

Brazil Starts Program Against Sex Tourism

Contributed by Luthianna Hollenbach
Friday, 04 March 2005

The Plan of Action for Sustainable Tourism and Childhood went into effect yesterday. Unveiled by the Minister of Tourism, Walfrido dos Mares Guia, the plan is designed to prevent the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.

"The action plan involves every entrepreneur in the sector and constitutes a code of ethics and conduct," the Minister said.

The plan also determines a diplomatic effort to get the home countries of tourists who visit Brazil to adopt the Extraterritoriality Treaty. This treaty guarantees that foreign tourists who commit crimes in Brazil will be punished in their home countries.

According to the Minister, it is necessary to heighten people's awareness so that they denounce exploitation.

"Wherever there is a bar, restaurant, hotel, or lodging, every businessperson, employee, and worker should be heedful not to allow the posture of an adult who molests a child to prevail," the Minister explained.

According to data from the Special Secretariat of Human Rights, there is evidence of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in 937 Brazilian municipalities.

The Northeast region is where the great number of episodes occur, most of them involving girls 8-12 years old. Of every ten children who are exploited, seven are girls and three, boys.

Translation: David Silberstein
Agência Brasil