

Kenneth S. Siegel

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT  
AND GENERAL COUNSEL

T 914 640 8235 F 914 640 8260  
E Kenneth.siegel@starwoodhotels.com

1111 westchester avenue  
white plains, ny 10604  
united states

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Ms. Joanne Bauer  
Senior Researcher and New York Representative  
Business & Human Rights Resource Centre  
333 Seventh Avenue, 14<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York, NY 10001

Dear Ms. Bauer:

First, I would like to thank you on behalf of Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. for your commitment to combating human trafficking and child exploitation. Your work is important and should be applauded.

We at Starwood take our responsibilities as global citizens very seriously. As active members of over 1,000 locations in more than 100 countries, we are deeply committed to enriching the communities in which we work and live. We also believe that stopping the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism is an important task.

Like you, we also believe that we are in a unique position to help put an end to the sexual exploitation of children in the travel and tourism industries. Starwood's [Human Rights Policy](#), in place since 2007, references the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and includes a clause related to the protection of the rights of children, condemning all forms of exploitation of children and stating our commitment to raise awareness of sexual exploitation in order to help prevent and punish such crimes.

In addition, Starwood is a founding member of the International Tourism Partnership (ITP), and as such a long-standing member of the International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF). The ITP is a unique industry partnership that focuses exclusively on developing responsible business practices and practical responses to social and environmental issues. The ITP Charter commits all members to "the highest standards of ethical management within its business operation and with external stakeholders in the tourism industry."

With the support of Starwood, ITP and IBLF have developed many initiatives that specifically address the issue of human trafficking, for example the ITP Sustainable Communities Initiative and the IBLF Human Rights Impact Assessment Tool. Furthermore, Starwood was present as early as 2006 in round-table discussions with ITP, the UN World Tourism Organization and other stakeholders, as part of a program looking at Human Rights policies, principles and impacts across the hospitality sector.

In 2009, Starwood established a Global Citizenship team that is dedicated to developing a centralized approach to environmental and social responsibility. An important focus of our work is on teaching and learning, so we can contribute to strengthening our communities in a positive way. As we continue to evolve this function, we will incorporate policy updates, associate training, monitoring and reporting as appropriate to address global issues such as human trafficking and ensure that we are doing everything we can to combat these crimes.

I would like to thank you again for your support of this important work.

Sincerely,



Ken Siegel