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MINUTES OF THE XI ANNUAL MEETING OF THE REGIONAL ACTION GROUP OF THE AMERICAS (GARA - Grupo de Acción Regional de las Américas) FOR THE PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN IN TRAVEL AND TOURISM

7, 8 AND 9 NOVEMBER 2018

LA ANTIGÜA, GUATEMALA

The XI Annual Meeting of the Regional Action Group of the Americas (GARA - Grupo de Acción Regional de las Américas) for the Prevention of children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism (SECTT) took place on 7 November 2018, in Antigua Guatemala. The meeting was attended by the Technical Delegates from Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Uruguay; and acting as Observers: ECPAT International and the Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN-OAS).

The Guatemalan Tourism Institute - INIGUAT, based on the commitment assumed in the X GARA's Meeting Manifesto, called the aforementioned meeting.

According to the programme and schedule of activities established in Article XI of the GARA Operational Procedures, the XI meeting was held from 7 to 9 November 2018.

On 7 November, field visits were organised to travel and tourism companies and tourist establishments that adhered to the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism in Guatemala. The meetings were organised to exchange experiences between local industry and GARA's Technical Delegates.

On 7 and 8 November, the Member States and Observers of the GARA came together to address the topics reported further on in this document.

On 9 November, the XI face-to-face meeting was concluded with the forum "Combating the Sexual Exploitation of Children in the context of Travel and Tourism, and its linkages with the Information and Communication Technologies".

WHEREAS:

1. "Tourism is included explicitly as part of three Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 8, 12 and 14 (...). However, given its scope, its transversal nature and its connections with other sectors along with its extensive value chain, tourism has the potential to directly and indirectly contribute to all 17 SDGs" (108 Meeting, San Sebastián, 2018), especially to the second target of Goal 16 which refers to "End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children."

2. 20 years after its approval, the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism remains fully in force and it includes and embraces the public and private tourism sector to guarantee

sustainable development, local development and a more meaningful intercultural dialogue, respecting the rights of the welcoming communities as well as the workers of the sector.

3. 2019 will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, contributing to the generation of public policies and programmes focused on the protection of children.

On the basis of the above,

RESOLVES:

1. To accept the inclusion of the Ministry of Tourism of Honduras (SETUR) and the Nicaraguan Institute of Tourism (INTUR) as members of the GARA.

2. To submit and approve a follow-up matrix to monitor GARA's Plan of Action for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism (P-SECTT), and to facilitate an articulated work between all Member countries of the Group.

3. To put forwards the Campaign GARA 2019 for the Prevention of SECTT.

3.1 To endorse the implementation of a dissemination campaign about GARA on April 11th 2019, as part of the World Day Against Child Labour on April 16th, as well as the joint use of the hash-tag #TurismoLibreDeExplotacion (Tourism Free from Exploitation), leaving the option for member countries to use a second hash-tag that reflects the local prevention actions.

3.2 To accept ECPAT International's proposal to incorporate GARA into the WEB platform aimed at receiving and channelling complaints of suspicious cases of SECTT.

4. By 30 November 2018 all training materials available in each GARA member country must be forwarded to GARA's Executive Secretary, to establish an information centre that could be hosted on the ECPAT International server as well as on the IIN-OEA server.

5. Following on the systematization of all training materials received, design a Guide that includes all basic contents on SECTT to guide training processes at regional level.

6. To request the Central American Tourism Integration Secretariat (SITCA), through its GARA's member countries, support for the review and homologations of the contents included in the tourist safety manual, and to include contents for the prevention of SECTT.

7. To endorse Paraguay as the venue that will host GARA's XII Annual Meeting from the 13th to the 15th of November 2019, and Honduras as the venue that will host GARA's XIII Annual Meeting in 2020.

8. To acknowledge the interest expressed by the International Federation of Associations of Tourism Operators (FIASEET) in being considered as an observer of the GARA, and to entrust GARA's Executive Secretariat to request this Federation to deepen the information received for the reconsideration of the proposal in future meetings of the Group.

9. To recognize and thank the effort and progress shown by the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, through the Ministry of Tourism, in its capacity as the Executive Secretariat of GARA during the 2016-2018 period.

10. To unanimously ratify the continuity of the Ministry of Tourism of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay as the Executive Secretariat in charge for the period 2018-2020. A memorandum of the ratification will be sent by GARA's member states to the Ministry of Tourism of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay.

We, the undersigned, acknowledge the progress registered within the GARA technical group; we recognize all coordination actions made by GARA's Executive Secretariat, currently based in Uruguay for the period 2016-2018; we recognize and ratify the support provided by the Ministries of Tourism and High level Authorities of GARA member states, observers, international organizations and non-governmental organizations, for the work presented by their technical delegates.

REPRESENTATIVES OF GARA'S MEMBER COUNTRIES AND OBSERVERS TAKING PART IN THE XI ANNUAL MEETING OF THE REGIONAL ACTION GROUP OF THE AMERICAS (GARA) FOR THE PREVENTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION IN TRAVEL AND TOURISM (SECTT).

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THE INTER-AMERICAN CHILDREN'S INSTITUTE (IIN)- ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS) ON CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS.