

Press kit background paper 4

An important partner: the private sector¹

What does the private sector have to do with commercial sexual exploitation of children?

Whether by commission or omission, the private sector is involved in the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).² Three sub-sectors within the realm of private enterprise have traditionally featured in the discussion on CSEC: the travel and tourism industries; the media industries; and those related to new technologies.

The travel and tourism industry has been active for several years in confronting its own involvement in facilitating CSEC and in developing strategies to end it. The media sector -- journalists, photographers, television and film producers, acting and modeling agencies, music companies, advertising firms -- have also made efforts to become engaged in exposing CSEC, although there remains a gap between media's coverage of CSEC as an issue and their understanding of the close links between media messages and the influence they have on both vulnerability of children and the rationale of exploiters.

The relatively young group of enterprises working in new technologies -- from Internet Service Providers to telecommunications companies to digital image recorder manufacturers -- have received a considerable amount of attention since the first World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation in Stockholm in 1996, mostly through the issue of Internet-based child pornography, although the full extent of the links between technology and CSEC has not been well explored.

In general, while it may be true that profit-driven corporations may be interested in and committed to children's rights, this is incidental rather than central to their business activities. This fact distinguishes their work from their non-profit counterparts. There is also a very real risk with for-profit businesses that children's rights will be subordinated to profit incentives. For example, private industries may be interested in helping young people advance their future employability but, if the expense incurred is not recouped by the corporation, then there may be temptation and pressure (for example from shareholders) to abandon such efforts.

Are there international laws relating to private sector responsibilities?

The United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989) offers the most comprehensive and the most widely agreed protections for children's rights. Articles 31 to 37 outline rights to education, leisure and development, and establish prohibitions upon various forms of abuse, including economic and sexual exploitation. ILO Convention 182 *Concerning the prohibition and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour* (1999) is of particular relevance since it tasks Member States to work in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations to eliminate CSEC as a worst form of child labour, including preventing hazardous employment and reporting abuse. Other ILO instruments relating to minimum age, slavery-like conditions and standards and norms of employment are also useful tools on which collaboration between the labour sector and non-governmental and inter-governmental actors can be built.

A number of non-binding multilateral declarations have been developed to place checks upon the work of private sector industries, in particular those that are multinational in origin. Many of these declarations include in their scope states, employers and workers. Perhaps most importantly, they recognize not only the need for private industries to respect rights, but that their position in society

places a strong obligation to promote and enhance respect for human rights. Protections and obligations are also found in the *Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises* (1977).

The United Nations has recently developed the 'Global Compact', which calls on businesses to show good 'global citizenship' in the states in which they operate. The human rights section of this document explains that businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights within their sphere of influence and ensure they are not complicit in human rights abuses. Although the Compact is voluntary, it draws the attention of industries to human rights and represents an important development in ensuring both respect for, and promotion of such rights.

Although 'soft law' instruments are not binding, they do offer important guidelines on the role the private sector can potentially play in both protecting and promoting children's rights, including their right to protection from exploitation.

Are tourism/travel, media and new technologies the only industries involved?

There are many private industries that have no *prima facie* link to exploitation but that could play an important role in combating it.

Given, for example, that many trafficked children cite the lack of jobs, poor living conditions and search for a better future as reasons why they leave home and put themselves at risk, then it is clear that businesses that offer young people realistic employment opportunities with reasonable salaries and respectable working conditions will be playing a major role in protecting children from exploitation.

In addition, many industries can take active preventative measures. They might coordinate and institute job training programmes for young people, particularly for those at high risk of CSEC. They could introduce mentoring programmes or funding and scholarship opportunities for education. Awareness raising among employees or co-workers, who are potentially both abusers and protectors of children, can help to influence community and individual attitudes to CSEC. Zero-tolerance policies can be developed and enforced by the high tech industry regarding, for example, on-line exploitation or transmission of child pornography.

The inter-governmental and non-governmental communities can provide examples of projects that could be replicated in the private sector. UNICEF, ILO, UNAIDS and a number of NGOs have developed projects in cooperation with employers in which children at risk are offered opportunities for training and employment. These have been designed as preventative measures to enhance skills and optimism for opportunities outside high-risk employment sectors and as rehabilitative measures to build confidence and employability after a child has been removed from commercial sex. ILO has worked with its traditional labour sector partners in a number of innovative projects in which trade unions, for example, have worked with the organization to develop training and awareness-raising materials for shopfloor worker mobilization.

Organizations that employ or recruit adults to work with children can put in place procedures to screen workers to ensure that there has been no history or incident of inappropriate conduct. Screening programmes are particularly important for businesses such as summer camps, boarding schools and day-care facilities. In short, just being aware of CSEC and the potential risk to children opens up new avenues of action for business enterprises and provides an opportunity for them to find their own ways of responding. There are many other ways in which private sector industries that are in no way implicated in CSEC can still help to eliminate it. Partnerships with other players can be supportive and

fruitful.

Moreover, it is well documented that consumers care about corporate accountability, in particular in relation to the environment, their own communities and their families, including the rights of children. Active protection and promotion of such rights may be seen as 'good business'.

What has the travel and tourism sub-sector done since Stockholm?

At the first World Congress, the travel and tourism industries were well represented and their delegates introduced several important agreements and resolutions. In the five years since, many new initiatives have been further developed. Nevertheless there is still concern among child advocacy groups and law enforcement agencies that not enough is being done by this group to monitor and report instances of child abuse.

The term 'travel and tourism' has been widely used in discussions on CSEC, yet no one definition outlines the entire scope of the trade. The sub-sector decisively includes travel agents, tour operators, airlines and hotels, but it may also involve travel wholesalers, excursion companies, bars and nightclubs, restaurants, bus companies, train carriers, local security officers and others. While some of the industries are easier to identify than others and therefore easier to control using traditional legal models, all individuals within the sub-sector have a moral obligation to protect children from possible harm caused by their services.

It has been reported that one of every 16 workers worldwide is employed in the feeding, lodging, entertaining or transporting of guests. As such, individual employees more than businesses can play a role in combating CSEC. Any response or measure developed by an organization or association is only effective if the people who work in it know about it and believe in its objectives. Often the travel and tourism industries take advantage of an uneducated work force by paying low wages and offering no benefits. Further, the seasonal aspect of tourism often results in cyclical lay-offs for many employees. The problem is compounded by the fact that locals often hold lower-level jobs while management jobs are reserved for outsiders. These factors can result in low job satisfaction by employees and frustration. In this case, the sub-sector must recognize that respecting the rights of their work force may be an important element in assuring the rights of children with whom their employees come into contact.

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) is the only intergovernmental organization that serves as a global forum for tourism policy and issues. Its members include 138 countries and territories, as well as more than 350 affiliate members from the public and private sectors. WTO's mission is to promote and develop tourism as a significant means of fostering international peace and understanding, economic development and international trade. In October 1999, the WTO General Assembly adopted a new *Global Code of Ethics for Tourism*. Article 2, paragraph 3 of the documents states: "The exploitation of human beings in any form, particularly sexual, especially when applied to children, conflicts with the fundamental aims of tourism and is the negation of tourism, as such... it should be energetically combated... and penalised without concession by the national legislation of both the countries visited and the countries of the perpetrators."

Governments representing the countries that support the Code have agreed to enact stricter laws and controls over the private sector to ensure that children within their borders are protected from the harm that can occur as a result of abetting or ignoring violations. Private members of the WTO who back the initiative have agreed to adhere to the Code.

In cooperation with ECPAT and intergovernmental organizations such as UNICEF, Interpol, UNESCO and the ILO, the WTO also launched Child Prostitution and Tourism Watch. The aims of the Watch programme are to prevent, uncover, isolate and eradicate the exploitation of children in sex tourism. To date, the programme has designed and implemented a logo campaign, for use by businesses, to demonstrate their commitment to eliminating CSEC. A Watch website has also been created.

Many international private sector umbrella organizations have developed charters and passed motions to control or regulate their members. The Universal Federation of Travel Agents' Associations (UFTAA) developed a *Child and Travel Agents' Charter*. A unique feature of this document is the follow-up mechanism that requires its members to help organizations that restore the dignity, physical and mental health of the victims of CSEC. Similarly, the International Federation of Tour Operators (IFTO) has developed a *Code of Operation against the Sexual Exploitation of Children*. The Federation of International Youth Travel Organisations (FIYTO) has passed a resolution to combat child sex tourism, as has the International Federation of Women's Travel Organizations (IFWTO).

Travel agents and tour operators are not the only industries who have acted. In 1996, the International Union of Food, Agriculture, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF/UITA/IUL) adopted a Resolution on Prostitution Tourism and that same year the International Air Transportation Association (IATA) drafted a Final Resolution Condemning Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

Although all charters and resolutions should be considered positive steps in the effort to combat CSEC, they are mostly voluntary in nature. If a member chooses to ignore the resolution, at worst it will be disassociated. Further, the language is often drafted after intense negotiations with multiple partners, including both trade unions and management. As a result, many of the words chosen are not as forceful as they could be.

A number of successful initiatives have been generated by European organizations. The Group of National Travel Agents and Tour Operators Association within the European Union (ECTAA) passed a Declaration Against Child Sex Tourism in which groups committed themselves to excluding 'without delay' any member proved to be engaged in sex tourism. In 1997, the Confederation of the National Associations of Hotels, Restaurants, Cafés and Similar Establishments (Hotrec) issued a Declaration against the Sexual Exploitation of Children. The Hotrec declaration unusually 'regrets' use of the term 'child sex tourism' on the grounds that it "is highly damaging to the image of the tourism industry. Such crimes occur because of child sex abusers and, unfortunately, they occur in all sorts of circumstances which are not related to tourism activities".

Several countries have independently adopted national codes or programmes for their travel and tourism industries. The most comprehensive code of conduct for tour operators was developed in 1998 by ECPAT Sweden, which requested input from a number of organizations that would be affected by such a code. These included UFTAA, ECTAA, WTO, ECPAT national groups and Scandinavian tour operators. Following a collaborative process in finalizing the document, a number of 'compliance contracts' were then signed with the travel industry. Such contracts represent 95 per cent of the Swedish travel market and 75 per cent of the Nordic market. In November 1999, Germany and Austria joined the coalition. In January 2001, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom also agreed to participate. Funding is provided by countries' respective governments and from the European Commission, and there is strong support for the view that financing should also come from the tour operators.

The Code has five criteria: establishment of an ethical policy regarding child sex tourism; training of personnel in the country of origin and the travel destination; a clause in contracts with suppliers that provides a common repudiation of child sex; provision of information to travellers by means of catalogues, brochures, in-flight films, ticket slips, home pages, etc.; and information to key local people. The initiative also provides for monitoring mechanisms to be implemented and conducted by independent bodies. This is a particularly important element outlining an accountability process that ensures there are strong incentives to adhere to the code. The Code has been implemented in Thailand, Sri Lanka, India, Brazil, the Dominican Republic and Cuba, with ECPAT acting as the interim monitoring body. This process has been highly influential, and a number of other countries have expressed interest in joining the coalition. Scandinavian tour operators announced in March 2001 that they will implement the code in Gambia, Vietnam, Bulgaria, Bali, Kenya and Turkey.

Such Codes might not, however, prove to be effective in all regions. ECPAT Australia, for example, has noted that such codes of conduct would have limited impact in Australia because Australian child sex tourism tends to occur outside the work of the mainstream tourism industry. However, a number of innovative efforts have been taken in Australia, including the inclusion of a prohibitive clause in the Australian Federation of Travel Agents' code of ethics. Child sex tourism is also dealt with in the national tourism curriculum, so that students are made aware of the issue. A new programme, 'Travel with Care', was launched; through it educational materials designed to combat child sex tourism are distributed by every travel industry. An additional innovative programme is 'Child Wise Tourism' working in travel destinations, helping to build capacities to prevent child sex tourism. ECPAT Australia developed a training module and training materials for travel and tourism students, educators and tour leaders. In so doing, they worked closely with the Australian tour operator Intrepid.

Is there better understanding of child sex tourism now?

ECPAT International commissioned a report on the state of the global campaign against child sex tourism in response to concerns that activities on the issue following the first World Congress have been inadequate. Worldwide surveys were conducted on child sex tourism, with the objective of using this information to develop a strategy to further promote its elimination, and good practice models in both the industry and non-governmental sectors were identified.

The report, *Child Sex Tourism and Action Plan*, notes a number of unmet needs, including the development of a methodology to quantify the volume of child sex tourists; design of a methodology to monitor child sex tourism arrests and convictions; design and circulation of good practice; design of a support programme for commercial sex tourism partners in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean; and design of an information and training programme in cooperation with the North American tourism industry.

The report identifies sectors involved in child sex tourism and highlights some of the work that remains to be done. It notes that CSEC happens in many ways. Implicated industries and individuals include the Internet, hotel staff, taxi drivers, transport terminals, families, panderers, brothels and escort agencies, and sidewalk agents. CSEC takes place in many locales, including hotels, guesthouses, holiday flats, homes, brothels and public places.

The report concludes that, while a great deal of important work has been done, there is much remaining, particularly in the areas of education and training. Guidelines are proposed to enhance awareness, and the creation of an international database is recommended. Furthermore, it is concluded that a Tourism Desk should be established within the ECPAT movement to "launch and

coordinate new actions as well as to motivate national groups". The report also recommends that organizations working against CSEC advance their understanding of, and participation in technological developments.

And what about the role of the media?

The role of the media in both protecting children and exploiting them is a subject of much debate. Often discussion of the media's relationship to CSEC has focused on the way the issue of CSEC is reported – sometimes responsibly, sometimes sensationally – and on media's too frequent impulse to 'campaign', often with imperfect understanding of the issues. Levels of violence and sex, and changing public tolerance and indeed acceptance of what many consider extreme depiction of both is also regularly mentioned. Less often discussed is the media's considerable power and how this might be harnessed to protect children, inform, clarify and mobilize.

The Government of Norway summed this up in a call to develop a positive relationship between children and the media, launched on the 10th anniversary of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* in November 1999. The *Oslo Challenge* says: "the media are in many ways children's best friend: across their wide diversity – television, radio, film, advertising, the Internet, print products, music and more – the media are able to protect, inform, educate, nurture, entertain, encourage and accompany children and young people in a unique way. But the same media also have the power and capacity to exploit, abuse, misinform, exclude and corrupt children, and in so doing deny them the rights the Convention [on the Rights of the Child] aims to guarantee. With their substantial and growing influence at the very centre of children's lives, the media represent a potent force for both good and evil in the life of a child".

In response to both the first World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and to the Oslo Challenge, a number of programmes have been developed, both by the media and with the media, that aim to harness the power of the media to combat CSEC and protect children from it.

A number of initiatives, for example, have focused on working with journalists to encourage better coverage not only of children's stories but also of wider stories that may have an impact on children. The British NGO PressWise has worked with UNICEF's Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe, the CIS and Baltic States, to run training sessions at which journalists are encouraged to pose the kinds of questions they face in their daily work when choosing which stories to cover and how to approach them. The PressWise trainers are all themselves journalists or former media professionals and bring to the partnership an understanding of the media and the credibility of peers.

A simple example, often quoted, is the frequency with which newspaper reports on child sex tourism give the name of the resort at which abusers prey on children. Such detail means nothing to the average reader but is valuable information to an abuser planning his next vacation. This may not be obvious to a reporter fashioning a story that s/he hopes will in fact increase public awareness of CSEC.

A reporting style that is insensitive to the complexities of CSEC can also sometimes distort relevant issues, sensationalizing exploitation or mobilizing public opinion in inappropriate ways. A clear example of this is the 'witch hunts' that have been orchestrated by some tabloid newspapers that have led to convicted paedophiles being targeted and attacked by outraged citizens who are probably unaware and uninformed of the fact that the majority of child sex abusers are neither paedophiles nor convicted but may, indeed, be the 'regular guy' living just next door.

Conversely, there is no doubt that much of the impact of the first World Congress in terms of putting

the issue of CSEC on the international agenda came from the sterling work undertaken by journalists from all over the world, not only at the Stockholm meeting itself but also in the months leading to the Congress and at the times of the several regional consultations held in preparation.

The key to good journalism on the subject of CSEC is to recognize and acknowledge that journalists are not distant onlookers but important players in efforts to combat CSEC. Working with journalists, respecting the realities of their profession and supporting their work is the most effective approach to take.

It is also important to recognize the potential role media industries can play in promoting youth empowerment. Confidence and identity-building activities are fundamental in helping young people to achieve their potential and helping prevent their exploitation. Modern media culture has had an increasing influence on young people with regard to sexuality – in many cases, overshadowing traditional sources of such education. Media images are powerful and omnipresent, and young people the world over are comfortable in a mediatized world.

New programmes are being designed to approach media education in ways compatible with traditional worldviews. Journalists can promote sex education serving to address some important reproductive health issues, such as HIV/AIDS and pregnancy. Such campaigns have been manifested in comic books, magazines aimed at youth and in other popular culture media. An innovative programme in Nigeria bases its campaigns on the premise that “only teenagers who know and value themselves, who are aware of options and who are skilled have the capacity to practise safer and responsible sex”.

What about media images of children and CSEC?

Image continues to play a prominent role in the child sex industry, and there are ways in which the private sector can act. The most widely acknowledged connection between image and CSEC is in the fashion and music video sectors. Current trends of using adolescent girls (or adult women with under-developed bodies) to promote clothes, perfume or other fashion consumables in highly sexualized images has been highly criticized by child advocacy organizations and by those who study and analyse abusers' behaviour. It is proven that sex abusers measure their behaviour against what they see as socially accepted norms, and that sexualized images of children serve to help them rationalize their impulses and their actions. Increasingly explicit sexual behaviour in music videos, including those featuring adolescent artistes and, for example, set in schools or 'teenage' settings, may send out damaging messages that early sexual activity is acceptable, providing justification to abusers and causing confusion for children.

This continues to be a much-debated issue on which little common ground has yet been found. The absence of the music video, computer games and other 'image making' industries from governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental forums of discussion is a matter of concern that needs to be addressed. The rhetoric of approbation and criticism that has characterized such discussion must give way to collaboration and exploration if this issue is to be seriously confronted.

Much the same is true of the television drama and film industries. Here, however, there have been moves to find ways to better protect children and promote the elimination of CSEC. Programmes and guidelines are being developed to help child actors cope with sensitive material, and a number of initiatives are taking place to guide directors in portraying the subject appropriately. There have been new developments in the filtering and rating of television programmes, as well, to protect children from potentially harmful material. In 1997 the European Parliament proposed requirements for

broadcasters to implement complex screening systems. While this move was eventually deemed premature, initiatives were taken to investigate other possible methods of protection. As an interim compromise, warnings now precede any potentially damaging programmes.

What impact does the growth of new technologies have on CSEC?

In the past decade the Internet has developed so fast that no regulatory system could keep pace. As a result, its unregulated nature has offered child sex offenders speed of transmission, ease of accessibility and the luxury of anonymity. Instantaneous transmission of information and images lessens the risk of intervention by law enforcement officials and eliminates cross-border customs investigations.

The Internet has done more, however, than just make existing methods of child abuse more convenient and risk-free. It has offered new and increasingly harmful methods for the violation of children. There are many ways in which the Internet is abused for such exploitative purposes. The more commonly known uses are through the publication of pornographic images involving young people. In this manner it is widely recognized that children are harmed in several different ways: children are abused in the production of the images, when witnessing abuse on their computer monitors, and can be encouraged to participate in production of pornography by being shown images that 'normalize' such activity and help to convince them that 'others do it'.

Abuse of the Internet's enormous reach, user-friendliness and the fact that children are often more comfortable at the keyboard than their parents are, has allowed abusers to find ways to 'speak' directly to children through newsgroups and chat rooms, to befriend and isolate them through duplicity and cunning, and to set them up for personal contact and abuse, often without the knowledge of parents or care-takers. 'Grooming' and 'stalking' of children is of serious concern, although in some countries police Net-specialists have had noted success in identifying and intercepting Net-stalkers.

A growing number of NGO initiatives have attempted to help parents, teachers and other care-takers to catch up with the technology their children navigate with ease, and provide support to them in both protecting their children on-line and helping their children to 'surf safe'. The London-based NGO ChildNet International has developed a number of projects aimed not only at improving child protection but also reinforcing understanding of the positive potential of the Internet.

The challenges of new technology, however, are constantly changing. Since 1996 a number of new technologies have been developed that, again, have potential both to increase children's vulnerability or to enhance their protection. Mobile telephony and SMS messaging is becoming an important 'tool' in the hands of children in the highly industrialized countries. If parents find it difficult to monitor their child's Net activity in front of a computer screen, how can they possibly check what their child is receiving or sending from a hand-held mobile phone in the school yard or at the bus stop? And yet many children now receive and send messages, surf the net, access web-based information and construct their worlds with the paradoxically isolating technology of [w@p](#) communications.

Digital technologies and hand-held 'personal' equipment reduce the child's involvement in the wider society of protection-givers and isolate him or her into one or a series of small, closed communities from which parents can often be excluded and which are then targeted by those who aim to harm. There are reports that in some industrialized countries, children are being pimped by exploiters who operate entirely on mobile phone networks, effectively keeping the child on a mobile phone 'leash' and leading clients to her also using the phone.

There is no doubt that new technologies are one of the greatest challenges facing those who wish to protect children from CSEC. Bringing on board the inventors, developers, manufacturers and vendors of such technologies is an important next step in ensuring that the power of new technology works for children and not against them.

How has the private sector responded to the challenge of CSEC?

A number of trends can be noted from the private sector's responses to CSEC. There are many other initiatives, however, that have yet to come to fruition or have not been fully explored.

Codes of conduct have emerged as a preferred means by which private industries aim to protect children from exploitation. There are many potential benefits to such instruments. Codes of conduct can build protective frameworks from the ground up. They can be used to identify holes in legislation, filling them with private obligations. They can help educate relevant parties on the underlying issues of CSEC, detrimental impacts of their actions and their potential to participate in the elimination of CSEC. They can be used by many private sector industries: tour operators, ISPs, image makers, for example. In fact, codes of conduct seem to be the most unifying objective among the various private industries with a stake in the elimination of CSEC.

Codes of conduct also have a number of weaknesses that must be recognized. The first is that they are invariably voluntary and non-binding. They have no legislative force. Terms such as 'might' or 'should' permeate the documents, indicating that there is no positive obligation placed upon the industry to incite change. Codes of conduct are often under-inclusive and self-serving. Because they are drafted by the implementing entity, they tend to be designed explicitly to serve the interests of that entity. For example, early codes of conduct by clothing manufacturers were widely criticized for failing to include such provisions as the right to organize into trade unions, although they were ostensibly based on domestic and international law.

Compliance with such codes is also often internally monitored, preventing public scrutiny of non-compliance. There is little commitment to the public that monitoring is being done, that monitors have requisite training and sensitivity, or that violations will not be covered up. Furthermore, because the corporation often pays the monitors directly, there is no assurance that they will try not to save money by simply neglecting to monitor.

A further challenge is that codes of conduct are often not widely distributed, particularly to employees. A study by the US Department of Labor found that less than 50 per cent of multinational corporations with codes of conduct governing labour standards could provide inspectors with copies of the codes upon request. Finally, and perhaps most detrimentally, there are criticisms that codes of conduct could serve as a disincentive for countries to strengthen their own laws. Some commentators are concerned that actions of the private sector, in adopting such codes, may be an attempt to replace legislation, to privatize law enforcement and thus to evade standards. .

Many of these weaknesses could be attributed to the fact that codes of conduct designed to guide private industries in protecting children from harm are still in their infancy. Mindful of the criticisms, and provided the codes are well drafted, implemented and adhered to, codes of conduct serve to offer exemplary support to the movement to eliminate CSEC. A compromise may be to have other groups outside the business help in drafting the code.

Clearly, the most effective way that the private sector could play a dominant role in the elimination of CSEC is through international cooperation. Travel and tourism, media, and industries relevant to new

technologies are international in nature. Even where private sector industries are localized, important lessons may be learned from the successes and failures of similar industries elsewhere. Cooperation must be two-tiered, between related private sector industries in an international forum, and between the private sector and such organizations working to establish and advocate international standards. International cooperation must also take place at a number of other levels, with the private sector being just one constituent component.

International events like the first World Congress, and industry-specific conferences such as the WTO General Assembly, have helped to lay the groundwork for the necessary and preferable steps to be taken by those working in the private sector. CSEC is a problem of international dimensions, and has been facilitated and exacerbated by rapid travel and growing disparity between developed and developing countries and increased globalization, including of the media, and instantaneous transmission of information offered by new technologies.

The many levels in which private sector industries may be implicated in CSEC indicate that businesses and corporations must play a leadership role in working towards its elimination. This challenge requires international cooperation among all private sector industries. The initial steps have been taken but there is still much work to be done.

¹ This backgrounder is in part based on *The role and involvement of the private sector*, one of six theme papers prepared as background reading for participants at the 2nd World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, Yokohama, Japan, 17 – 20 December 2001. The theme paper was written by Mark Erik Hecht with the assistance of Lisa DeLong. Note that all references to research and other source documents are given in the original paper.

² For the purpose of the theme paper, the private sector was primarily defined as for-profit industries. Although many of the principles outlined are relevant for civil society organizations, as well -- and many non-profit agencies have been instrumental in protecting children from CSEC -- the *motivations* for participation differ greatly when profit incentives are involved.