

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN IN TRAVEL AND TOURISM (SECTT)



RECOMMENDATIONS for ACTION

December 2017

The Recommendations for Action are to support ECPAT member's advocacy efforts to ensure that children enjoy greater protection from sexual exploitation in the context of travel and tourism (SECTT).

On 15 September 2017, the General Assembly of the UNWTO approved the transformation of the Code of Ethics for Tourism into an international convention, known as the UNWTO Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics. In 2019, the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development will review Goal 16, which is of direct relevance to combatting SECTT, as set out below.

The ECPAT Network is encouraged to seize this momentum and to act, to make sure that ending the sexual exploitation of children in the context of travel and tourism is a priority in 2018-2019 and beyond.

Purpose of the Recommendations

The purpose of the Recommendations is to support ECPAT members in designing and implementing advocacy strategies towards ending SECTT, in particular towards the signature and ratification of the UNWTO Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics by their national governments. The Recommendations will help to:

1. Increase familiarity with the UNWTO Framework Convention.
2. Identify the SDG targets particularly important for advancing the agenda against SECTT.
3. Develop messages and recommendations that will guide advocacy work towards ending SECTT.

ECPAT's global advocacy efforts

ECPAT's advocacy efforts on SECTT are currently focused on moving forward with the implementation of the recommendations of the Global Study together with:

- international and regional intergovernmental bodies
- non-governmental organisations
- national governments
- private sector companies

The [Global Study on the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism](#) is the most comprehensive review and analysis on the topic ever undertaken. It was launched mid-2016, following two years of collaborative effort and extensive consultations with 67 partners.

The definition of SECTT emerged from the Global Study: **“acts of sexual exploitation of children, which are embedded in the context of travel, tourism, or both”** should guide efforts to combat this crime.

In June 2017, the UNWTO hosted the Transition Meeting of Global Leaders on fighting SECTT. The report and summary of conclusions are available on the website www.globalstudysectt.org/meeting-on-implementation-of-the-global-study-recommendations. The Transition Meeting generated a collective commitment towards implementation of the recommendations in a synergistic manner and set grounds to establish a process of monitoring global progress in the fight against SECTT.

In September 2017, SECTT was put on the UN agenda with a compact which emphasises “the shared principles” of the [U.N. and member states for conducting peace operations](#) including commitments to prevent sexual exploitation.

In November 2017, the ILO included the issue of SECTT in the program of the [IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labor](#). The recommendations of the Global Study call also for actions, which are directly interlinked with child labour.

ECPAT presented the recommendations of the Global Study at the 35th Meeting of the [INTERPOL Specialists Group on Crimes against Children](#); contributed to the regional Plan of Action against SECTT during [the 10th meeting of GARA](#) in Mexico, successfully called for child protection at Global Conference on Jobs & Inclusive Growth: [Partnerships for Sustainable Tourism](#) in Montego Bay and at the Closing ceremony of [the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017](#) at the Palace of Nations, in Geneva.

The challenge is to sustain this momentum, support and ensure the implementation of the Global Study's Recommendations at local, national, regional and global levels. To achieve this objective, it is critical that along with global advocacy efforts there is national attention created by the ECPAT Network in prioritising SECTT on the agendas of the key stakeholders in the coming years.

UNWTO Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics

The Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics was adopted by the UNWTO on 15 September 2017 in Chengdu, China. ECPAT International presented the Global Study Recommendations to the global leaders during the 22nd session of the General Assembly.



The final text of the Convention on Tourism Ethics can be [downloaded](#) from the UNWTO website.

The following articles refer to SECTT:

Art 5.2 refers to the promotion of the rights of children:

Tourism activities should respect the equality of men and women; they should promote human rights and, more particularly, the individual rights of the most vulnerable groups, notably children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples.

Art 5.3 refers directly to the protection of children from sexual exploitation:

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, in accordance with international law, it should be energetically combated with the cooperation of all the States concerned and penalized without concession by the national legislation of both the countries visited and the countries of the perpetrators of these acts, even when they are carried out abroad.

Art 9.6 refers to the media and the ways of addressing the problem of sexual exploitation in tourism:

The press, and particularly the specialized travel press and the other media, including modern means of electronic communication, should issue honest and balanced information on events and situations that could influence the flow of tourists; they should also provide accurate and reliable information to the consumers of tourism services; the new communication and electronic commercial technologies should also be developed and used for this purpose; as is the case for the media, they should not in any way promote sexual exploitation in tourism.

The text of the Convention was approved in English. The Convention needs to be translated in four other official UNWTO languages (Arabic, French, Russian and Spanish). The adoption is being planned for a Plenipotentiary Assembly in 2018. Once adopted, the Convention will be open for signature by Member States for a period of one year.

SDG targets for advancing the agenda against SECTT

The Sustainable Development Goals are part of a global agreement called Agenda 2030, which includes indicators to measure progress towards the achievement of the 17 Goals and 169 targets.



Unlike the UNWTO Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics, the SDGs are not legally binding, but represent an important political commitment through which governments and other stakeholders have pledged to take concerted actions.

Five targets are directly connected with SECTT in terms of combatting sexual exploitation of children and developing sustainable and responsible tourism:

- **Target 5.2** *Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation*
- **Target 8.7** *Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms*
- **Target 8.9** (...) *devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products*
- **Target 12.b** *Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism...*
- **Target 16.2** *End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.*

Goal 16 will be reviewed in-depth at the High Level Political Forum in 2019. As reported in the current progress on Goal 16: “Sexual violence is perhaps the most disturbing of children’s rights violations. Underreporting and a lack of comparable data limit understanding of the full extent of the problem”.

Note: there are number of international and regional documents already in place, which refer to SECTT and are supportive legal instruments to the UNWTO Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics and the SDGs.

Messages and recommendations towards ending SECTT

- 1. Advocate for national governments to examine the provisions of the UNWTO Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics, revise national laws and ensure that domestic legal frameworks address SECTT adequately.**

Find out if your Ministry of Tourism (or other relevant government body represented at the UNWTO) plans to sign the Convention. Identify other key ministries and allies who may also support the signature and ratification process in 2018-2019.

Call specifically for the national legislation to require the involvement of the private sector, as they are in the key position to prevent and fight SECTT. Advocate for the development of child protection policies by the private sector, the introduction of reporting obligations and the instruments for holding the industry accountable.

Call for the development of SECTT legal framework to stop impunity of the offenders by introduction of sex offenders' registries, notifications systems, travel restrictions and effective extraterritorial legislation. Impunity of offenders who sexually exploit children in the context of the continuously growing travel and tourism industry must end.

- 2. Encourage development of child protection policies by the private sector and promote the companies, which are involved in the fight against SECTT.**

Raise awareness about SECTT within the tourism and travel industry, support relevant companies in developing child protection policies and promote their applications for the UNWTO Ethics Award or other relevant awards and recognitions for their commitment.

- 3. Raise media awareness about the UNWTO Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics and involve them in the advocacy efforts.**

The Explanatory Note on the adoption the Framework Convention can be downloaded from the UNWTO website¹. Involve media in the advocacy efforts towards signing and ratification of the Convention by member states. Raise media awareness about the appropriate terminology. "Sexual exploitation in tourism" for example, is employed in the UNWTO Convention instead of "sex tourism", previously used in the Code of Ethics for Tourism. The change is in line with the recommendations of the Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, available at: www.luxembourgguidelines.org.

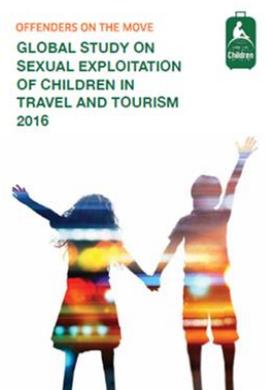
- 4. Advocate for SECTT to be included in the implementation, monitoring and reporting on Goal 16 in the view of the upcoming reporting process in 2019.**

Find out which ministry or government agency has the primary responsibility for coordinating implementation and monitoring progress towards achieving SDGs targets.

Monitor your government level of participation in the voluntary national reviews of the High-level Political Forum and whether SECTT is specifically included in the plans to achieve Goal 16, which will be under review in 2019.

- 5. Use the Global Study as an advocacy tool for the implementation of the 46 recommendations by national governments, regional bodies and private sector companies.**

The transformation of the UNWTO Code of Ethics for Tourism into the international convention and its subsequent ratification by member states is one of the recommendations of the Global Study. Refer to the ongoing Global Advocacy efforts (updates will be sent to the ECPAT Network through the newsletter) and call for the implementation of the recommendations specific for each sector. The full list of the recommendations is available in the [Global Study](#) report (p. 110-114).



- 6. Inform ECPAT International about the events, best practices, stories from the field and changes at national and regional level linked with SECTT.**

Your input will provide ECPAT Secretariat with valuable information to be shared at global forums and on the SECTT website – it will feed into Global Advocacy efforts. We need to hear from your countries and regions, please write to Gabriela Kühn at gabrielak@ecpat.net.

¹ <http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/docpdf/explanatorynote-adoptionconventiontourismethicssubsequentsteps.pdf>