

MEDIA ADVISORY

Arab-African Forum Against The Sexual Exploitation Of Children Rabat, October 24-26, 2001

3 October 2001

What Arab-African Forum Against The Sexual Exploitation of Children.

Under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Meriem of Morocco, and the presidency of the Minister in charge of Women's Condition, the government of Morocco has invited Arab and African countries for this forum. The meeting is supported by UNICEF Morocco, in cooperation with three UNICEF Regional Offices (the Middle East and North Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, and Western and Central Africa).

Who Around 200 participants representing:

- The governments of 65 countries from the Middle East and Africa, /Eastern and Southern Africa and Western and Central Africa,
- UNICEF
- The international campaign organisation to End Child Prostitution, Pornography And Trafficking (ECPAT),
- The NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child,
- Other civil society organisations
- The media
- A group of young people involved in their respective countries in activities concerning the prevention of the sexual exploitation of children.

When 24-26 October 2001

Where Tour Hassan Meridien, Rabat, Morocco, 26 rue Chellah, Rabat,
Tel. (212) 37 23 90 00 - Fax: (212) 37 72 54 08

Why In August 1996, 122 governments gathered in Stockholm, Sweden, to discuss and commit themselves to act against commercial sexual exploitation of children in a ground breaking event: the *World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children*. The congress, which was hosted by the Government of Sweden, in cooperation with UNICEF, the campaign organisation ECPAT, and the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, represented the first time that governmental, United Nation and civil society players joined forces to address this serious violation of child rights to health, safety, protection and freedom from harm.

Five years later, the Japanese Government and its co- organizations – UNICEF, ECPAT and the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child – invite governments, NGO's, intergovernmental players and private sector representatives, young people and others working to eliminate commercial sexual exploitation of children to examine the progress achieved. The *2nd World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children*, due to take place in Yokohama, Japan, 17-20 December 2001, is a working Congress that will focus on updating information, building on experiences since Stockholm, sharing lessons learned and moving forward with improved understanding, better ideas for action, new partnerships and even stronger commitment.

As part of a series of regional consultations being organized to bring together players at a regional level to prepare for the 2nd World Congress, the *Arab-African Forum Against Sexual Exploitation of Children* aims to examine the issue of sexual

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exploitation of children in the Middle East and Africa.

The Forum has the following objectives:

- The reinforcement of the political engagement of the countries present in Stockholm 1996;
- The examination of the progress accomplished in the way of implementing the plan of action that was adopted in Stockholm (1996);
- The identification and analysis of regional specificities and priorities as well as the elaboration of regional plans of action;
- Sharing experiences of good practices.

The recommendations from this, and other, regional consultations will be presented at Yokohama, and discussed by all the participants so that the final declaration takes into account regional specificity.

With an aim of coming up with common regional strategies, the Arab-Africa Forum will examine the problem of the sexual exploitation of children in the Middle East and Africa, through plenary sessions and working groups, in light of the six themes to be addressed in Yokohama : 1) Who is 'the sex exploiter'? 2) Pictures of abuse: child pornography; 3) An important partner: the private sector; 4) The weight of the law: legal frameworks and action against CSEC; 5) On the move: trafficking of children for sexual exploitation; and 6) Progress and problems: action since Stockholm.

The Forum will also discuss the problems and types of constraints peculiar to the Middle East and Africa. Studies on the situation of sexual exploitation in the Middle East and North Africa, West and Central Africa, and Eastern and Southern Africa, will be presented and will serve as springboards for work during the forum.

**Visa
Information:**

For visa, please fill out the attached form and return to UNICEF Morocco Country Office. Addressed to :
MDARHRI ALAOUI, El Kébir, Communication Officer, UNICEF Rabat (Morocco)
tel : (00.212) 37.75.97.41 - fax : (00.212)37.75.97.60 - e-mail: kmalaoui@unicef.org

The office will then issue an invitation which you can use to acquire a visa from the Moroccan Embassy in your country. Also, please include information about any equipment (cameras, etc) that you will be bringing with you.

For reference material and information about The 2nd World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, please contact June Kane, Communication Advisor, 2nd World Congress –
Tel: +41-22-328-2785 - e-mail: junekane@bluewin.ch

For more information about the Rabat Forum, please contact:

- In the Middle East and North Africa: Dina Ra'ad, UNICEF MENARO Communication Section: tel. +962-6-5539977, ext. 308 – e-mail: draad@unicef.org
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