

DECLARATION ON THE PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION IN TOURISM IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

(Unofficial English translation.)

The Ministers and Tourist Authorities of the countries of Central America and the Dominican Republic, jointly with representatives of the National Chambers of Tourism from the region that make up the Federation of Chambers of Tourism of Central America (FEDECATUR), hereby declare the following:

CONSIDERING that in the Declaration of San José, issued at the XXII Summit of Presidents and Heads of State of Central America on 13 December 2002 as Agreement Number 7, “to instruct those entities responsible for issues concerning children and adolescents of Central America, so that they prepare as the earliest time, based on national plans and with the technical and financial support of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and other related entities, a regional action plan to become placed into force for ten years, co-ordinated by the Regional Forum for Families, Children and Adolescents, as approved in the XXXII Meeting of the Ministers of Social Integration held in Managua on 15 March 2002, that guarantees compliance with the rights of children and adolescents in the region based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Proposal formulated in the United Nations World Summit for Children, and the Ibero-American Agenda, subscribed to in Bávero, the Dominican Republic.

CONSIDERING that in the Fourth Conference of the Ibero-American Ministers of Tourism held 11-12 October 2004 in San José, Costa Rica, the commitment was made to “disseminate and apply the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism as approved by the World Tourism Organization, especially with regard to the protection of children and adolescents.”

CONSIDERING that tourism is an activity that contributes to the development of our countries, to the creation of a higher quality of life, to enhancing the dignity of people, and to protecting natural and cultural resources, being of vital importance the prevention of situations that might affect its sustainability as well as the human and economic development of the region.

WE HEREBY AGREE:

First: To recognise that the purpose of tourism in our countries is to generate opportunities for human development, with people being its greatest asset and especially children and adolescents who constitute the future of our nations, which makes it of the utmost importance to guarantee their protection.

Second: To make the commitment to promote, manage and participate in plans and activities that protect children and adolescents against sexual exploitation and other forms of abuse that can come about when tourist services and facilities become used to that end.

Third: Encourage all countries to finalise their processes of subscribing to the Code of Conduct and the Code of Ethics of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and to urge the private sector in tourism to put these norms into practice by the end of 2004.

Fourth: To request to UNICEF that with respect to the struggle against sexual exploitation, as it becomes associated with tourism, that the valid intermediaries in this regard be the ministers of tourism and the tourist authorities.

Fifth: To request from the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, seated in Panama, that they elaborate in collaboration with the Ministers of Tourism of Central America and the Dominican Republic and with SICA, a joint regional plan for the 2005-2006 period, aimed at the prevention of sexual exploitation in the tourist sector. Said plan should contain activities aimed at raising awareness, capacity building and training for this sector and be implemented in co-ordination with the national chambers of tourism of the participating countries, along with informational activities for dissemination to the citizenry.

Sixth: To request the support of the World Tourism Organization in reinforcing the activities contemplated in the plan described in the preceding point of agreement.

Seventh: To incorporate as an integral part of this Declaration, an appendix that contains the recommendations and conclusions issued by the technical working groups that

convened during the event “Prevention of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents: Contributing to a Sustainable Tourism in Central America.”

Eighth: To elaborate the annual plan of activities contemplated in this Declaration, based on the necessities and priorities of the participating countries, in co-ordination with the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean along with the Technical Secretary of the Central American Council of Tourism.

Subscribed to in San Salvador on the twenty-ninth day of October in the year two-thousand and four.

Luis G. Cardenal
President Pro-tempore of the Central
American Council of Tourism
and the Minister of Tourism
of El Salvador

Rodrigo A. Castro F.
Minister of Tourism
of Costa Rica

Luis Simó
Sub-Secretary of Tourism for
International Affairs of the
Dominican Republic

José Miguel Gaitán
Deputy Director of the Guatemalan
Institute of Tourism

Sara Sánchez Sáez
General Secretary of the
Panamanian Institute of Tourism

Dennis Javier Chacón
General Secretary of the
Office of Tourism of Honduras

Ian Coronel
Executive Presidential Advisor
of the Nicaraguan Institute of
Tourism

Carlos A. Delgado
President,
Federation of Chambers of Tourism
of Central America