

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION CONFERENCE

The world conference against commercial sexual exploitation of children is to be held in Stockholm, Sweden from the 27th to 31st August 1996. Amongst other things, the Congress will focus on the legal and law enforcement aspects of the problem; psycho-social rehabilitation of victims and their mental and physical health; children in pornography; sex tourism; human values and the responsibility of the media.

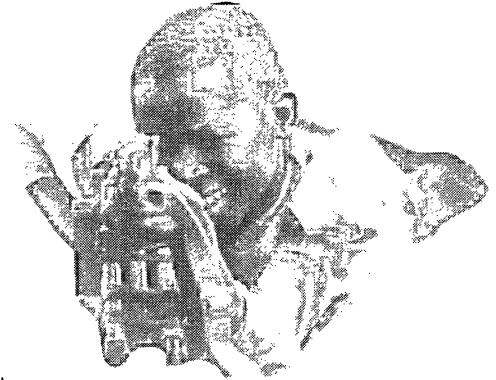
Approximately a thousand persons will be participating of whom about 1/3 will be part of government delegations. Other participants will include official representatives of United Nations related organisations, inter-governmental agencies, tourism industry representatives and non-government organisations (NGOs). The selection of NGO participants will be done by ECPAT (End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism) and the NGO group on the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

The criteria for selection are as follows:

- proven expertise in the field;
- proven track record in children's rights;
- potential to take action at the national level for the congress;
- link with grass-root workers and/or national level organisations.

Selection will also ensure a balance of regions, gender and fields of expertise.

If you feel you could meet these requirements and want your name to be considered as a participant in the congress, please contact ECPAT, 328 Phya Thai Road, Bangkok 10400 Thailand. (Fax: 66-2 215 82 72).



CHILDREN AT WAR

As world attention is focused on children fighting in wars around the globe, the details become clearer. DCI listed 27 armed conflicts involving children in the latest issue of Monitor (Vol 11 no.4) That list has now grown to 32. Undoubtedly there are more - for instance the international list still does not include Bougainville, where we know children have been armed and trained on both sides and have been engaged in actual combat. Children have been killed, injured and raped during the 8 years of conflict. Some have witnessed torture and many have witnessed the destruction of homes and villages by armed forces. DCI-Australia is undertaking a joint project with Quaker Service Australia to investigate and report on the involvement of child soldiers on Bougainville, for the UN Study of Children in Armed Conflict. Radda Barnen has also launched a global information project on child soldiers. The central feature will be a newsletter providing up-to-date information, and aimed at arousing public opinion and stimulating action. A database will also be built on the recruitment of children into armed conflicts, their involvement in fighting and support services, and the consequences in their lives.

Information, data and materials are requested from all possible sources. The newsletter can be obtained from Anna Lena Andrews, Radda Barnen, S-107 88 Stockholm, Sweden.

SARAH SAVED FROM DEATH BUT TO RECEIVE 100 LASHES

Sarah Balabagan, a 16 year old Filipino domestic servant, who was sentenced to death for the murder of her employer after he repeatedly raped her, is no longer facing the death penalty. Working closely with DCI-Philippines, DCI-Australia campaigned widely to get Sarah's death sentence lifted and wrote to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Australian Ambassador in Saudi Arabia and the President of the UAE. Thank you to all the DCI members who wrote on her behalf.

We received a reply from Gareth Evans:

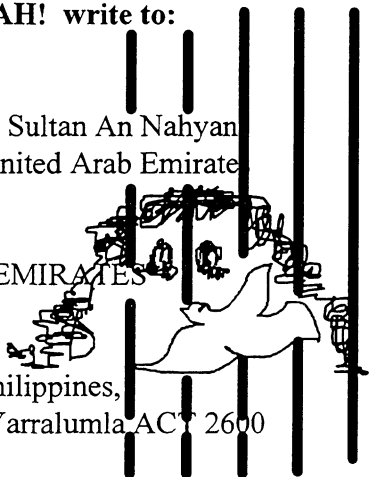
Sarah is now to be imprisoned for 12 months and to receive the inhuman and degrading punishment of 100 lashes. We understand she is being held in an adult prison. This treatment is contrary to Article 37(c) which states that "every child deprived of liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of human persons, and... shall be separated from adults ... and shall have the right to maintain contact with his or her family." The dreadful violation of Sarah's rights started with those who falsified her age as 28 and not 14, and allowed her to be taken to the UAE as an underage domestic servant.

DCI-Philippines has asked us to continue making representations to the UAE President, asking him to release Sarah and to allow her to return home. DCI members are also encouraged to write to the Philippines Ambassador in Australia requesting that those involved in Sarah's recruitment are prosecuted.

RELEASE SARAH! write to:

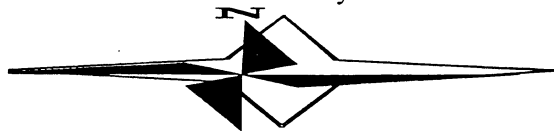
His Excellency
Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan An Nahyan
President of the United Arab Emirate
PO Box 899
ABU DHABI
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Ambassador
Embassy of the Philippines,
1 Moonah Place Yarralumla ACT 2600



Child Porn On The Internet.

Computer bulletin boards and other on line services have become the new frontiers for paedophiles, according to one of the world's foremost authorities on child pornography, Mr Don Hike. 'Government and police need to react quickly to the growing threat of electronic transfer of images of child sex by enacting new legislation and increasing their technical abilities', Mr. Hike said recently in Melbourne where he addressed an International Law Enforcement conference. Australia has been slow to move on such legislation, with the Commonwealth leaving the issue to the states. A spokesman for the Attorney General, Mr. Lavarch, said that the Commonwealth was helping the states to develop their legislation, which focused on policing the possession of child pornographic images rather than the transmission of the images. There were no plans for the development of Federal legislation to outlaw the importation and exportation of the images, despite pressure from the federal law enforcement agencies such as the Australian Federal Police and the National Crime Authority.



NEWS FROM THE SECTIONS

DCI-Palestine is undertaking research into child labour in Palestine. They are campaigning against trauma suffered by children who witness the violent arrest of their parents by Israeli soldiers. Israel has 300 fathers under "administrative detention". Support groups are being formed for children who have been imprisoned and interrogated by Israelis. DCI-Palestine divides their action into legal, awareness, counseling, and research contexts, with specific emphasis on girls rights in areas of education, violence, early marriage and lack of opportunity.

DCI-Canada invites you to their conference to celebrate the 5th International Week for Children's Rights, to be held in Montreal between June 26 and 30. Training sessions will cover the UN Convention, the world wide urgency to espouse children's rights, children's rights in the global economy, the role of the state, child labour in the world trade context and the ethical and social implications of business. Speakers include Martin Garate, president of DCI, Ricardo Petrella from DCI-Lisbon and Gabriele Stoikov who is in charge of the program for the elimination of child labour (ILO). Registration and accommodation guidelines are available from DCI-Canberra. ➔