



## The Rio de Janeiro Declaration and Call for Action to Prevent and Stop Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents

### Preamble

We, participants at the World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, representing governments, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, human rights institutions, ombudspersons, the private sector, law enforcement and legal community, religious leaders, parliamentarians, researchers and academics, civil society and children and adolescents<sup>1</sup>, have gathered in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, (25-28 November 2008) to review developments and action taken in follow-up to the Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action 1996 and the Yokohama Global Commitment 2001, to identify lessons learned and key challenges, and to commit ourselves to the implementation of goals and targets of a Call for Action to prevent, prohibit and stop sexual exploitation<sup>2</sup> of children and adolescents and to provide the necessary support to children who have fallen victim to it.

**(1) We reiterate** that the sexual exploitation of children is a gross violation of their right to respect of their human dignity and physical and mental integrity and that it cannot be condoned under any circumstances.

**(2) We express** concern at the continuing high level of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in States in all regions, and at the increase in certain forms of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, in particular through abuse of the Internet and new and developing technologies, and as a result of the increased mobility in travel and tourism.

**(3) We note** with deep concern the increased vulnerability of many children to sexual exploitation as a result of increasing poverty, social and gender inequality, discrimination, drug and alcohol abuse, ongoing demand for sex with children, environmental degradation, HIV/AIDS, displacement, occupation, armed conflict and other emergencies that create strains on the basic unit of the family responsible for the protection of children, as well as the persistent demand for sex with children in all regions and States underpinned by an environment of social tolerance, complicity and impunity.

**(4) We recall** the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) which calls on States Parties to take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected from sexual exploitation, as well as the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, which require States Parties to prohibit, criminalize and prosecute these practices.

**(5) We recognize** the active and meaningful participation of 282 adolescents from 96 countries at the World Congress III and their significant contributions against sexual exploitation. These have been consolidated in the “Adolescent Declaration to End Sexual Exploitation” annexed in this document.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this document, ‘child’ and ‘children and adolescents’ are used to denote all human beings below the age of 18 years.

<sup>2</sup> Throughout this document, ‘sexual exploitation of children and adolescents’ is used to denote all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of people under the age of 18 in all settings: in the home and family, in schools and educational settings, in care and justice institutions, in the community and in the workplace.

We encourage adolescent girls and boys to continue their important actions to fight sexual exploitation through forming their networks and promoting their peer to peer initiatives.

**(6) We welcome** the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and other relevant international, regional and national human rights mechanisms in addressing the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.

## **A. Review of progress and outstanding challenges**

We welcome the progress achieved in addressing the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents since the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Congress in Yokohama, Japan, in 2001:

(1) The entry into force of key international instruments such as the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (ratified by 129 States as at 15 November 2008), and the increase in ratifications of ILO Convention 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (the Palermo Protocol), supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the adoption of new regional instruments including the Council of Europe Conventions on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse and on Cybercrime.

(2) Adoption of legislative measures by more States to strengthen the protection of children from sexual exploitation in compliance with international obligations, including the enactment of legal provisions for the protection of child victims of sexual exploitation during the process of criminal investigations and trials against alleged perpetrators, taking into account the *United Nations Guidelines on Justice in Matters Involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime*.

(3) The development and implementation of national agendas, strategies or plans for the protection of children from sexual exploitation, increasingly within the context of broader, overarching national frameworks to create a World Fit for Children.

(4) The establishment of multi-sectoral initiatives to prevent and combat trafficking of children including for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

(5) The conclusion of bilateral and multilateral agreements between and among States with a view to establishing effective cooperation in efforts to prevent and combat cross-border trafficking and sexual exploitation of children and adolescents as well as for the detection, investigation, prosecution and punishment of those responsible.

(6) Increased support of companies operating in tourism and travel by signing the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism.

(7) An increase in some countries both in training for professionals involved in prevention and protection of children from sexual exploitation and victim support, and in targeted awareness raising and education campaigns.

(8) The increased engagement of UN and UN-related organizations, national and international NGOs, other civil society organizations, human rights institutions and inter-governmental organizations in preventing and stopping the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.

While acknowledging the progress, we note particular challenges and concerns:

- (9) There remain significant gaps in identification of children vulnerable to sexual exploitation, knowledge and understanding of how to address and respond to emerging manifestations, trends and the increasingly complex nature of the different forms of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, including the increasing challenge of children on the move.
- (10) There is a lack of coordinated actions among different stakeholders involved in the protection of children from all forms of sexual exploitation, in particular among governmental agencies. To remedy this, there must be an effort to integrate cross-sectoral policies and create a more coherent framework for effective actions.
- (11) In many States, laws do not adequately define and criminalize the various forms of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in accordance with applicable international standards, therefore hindering the effective protection of children as well as the prosecution of these crimes.
- (12) Consistent law enforcement and the ending of impunity is too often hampered by the lack of adequate resources, structures for implementation and a lack of appropriate training of those involved.
- (13) Impunity for perpetrators of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents is often perpetuated by the lack of investigation and prosecution of offenders in the country where the crime takes place, and the lack of consistent and effective extraterritorial jurisdiction, often hindered by a ‘dual criminality’ requirement, and the lack of necessary extradition regulations and mutual legal assistance agreements and practices.
- (14) There is an insufficient focus on measures to reduce and eliminate the demand for sex with children and adolescents, and in some States inadequate sanctions against sexual abusers of children.
- (15) Children’s right to express their views and have those views given due weight in all matters affecting their lives, including in all administrative and judicial proceedings, is not consistently incorporated in national legislation and practice; and in particular child victims of sexual exploitation experience further trauma because of the lack of effective opportunities to exercise that right and of child-sensitive victim and witness procedures.
- (16) Protection for children’s sexual development, in accordance with their age, empowers them against sexual exploitation but is not sufficiently recognized.
- (17) Insufficient resources are made available, including where appropriate through international cooperation, to ensuring free, accessible, safe and high quality education for all children as a component of primary prevention against the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.
- (18) Laws and programmes addressing trafficking in human beings, including for the purpose of sexual exploitation, too often do not recognize the special status of child victims and their right to special protection, including through repatriation procedures that includes the view of the child and guarantee the child’s safety in case of return to their place of origin and support for full restitution of their rights.
- (19) Many States have not taken all feasible measures with the aim of ensuring all appropriate assistance to child victims of sexual exploitation, including their full social reintegration and their full physical and psychological recovery; and assistance is often compromised by a lack of effective coordination among the necessary partners (including law enforcement, immigration, social workers, mental and physical health professionals, housing and education services).

(20) The links between sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and family violence are not sufficiently acknowledged in policies and programmes.

(21) There continues to be a lack of reliable, disaggregated data on the prevalence and nature of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and on children at risk, and inadequate evaluation of the impact of legislative, social and other measures to prevent and stop the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and to support those who have fallen victim to it.

(22) Information continues to circulate that is not based on updated knowledge and the wealth of field-based experience in the areas of prevention and protection of children, law enforcement and victim support; and there is insufficient proactive sharing of experiences and lessons learned.

## **B. Declaration**

We, participants at the World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, representing governments, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, human rights institutions, ombudspersons, the private sector, law enforcement and legal community, religious leaders, parliamentarians, researchers and academics, civil society and children and adolescents, pledge ourselves to undertake as a matter of priority the necessary measures to prevent and stop the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.

**(1) We will be guided** by international human rights standards in fulfilment of States' obligations to protect children from all forms of abuse and exploitation.

**(2) We recognize** that our efforts to prevent and end the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents must address the root causes of these serious violations of the rights of the child by mainstreaming strategies within broader policy frameworks. We thus recommit ourselves to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, particularly to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty, ensure that all children complete a full course of primary schooling and halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.

**(3) We recognize** the important role that parents, the (extended) family and other community caregivers can play in preventing and protecting children from sexual exploitation, and the need to provide them and other caregivers with adequate support.

**(4) We welcome** the recommendations of the UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children and commit ourselves to follow-up and to support with financial, human and other resources, and facilitate the work of the (still to be appointed) Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children as well as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, and relevant Special Procedures, particularly the Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially in Women and Children.

**(5) We recognize** that a comprehensive response to the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents should include a focus on fighting all forms of child labour, and **we welcome** the endorsement in 2006 of the ILO's Global Action Plan against the Worst Forms of Child Labour, by which all 182 member States have committed themselves to eliminating all these forms – including the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents – by 2016.

**(6) We will cooperate** with and support international, regional and national human rights bodies and civil society in efforts to promote and review reports on the implementation of measures against the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.

**(7) We will support** measures and structures to institutionalize meaningful child participation in a sustainable way at all levels, including for child victims of or at risk of sexual exploitation, for example through adequately resourced child and youth advisory committees, community-based programmes and peer-to-peer initiatives and we will support measures aiming at the implementation of the recommendations of the “Adolescent Declaration to End Sexual Exploitation” made at the Rio Congress (for the text of these recommendations see the annex to this document).

**(8) We will strengthen** our efforts to address through targeted, gender-sensitive information, communication and education, training and community mobilization, any denial of the seriousness of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and of its negative consequences, in particular the beliefs and values that condone and sustain sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and perceptions and treatment of the child as a sexual object or commodity.

**(9) We will initiate, fund and share the outcomes** of research on all forms of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, *inter alia* on the nature and scope of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents; mental and physical health impact of sexual exploitation of children; new manifestations including changing modalities, actors, mechanisms and locations used; sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in schools and care and justice institutions; the implementation and impact of legislative, social and other measures taken to prevent, stop and respond to sexual exploitation of children and adolescents; the demand that perpetuates sexual exploitation of children and adolescents; those involved in facilitating and perpetrating sexual crimes against children; the sexual exploitation of boys; vulnerability and resilience of children in relation to sexual exploitation; the nature and impact of virtual social interaction among children and its potential in preventing and protecting the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in different social and cultural contexts; the impact and effect of global consumer culture on social values and behaviours, in particular on the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents; patterns of offending, with a view to ensuring that interventions are appropriate and effective.

**(10) We undertake** to further develop specific indicators of performance and progress to measure the impact on children of all policies and programmes that we develop or implement in the area of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, with a view to ensuring that all actions taken are in the best interests of the child and do no harm; and to share lessons learned – both positive and negative – in order to contribute to better understanding and action in the future and to ensure that as far as possible evidence-based information is used for the development and implementation of effective policies and programmes to prevent and protect children from sexual exploitation and support those who have been victimized by it.

### **C. Call for Action**

We call on all States, with the support of international organizations and civil society, including NGOs, the private sector, adolescents and young people to establish and implement robust frameworks for the protection of children and adolescents from all forms of sexual exploitation, and we call upon them to:

## ***I - International and Regional Instruments***

(1) Continue working towards ratification of relevant international instruments, including as appropriate the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, ILO Convention 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

(2) Continue working towards ratification of relevant regional instruments, including as appropriate the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the ASEAN Charter, the Inter-American Conventions on International Traffic in Minors and on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, the SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution, and the Council of Europe Conventions on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, on Cybercrime and on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, conventions which can be ratified by States that are non-members of the Council of Europe.

(3) State Parties should take all necessary measures to implement the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, taking into due accounts the conclusions and the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child in the context of its review of State Parties' reports. All countries are encouraged to use this as an important reference.

## ***II – Forms of Sexual Exploitation and its New Scenarios***

### *Child pornography/ child abuse images*

(4) Criminalize the intentional production, distribution, receipt and possession of child pornography, including virtual images and the sexually exploitative representation of children, as well as the intentional consumption, access and viewing of such materials where there has been no physical contact with a child; legal liability should be extended to entities such as corporations and companies in case the responsibility for or involvement in the production and/or dissemination of materials.

(5) Undertake specific and targeted actions to prevent and stop child pornography and the use of the Internet and new technologies for the grooming of children into online and off-line abuse and for the production and dissemination of child pornography and other materials. Victim identification, support and care by specialized staff should be made a high priority.

(6) Conduct educational and awareness-raising campaigns focusing on children, parents, teachers, youth organizations and others working with and for children with a view to improve their understanding of the risks of sexually exploitative use of the Internet, mobile telephones and other new technologies, including information for children on how to protect themselves, how to get help and to report incidences of child pornography and online sexual exploitation.

(7) Take the necessary legislative measures to require Internet service providers, mobile phone companies, search engines and other relevant actors to report and remove child pornography websites and child sexual abuse images, and develop indicators to monitor results and enhance efforts.

(8) Call upon Internet service providers, mobile phone companies, Internet cafes and other relevant actors to develop and implement voluntary Codes of Conduct and other corporate social responsibility mechanisms together with the development of legal tools for enabling the adoption of child protection measures in these businesses.

(9) Call upon financial institutions to undertake actions to trace and stop the flow of financial transactions undertaken through their services which facilitate access to child pornography.

(10) Set up a common list of websites, under the auspices of Interpol, containing sexual abuse images, based on uniform standards, whose access will be blocked; the list has to be continuously updated, exchanged on international level, and be used by the provider to perform the access blocking.

(11) Undertake research and development, in the realm of the private sector, of robust technologies to identify images taken with electronic digital devices and trace and retract them to help identify the perpetrators.

(12) Promote public/private partnerships to enhance the research and development of robust technologies to investigate and to trace the victims with a view to immediately stop their exploitation and provide them with all the necessary support for full recovery.

(13) Make technologies easily available, affordable and usable for parents and other caregivers, including to assist with the use of filters to block inappropriate and harmful images of children.

#### *Sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in prostitution*

(14) Address the demand that leads to children being prostituted by making the purchase of sex or any form of transaction to obtain sexual services from a child a criminal transaction under criminal law, even when the adult is unaware of the child's age.

(15) Provide specialized and appropriate health care for children who have been exploited in prostitution, and support child centered local models of recovery, social work systems, realistic economic alternatives and cooperation among programmes for holistic response.

#### *Sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in travel and tourism*

(16) Encourage and support the tourism, travel and hotel sectors in adopting professional Codes of Conduct, for example by joining and implementing the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism; encourage the use of businesses that put in place appropriate child protection-focused corporate social responsibility strategies; and/or provide other incentives for those participating.

(17) Ensure that all stakeholders pay specific attention to unregulated tourism to prevent domestic and international travellers from sexually exploiting children and adolescents.

(18) Cooperate in the establishment of an international travel notification system, such as the Interpol 'green notice' system, in accordance with applicable law and human rights standards.

(19) Ensure investigation and, where sufficient evidence exists, that appropriate charges are brought and vigorously pursued against the State's nationals who are reported or alleged to have sexually exploited a child in a foreign country.

(20) Prohibit the production and dissemination of material advertising the sexual exploitation of children in tourism; and alert travellers to criminal sanctions that will apply in cases of sexual exploitation of children.

(21) Monitor new and emerging tourist destinations and establish proactive measures to work with private sector partners involved in the development of tourism services on measures to prevent the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, including the use of socially and environmentally responsible strategies that promote equitable development.

#### *Trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents*

(22) Mobilize communities, including children and adolescents with a view to engaging them in dialogue on and a critical review of social norms and practices and economic and social conditions that make children vulnerable to trafficking, and establish procedures that involve them in developing strategies and programmes where they participate, where appropriate, in the planning, implementation and monitoring of such programmes.

(23) Pilot and adapt or replicate successful models of community-based prevention and rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for child victims of trafficking.

(24) Establish policies and programmes that address not only cross-border but also internal trafficking of children and that include, among other elements, a standard operating procedure for the safe repatriation and return of children based on the child's view and on a careful assessment of the needs and risks to the child of returning to her/his place of origin to ensure that the best interests of the child are taken into account.

(25) Continue strengthening cross-border and internal cooperation of law enforcement officials, for example by establishing coordinating units with a mandate to issue clear guidelines for child centered investigation of cases of trafficking of children and for treating trafficked children not as criminals but as victims in need of protection.

(26) Take legislative and other measures to ensure that a guardian is appointed without delay for every unaccompanied trafficked child, that an effective system of registration and documentation of all trafficked children is established, and that every trafficked child is provided with not only short-term protection but also with the necessary economic and psycho-social support for full and long-lasting recovery and social reintegration (in line with the *UNICEF Guidelines on the Protection of Child Victims of Trafficking* and *UNHCR Guidelines on Formal Determination of the Best Interests of the Child*).

(27) Undertake and/or support, with the involvement of civil society and children, the regular evaluation of programmes and policies to prevent and stop the trafficking of children and of legislation that may have a conducive impact on trafficking, for example laws on marriage, free education, adoption and migration, birth registration, accordance of citizenship, refugee or other status.

### ***III – Legal Frameworks and Enforcement of the Law***

(28) Define, prohibit and criminalize, in accordance with existing international human rights standards, all acts of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in their jurisdiction, irrespective of any set age of consent or marriage or cultural practice, even when the adult is unaware of the child's age.

(29) Establish effective extraterritorial jurisdiction, abolishing the requirement of double criminality for offences of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, and facilitate mutual legal assistance, in order to achieve effective prosecution of perpetrators and appropriate sanctions. Make all acts of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents an extraditable offence in existing or newly established extradition treaties.

(30) Designate a lead law enforcement agency, where appropriate to national circumstances, to proactively enforce extraterritorial laws related to sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.

(31) Ensure that child victims of sexual exploitation are not criminalized or punished for their acts directly related to their exploitation, but are given the status of victim in law and are treated accordingly.

(32) Establish special gender sensitive units/children's desks within police forces, involving when appropriate other professionals like health care and social workers and teachers, to address sexual crimes against children, and provide specialized training to judicial and law enforcement personnel.

(33) Address corruption in law enforcement and the judiciary, as well as other authorities with a duty of care to children, recognizing corruption as a major obstacle to effective law enforcement and protection for children.

(34) Establish and implement international, regional and national legal mechanisms and programmes for addressing sex offender behaviour and preventing recidivism, including through risk assessment and offender management programmes, the provision of voluntary extended and comprehensive rehabilitation services (in addition to but not in lieu of criminal sanctions as appropriate), safe reintegration of convicted offenders and the collection and sharing of good practices and establish where appropriate sex offenders registers.

### ***IV – Integrated Cross-Sectoral Policies and National Plans of Action***

#### *General*

(35) Develop and implement comprehensive National Plans of Action on the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, or include these in existing relevant planning frameworks, such as National Development Plans and ensure that these Plans are based in a cross-sectoral approach which brings all stakeholders together in a coherent and comprehensive framework for action. These Plans should incorporate gender-sensitive strategies, social protection measures and operational plans, with adequate monitoring and evaluation targeted resources and designated responsible actors, including civil society organizations for implementation of initiatives to prevent and stop the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and provide support for child victims of sexual exploitation.

(36) Promote and support multi-sectoral policies and programmes, including community-based programmes, within the framework of a comprehensive national child protection system to address phenomena that contribute to the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents including, for example, discrimination (including on the basis of sex), harmful traditional practices, child marriage and social norms that condone sexual exploitation.

(37) Promote and fund meaningful child and youth participation at all levels in the design, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes, in campaigns and through peer-to-peer youth programmes, aimed at raising awareness and preventing the sexual exploitation and trafficking of children and adolescents.

(38) Initiate and support the collection and sharing of reliable information and cross-border cooperation, and contribute to databases on victims and perpetrators, to enhance assistance to children and address the demand for sex with children, in accordance with applicable laws.

### *Prevention*

(39) Ensure that all children born on their territory are registered immediately and for free after their birth and pay special attention to not yet registered children and children at risk and in marginalized situations.

(40) Strengthen the role of educational institutions and staff to detect, denounce and help address sexual abuse and exploitation of children in all forms and sources.

(41) Emphasize prevention of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, through e.g. awareness raising and educational campaigns, support for parents and eradication of poverty while reinforcing or establishing multi-sectoral referral mechanisms to provide comprehensive support and services to children who have been victimized in sexual exploitation.

(42) Support children to gain deeper knowledge of their own rights to be free from sexual exploitation, and the options available to help them to address abuse, so that they are empowered, with the partnership of adults, to end sexual exploitation.

(43) Engage children in meaningful and critical examination of changing contemporary values and norms and their potential to increase vulnerability to sexual exploitation; and promote education to enhance children's understanding of these issues in relation to sexual exploitation.

(44) Undertake research on contemporary patterns of socialization of boys and men across different contexts to identify factors that promote and strengthen boys' and men's respect for the rights of girls and women and engage them in action initiatives that inhibit and discourage them from engaging in sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.

### *Protection of the child*

(45) Increase efforts to address the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents through the development of comprehensive and integrated national child protection systems, including the necessary budget allocations and based on identifications of settings where children are most at risk that aim to protect children from all forms of violence and abuse.

(46) Establish by 2013 an effective and accessible system for reporting, follow up and support for child victims of suspected or actual incidents of sexual exploitation, for example by instituting mandatory reporting for people in positions of responsibility for the welfare of children.

(47) Develop or enhance accessibility of existing telephone or web-based help lines, in particular for children in care and justice institutions, to encourage children and require care givers to confidentially report sexual exploitation and seek referral to appropriate services, and ensure that the operators of such reporting mechanisms are adequately trained and supervised.

(48) Strengthen existing national child protection services or establish new ones in order to provide all child victims of sexual exploitation, girls and boys, without discrimination, with the necessary economic and psycho-social support for their full physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration, and when appropriate, family reunification and interventions that support and strengthen families to mitigate the risk of further exploitation; such services to be provided by well trained multi-disciplinary teams of professionals.

(49) Ensure that these services are accessible, appropriately resourced, comprehensive, child- and gender-sensitive, and reach all children without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex (or orientation), and social origin and including children with disabilities, from ethnic minorities, indigenous or Aboriginal children, refugee or asylum-seeking and children in domestic service or living on the streets and children displaced by conflict or emergency situations.

(50) Develop programs that provide children of sex workers and children living in brothels with support and protection.

(51) Promote and defend the privacy of the child victims and child perpetrators of sexual exploitation, taking into account relevant national laws and procedures, to protect their identity in investigatory or court proceedings or from disclosure by the media and ensure that these proceedings are child friendly and allow the child to participate in a meaningful way in the process of bringing the perpetrator to justice.

(52) Ensure that children and adolescents exhibiting acts of sexual violence harmful to others receive appropriate care and attention as a first option through gender-sensitive and child-focused measures and programmes that balance their best interest with due regard for the safety of others, and ensure compliance with the principle that depriving children of liberty should be pursued only as a measure of last resort, and ensure that those responsible for the care of such children are equipped with relevant and culturally appropriate training and skills.

## ***V – International Cooperation***

(53) Take all necessary steps to strengthen international cooperation by multilateral, regional and bilateral arrangements for the prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution and punishment of those responsible for acts of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents; and for the assistance of child victims in their physical and psychological recovery, social reintegration and, as appropriate, repatriation.

(54) Establish and/or improve by 2013 concrete mechanisms and/or processes to facilitate coordination at national, regional and international levels for enhanced cooperation among government ministries, funding bodies, UN agencies, NGOs, the private sector, workers' and employers' organizations, the media, children's organizations and other representatives of civil society

with a view to enabling and supporting concrete action to prevent and stop the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.

(55) Strengthen and improve the effectiveness of existing regional mechanisms for exchange, coordination and monitoring of progress on child protection including against sexual exploitation in order to review progress and strengthen follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations made.

(56) Provide, when in a position to do so, financial, technical and other assistance through existing multilateral, regional, bilateral and other programmes for addressing the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents; and explore the potential of a fund for child and youth initiatives in this area.

(57) Develop, where appropriate with the support of UN agencies, NGOs, civil society organizations and the private sector, workers' and employers' organizations, policies and programmes to promote and support corporate social responsibility of enterprises operating *inter alia* in tourism, travel, transport and financial services, and of communication, media, Internet services, advertising and entertainment sectors; so that child-rights focused policies, standards and codes of conduct are implemented throughout the supply chain and include an independent monitoring mechanism.

(58) Support and contribute to the Interpol international child abuse images database and nominate a responsible national focal point person or unit to collect and update promptly national data on sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, and systematically share this information with Interpol in order to support cross-border (international) law enforcement action and strengthen its effectiveness, and adopt multilateral agreements especially for police investigation work.

(59) Undertake national and international coordinated measures to curb and stop the involvement of organized crime in commercial sexual exploitation of children and bring persons and/or legal entities responsible for this form of organized crime to justice.

## ***VI – Social Responsibility Initiatives***

We encourage the private sector, employers' and workers' organizations, to proactively engage in all efforts to prevent and stop the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, and to use their know-how, human and financial resources, networks, structures and leveraging power to:

(60) Integrate child protection, including the prevention of sexual exploitation of children, into new or existing corporate social responsibility policies of enterprises operating *inter alia* in tourism, travel, transport, agriculture and financial services, and of communication, media, Internet services, advertising and entertainment sectors, and ensure appropriate implementation of such policies and widespread public awareness.

(61) Incorporate the prevention and protection of children from sexual exploitation in human resources policies, such as Codes of Conduct and other corporate social responsibility mechanisms throughout the supply chain.

(62) Join efforts with Governments, UN agencies, national and international NGOs, and other stakeholders to prevent the production and dissemination of child pornography, including virtual images and the sexually exploitative representation of children, and stop the use of the Internet and new technologies for the grooming of children into online and off-line abuse; undertake actions to trace and stop the flow of financial transactions for sexual exploitation of children through the

services of financial institutions; support efforts to address the demand for sexual exploitation of children in prostitution and the strengthening of services for children victims and their families, including the establishment of accessible telephone or web-based help lines; and provide support for educational and awareness-raising campaigns targeting children, parents, teachers, youth organizations and others working with and for children, on the risks of sexual exploitation of children, sexually exploitative use of the Internet, mobile phones and other new technologies as well as on protective measures.

## ***VII – Monitoring***

(63) Establish by 2013 independent children’s rights institutions such as children’s ombudspersons or equivalents or focal points on children’s rights in existing human rights institutions or general ombudsperson offices, highlighting the importance for States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child of General Comment No 2 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child; these bodies should play a key role in the independent monitoring of actions taken for the prevention of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, protection of children from such exploitation and the restoration of the rights of sexually exploited children, in advocating for effective legal frameworks and enforcement and in ensuring, where necessary, that child victims have effective remedies and redress, including the possibility of filing complaints before these institutions.

We encourage the Committee on the Rights of the Child to:

(64) Persevere with reviewing progress of States Parties’ fulfilment of their obligations to uphold the right of children to protection from sexual exploitation and pay special attention to the recommendations in the Rio Call for Action in its examination of reports under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols.

(65) Adopt as a matter of priority a General Comment on the right of the child to protection from sexual exploitation, trafficking for sexual purposes, and the abduction and sale of children, including detailed guidance to States on the development, implementation and enforcement of national legislation and policies in this regard.

(66) Continue to work with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in protecting child rights, and raising awareness of relevant international and regional human rights mechanisms.

We encourage other United Nations human rights treaty bodies, special procedures of the Human Rights Council and special representatives of the United Nations Secretary-General, as well as regional human rights mechanisms, to:

(67) Pay particular attention to combating the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, within their respective mandates and during their examination of State Parties’ reports, country visits, in their thematic work and/or other activities.

We urge the Human Rights Council to:

(68) Ensure that the Universal Periodic Review process includes rigorous examination of States’ fulfilment of their obligations to children, including preventing and stopping the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and to respect fully the rights of child victims of such exploitation.

We urge the yet-to-be-appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially in Women and Children, together with other appropriate mandate holders and in collaboration with the Committee on the Rights of the Child, to:

(69) Work together to avoid duplication and to maximise their impact in preventing and stopping the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and, through their work, map experiences in the area of prevention and response to sexual exploitation of children and asses their effectiveness.

We encourage UN agencies, NGOs and human rights institutions to:

(70) Support and provide information on the extent of and responses to sexual exploitation of children and adolescents to these bodies.

(71) Work with the media to enhance their role in education and empowerment, and in protecting children from sexual exploitation, and to mitigate the harmful potential of the media, including through the sexualization of children in advertising.

We call on international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to:

(72) Review their current macro-economic and poverty reduction strategies with a view to counteracting any negative social impact on children and their families, including loan conditionality which essentially limits social services and access to rights and minimizing the risk for children to sexual exploitation.

We call on religious communities to:

(73) Reject, in the light of their consensus about the inherent dignity of every person, including children, all forms of violence against children including sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and establish, in that regard, multi-religious cooperation and partnership with other key stakeholders such as governments, children's organizations, UN agencies, NGOs, media and the private sector using their moral authority, social influence and leadership to guide communities in ending sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.

## **D. Follow-up**

(1) We commit ourselves to the most effective follow-up to this Call for Action:

- At the national level, *inter alia*, by biennial public reporting on the measures taken for the implementation of the Rio Declaration and Call for Action and promoting/initiating discussions on the progress made and the remaining challenges to named responsible mechanisms for monitoring implementation while also integrating such requirements into State reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

- At the international level, by encouraging and supporting coordinated actions by the relevant human rights treaty bodies, special procedures of the Human Rights Council and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a view to maintaining awareness of the Rio Declaration and Call for Action and promoting its implementation.

(2) Encourage the private sector to join the United Nations Global Compact and communicate their implementation progress with regard to addressing the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and supporting the realization of this platform for coordinated corporate efforts and sharing of best practices.

## ANNEX

### Adolescent Declaration to End Sexual Exploitation

28 November 2008, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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We the children of the world commend the Government of Brazil and the other governments and responsible agencies for giving us the children, the present and future of the world, a voice at this World Congress III.

The children have suffered too much from adult exploitation. But, organized and united, we have gone from being victims to actors. Our children's organizations give us the strength to defend ourselves and fight for our rights.

We are here to contribute to the process of fighting this issue and raising awareness about this problem that continues to grow larger. We respect the adults, our parents and the life rules of our different countries. But we also want the respect of all of you. Everyone has the right to respect and this is an attitude that everyone should take

However, it is not enough to just give us a voice but you **MUST** listen. Listen to our calls for urgent action, listen to our experiences and most importantly listen to our solutions.

The work we have begun here must not end here today when the congress rooms become empty and the heated discussions here in Rio de Janeiro become silent. We must not allow the discussion of children's rights particularly in the matter of sexual exploitation to ever go silent again but we must evoke calls of change throughout the world like we have never done before.

Now, we need governments, NGOs, media, private sector, local authority, and many more children to join us in fight against child sexual exploitation and help high-risk children and victims.

We the children of the world ask of ourselves and similarly of you to share presentations of the proceedings of this conference with your communities, your nations and regions to perpetuate this message further.

If we are to make the pervasive and repugnant problem of sexual exploitation of children a relic of history once and for all, you the Government, the NGOs, and other social partners **MUST**:

1. Create the office of ombudsman with regards to children's rights in each country to ensure the full and effective implementation of children's rights, reform in all sectors to promote a more child-friendly service, and efficient prevention, monitoring and handling of cases of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.
2. Establish Child Protection Agencies and Centres in local communities throughout the world funded by UNICEF, other international and local groups to protect those that remain vulnerable to this cancerous problem.
3. Furthermore, a Children's forum and organization led by children and for children needs to be established to ensure child and adolescent participation to prevent sexual exploitation.
4. We also ask that each major governmental agency and international organization dealing with children's rights should have a Children's Ambassador.

5. Pursuant to this Congress, we ask for national and regional consultations to internalize and adapt the decisions of the Congress to fit our varying cultural realities within 6 months. Again, we ask that the Governments of the World to engage us the children and listen to our voices.

6. Additionally, every 6 months to a year, we wish to continue these consultations to discuss matters related to sexual exploitation of children and children's rights in general to promote the institutionalization of child participation. Arising from these consultations, regional reports should be submitted to UNICEF to form the International Report which will then be disseminated throughout the world.

7. We are at this moment calling for governmental actions to effectuate laws and policies that redound to the benefit, protection and well-being of children both on the local and international level. However, it is simply not enough to allow governments to make empty promises to curb this attack on children. Consequently, we the children, ask that action committees be created to audit the action plans in each country.

8. We also call for the adoption of an International Day where children will lead the effort in awareness raising campaigns, rallies and marches. To further enlarge the scope of this day, we request the organization of an International Art, Essay and Speech competition which will culminate on this day.

9. We now turn our attention to the media particularly the internet which poses one of the greatest threats to millions of children throughout the world.

Stop X. org has emerged from this conference as a great resource in the combat against sexual exploitation. Henceforth, we ask that the webpage list the agenda of all the activities and conclusions of the World Congress, provide a forum to post documents and closely monitor the development of our work and most importantly to continue discussion on this topic and the development of ideas.

10. We the children must make known our plight for governments to pursue strict and punitive legislation with regards to the Internet, especially child pornography- simply another form of abuse.

11. We similarly ask for strong cyber safety Rules which are well propagated on both the websites and within the communities. To this end we call for the increased development of children's, teachers, parent's and family manuals which address the threats of the internet in addition to providing supplemental information about sexual exploitation of children.

12. Further, we provide a mandate for the media to gather documents, reports, folders, CDs, videos and other materials to increase knowledge on this issue.

We the children of the world pledge to vehemently and passionately pursue these policies and to call our governments to action if we do not see positive steps being taken to end this phenomenon that continues to scourge the world today.

The children and adolescents of the world ask all the event participants to remember when you adults were our age, in our developmental stages so that it will be easier to touch the hearts of the people and thus all reflect on and ratify our commitment to fight together, crossing frontiers to eradicate this world problem that interrupts the happy and harmonious development during childhood and adolescence throughout the world.

We children and adolescents throughout the world hereby ratify that by this conclusive document we

are expressing what we feel, think and want to achieve to win the war against child sexual exploitation because, as already mentioned in the opening document, THE DECISION IS IN OUR HANDS.

Without a doubt, the greatest challenge that we will face as of the closing of this Third World Congress will be the multiplying effect.

We are convinced that all human beings are not the result of chance but that we have to realize our goal which is to bring in our lifetime through our realities and experiences to that they leave footprints. If I leave my children the same world as the one my parents left me, my existence will have been in vain, however, if my existence enriches my successors, my existence will have been justified.

Today, we are all making history because by simply participating in this important world event demonstrates our commitment to contribute our grain of sand to make our world a better place.

Since the first congress up to the third congress, a greater social conscience was created about this world problem, but we believe that we need to act more and talk less, since more than a decade has gone by since we began before we saw the results of the proposals and commitments by which many of the decisions were made by the authorities of each country, to them we say the following:

We are together with the government, society, NGOs, international organizations and with all those who have the commitment to combat sexual exploitation of children and adolescents. Uniting the creativity of children, the participation of adolescents and young people with the experience of adults, we can transform our view in one cry of STOP sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.