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The International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC) works with government leaders, nongovernmental organizations and law enforcement to create national and regional centers around the world to build a strong network of organizations and programs to combat child abduction and exploitation. ICMEC is a 501(c)(3) nongovernmental organization.

For more information or to make a donation contact:

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Child Abduction Institute Named for Artist

World renowned artist, and recipient of the French Legion of Honor Award, Jeff Koons is working with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children to create the Koons Family Institute on International Child Abduction.

Koons is a parent who knows first hand the pain and anguish of international child abduction. In 1993, Jeff's son Ludwig was abducted from New York and taken to Italy by his former wife. For more than a decade, he has waged an expensive and frustrating battle to recover his son. Yet, despite his legal custodial right, his fame, and his resources, his effort

has been unsuccessful and his son remains in Italy.

In 1980, the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction was adopted to address international child abduction cases in a uniform, multinational way. Yet, for too many parents, it does not work and too many legal and social obstacles remain. The new Koons Institute will be a resource for victim parents and will work together with the Hague Conference on Private International Law to overcome obstacles in an effort to resolve abduction cases in a more swift and consistent manner.



International Centre
FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN

PROGRESS REPORT • FALL 2005

Queens and First Ladies Attend Conference for Children



Pictured Left to Right: Honorary Board Members of the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children, Bernadette Chirac of France, Queen Silvia of Sweden, Jolanta Kwasniewska of Poland, and Queen Paola of Belgium at the Royal Palace in Brussels

The European Federation for Missing and Sexually Exploited Children convened for a special conference hosted by Her Majesty Queen Paola of Belgium to review and report on initiatives in Europe. The conference was held at the Royal Palace in Brussels and brought together leaders from throughout Europe. In addition to Queen Paola, also attending were three other founding members of the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children's Honorary Board: Queen Silvia of Sweden; Madame Bernadette Chirac, First Lady of France; and Mrs. Jolanta Kwasniewska, First Lady of Poland. Also in attendance were Princess Astrid of Belgium and Princess Victoria of Sweden.

The conference was held to increase awareness of the large and under recognized problem of missing and exploited children as well as to discuss what needs to be done. The meeting was chaired by Baron Daniel Cardon de Lichtbuer, Vice Chair of ICMEC and President of the European Federation. Ernie Allen, ICMEC's President and CEO, was a featured speaker. Allen committed that ICMEC would work hand-in-hand with European leaders to combat this growing crisis. In his remarks, he cited a recent report by Tass, the Russian News Agency, that organized criminals, extremist organizations and terrorist groups are increasingly moving into child

trafficking and child pornography to generate revenue to support their activities. The apparent appeal is that children are plentiful, child pornography is easy and inexpensive to produce, there is a huge consumer market for it, and there is virtually no risk, far less than drugs, guns or tobacco.

The European Federation represents nineteen non-governmental organizations from fifteen countries throughout Europe.

Global Effort to Target Child Pornography

The second international forum on child pornography was held in Lyon, France during April 2005, to implement a global effort to combat the problem of child pornography that is growing around the world. A unique public and private sector coalition consisting of top law enforcement leaders and officials from Europe, South America, Asia and North America pledged to work together in an international effort to protect child victims and target offenders. Citing the growth of the Internet and a rampant growth of child pornography websites, the group will undertake five steps.

1. Review and expand legislation worldwide to criminalize distribution and possession of child pornography, and require the reporting of child pornography by Internet Service Providers.
2. Eradicate child pornography as a commercial enterprise by eliminating the use of credit cards to purchase it on the Internet.
3. Eliminate the ability of pedophiles and predators to be anonymous.
4. Expand efforts on a worldwide basis to identify and provide help for child pornography victims.
5. Increase awareness about how the problem of child pornography has grown to epidemic proportions.

The forum was hosted by the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children.

Costa Rica Becomes 16th Member of Global Network

The government of Costa Rica has made a firm commitment to protect the children throughout Central America. Costa Rican President Abel Pacheco announced plans to create a new missing and exploited children's center that will be located in Costa Rica, and launched a new missing and exploited children's website. The plans were announced in September 2004, when a Memorandum of Agreement was signed with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children.

Costa Rica becomes the sixteenth country to partner with ICMEC in establishing a national website

as part of the global network that links websites around the world. The website enables Costa Rican law enforcement authorities to post missing children information that can immediately be viewed by other law enforcement agencies around the world. Posters can be printed directly from the website and circulated minutes after a child is reported missing.

Other countries currently participating in the global network include Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Ireland, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Hague Partnership to Combat International Abductions

A new partnership between the Hague Conference on Private International Law located in The Netherlands, and the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children will provide victim parents with new resources in the recovery and return of abducted children around the world.

Each year thousands of children are abducted and transported to other countries. It is a problem that affects every nation. Abducted children suffer significant physical and emotional harm and often feel isolated and alone. Victim parents often face difficult legal, financial, cultural and linguistic barriers when trying to recover their child or gain access to them. Despite laws and treaties, many children are not located. Many children who are found are not returned to their country of origin due to legal and procedural problems. It is a difficult, complex problem.

ICMEC will reach out to the countries who are participants of the Hague

Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. Of the current 75 member countries, many have limited experience in handling child abduction cases.

ICMEC will work to facilitate more uniform use of the Hague Convention in resolving international child abduction cases; work closely with the Permanent Bureau at The Hague in creating a new "rule" book with model legislation, judicial procedures and guidelines on child abduction that will help individual countries implement the existing treaty; and promote international training for judges on how to resolve complex international disputes surrounding abduction cases. ICMEC will also join with the Hague Conference in a special effort to establish dialogue with countries who are not members of the Hague Convention, with special focus on the Islamic world, in an effort to work together on cases involving abductions of children to those countries.

Hoffmann La Roche to Host Summit

In October 2005, ICMEC will hold the first US/European Summit on the growing problems of missing and exploited children. Pharmaceutical giant Hoffmann La Roche will host the meeting in Switzerland. It will bring together key leaders of government, law enforcement, non-governmental organizations and business leaders from Europe and the US.

Microsoft Funds Global Training

More than 1,050 law-enforcement personnel from 77 countries have received specialized training on investigative techniques to identify distributors and users of child pornography on the Internet. Funding for the training is being provided by Microsoft Corporation.

The training seminars are conducted at sites around the world by the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children in partnership with Interpol. The training on Computer Facilitated Crimes Against Children provides valuable training in investigating online child predators, and collecting evidence and computer forensic information.

Training is being provided for law enforcement agencies in all 180 member countries served by Interpol. Since 2003, training sites have included Argentina, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Jordan, Romania, Russia, South Africa and Spain. Future sites for training include New Zealand and Thailand.

Interpol Partnership Announced



Left to Right: Arnold Burns, ICMEC Chairman; Ronald Noble, Interpol Secretary-General; Ernie Allen, ICMEC President & CEO, at Interpol Headquarters, Lyon, France.

Interpol announced plans to partner with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children and establish a new International Child Pornography Resource Centre located at Interpol headquarters in Lyon, France and at ICMEC headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia USA.

The new Centre will monitor international child pornography that is distributed online, and create several new resources that will be available to law enforcement around the world. Image analysis to help identify child victims of pornography, as well as a new database of experts is planned to help identify victims and prosecute predators.

Few Child Pornography Laws Found

In many nations, the distribution or possession of child pornography is not a crime. In many countries where it is illegal, laws are still inadequate. The International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children, working together with Interpol, is reviewing the laws of 180 countries served by Interpol to determine if adequate laws exist to address child pornography.

To date, ICMEC has reviewed laws of 130 countries. Preliminary results are shocking. Only 5 of the 130 have adequate laws and almost half of the 130 have no laws at all making child pornography illegal.