



ECPAT NEW ZEALAND INC.

End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes

PO Box 41-264, St Lukes, Auckland 1346 NZ

Ph: (09) 376 5252 Fax: (09) 376 5253

Email: office@ecpat.org.nz www.ecpat.org.nz

Chairperson's Report

Warm greetings from the ECPAT New Zealand Board.

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Alan Bell as the new National Director. Alan comes to ECPAT with vast work experience in the humanitarian sector, in New Zealand and overseas. The Board looks forwards to Alan supporting us in the realization of our vision to live in a world free from the commercial sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children.

Alan's appointment follows the resignation of Lyn Mayson on 22 August 2008.

In 2003, the New Zealand Parliament passed the Prostitution Reform Act, with the slimmest majority of one vote! Amid the controversy of passing this Act, voters knew that while there are those who make a choice to undertake sex work, there are others who enter the sex industry not by choice, but rather by circumstance. Among these others are under-age people active in prostitution.

Five years later, in May 2008, the Prostitution Law Review Committee presented its report on the impact of the decriminalization of prostitution to the Associate Minister of Justice. Unsurprisingly, the Committee's report acknowledged the vulnerability of people used in under age prostitution and recognized the difference between commercial sexual activity and other sexual activity. Whether you are a supporter of the Act, or not, the report raised concern for all of us about young people under the age of 18 involved in sex work

Legal instruments are insufficient to protect children from prostitution. We have a long way to go to understand the problem, and we have even further distance to go before we can deal with the root problem. Poverty and sexual abuse are well recognized as factors that increase children and young people's vulnerability to be used in prostitution.

Upon the eve of the 2008 World Congress III Against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, ECPAT renews its call for the New Zealand Government and non-government sectors to do more than this recent Act that decriminalizes prostitution, in order to provide a healthy and safe environment for sex workers.

The World Congress III will bring together more than 3000 participants comprised of governments, civil society, international organizations, private sector, children and young people to map out the actions to be taken to combat the sexual exploitation of children. Together with the Committee's report, this is a significant time for New Zealand to not only reaffirm its adoption of the Stockholm Agenda for Action against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children but to consider new ways to also improve cooperation and co-ordination for the protection of children and the prevention of under-age people in prostitution.

I look forward to Alan Bell 'rolling up his sleeves' and working with other organisations and individuals to direct technical and material resources from upcoming World Congress III for renewed actions to provide health and educational programmes, strengthen law enforcement and legislation, and encourage child and youth participation in a world free from those who use under age people in prostitution.

Maureen Crombie
Chairperson

Tackling Child Prostitution

Some years ago a group of people concerned about the incidence of underage prostitution started meetings to explore ways in which this problem could be addressed. Under the auspices of Child, Youth and Family (CYFs) the group comprises representatives from local bodies, government departments, non-government organisations, Police, Health and Social Workers.

The Child Prostitution Group is now working on a three strand approach directed at Protection and Wellbeing, Demand and Enforcement.

Protection and Wellbeing

Aim: To provide protection for children and young people under 18 years who have become involved in underage prostitution, and improve their access to services which are aimed at enhancing their well being.

Actions:

- Engage with children and young people involved in underage prostitution to improve their protection.
- Provide a safe environment for children and young people involved in underage prostitution, such as assisting them to return to a supportive home environment; locate alternative accommodation if they are homeless or living in an "at risk" environment; create "places of safety" for children and young people under 18 years who are being sexually exploited.
- Reduce the circumstances which predicate children and young people becoming involved in underage prostitution, such as financial hardship, alcohol or drugs misuse, financial benefits.
- Create positive alternatives for children and young people under 18 years who have become involved in underage prostitution. Identify and involve community and voluntary organisations who can assist and improve protection to children under 18 years of age who are being sexually exploited.

Demand

Aim: To reduce demand by deterring people from picking up under aged children and young people for sex.

Actions:

- Implement targeted interventions in areas that will raise awareness within the local community of the legislation protecting children from sexual exploitation.
- Advocate for full implementation of the judicial sanctions available through the Prostitution Reform Act 2003, against people prosecuted and found guilty of having sex with children and young people under the age of 18 years.

Enforcement

Aim: To improve legislation, that will enable the elimination of sexual exploitation of children and young people.

Actions:

- Establish information sharing processes and protocols between principal organisations about children and young people engaged in providing sexual services, which include dissemination of best practise.
- Establish information sharing as a priority for all organisations with a role to play in the protection of young people and improvement of their wellbeing.
- Increase awareness in the community and amongst government organisations about the issues of child neglect arising through sexual exploitation, through linking actions to instruments such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Cook Islands: Prevention better than Cure

Alan Bell, Director ECPAT NZ has just returned from a workshop in the Cook Islands regarding the sexual abuse of children. One might wonder if the issue is a problem in this Pacific paradise?

The workshop was attended by some 40 people from the main island of Rarotonga and the Outer Islands. Participants represented community workers, teachers, social workers, counselors, church leaders and government departments, including Police, Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Office of the Prime Minister. Using an analysis on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and Child Sexual Abuse (CSA), that was carried out in the Cook Islands during 2006, the participants explored the issues both in the current context and for the future.

The Cook Islands are an attractive tourist destination and tourism is their main industry. This is not surprising given the beautiful nature of the country. However experience in other tourist destinations has shown that this beauty can be spoilt by tourism in several ways. One of the most obnoxious is that of sexual predators, including the abusers of children. Fortunately this has not been evidenced in the Cook Islands to any great extent, but the participants recognised that along with the benefits of tourism come potential downsides, that they also must be aware of and take responsibility for. Thus, they committed to a determined effort at the workshop to protect their children from this sort of behaviour, by including awareness and education in their child protection plans.

Prostitution is another aspect often connected to tourism – and sadly, this often includes children. Again this is not a high profile problem in the Cook Islands, but the participants are alert to the possibilities. In the words of one of the participants **“how serious does this have to become to be taken seriously in the Cook Islands? Do we wait for one hundred children to be abused? Do we wait for ten children to be abused? Should we wait even for one child to be abused? No, we must do something now to prevent this happening.”**

Unfortunately, as in many cultures, including our own, there is evidence in the Cook Islands of children being sexually abused in the home and in the community, both within the larger towns and outlying villages. This was of great concern to the participants, many of whom knew of specific instances and were passionate about preventing this happening.

Another more covert threat in this context is the advent of technology. The Internet has the capacity to deliver both good and bad information and the Cook Islands are at a stage where access to the Internet is now readily available and usage is increasing. Aware of illegal material available online, in regard to child pornography, they are keen to take steps to avoid this becoming an issue. They are presently exploring methods in which illegal content could be filtered at a national level.

As the workshop progressed and more information was shared there was a determination by the participants to formalise their desire to act into a CSEC/CSA National Plan of Action (NPA) Framework for the Cook Islands. An action plan was developed which received positive support from the Government of the Cook Islands, with regard to progressing it. The Government also vowed to endorse and approve the National Plan of Action, as well as include it in their overall plan for the nation.

In taking this step the Cook Islands are joining many countries around the world who have responded to the 1996 World Congress against the Commercial Exploitation of Children, which resulted in the Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action.

It is great to see this nation so determined to protect their future – their children. They have responded positively to the challenge and will work proactively to learn from others and work towards prevention of sexual exploitation of their children. As was stated “how many children have to be abused before we put the protection in place?”



What does it take...?

On September 30 in Auckland, one Antonio Simone was sentenced to 10 years jail after a jury found him guilty of abduction, sexual violation and rape of a 12 year old girl, seven years ago.

What does it take for the community to notice this awful offence?

Judge Roy Wade released his sentencing notes to the *Herald* in order to draw public attention to the case, as it may have gone unreported. It is a sad scenario when the community at large is no longer repulsed by this violation of children. The 12 year old girl assaulted was undressed by the offender, made to perform oral sex with him, and then beaten and raped. **What more would it take for public concern?**

What does it take to have a 12 year old girl put herself in such a dangerous situation? This girl and her friend decided to pretend to be prostitutes on an Otahuhu street so that they could get some money and then run away. Whilst one girl did escape the other suffered horrible sexual abuse. Why did the girls resort to such a dangerous plan and where were the controlling influences that should have checked such a desperate move? In this country should young people have to consider selling sex to survive? **What more would it take to protect children from such circumstances?**

What does it take to protect children from experiences that can negatively shape their future lives? In this case both of the girls – now in their late teens – are in jail for serious crimes. The girl who was raped said she was left feeling angry and full of shame. Too many children have their innocence ripped from them by sexual abuse and too many are never able to recover from the experience. Their lives are more often than not, stunted and warped, and they are denied the freedom to find their true potential. **What more would it take to ensure children grow up free from fear and such terrible experiences?**

What does it take to prevent men from behaving in this way? In this case the offender was 36 years old when he committed this crime against the 12 year old girl. Despite the girl repeatedly telling him of her age he persisted and has shown little remorse, protesting that the girl knew what she was doing. This attitude is in spite of the obvious difference in age, physical size and resistance shown by the girl. The rationalisation of his behaviour all point to previous conditioning of his mind, that consequently lead to him committing these despicable acts. **What more would it take to educate and influence men to respect and protect children, instead of abusing them?**

ECPAT is committed to the protection of children from all forms of sexual abuse. Fortunately there are agencies such as ECPAT who will speak out for the vulnerable ones. But the answer to the questions above is that society at large needs to be aware of the threat to all our children and to act together so that the sexual abuse of children is no longer tolerated.

THE ROAD TO RIO: WORLD CONGRESS III AGAINST SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS



On Tuesday November 25, more than 3,000 participants will convene in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to participate in the World Congress III against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC).

Organised by the Government of Brazil, ECPAT International, UNICEF and the NGO Group to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, this global forum will map out the actions that have to be taken to combat the sexual exploitation of children.

The Congress is a unique gathering. Over 150 governments will send delegations to Rio, but unlike most inter-governmental gatherings there will be equally strong voting delegations from civil society, international organisations, private sector, children and young people.

Almost all other international conferences involving governments are run by the United Nations and the only people who vote are the governments themselves. But such is the importance of the central issue of the Rio Congress (the sexual abuse of children) that governments are willing to share the decision making with wider groups of society.

It is the third time such an event has taken place. The first World Congress in Stockholm, Sweden in 1996 resulted in the 'Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action', which was adopted by 122 countries. This committed countries to develop strategies and plans of action with agree-upon guidelines. In December 2001, the second World Congress was held in Yokohama, Japan, resulting in the 'Yokohama Global Commitment 2001'. The Congress consolidated global partnerships and reinforced the global commitment to protect children from sexual exploitation. A total of 161 countries have now signed the 'Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action'.

Sadly, more than a decade after Stockholm many studies – including the recent 'UN Study on Violence Against Children' – indicate that the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents is increasing. There is also growing evidence of criminal activity related to the trafficking of children for sexual purposes, exploitation by tourists and travellers, the proliferation of child abuse imagery and internet-related crimes.

The sexual exploitation of children is fuelled by international demand, which threatens children and adolescents of all ages, in every corner of the world.

What has been achieved is noteworthy. Nevertheless, given the scale of these crimes against children, it is clearly not enough. New energy, collaboration, strategies and goals must be brought together in a concerted way to confront the scourge that is affecting hundreds of thousands of children caught up in prostitution, pornography, and trafficking.

The following 5 key themes will be addressed at World Congress III:

- 1: *New Dimensions of Commercial Sexual Exploitation*
- 2: *Legal Frameworks and Enforcement*
- 3: *Integrated Inter-agency Policies*
- 4: *Role of the Private Sector and Corporate Social Responsibility*
- 5: *Strategies for International Cooperation*

The World Congress objective is to mobilise all continents to guarantee the right of children and adolescents to be protected from sexual exploitation by taking action:

- *to analyse new challenges and dimensions of contemporary sexual exploitation*
- *to identify advances and gaps in legal framework and liability*
- *to open channels and secure greater international cooperation on key issues*
- *to discuss social responsibility initiatives*
- *establish clear, achievable and measurable targets to guarantee children and adolescents' right to be protected from sexual exploitation.*

An Outcome Document will be produced from World Congress III which will include a statement on priority actions to be taken and specific time-bound goals and targets to combat the sexual exploitation of children, reflecting inputs from the Congress processes on key thematic areas.

The World Congress provides a key opportunity to enhance international cooperation, whilst promoting practical advances in tackling this problem.

The World Congress III will activate the global community to put in place clear, achievable and measurable goals and targets, that will further a shared global vision for eliminating the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.

At a national level, New Zealand, being one of the attending countries at the First World Congress to adopt the Agenda for Action, was required to develop a Plan of Action, that would identify areas of law and policy that could be strengthened to comply with the Agenda.

A working group of officials from relevant government agencies was established to develop the Plan of Action and after a first draft was produced, relevant non-governmental organisations, such as ECPAT, were also consulted.

The New Zealand Plan of Action, 'Protecting Our Innocence', was presented to the Second World Congress in Japan, by the leader of the NZ Government delegation, The Hon Laila Harre. The Plan of Action examined what was being done in NZ, to prevent the commercial sexual exploitation of children, by government and non-government organisations.

In introducing the Plan of Action the Minister of Justice, The Hon Phil Goff, stated that there were "further activities, which were identified during the development of the Plan of Action, that need to be actioned, as New Zealand works towards the goal of eliminating the exploitation and abuse of children".

As no agency was formally tasked with monitoring or reporting on NZ's progress on the Plan of Action, in 2005 ECPAT NZ took the initiative and prepared a draft stocktake. The Ministry of Justice, in collaboration with ECPAT, then compiled the rest of the stocktake from the contributions of agencies.

ECPAT NZ will have strong representation at this World Congress and will actively participate in the processes. The Outcome Document from the Congress will become a focal point for ECPAT NZ and other agencies, as the fight to prevent sexual abuse of children continues.

5 Years on...Prostitution Law Review

In 2003 the Prostitution Reform Act (PRA) was passed by the New Zealand Government. The purpose of the PRA was to decriminalise prostitution (while not endorsing or morally sanctioning prostitution or its use); create a framework to safeguard the human rights of sex workers and to protect them from exploitation; promote the welfare and occupational health and safety of sex workers, contribute to public health and to prohibit the use in prostitution of persons under 18 years old.

Following this the Government set up the Prostitution Law Review Committee (PLRC), to review the operation of the Act over a five year period. This Committee published its findings in May of this year.

So what are some of the outcomes of the Review?

- There has been no significant increase in the number of sex workers since decriminalisation.
- Some sex workers confirm that their health and safety has improved, but others still face the same threats and risks.
- Financial pressures are still the main reason why people enter prostitution, i.e. rather than because it is now decriminalised
- A recommendation that the Government (Ministry for Youth Development and Ministry of Social Development) increase funding to NGOs working with youth at risk. A collaborative approach from these Ministries plus the Police and relevant NGOs should be taken to assist youth at risk.
- The review period was relatively short and it may take another decade or more to assess the long term impact of the PRA.

ECPAT remains alert to the risks for young people in terms of sexual exploitation. It concedes that the numeric rating of involvement is very difficult and likely to be inaccurate. It may be difficult to quantify the increase of underage prostitution, but there is no denial that it exists. The Review recognises the many negative consequences for people under the age of 18 who are involved in the sex industry. These consequences include physical, psychological and emotional harm, and negative social consequences such as ostracism and social stigma.

ECPAT is also concerned that Police do not have the power to require age identification. Nor do they have the right of entry into a brothel to check age identification and brothel owners are not required to maintain a record of age identification, or provide such to the Police.

ECPAT supports the Review Committee's statement that "all measures should be taken to divert underage people from entering the sex industry as a means of survival". It also endorses the Committee's recommendation for a collaborative approach to prevent young people being used in prostitution.

ECPAT endorses the Committee's view that "the apprehension of clients attempting to procure under age people must be given greater priority. Police action should be directed at offending actions, and not the victim."

ECPAT VISION

The vision of ECPAT is the realisation of the right of all children to live free of child prostitution, child pornography and child trafficking for sexual purposes.

ECPAT MISSION

ECPAT International 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 exploitation.

ECPAT NEW ZEALAND AGM

Please join us and other friends of ECPAT NZ for an end of year BBQ & Drinks, followed by our AGM.

FRIDAY 14th NOVEMBER, 2008

5:30—7:30pm

GARDEN ROOM

**GREY LYNN COMMUNITY CENTRE
510 RICHMOND ROAD, GREY LYNN**

All welcome.

We would love to see you there!

PLEASE HELP US TO UPDATE OUR DATABASE BY COMPLETING BELOW:

Name:.....

Address:.....

Phone:.....

Mobile:.....

Email:.....

YOU CAN SUPPORT ECPAT NZ BY MAKING A DONATION:

Enclosed is my donation of \$.....

(Donations over \$5 are eligible for tax exemption)

If you would like to unsubscribe to the ECPAT NZ Newsletter please check

Post to: ECPAT NZ, PO BOX 41 264, St Lukes, Auckland, NZ



Protecting Children
against Commercial
Sexual Exploitation