



## ECPAT Child ALERT Press Release

The image may be virtual but the demand is real!

‘Let’s hope that this expose from the Terre des Hommes organisation will awaken authorities world-wide to the explosion of illegal child pornography and online sex options offered to a huge audience of paedophiles.’ said Yvonne Dufaur, ECPAT Child ALERT chairperson, commenting on the release of information by the Dutch organisation, Terre des Hommes, which has listed four New Zealanders among up to 20,000 sexual predators who responded to a site offering an on-line sex show from a 10-year-old ‘virtual’ Filipino girl.

This confirms the demand for sex with children. What is important here is that those who engaged with this site believed they were doing so to view a real child being sexually abused. Fortunately in this case the image was virtual and not real – however the demand was certainly real and of great concern.”

“This case emphasises the risk associated with the misuse of technology enabling global access to sex on demand with children. Among the many nationalities involved in this situation were a small number of New Zealanders involved – proving once again that this country is not exempt. Unfortunately there is a growing use of technology and social media sites being used in real situations. As with any item for sale trade is dependent upon supply and demand. While a demand for child sex remains the supply of innocent victims will also remain a sad reality. Every effort must be made to bring this illegal trade to an end.”

New Zealand law enforcement agencies work in collaboration internationally to monitor and track down child sex offenders. This is a lengthy and highly complex problem where law enforcement agencies such as the Department of Internal Affairs, Police and Customs develop technology in an ongoing process to outwit criminal activity.

Every time a child sex site is accessed is yet another abuse of the child involved and it is a sad reflection on their lack of conscience that paedophiles can ignore the dire effects on the lives of children forced into this activity.

The Terre des Hommes sting is an attempt to force authorities into recognising the extent of the problem. It is urgent that some action is taken to eliminate the very serious proliferation of illegal child sex activities on the internet.

ECPAT Child ALERT is registered charitable trust working to prevent the sexual exploitation of children.

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