



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Meeting Professionals Against Human Trafficking (MPAHT)
Introduces Advisory Council**

Toronto, ON – Since its launch in 2017, Meeting Professionals Against Human Trafficking (MPAHT) has made great strides in driving awareness and education on the issue of human trafficking in the meeting planning industry in Canada and the United States

Today, Sandy Biback, Founder and President of MPAHT’s Board of Directors, announced the creation of a new Advisory Council with members representing advocacy groups, survivors, police services and business executives. This is an important next step in MPAHT’s mandate to engage the insights and experience of a diverse group of thought leaders in helping to advance and support the organization’s future growth.

Members of the advisory council are:

Ruth Abrahamson – CEO, Base Consulting and Management Inc.

Cynthia Bland – Founder/CEO, Voice Found and **Christine Pratt**, Manager, Anti-Human Trafficking Services, Voice Found (shared role)

Detective David Correa – Toronto Police Service, Sex Crimes Human Trafficking Enforcement Team, High Risk Release/Threat Assessment Unit

Matt Friedman – CEO, The Mekong Club

Michelle Furgiuele – Human Trafficking Survivor

Michelle Guelbart – Former Director of Private Sector Engagement, ECPAT-USA; Associate Director of Private Partnerships at Center for Court Innovation, NYC

Sian Lea – Managing Director, Shiva Foundation UK

Rita Plaskett (CMP CMM) – President, Agendum Inc.

Heidi Welker – Senior Vice President, Business Development and Industry Partnerships, Freeman Audio Visual, Canada

" What we all must understand is that if each of us does one thing to combat Human Trafficking, we can create the momentum that's happening in our world today. If you see something, say something, if you are wrong, that's OK, if you are right, you can save a life", says Sandy Biback, Founder of Meeting Professionals Against Human Trafficking.

Highlights of MPAHT's impact to-date include:

- Delivering educational workshops and speeches to more than 2,000 people across Canada and the United States in the hospitality, meeting and events, and travel industry
- Presenting to more than 1,000 students of hospitality in colleges throughout Ontario
- Participating in the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women's "Collaborating to Tackle Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery" panel
- Developing alliances with several global trafficking groups, including the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline www.canadianhumantraffickinghotline.ca
- Recognized by the Government of Canada for improving self-governance within the hospitality industry through education and awareness

About Meeting Professionals Against Human Trafficking

Meeting Professionals Against Human Trafficking (MPAHT) is a Toronto-based organization creating awareness of the issue of human trafficking in Canada in the event industry. Focusing on collaboration and education, MPAHT is driving the conversation on human trafficking that may be taking place at events and through allied partners including hotels and airlines. The ultimate aim for the volunteer-based organization is to provide awareness and resources for the meetings and conference industry at large. For more information, visit www.mpaht.com or follow us on Twitter @MPAHTCanada, Instagram @mpahtcanada, LinkedIn @mpaht and Facebook @MeetingProfessionalsAgainstHumanTrafficking.

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