

Wednesday, November 17

World Vision

PRESS RELEASE

Thousands of children exploited in Canadian vacation destinations *World Vision calls on Canadian tourists to travel wisely*

On Canada's National Child Day, November 20, World Vision is calling on Canadians to consider the millions of trafficked and exploited children around the world when they plan their tropical vacations.

Topping the list of favorite getaways for Canadians are Mexico, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic. Unfortunately, these countries also find themselves topping the list of countries with high numbers of travelling child sex offenders and high rates of child trafficking. While tourism boosts economies, it also creates a platform for trafficking and the abuse of vulnerable children.

World Vision is asking Canadians to:

- Take responsibility for the impact of their own travel by researching hotels and travel companies to ensuring codes of conduct have been signed to protect children
- Report the exploitation of children – labour, sexual or trafficking – that they witness while abroad (cybertip.ca)
- Deter any travel companions from engaging in such behaviours

Background

World Vision has been combating child trafficking, forced child labour and the sexual exploitation of children for more than a decade in overseas projects. The agency works in nearly 100 countries where they do relief, development and advocacy with local communities.

Facts

- An estimated 1.2 million children are trafficked every year for labour and sexual exploitation
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), created on November 20, 1989, is the first legally binding international declaration that covers the full range of human rights and is the most widely endorsed human rights treaty in the world, with all countries except two signed on
- Canada signed on to the CRC on May 28, 1990
- Under Canadian law, travelling child sex offenders can be prosecuted in Canada for crimes committed abroad

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“Planning family vacations is an exciting and energizing time. We are quick to hunt for great deals but are oblivious to the issues within the countries we visit. Often, we are responsible for creating a platform for vulnerable children to be abused or trafficked. ‘Ignorance is bliss’ will no longer suffice as an excuse.”

—Caroline Riseboro,
VP, Public Affairs,
World Vision Canada

World Vision is a leading Christian relief, development and advocacy organization dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. Inspired by our Christian values, we are dedicated to working with the world's most vulnerable people. We serve all people regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender.