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JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, February 28, 2013

Michigan Man Found Guilty in Florida of Child Sex Tourism Charges

A former Michigan resident was found guilty by a federal jury today in Miami of child sex tourism charges, announced Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida Wifredo A. Ferrer and Special Agent in Charge Alysa D. Erichs of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Miami office.

Matthew Andrew Carter, aka "William Charles Harcourt" and "Bill Carter," 67, formerly of Brighton, Mich., was found guilty in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida of five counts of traveling in foreign commerce from the United States to Haiti for the purpose of engaging in illicit sexual conduct with children and one count of attempting to do so. Carter was charged in a second superseding indictment returned on Jan. 12, 2012.

According to court documents and evidence presented at trial, from 1995 to 2011, Carter resided at and operated the Morning Star Center near Port-au-Prince, Haiti, prior to his arrest on May 8, 2011. The Morning Star Center was a residential facility that provided shelter, food, clothing and school tuition to Haitian children. The children who lived at the Morning Star Center were from impoverished families that could not feed them, send them to school or otherwise support their children. The evidence at trial showed that Carter specifically targeted children in need and preyed on their vulnerability. Between 1995 and 2011, Carter frequently traveled between the United States and Haiti in order to raise funds from churches and donors for the continued operation of the center. Carter sexually and physically abused the children in his care and custody at the center during this period of time. According to court documents and evidence presented at trial, Carter used force to get these children to comply with his sexual demands and required the children to participate in sexual acts in order to receive food, remain at the center and/or continue to receive school tuition payments.

At trial, 16 Haitian victims who resided at the Morning Star Center between 1995 and 2011 testified. Additionally, four witnesses testified that they were sexually abused by Carter in London during the 1970s. Carter previously was charged with and acquitted of charges related to the sexual abuse of children in London, Cairo, Egypt and Winter Haven, Fla.

At sentencing, Carter faces a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison on one count and a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison for each of the other five counts. Carter is scheduled for sentencing on May 20, 2013, in Miami before U.S. District Judge Joan A. Lenard.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Maria K. Medetis of the Southern District of Florida and Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section Trial Attorney Bonnie L. Kane of the Criminal Division. The case against Carter was investigated by ICE-HSI in Miami, the ICE-HSI Assistant Attaché's Office in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic and the ICE-HSI Santo Domingo Transnational Criminal Investigative Unit. Substantial assistance was provided by the U.S. Secret Service Miami field office; the Haitian National Police Brigade for the Protection of Minors; Haitian Social Services; the Ministry of the Interior for Haiti; the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, Regional Security Office for the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince, Haiti; the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince, Haiti; the London Metropolitan Police Service; the FBI's Washington, Boston and Miami field offices; and the ICE-HSI Attaché's Offices in London and Cairo.

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Criminal Division

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