



### Campaign Inspires Historic Change

*The Body Shop and ECPAT present one of the largest petitions in the history of the United Nations calling for action to stop sex of trafficking of children and young people*

Today, ECPAT and The Body Shop presented a petition of over 7 million signatures from all over the world to the President of the Human Rights Council, H.E. Ms. Laura Dupuy Lassere, calling on governments across the world to take urgent action to stop the sex trafficking of children and young people.

The petition is part of ECPAT and The Body Shop's ground-breaking campaign to urge governments to do more to protect the 1.2 million<sup>1</sup> children and young people trafficked every year for sexual exploitation. This campaign has already inspired change on an unprecedented scale, leading to 14 countries across the world to commit to adopting new legislation in response to this petition. Countries where governments have already committed to action as a result of the Stop Sex Trafficking of Children and Young People campaign include Malta, Denmark, Portugal, South Africa, Malaysia, Norway, Switzerland, Pakistan, Romania, Taiwan, Ireland, Indonesia, The Philippines and New Zealand.

Receiving the petition, President of the Human Rights Council, H.E. Ms. Dupuy Lassere said 'This petition represents an historic occasion for the United Nations Human Rights Council to build on the notable successes of the campaign and to inspire governments to join and take action to tackle this crime in its internal and international form and work on prevention and reparation of victims'.

The joint campaign has been active across 65 countries, with ECPAT youth groups expanding the reach of the campaign by bringing it to countries that currently lack a The Body Shop presence. Senior representatives from 35 national governments have accepted campaign petitions and met with representatives from ECPAT, The Body Shop, and other local partners to discuss actions to support those at risk or affected. With over 2.3 million signatures collected in the European Union, the campaign produced the largest human rights petition ever presented to the European Union and

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<sup>1</sup>UNICEF 2003



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has received a number of prestigious awards and secured the support of major opinion formers including President Bill Clinton who described it as 'an exemplary approach to addressing a specific global challenge'.

Commenting on today's event, Christopher Davis, International Campaigns Director for The Body Shop, and winner of the United Nations Business Leaders Award Against Human Trafficking said: 'Our success demonstrates that the approach of The Body Shop to campaigning can change the world. By uniting the voices of people calling for social change instead of focussing on short term fundraising activities we know we can inspire governments to take action which creates long term sustainable change. What we have achieved with our campaign so far will create a safer world for children for decades to come'.

Kathleen Speake, Executive Director of ECPAT International added, 'Trafficking in children and young people is a grave crime, where offenders have been operating with impunity and where child victims are often criminalised or abandoned without care options. The unprecedented support for ECPAT's campaign with The Body Shop demonstrates that the world is calling for change, and governments are beginning to listen. Alongside the United Nations Human Rights Council, we will continue our efforts to fight this egregious crime against children, calling for governments to take urgent action and to promote productive multi-stakeholder partnerships'.

In addition to today's presentation, The Body Shop and ECPAT, with the support of the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs, have hosted an exhibition which tells the story of the campaign and celebrates progress. Praising the campaign, former President of the Human Rights Council, Permanent Representative of Thailand to the UN Office at Geneva, H.E. Mr. Sihasak Phuangketkeow, said 'This campaign demonstrates the power of partnerships. When companies join NGO's and governments we can take action to protect our most vulnerable. I congratulate The Body Shop and ECPAT on their achievements so far'.

Human trafficking is the third largest<sup>2</sup> and fastest growing criminal industry in the world,<sup>3</sup> affecting over 1.2 million children and young people every year who are trafficked for sexual exploitation and

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<sup>2</sup>UNFPA 2006



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cheap labour<sup>4</sup>. The Stop Sex Trafficking of Children and Young People campaign aims to put an end to the trafficking of children and young people, guarantee their rights to be protected from exploitation and inspire long-term change to protect children and young people. The campaign has been launched in over 65 countries and in just two years has raised over US\$3million worldwide which goes towards ECPAT International's Global Youth Partnership Project and a number of anti-trafficking initiatives implemented by the ECPAT network and NGO partners around the world.

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**Notes to editors:**

**What are ECPAT and The Body Shop asking the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to do?**

ECPAT and The Body Shop, along with the supporters of the campaign petition, are asking for the UNHRC to respond to the call for action to protect children and young people. We are also asking the UNHRC to use its considerable influence in urging all governments to focus on the issue of child trafficking and to take concrete action by strengthening their efforts in preventing, protecting and offering specialised care services for child survivors.

The campaign has also made the following specific requests to the Human Rights Council:

1. To encourage Member States of the Human Rights Council to organise an '**Annual Full Day Meeting**' on the rights of the child, focusing on child trafficking
2. To urge all states to **strengthen their national efforts to combat child trafficking, especially in areas of prevention, protection and specialised care services**
3. To urge Member States where the campaign has been active to **implement the specific campaign calls to action that require urgent attention and follow up**
4. To encourage Member States to invite the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children and the Special Rapporteur on trafficking to visit their countries and provide them with adequate assistance
5. To urge Member States to ensure that within the framework of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the fulfilment of each Member State's obligations under the UPR to systematically examine the protection policies that are in place to combat all forms of violence against children, including trafficking

**About the Stop Sex Trafficking campaign**

The Stop Sex Trafficking of Children and Young People campaign is a three-year global campaign in partnership with The Body Shop. The campaign aims to put an end to the trafficking of children and young people,

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<sup>4</sup> UNGIFT 2008

<sup>5</sup> ILO 2002



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guarantee their rights to be protected from exploitation and inspire long-term change to protect children and young people. The campaign has been launched in 65 countries and in just two years has collected over 7 million signatures and raised over US\$3million worldwide. The campaign has presented petitions to 36 governments around the world and already inspired governments to change laws in 14 countries. Recently, the campaign presented the biggest petition on human rights in history to the EU.

**About ECPAT**

ECPAT International is a global network of organisations and individuals working together for the elimination of child prostitution, child pornography and the trafficking of children for sexual purposes. It seeks to encourage the world community to ensure that children everywhere enjoy their fundamental rights free and secure from all forms of commercial sexual exploitation. Currently, the ECPAT global network is composed of 83 member organisations in 75 countries. ECPAT works to build collaboration among local civil society actors and the broader child rights community to form a global social movement for protection of children from sexual exploitation. ECPAT members provide direct care to child victims, conduct research, implement awareness-raising campaigns, work on advocacy and lobby with governments and capacity building trainings for relevant stakeholders.

**About The Body Shop**

The Body Shop International plc is the original, natural and ethical beauty brand, with over 2,500 stores in over 60 markets worldwide. The Body Shop seeks out wonderful natural ingredients from all four corners of the globe to deliver products bursting with effectiveness, to enhance your natural beauty. By striving to use the planet's resources wisely, The Body Shop searches for outstanding natural materials and ingredients from across the globe to include in its range of products. The Body Shop is proud to have been the first beauty brand to have brought the benefits of fair trade to the beauty industry through its own unique Community Fair Trade programme, to have introduced 100% recycled packaging, and to raise funds and awareness on key issues of the day, including the sex trafficking of the most vulnerable in our society, children and young people.

**For more information on the Stop Sex Trafficking of Children & Young People campaign, please visit [www.ecpat.net](http://www.ecpat.net) or [www.thebodyshop.com](http://www.thebodyshop.com)**

**For other information, including media enquiries, please email [patchareeboons@ecpat.net](mailto:patchareeboons@ecpat.net), [jessicaw@ecpat.net](mailto:jessicaw@ecpat.net) or [wanchit@ecpat.net](mailto:wanchit@ecpat.net).**