQ_ENG.pdf