

Gordon Bancroft
Marriott International, Inc.
10400 Fernwood Road
Bethesda, MD 20817

To whom it may concern:

After having read your “company values” and your “community involvement” I applaud you. We live in a world that needs your kind of leadership and values.

Keeping in line with your commitment to community and your value for the underprivileged individual I want to encourage you to take action against an ever increasing tragedy in the tourism industry. Millions of children around the world are falling prey to sex tourists. Sex tourists are people who believe it is legal and culturally acceptable to sexually exploit children in other countries. They even believe they are helping children because they pay them. According to ECPAT-USA, as many as 25% of the world’s sex tourists may be Americans. ECPAT-USA is a non-profit organization that has been working for more than 15 years to end the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism. (www.ecpatusa.org).

In keeping with your values please take a principled position to help eliminate this practice. Please sign the ECPAT Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children From commercial Sexual Exploitation. Under this voluntary code, a company agrees to:

1. Establish an ethical policy regarding commercial sexual exploitation of children
2. Train the personnel in the country of origin and travel destinations.
3. Introduce a clause in contracts with suppliers, stating the common repudiation of commercial sexual exploitation of children.
4. Provide information to travelers by means of catalogues, brochures, in-flight films, ticket-slips, web-sites etc.
5. Provide information to local “key persons” at the destinations.
6. Report annually.

More than 600 companies around the world, including Carlson Companies in the United States, have signed the Code of Conduct. Companies like yours are not responsible for the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism, but they are in a position to do something to fight it.

More information about the ECPAT Code is available at www.thecode.org. Please contact the ECPAT-USA at ecpat@ecpatusa.org to become a part of the solution.

Again, let me thank you for what you are promoting through your community involvement and encourage you as you encourage your company to make a difference in the lives of children around the world.

Sincerely,
