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**JUSTICE NEWS**

**Attorney General Eric Holder Speaks at the Global Alliance  
Against Child Sexual Abuse Online Ministerial**

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Thank you, Commissioner Malmström, for that kind introduction – and for welcoming me back to Brussels for today’s important conference. On behalf of President Obama, my colleagues across the United States government, and the American people we are privileged to serve, I also want to thank you for your efforts and leadership in helping to safeguard our most vulnerable citizens – and our common future – from exploitation and abuse.

It’s a privilege to count you as a colleague – and an essential partner – in advancing this work on a global scale. And it’s an honor to join with you in convening such a distinguished group of leaders, experts, and allies from around the world – as we mark the official launch of the Global Alliance Against Child Sexual Abuse Online, and renew our shared commitment to protecting the safety, rights, and best interests of all of our children.

Especially in recent years – as technological advances have ushered in a new era of seamless commerce, instant communication, and virtual interaction between individuals and businesses – the need to protect children from the dangers posed by anonymous predators in cyberspace has become increasingly clear – and urgent. Today’s criminals have developed the ability to operate beyond the reach of traditional law enforcement mechanisms and international boundaries. And many of the technologies that our societies have come to rely upon have also created vulnerabilities that pedophiles find all too easy to exploit – in order to trade illegal images, to discuss fantasies about abusing children, and even to find and target potential victims.

As my nation’s Attorney General – and as the father of three teenagers – protecting the safety, and the potential, of our young people has always been both a personal and professional priority. From developing the U.S. government’s first-ever National Strategy for Child Exploitation Prevention and Interdiction, to strengthening enforcement efforts, fostering increased community action, and raising awareness – I’m proud of all that today’s Justice Department – and the entire Obama Administration – is doing to confront the threats faced by children at risk and in need. Thanks to the dedicated prosecutors in the Department’s Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section – along with a variety of advocacy organizations and specialized law enforcement units, including the FBI, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Postal Inspection Service, and the Secret Service – we’re working, through an initiative known as Project Safe Childhood, to prevent the sexual exploitation of children and achieve justice for the victims of such crimes. Since 2006, when this national network was created, we’ve seen a significant increase in prosecutions of those who sexually exploit young people. And over the last fiscal year alone, we filed more than 2,500 indictments in such cases – a great number of them involving child pornography offenses.

Of course, we also recognize that – by itself – prosecution is only one part of the solution to this terrible problem. That’s why we’re working with a range of private sector partners to explore new technologies – such as PhotoDNA – that allow online providers, working with our National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, to more readily find, report, and eliminate child pornography images on their own servers. We’re supporting the efforts of 61 Internet Crimes Against Children Task Forces around the United States, which handle thousands of complaints and forensic investigations each year. And we’re working harder than ever to engage with key allies – like the nations represented here – to build a more nimble information-sharing infrastructure; to bolster existing enforcement capacities; to conduct sophisticated, cross-border investigations targeting online child pornography rings; and to build upon the record of success that’s already been established.

For example, through last year's Operation Delego, the Justice Department and a variety of U.S.-based law enforcement agencies collaborated with international partners – including Eurojust, Interpol, and Europol – to dismantle a global community of pedophiles known as “Dreamboard.” By working together, we were able to identify and apprehend offenders from 14 countries on five different continents – all of whom were engaged in the creation or exchange of unspeakable images of child pornography.

Such operational successes have proven the power – and the effectiveness – of broad-based collaborations involving allies from every corner of the globe.

But they've also demonstrated – quite clearly – that a great deal remains to be done; that threats to our children continue to grow and evolve; and that no single nation will be able to address these challenges – or overcome the obstacles ahead – on its own.

As Commissioner Malmström reminded us just a moment ago, the sexual exploitation of children online is a global problem that demands a global response. It's only by working together – in common cause, in good faith, and with mutual respect – that our nations will be able to secure the progress we need in bringing criminals to justice and getting abused and exploited children to safety. And that's exactly why forums like this conference – and innovative partnerships like the Alliance we announce today – have never been more important.

Through increased cooperation, broader information-sharing, and expanded training opportunities, we're already laying the foundation for a more effective international legal framework – designed to allow investigators and prosecutors to move more seamlessly between jurisdictions in order to shut down exploitative online enterprises. Those who would harm our children are not respecters of our national borders – we in law enforcement must not allow these borders to be impediments to our best efforts. And as we move forward – by establishing common procedures, exchanging knowledge and expertise, enhancing reporting mechanisms, and engaging a broader coalition of private industry leaders – I'm hopeful that this Global Alliance will enable us to take our comprehensive efforts to a new level.

Despite the uncertain challenges we face, and the many responsibilities before us, I'm confident that today's session will afford a unique opportunity to strengthen our shared commitment to this work. I am eager to hear from, and to learn from, each of the leaders in this room. And I look forward to all that we must – and surely will – accomplish together in the critical days ahead.

Thank you.