

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

February 26, 2014

### **BEYOND BORDERS ECPAT CANADA PARTNERS WITH THE AIR CANADA FOUNDATION TO LAUNCH NEW IN-FLIGHT VIDEOS TO COMBAT CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

Montreal and Winnipeg – Beyond Borders ECPAT and the Air Canada Foundation have partnered in the creation of three new onboard videos that denounce child sexual exploitation while giving voice to exploited children across the globe. Since the beginning of February, Air Canada passengers who access in-flight entertainment may see one of three public service announcements created to help protect children from exploitation by encouraging the reporting of these horrific crimes.

“A significant barrier to putting an end to the sexual victimization of children is silence and ignorance,” states Beyond Borders ECPAT Canada president, Rosalind Prober. “The impact of a corporation with Air Canada’s profile speaking out on this issue can’t be underestimated. We are incredibly pleased to have the foundation’s support.”

“Air Canada has long supported children and children’s health and wellness programs and we firmly believe in doing our part to help denounce the sexual exploitation of children,” said Priscille LeBlanc, Air Canada’s vice president of corporate communications and chair of the Air Canada Foundation. **“Air Canada was the first airline in Canada and the second in North America to air on-board videos denouncing child sex tourism and exploitation** and The Air Canada Foundation will continue to work with Beyond Borders ECPAT Canada and others to ensure that Air Canada remains a strong partner in protecting children against sexual exploitation in the travel and tourism trade.”

Each of the PSAs depicts a child displaying a bar code on his or her body. As a laser scanner passes over the bar code, it bears a message such as, “Exploited by a sex tourist,” followed by words on the screen that say, “Kids are not commodities. Help stop child sex tourism.” All three videos can be viewed at this link: <http://www.beyondborders.org/wp/air-canada-flight-videos/>

The United Nations estimates that **150 million girls and 73 million boys under 18 years of age experience sexual exploitation or other forms of sexual violence** with millions more likely exploited through prostitution and the creation and distribution of child sexual abuse images (child pornography).

“The sexual exploitation of children is pervasive and with an increasingly global economy and unprecedented mobility aided by digital technology, there has never been a greater need for

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global cooperation to end this blatant human rights violation. There are no borders when it comes to this crime, which is why we need industries such as travel and tourism to take a lead role here,” states Prober.

#### **About Beyond Borders ECPAT Canada**

Beyond Borders ECPAT Canada is a national non-profit organization advancing the rights of children everywhere to be free from sexual abuse and exploitation. It is the Canadian representative of [ECPAT International](#), a global network of more than 81 groups in 74 countries, and the Canadian representative for the [Code of Conduct](#) for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism. [Beyondborders.org](http://Beyondborders.org)

#### **About the Air Canada Foundation**

In celebration of its 75 years of community involvement, Air Canada launched in 2012 the Air Canada Foundation, a not-for-profit organization focused on the health and well-being of children in need. The Air Canada Foundation offers both financial and in-kind support, through travel assistance, to Canadian registered charities. Core programs include the Hospital Transportation Program, which donates Aeroplan Miles to pediatric hospitals across Canada enabling children to access medical care unavailable locally; the Volunteer Involvement Program (VIP) recognizes the involvement of employees in their local community by providing airline tickets to the registered charities in support of their fundraising initiatives. The Foundation in collaboration with the airline also engages directly in fundraising activities such as the Every Bit Counts program, which encourages customers to donate loose change of all denominations onboard flights or through airport collection containers. The Foundation also offers continued support to major health-related causes that benefit Canadians and is an active participant in international humanitarian relief activity as the need arises. For more information about the Air Canada Foundation, please visit [www.aircanada.com/foundation](http://www.aircanada.com/foundation) or the 2012 Corporate Sustainability Report, Citizens of the World, online at <http://www.aircanada.com/csr>.

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