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HILTON PRIZE -- WORLD'S LARGEST HUMANITARIAN PRIZE – AWARDED TO ECPAT INTERNATIONAL, GLOBAL NGO LEADING FIGHT TO STOP COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

Prize spotlights atrocities of the child sex exploitation industry around the globe

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia, August 1, 2013—ECPAT International, the leading global network of organizations dedicated to stopping the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), has been selected to receive the 2013 Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize of \$1.5 million, the world's largest humanitarian prize. This is the 18th year for the Hilton Prize given by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation to an organization that is significantly alleviating human suffering.

The announcement was made here today at a Consultation convened by ECPAT to develop an action plan to combat child trafficking, prostitution and pornography in Africa which has been growing due to increased tourism, family breakdowns, greater access to new technologies, unsafe migration and widespread poverty.

“Each year 1.2 million children have their childhoods stolen from them by unscrupulous traffickers and pimps, generating a \$12 billion global market,” said Steven M. Hilton, president and CEO of the Hilton Foundation. “ECPAT’s work has been pivotal in mobilizing the international community to stop this evil commerce that does such harm to our children.”

Hilton Prize juror Strive Masiyiwa, a leading African entrepreneur and humanitarian whose foundation supports orphans and vulnerable children throughout the continent, noted, “Those of us on the jury were impressed by ECPAT’s leadership in addressing the explosion of child sexual exploitation and forging a worldwide coalition of NGOs, UN agencies, private sector and law enforcement entities to put a stop to these vile activities.”

Founded 20 years ago to halt child sex tourism in Asia, ECPAT today leads a global social movement dedicated to ending child prostitution, child pornography and the trafficking of children for sexual purposes. Its international secretariat based in Thailand provides technical support and information, forms partnerships with key actors such as law enforcement and the tourism industry, and is an international voice for children who are being exploited sexually for commercial gain. Its 81 member organizations in 74 countries implement local initiatives to protect children from sexual exploitation and help child survivors return to health and well-being.

“ECPAT is deeply honored to be selected to receive the prestigious Hilton Humanitarian Prize by its distinguished jury. Over the last 20 years the name ECPAT has become synonymous with action to stop the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The Hilton Humanitarian Prize is welcome recognition of the pioneering role ECPAT has played to bring this issue to the world’s attention. The Prize is also an impetus for ECPAT to accelerate action as we seek to build a world where no child is a victim of child prostitution, child pornography or trafficking for sexual purposes,” said Dorothy Rozga, Executive Director of ECPAT International.

To combat child sex tourism, ECPAT developed the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism that now has more than 1,000 private sector companies as members in 40 countries who have committed to this industry-led code. It continues to devise solutions to tackle transnational challenges such as protecting children from sexual exploitation leading up to, during and after major global sporting events. In 2011 ECPAT, along with private sector partner The Body Shop, collected more than seven million petition signatures as part of the Stop Sex Trafficking of Children campaign, which were presented to the United Nations Human Rights Council, the largest human rights petition on a single issue ever submitted to the UN.

ECPAT also pioneered the empowerment of youth survivors and at-risk youth to run advocacy campaigns, lobby governments and raise awareness to protect children from commercial sexual exploitation. Through a global network of trained Peer Supporters and Youth Motivators in over 16 countries, ECPAT has recognized the important role that children and youth can play in the fight against CSEC. This focus on meaningful youth participation also now includes a global child and youth advisory council and a youth representative to the International Board.

ECPAT, in partnership with UNICEF and the NGO Group for the Committee on the Rights of the Child, were the driving force behind three World Congresses to focus global efforts against CSEC. A total of 122 countries initially signed the Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action, committing their support to stop CSEC, and ECPAT has continued to monitor governments’ commitments ever since.

“ECPAT was one of approximately 200 nominees received this year for the Hilton Prize,” said Judy Miller, vice president of the Hilton Foundation and director of the Hilton Prize. She added, “The Hilton Prize international jurors recognized the pressing need to put a spotlight on this malignancy that is growing throughout the world.”

About the Hilton Prize

The 2013 Hilton Prize will be presented at the annual Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Symposium at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City on October 23, 2013. The Hilton Symposium gathers policymakers and leaders in the humanitarian field to address the most challenging issues facing the billions of people who make up the world’s most vulnerable populations.

The Hilton Prize jury includes: **Princess Salimah Aga Khan**, international ambassador for SOS Kinderdorf International; **Catherine A. Bertini**, professor of public administration, Syracuse University, and former executive director of the United Nations World Food Programme; **Gro Harlem Brundtland, MPH**, former director-general of the World Health Organization and former prime minister of Norway; **James R. Galbraith**, director, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation; **Strive Masiyiwa**, humanitarian, founder and executive chairman of Econet Wireless; **Hawley Hilton McAuliffe**, director, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation; and **Professor Amartya Sen**, Nobel Prize Laureate in economics and Lamont University professor at Harvard University.

About Conrad N. Hilton Foundation: The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation was created in 1944 by international business pioneer Conrad N. Hilton, who founded Hilton Hotels and left his fortune to help the world’s disadvantaged and vulnerable people. The Foundation currently conducts strategic initiatives in six priority areas: providing safe water, ending chronic homelessness, preventing substance abuse, helping children affected by HIV and AIDS, supporting transition-age youth in foster care, and extending Conrad Hilton’s support for the work of Catholic Sisters. Following selection by an independent international jury, the Foundation annually awards the \$1.5 million Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize to a nonprofit organization doing extraordinary work to reduce human suffering. From its inception, the Foundation has awarded more than \$1 billion in grants, distributing \$83 million in the U.S. and around the world in 2012. The Foundation’s current assets are in excess of \$2.2 billion. For more information, please visit www.hiltonfoundation.org.

About ECPAT International: ECPAT International is a global network of organizations dedicated to ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC). ECPAT focuses on the three key manifestations of CSEC; child prostitution, child pornography and the trafficking of children for sexual purposes. ECPAT began as a regional campaign in 1990 after researchers at a tourism consultation in Thailand first exposed the degree to which the prostitution of children was growing in parts of Asia. Today, the ECPAT network is comprised of an International Secretariat based in Thailand, together with 81 member organizations in 74 countries. For more information, please visit www.ecpat.net

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