



First session

Agenda item
20 March 2021

**Synopsis for Protecting Children from
Sexual Exploitation in the Tourism Industry**

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Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the United Nations Children's Fund the topic synopsis entitled "Protecting Children from Sexual Exploitation in the Tourism Industry" (UNICEF/SYN/IIC/00.2).



Protecting Children from Sexual Exploitation in the Tourism Industry

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Section I—Introduction

UNICEF, or the United Nations Children’s Fund, is an organ of the United Nations whose focus is to assist children and mothers within developing nations as well as offer humanitarian aid for those suffering individuals. On December 11, 1946 UNICEF was created in order to offer aid for children who had been devastated by WWII. In its wake, UNICEF, who relies on contributions from governments and private donors, worked to combat infectious disease outbreaks as well as quotidian lack of necessities with developing nations.

Section II—Topic Background

Child sex tourism is the sexual exploitation of minors by people who move from area to area to engage in sexual activity with children and adolescents. Typically, perpetrators migrate from a richer, more developed country to a less developed country, although sex tourists can also migrate within their own countries or regions. Child sex tourism often uses accommodation, transport and other tourist services which promote association with children and allow the abuser to remain discreet in the community and the encompassing area. Child sex tourism involves the exchange of cash or some other form of compensation to a child or third party for sexual contact. Child sex tourism occurs in multiple venues, and in both urban and rural settings. Children of all genders and backgrounds are in danger of sexual exploitation in tourism, but in particular, indigenous children, displaced children, and children living in poverty are at risk. The consequences of sexual exploitation on children are both physically and emotionally destructive, and they include sexually transmitted diseases, unplanned pregnancy, and even drug addiction. Due to the concealed nature of the sexual exploitation of children in the tourism industry, it is impossible to obtain exact figures on its prevalence. However, investigations have shown that the sexual exploitation of children around the world is increasing due to several factors, including an addition in the number of travelers, the growing prevalence of voluntourism and greater anonymity due to modern advancements in technology that make it challenging to locate and prosecute perpetrators.

Over 120 million girls below 20 years old are abused sexually throughout the world, according to UNICEF. The UN intends to undertake this problem by installing it as a component of the sustainable development goal that concentrates on peace, justice, and strong institution, or SDG 16. The goal is clearly stated as “end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against, and torture of children” and is designed on being achieved by 2030. UNICEF, the World Tourism Organization and ECPAT are working together to launch a code of conduct to prevent exploitation of children by destroying the industries associated with the sexual exploitation of children. UNICEF works with government sectors, and with local communities, and other prominent organizations, to promote recognition and curb child maltreatment and child trafficking.

Section III—Possible Solutions

Government laws are essential for protecting children from sexual exploitation in the tourism industry. Industries will not stop the exploitation if it is profitable; making it illegal and providing a framework for effective prosecution will dissuade many industries from engaging in or permitting the practice to occur. Many governments do not have these laws, and even if they do, the laws are loosely enforced, however, this can be fixed if the government hired people to do checks on companies regularly.

Education also plays a significant part in preventing this issue. Children should be taught safety measures that may save them from being exploited. The problems address all genders, so advocacy should include both instances of boys and girls. This education will be given through school and public areas may have posters up. Advertisements that condemn the idea of using children for sexual exploitation will force society to look down upon it as well as raise awareness for the growing issue. Since the topic of sexual exploitation in tourism is a cross-border issue, cooperation is fundamental if there is to be success. In addition, technological advances have greatly changed the nature of cybercrimes, making it hard to persecute offenders of the crime because of the increased anonymity that comes with improvements in technology.

Section IV—Bloc Positions

African Bloc: Inadequate laws managing sexual exploitation in travel and tourism are reconstructing the region of Africa into a new frontier for child sexual exploitation.

Asian Bloc: Outmoded laws, ineffective legal implementation, cheap transportation and the increase of technology are intensifying the hazard of children's sexual exploitation. Many Southeast Asian countries are also global hubs for child sexual exploitation.

Latin American Bloc: Latin American countries have established regulations against the sexual exploitation and violation of children, however, these laws are seldom implemented. Its proximity to the United States is one factor in why sexual tourism has become so prevalent in this region.

Middle Eastern Bloc: The inadequacy of data and lack of collaboration amongst authorities make it challenging to represent an authentic picture of the sexual exploitation of children. In addition, the low social and cultural status of women and girls in the region, and a shortage of economic or educational opportunities for the youth has created other approaches for vulnerability.

Western Bloc: Elevated access to the Internet and technology have fueled the sexual exploitation of minors, and the prosecution of perpetrators is limited by a shortage of government coordination and information distribution.

Section V—Questions That Should Be Taken Into Consideration

Who are the perpetrators of children’s sexual exploitation and are they domestic or international travelers?

How is the sexual exploitation in the tourism industry run and where does the money come from?

Is the government aware of the extent of the child sex tourism industry and what measures are they taking to prevent this crime from continuing?

What are the UN and NGOs doing in terms of protecting children from sexual exploitation in the tourism industry and how can your country bring a unique, efficient solution that is different from solutions tried before?

Section VI—Helpful Sites and Resources

Report—ECPAT International— Offenders on the Move: Global Study on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism 2016

bit.ly/39U9CEH (Shortened URL from www.protectingchildrenintourism.org)

Article—ECPAT International— More Children Are Being Sexually Exploited in the Tourism Industry Than Before

bit.ly/2HI4NCB (Shortened URL from www.ecpat.org)

Article—UNICEF USA—Fighting the Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism

bit.ly/2SIOX0H (Shortened URL from www.unicefusa.org)

Report—ECPAT International—Sexual Exploitation Children Increasing Concern Across Southeast Asia

bit.ly/2uby9WG (Shortened URL from www.ecpat.org)

Article—Journal of Tourism and Hospitality—Sex Trafficking in the Tourism Industry

bit.ly/2HFQhez (Shortened URL from www.longdom.org)

Information Sheet—UNICEF—Sexual Exploitation

uni.cf/32gjBld (Shortened URL from www.unicef.org)

Potential Search Terms— UN involvement of child sexual exploitation in industry, sexual exploitation of children, UNICEF SDG 16, sexual exploitation UN, Sexual Exploitation in the Tourism Industry, Child exploitation