

Costa Rica Declaration

First Seminar "Integration of Strategies Against the Use of Minors in Pornography."

San Jose, Costa Rica April 27-29, 2009

The National Coalitions of El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama, and the Nongovernmental Organizations of Guatemala and Mexico met in the First Seminar on the "Integration of Strategies Against the Use of Minors in Pornography," and consisted of an important debate and analysis of the problem. The Seminar referenced the conclusions and recommendations issued by the World Congress on Commercial Sexual Exploitation, specifically the use of children and adolescents in pornography.

The Convention of the Rights of the Child is the human rights instrument which links the majority of countries in the world. Coalitions and organizations gathered at the Seminar, and used this as the legal framework and reference, the nearly twenty years since ratification.

We believe that:


- a. The majority of countries have ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention of the Rights of the Child, which seeks to strengthen the implementation of the provisions of the Convention on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and the sale and use of children and adolescents in pornography.
- b. The International Conference in Vienna in 1999, in order to combat child pornography in the internet, demanded worldwide penalization for the production, distribution, exportation, transfer, possession, and advertisement of pornography. This conference emphasized urgent collaboration between the governments and the new technology and communication industries.
- c. Increasingly the world is full of new technologies that are used to violate the human rights of children and adolescents for CSE in the form of pornography.
- d. The crime of CSE in its various manifestations such as pornography, are based on casual factors associated with social character, ethical, cultural, economic, and political initiatives, that contribute to its proliferation at local, national, regional, and international levels.
- e. The measures to approach and prevent this crime have proved to be inadequate because of the magnitude and nature of the crime. Reflected in *New Modalities*, the complexity associated with several known limiting factors include weak processes involving various actors, difficulty in the coordination and administration of justice, insufficient resources, current inapplicable legislation, and lack of public policy suiting the best interest of children and adolescents.

Previously, the national coalitions and non-governmental organizations agreed to the following:

1. Strengthening the coordinating mechanisms and established unified alliances between civil society, states and International Cooperation Agencies to the sub-regional level, orienting them with the knowledge, investigation, investment and preventative actions that can and have been taken.
2. Promoting permanent spaces for children, adolescents and youth to participate in the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of preventative measures taken, and other actions taken against commercial sexual exploitation of children, especially in regards to pornography.
3. Requiring the states to protect children and adolescents from commercial sexual exploitation in all of its diverse forms.
4. Promoting a design that manages the protection of children and adolescents through implementation of protocols and preventative programs and gives attention to the framework of the Integral Political Protection in which specific estimates are assigned for implementation.
5. Incorporating programs of NGOs in a systematic Project and supporting sexual education that focuses on human rights and gender equality to children, adolescents and youth, along with men and women whom are trying to reconstruct their masculinity or femininity.
6. Contributing to the strengthening of training processes operators of the National System of Justice, in charge of attending, investigating and monitoring pornography, receive.
7. Designing a sensitization process for communication centres, private businesses and the general population which recognizes each persons' social responsibility regarding this issue.
8. Redoubling our efforts and demanding that our countries define and apply a national information system which reliably documents relative statistics in a timely and permanent manner. This will give a baseline from which we can measure progress.
9. Promoting the creation of Inter-institutional committees and local networks that include the schools, neighbourhoods, health services, social organizations, girls, boys, adolescents and youths, in the promotion and protection of their rights through education and prudent action taken against cases of commercial sexual exploitation and pornography before they occur.
10. Promoting a culture that denounces the crime of pornography and other manifestations of commercial sexual exploitation.
11. Contributing to the design of strategies which offer information and knowledge to children and adolescents, youths, fathers and mothers, educators and those responsible for taking care of children, about the consequences for the ill-use of new technologies such as the Internet, cellular phones, and television among others, and for the responsible assumption of conduct and protections against the use of minors in pornography.


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