



For Immediate Release:

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ECPAT-USA and Altruvistas are proud to launch a new travel partnership. In January 2015, ECPAT-USA and Altruvistas will be leading a group of tourists on a journey to Thailand to learn about the issue of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. This is the first trip where Altruvistas, a leader on the forefront of socially responsible tourism, and ECPAT-USA, the leading anti-trafficking policy organization in the United States, are working together to lead a journey to Thailand focused on ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children. On this journey, participants will gain an invaluable educative perspective on the issue of sex trafficking and exploitation.

The journey will include visiting ECPAT International's headquarters, based in Bangkok. Participants will meet with local ECPAT staff, advocates from other organizations, legislators, and others to develop a better understanding of the scope of the issue, along with the legal framework and socio-economic factors that contribute to sex trafficking and exploitation in Thailand. The journey will also highlight the progress being made on the ground and the work of the NGO sector, such as vocational training, public awareness campaigns, and other preventative services, plus include several cultural excursions.

"Through socially responsible and educational travel, our constituents have the opportunity to partake in a customized journey abroad that focuses on ECPAT's priority areas, including the issue of the commercial sexual exploitation of children", said Sarah Porter, Development Associate for ECPAT-USA.

Altruvistas was the first tour operator to sign the ECPAT Tourism Child Protection Code of Conduct, an internationally recognized set of guidelines travel and tourism companies can sign to demonstrate their commitment to fighting the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Altruvistas founder Malia Everette explains, "For those of us with open eyes and a social advocacy lens it is impossible not to acknowledge the real and horrific underbelly inherent in the tourism industry. By signing The Code, Altruvistas is taking a proactive stand. We recognize that we have an obligation to support each traveler to travel consciously."

Altruvistas supports and promotes sustainable tourism to help sustain livelihoods, support local communities and conserve the world's natural and cultural heritage. Its staff is made up of experienced travel professionals with a shared commitment to sustainability and a passion to ensure the benefits of responsible tourism globally. <http://altruvistas.com/>

ECPAT International is a network comprised of over 80 organizations, represented in 74 countries. ECPAT-USA is recognized as one of the primary organizations focused on ending this form of child exploitation and abuse. ECPAT-USA is the American affiliate of the international ECPAT network, working to eliminate the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The mission of ECPAT-USA is to ensure that children everywhere enjoy the fundamental right to live free from all forms of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking. ECPAT-USA undertakes policy and legislative advocacy, private sector engagement, research, training, and raising awareness about the issue of children being commercially sexually exploited here in the US. <http://www.ecpatusa.org/>

**Advocacy Journey Details:** <http://altruvistas.com/upcoming-journeys/#ThailandJan24-Feb3-2015>