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## **WYNDHAM WORLDWIDE SIGNS TOURISM CODE OF CONDUCT, JOINING ECPAT-USA IN THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHILD TRAFFICKING IN THE TRAVEL SECTOR**

**New York, NY (November 23, 2011)** – ECPAT-USA announced that Wyndham Worldwide has become the latest major hospitality company to take a stand against the commercial sexual exploitation of children by signing the Tourism Child-Protection Code of Conduct (The Code).

The Code, an industry driven responsible tourism initiative in collaboration with ECPAT International, funded by UNICEF and supported by The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), specifically focuses on the protection of children from sexual exploitation in the travel and tourism industries. While The Code has been signed by more than 1,000 travel industry members worldwide, Wyndham Worldwide, one of the world's largest hospitality companies, is only the fifth U.S. company to sign.

As a subscriber to The Code, Wyndham will implement policies that condemn child trafficking and provide training to help their employees and hotel franchisees identify and report trafficking activities. Wyndham will also raise awareness among its business partners, franchisees, and customers by including information about the issue and The Code through its website and meetings, and by annually reporting on its progress.

According to Carol Smolenski, Executive Director of ECPAT-USA, a nonprofit organization that advocates for policies to protect sexually exploited children, the purpose of The Code is to prevent and mitigate child trafficking, as well as encourage a socially responsible, child-wise tourism industry.

“We are so happy to welcome Wyndham Worldwide to the growing community of companies that are helping in the fight against the sex trafficking of children,” said Smolenski. “All travel properties could unwittingly be used as venues for this purpose. If they do nothing to raise awareness or to prevent child trafficking, they risk becoming an indirect and unintentional conduit for the abuse that takes place.”

“As a family-oriented company, we are proud to join with ECPAT in our shared commitment to the safety of all children,” says Mary Falvey, executive vice president and chief human resources officer, Wyndham Worldwide. “Unfortunately, as long as there are people profiting from this tragic practice, no member of the tourism industry can ever guarantee these events will not occur in the future. Nonetheless, we firmly believe that collaborations like this play a critical role in increasing awareness and prevention that can make a difference.”

The addition of such a large company such as Wyndham to The Code membership is being applauded by several groups supporting ECPAT.

“Being aware of the ways that traffickers may use a company's premises helps companies be active partners in identifying and preventing child exploitation around the world,” said Julie Tanner, assistant director of Socially Responsible Investing at Christian Brothers Investment Services, a member of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, a coalition of active shareholders who view their investment management as a catalyst for change. “We applaud Wyndham for its leadership and for taking a proactive approach as a global corporate citizen committed to the safety of children.”

Other U.S. organizations that have signed The Code include Global Exchange's Reality Tours, Hilton Worldwide (with pilot projects in two cities), Delta Air Lines, and Carlson Companies, whose brands include Radisson Hotels.

Suppliers of tourism services adopting The Code ([www.thecode.org](http://www.thecode.org)) commit themselves to implement the following six criteria:

1. To establish an ethical policy regarding commercial sexual exploitation of children.
2. To train the personnel in the country of origin and travel destinations.
3. To introduce a clause in contracts with suppliers, stating a common repudiation of commercial sexual exploitation of children.
4. To provide information to travelers by means of catalogues, brochures, in-flight films, ticket-slips, home pages, etc.
5. To provide information to local "key persons" at the destinations.
6. To report annually.

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#### **About ECPAT-USA**

ECPAT-USA, the U.S. arm of ECPAT International, is focused on protecting children trafficked into the U.S., American children trafficked for sexual exploitation, and foreign children exploited by American tourists traveling abroad. ECPAT International is a global network of organizations working together for the elimination of child trafficking, child prostitution and child pornography. The network is comprised of 81 groups in 74 countries around the world. All ECPAT groups are independent grassroots organizations, working to combat child exploitation at the local level. For more information, visit [www.ecpatusa.org](http://www.ecpatusa.org)

#### **About Wyndham Worldwide**

As one of the world's largest hospitality companies, Wyndham Worldwide offers individual consumers and business-to-business customers a broad suite of hospitality services and products across various accommodation alternatives and price ranges through its premier portfolio of world-renowned brands. Wyndham Worldwide encompasses approximately 7,360 franchised hotels and vacation ownership resorts with approximately 632,000 rooms worldwide. Wyndham Exchange & Rentals offers leisure travelers, including its 3.7 million members, access to approximately 99,000 vacation properties located in approximately 100 countries. Wyndham Vacation Ownership develops, markets and sells vacation ownership interests and provides consumer financing to owners through its network of vacation ownership resorts serving nearly 815,000 owners throughout North America, the Caribbean and the South Pacific. Wyndham Worldwide, headquartered in Parsippany, N.J., employs approximately 26,000 employees globally. For more information, please visit [www.wyndhamworldwide.com](http://www.wyndhamworldwide.com).