



NEWS RELEASE

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Travelers Unite to Stop Child Sex Trafficking in Peru

Campaign Seeks to Pressure Peruvian Government to Pass and Enforce Laws

BERKELEY, USA – (Travel-newswire.com – July 14, 2009) – Peru’s fascinating cultural heritage and Incan legacy are being eclipsed by a more sinister attraction. Young women and girls, as well as boys, are being exploited by a commercial sex industry fueled by increasing numbers of tourists who visit Peru to engage in sex with children.

A coalition of five non-profit groups has launched a campaign to highlight the plight of children in Peru’s sex trade. The effort, spearheaded by Berkeley-based Ethical Traveler, will send hundreds of letters from concerned travelers to Peru’s Minister of Foreign Trade and Tourism, Mercedes Aráoz. The letters will urge Ms. Aráoz to use her influence to end child sex slavery in her country. “Child sex tourism is a threat to Peru’s status as a world-class travel destination,” says Jeff Greenwald, Ethical Traveler’s Executive Director. “If the practice is allowed to continue, travelers of conscience may be reluctant to support the government with their travel dollars.”

Sex tourism is a flourishing industry in Peru, where tourists have easy access to vulnerable children. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child estimated that there are up to 500,000 child victims of sexual exploitation and violence in Peru. But the Peruvian government’s efforts to eradicate the sex slave trade have been stalled by corruption, insufficient law enforcement, and apathy. “Tourism is a major economic force in Peru, and inbound tourism is increasing by 10% every year,” says Greenwald. “This means that more children will fall victim to sex slavery, unless we take action now. By joining our voices, travelers can convince Peru to protect these children.”

Ethical Traveler’s campaign against child sex trafficking in Peru is being waged in partnership with Global Exchange, Not for Sale–Peru, Generación and Peruvian Net Against Child Pornography. For more on this campaign, or to sign and send a letter to the Peruvian Minister of Foreign Trade and Tourism, please visit www.ethicaltraveler.org .

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