

UN agency spotlights role of Governments in preventing child exploitation in tourism

10 March 2017 – The United Nations-backed meeting on tourism has spotlighted the leading role of Governments in preventing all forms of child exploitation in the leisure travel industry.

“There is a bright and black side to tourism [...] We cannot allow the tourism infrastructure to be used for this and shouldn’t have any issues in exposing such situations,” said UN World Tourism Organization (WTO) Secretary-General Taleb Rifai in a press release.

Mr. Rifai was addressing the 32nd meeting of the UNWTO World Tourism Network on Child Protection held yesterday in Berlin, Germany.

The meeting was attended by the Ministers of Tourism of Ghana and Sudan and was an opportunity to share best practices from a number of countries, including India, Kenya, Maldives, Myanmar, and Uruguay.

The meeting highlighted cross-government coordination and commitment as well as cross-sectoral cooperation as key factors to advance child protection in tourism.

The World Tourism Network on Child Protection, formerly the Task Force for the Protection of Children in Tourism, is an open-ended network featuring the multi-stakeholder participation of a range of tourism stakeholders, from governments, international organisations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to tourism industry groups and media associations.

Since 2007, its mandate has been to prevent all forms of youth exploitation in the tourism sector, such as sexual exploitation, child labour and child trafficking.

The activities of the World Tourism Network on Child Protection are co-ordinated by the UNWTO Secretariat.