



ECPAT applauds decision by Thai authorities in sentencing of Prail and calls for prosecution of all child sex offenders

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Bangkok, Thailand – ECPAT applauds the decision of the Thai authorities in the sentencing of Maurice John Prail for sexually abusing an 8-year old boy in Pattaya, Thailand. Prail's sentence today, to 14 years in prison with no bail, comes after he evaded punishment for several previous charges in Thailand related to the sexual exploitation of children.

'ECPAT welcomes the recent sentencing of Prail,' said Giorgio Berardi, Programme Officer for Combating Child Sex Tourism, ECPAT International. 'Prosecution of child sex offenders in the East Asia/Pacific region, however, continues to be low, and sentences do not reflect the gravity of the crime. We are concerned that it often takes several offences and repeated arrests to ensure that a perpetrator is effectively prevented from harming more children.'

'Sexual exploitation causes profound harm to children and acts such as these are serious breaches of the fundamental rights of a child. Courts in every jurisdiction need to denounce these acts while ensuring that the child receives full and appropriate support for recovery,' added Berardi.

In addition to sentences that reflect the crimes, ECPAT calls for stronger international cooperation and agreements between all relevant countries on the sharing of information on suspected sex crimes against children and the investigation and prosecution of child sex offenders.

ECPAT hopes that, after serving his sentence, Maurice John Prail will be deported back to his home country and placed on the sex-offender register, so that his movements can be properly monitored and no other children have to suffer any harm at his hand.

ECPAT also praises Mr Supagon Noja, Director of Children Protection and Development Center (CPDC) and FACE Foundation for their roles in the justice procedure of this case.

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Notes to editors:

- ECPAT International is a global network of organisations and individuals working together for the elimination of child prostitution, child pornography and the trafficking of children for sexual purposes. It seeks to encourage the world community to ensure that children everywhere enjoy their fundamental rights free and secure from all forms of commercial sexual exploitation. For more information, see www.ecpat.net