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Rosana Camargo de Arruda Botelho, Chairman of the Board of the Childhood Brasil (Instituto WCF).

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There is a road that starts from the gates of our nation's industries and leads to a Brazil in need of both goods to consume and more wealth to produce. It is this road that brings well-being, quality of life and progress to both our country's most developed areas as well as the remotest and least privileged of our communities. Alongside this road, however, we also see another Brazil, a Brazil lain waste by social ruin, underdevelopment, material and cultural poverty, violence and oblivion; a Brazil so painful to see that many choose to simply just ignore it.

False illusion! This Brazil is also real. We must fight the problems it represents head on to guarantee within our society the necessary conditions for human development, which is the foundation for all other types of growth: economic, political, cultural, or spiritual.

One of these very serious problems is the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, the topic of this magazine and the mission of the *Programa na Mão Certa (On the Right Track Program)*, which Childhood Brasil (Instituto WCF) is currently launching nationwide. Our purpose is to put society into action so that we can put an end to the dramatic social reality affecting thousands of children victimized by an organized system of violence and abuse that proliferates predominately alongside our roadways.

At the same time, as part of this program, Childhood Brasil (Instituto WCF) is encouraging companies and businessmen to sign The Cooperate Pact Against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents along Brazilian Highways. Because they can mobilize companies and people into action, influence communities and commercial establishments along our roads, utilize their economic, political and social power and draw on their ability to educate their clients, companies can play a decisive role at this moment — by spearheading initiatives and increasing them to

Brazil on the right track

prevent child abuse.

A survey ordered by Childhood Brasil (Instituto WCF) and conducted by the Graduate Program in Psychology at the *Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS)* Federal University in Rio Grande do Sul revealed an exploitation map as well as the mechanisms through which children and teens become victims of the organized crime that operate alongside Brazilian roadways, as shown in the articles that follow. This survey makes it very clear that the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents is a complex phenomenon. It is connected, among other things, to poverty, lack of proper education, behavior problems and the feeling of empowerment of adults who usually exert domination over children and teens.

Lastly, the survey indicates that exploitation of children on roadways is a problem under the direct responsibility of the corporate sector, not just because it is a humanitarian issue. Truck drivers, whom sexual exploitation networks try to allure as customers, are employed either by our companies or by corporations with which our companies have a relationship — and who, if not made aware, may be entrapped by this situation. The characteristics and the magnitude of this problem very clearly show that the solution to this problem requires multiple initiatives and the involvement of our entire society. Although it is a very serious issue, there is a solution and this solution is known: a plan of action to be jointly implemented by companies, governments, and the organized civil society. And corporations have a very special responsibility in this endeavor. It is up to them to mobilize their suppliers, customers and partners so they will rise and stand to help to fight this evil.

Childhood Brasil (Instituto WCF) believes that companies will respond to the plea of the **On the Right Track** Program so that together we can put an end to sexual exploitation of children and adolescents on Brazilian roadways.

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