

# Swedish contribution to the Global Alliance against child sexual abuse online

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## I. Introduction

According to the Declaration on Launching the Global Alliance against child sexual abuse online, each participating state will by 1 April 2013 take stock of measures already implemented within its jurisdiction, will communicate them, and will announce what specific measures it will be undertaking in the future to reach the operational goals and pursue the shared policy agenda of the Global Alliance. Sweden strongly supports the establishment of the Global Alliance and its objectives. On that basis, Sweden has the pleasure to submit the following contribution to the Global Alliance.

## II. Two present concerns

First, Sweden wishes to take this opportunity to highlight two present concerns that the Global Alliance is well-placed to effectively address.

### 1. *Child sex tourism*

A problem, common to many countries in the Northern hemisphere, is that their citizens travel to tourist destinations in South East Asia, West Africa, the Caribbean or elsewhere where they purchase sexual services of children and commit other sexual offences against children. The children are often victims of trafficking in human beings. Due to poverty and social exclusion, some are even sold by their own families.

It also occurs that the offences are depicted or filmed, later to appear on the Internet or, as the case might be, in a computer seized suspected of containing child sexual abuse material. In a number of cases, children are being “adopted” for a longer or shorter period of time during which the abuse takes place. In a few cases, the offenders have even committed their offences behind the front of managing a child care centre or similar activities. Some of the offenders, so called travelling sex offenders, commit their crimes as the opportunity presents itself. Others are part of organised paedophile rings that are active also on the Internet in concealed networks and that systematically plan their travelling for the purpose of sexually abusing children. It should also be noted that these offenders often commit sexual offences against children in their respective EU-countries of residence or citizenship. In many revealed cases, the offenders are also registered in the criminal records of the country of citizenship or residence.

The Internet plays a key role in facilitating child sex tourism and in the dissemination of child sexual abuse material produced in connection with travelling and tourism.

Sweden proposes that an EU-funded project is set up with the overarching objective to significantly increase the attention given to child sex tourism at the political levels of the EU, its Member States and states participating in the Global Alliance, thereby also making it an issue of greater international concern. Such a project would also contribute to a increased attention at operative levels, including to facilitate and to promote operative, law enforcement, judicial co-operation and co-operation involving civil society.

This proposed project connects to policy targets 1, 2, and 4. An integral part of the project would be the link between child sex tourism, trafficking in children and production of child pornography subsequently appearing on the Internet. The project would revolve around an EU-partnership, not least involving Europol, and invite all states participating in the Global Alliance to contribute to the objectives of the project and to contribute to activities of the project, including **a conference in Brussels**. The outcome of the project would be reported to the Global Alliance. It is believed that child sex tourism seriously underpins child sexual abuse online and that vigorous, concerted action against it would be a valuable contribution to reducing the production of child sexual abuse material as well as the opportunities for paedophiles to sexually exploit children in connection with travelling and tourism.

## *2. Real-time, web-based child pornographic performances and “virtual rapes”*

On 10 January 2013, a 52-year old man was sentenced in Sweden to eight years imprisonment for eleven cases of instigating gross rape of a child in the Philippines. This was the first sentence in Sweden for committing serious, sexual offences against children documented by real-time, web-based cameras. Payment and instructions were sent from Sweden via the Internet and the instructions were carried out in the Philippines.

This case illustrates very much the borderless nature of Internet as a means to commit child sexual abuse online. The real-time abuse of this case is a particularly worrying development that needs to be addressed by the international law enforcement community.

Sweden proposes that **work against real-time abuse over the Internet is included as a potential action** in connection with Policy Target 2 Enhancing efforts to investigate cases of child sexual abuse online and to identify and prosecute offenders. It seems clear, including from collected intelligence, that this particular modus operandi will remain a challenge for the international law enforcement community. Sweden therefore already brings it up in relevant international fora.

### III. Policy targets

#### 1. *Enhancing efforts to identify victims and ensuring that they receive necessary assistance, support and protection*

Operational Goal: Increase the number of identified victims in the International Child Sexual Exploitation images database (ICSE database) managed by INTERPOL by at least 10% yearly.

#### Taking stock

The low number of children appearing in child sexual abuse material who can be identified in relation to the total number of children in this material has long been a particular issue of concern, both at national and international levels. It shows that there are many girls and boys who are victims of sexual abuse, but who are never identified and who therefore cannot receive adequate assistance and help. Consequently, improving the work to identify victims in child sexual abuse online and increasing the numbers of identified children are key priorities for enhancing the fight against child sexual abuse online.

#### Future developments

**The Swedish National Bureau of Investigation was in 2012 given a clearer mandate and a coordinating role in the work against child sexual abuse online across the 21 regional police services.** This has meant that the cooperation between the regional and national levels has improved, including an increase in the child sexual abuse material that is exchanged between regional and national level. In turn, this development will have a positive impact on the ability of the National Bureau to contribute to international cooperation. In addition, an extra two investigators working solely on victim identification were deployed to the National Bureau. Already in the first year, these measures have meant that more children have been identified. **It is in particular clear that there is a correlation between the investment in the number of dedicated investigators on identification and the increase in number of children identified.** Given

these developments, the reinforcement on identification will be maintained and possibly increase further. In turn, the Swedish contribution to the ICSE database at Interpol and the network around it will most likely grow and improve. The National Bureau will follow-up its efforts and report to Interpol and its ICSE database. One identified technical challenge is the software Sharepoint currently used by the Interpol network. This software does not allow too many users to be logged on at the same time. **It is therefore desirable to initiate discussions about the technical support for the network around the ICSE database.**

## ***2. Enhancing efforts to investigate cases of child sexual abuse online and to identify and prosecute offenders***

Operational Goal: Establishment of the necessary framework for the criminalization of child sexual abuse online and the effective prosecution of offenders, with the objective of enhancing efforts to investigate and prosecute offenders.

### Taking stock

- i) On 1 July 2010, amendments were made in the Swedish Penal Code that criminalised viewing of a child pornographic picture which the viewer had gained access to, sometimes referred to as web-viewing. The amendments also involved a clarification of the prerequisites under which an offence should be considered gross. Attention should in this latter regard be paid to if the child was particularly young or had been exposed to coercion or violence or exploited in some other particular ruthless way.

On 1 January 2011, additional amendments were made in order to extend the criminalised area to include all pornographic representations of children under eighteen, regardless of whether they have undergone a full pubertal development. The amendments were made in the explicit purpose of making the combat against child pornography crimes more effective.

Finally, a Parliamentary Bill was recently presented on the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. The Bill include in particular proposals on extension of Swedish jurisdiction and on the point in time when child sexual abuse offence is statute-barred. In conclusion on legislation, **the Swedish legal framework is therefore at present up-to-date and continuously under review.**

- ii) On 1 July 2009, the criminal offence *contact with a child for a sexual purpose* was introduced in the Penal Code. The provision is intended to further strengthen the penal law protection for children against being exposed to sexual abuse. The offence requires that there is an agreement between the perpetrator and the child to meet, and that the perpetrator after such an agreement takes some action in order to promote that the meeting actually takes place. The provision is technology neutral and encompasses both contacts online and other contacts. There are only a few convictions. An evaluation will be presented in June 2013 by the National Council for Crime Prevention. The purpose of the evaluation is to investigate how the provision works in practice and whether any particular problems arise in connection with its application. The evaluation should also include an analysis of the reasons why so many cases are dropped.

With the introduction of the offence “grooming”, an intelligence operation was also launched. To date around 860 persons have been identified as “groomers”, i.e. persons being active on the Internet clearly behaving in a way that demonstrates an interest in sexual contacts with in particular adolescent girls. However, these identified “groomers” have not been prosecuted since the definition of the offence requires action additional to the obvious “grooming” behaviour on the Internet. In some cases, the National Bureau of Investigation has therefore applied the method of so called “preventive talks”.

It should be noted that the success of this intelligence operation has much depended on cooperation with the private entities running social websites where grooming occur.

- iii) Furthermore, the **National Image Database** should be mentioned as one tool for effective prosecution and efficient investigations. This database is a national tool similar to the ICSE database at Interpol. It is operated at national level by the National Bureau and contains today over 1,2 million files (images and film sequences). Each image in the database is given a unique digital code after classification as child sexual abuse material in an investigation. An image recognition software can on this basis sort out images in future investigations which saves work hours on classification. The software can also match series of images, for instance to find missing images in a series. The Swedish software company **Netclean is drawing on the digital codes of this database for its filters**. More than 400 000 licenses have been sold in Sweden alone.

- iv) In connection with this policy target, training should also be noted. Since 2006 around 250 officers have been trained in classification and investigation of child pornography offences. At present, around 100 of the trained officers are still active in child sexual abuse investigations. An important aspect of training is that the National Bureau can provide training to other relevant actors than the law enforcement services, for instance to prosecutors.

#### Future developments

- Currently, there is an important development in Sweden on how we view child sexual abuse material; rather than focusing on this material being criminal to possess and distribute, it is considered as evidence of sexual abuse of children, in particular if the material is not previously known and relatively recently produced. This approach goes hand in hand with the increased attention given to the issue of identification and also allows for intrusive and covert investigative measures that are normally applied in cases concerning very serious crimes. Indeed, it is a big difference to investigate possession of child pornography and gross rape of a child.
- The expected evaluation of the criminal offence contact with a child for a sexual purpose in June 2013 will shed new light on potential application problems and together with the improved understanding of the phenomenon by the intelligence gathering carried out by the National Bureau, new approaches to counteract grooming will hopefully emerge.
- The Swedish image database and the image recognition tool are considered to be important parts of the tool-kit to counteract child sexual abuse. However, this database operated in isolation has little impact on the overall availability of child sexual abuse material. Sweden is therefore supporting inter alia the IN-4-MATION EU-project by the Netherlands and others that aims at a more effective and efficient exchange of child abuse images in connection with the ICSE database.
- In Sweden further efforts on training will be taken, both within the law enforcement services and in relation to other relevant actors. New developments such as the above underlined real-time abuse over the Internet as well as basic understanding of the phenomenon child pornography will be covered.

Operational Goal: Improve the joint efforts of law enforcement authorities across Global Alliance countries to investigate and prosecute child sexual abuse online.

### Taking stock

The volume of available child sexual abuse material on the Internet is such that actions by an individual state have little impact. It is therefore obvious that concerted action is needed for a more effective response. The Swedish Police is working on a regular basis in the context of the law enforcement network built around Interpol and its ICSE database. The Swedish Police is also active in all other international fora, including Europol. Bilateral cooperation is an important channel.

### Future developments

- Sweden believes that Interpol, its ICSE database and its network will play a crucial role if the joint, international law enforcement response is to be improved and reinforced. Sweden participates actively in the network, will continue to do so on a daily basis and will enhance its contribution particularly in the field of identification.
- One future challenge is cloud computing. In a not so distant future, there will be much less child sexual abuse material stored in seized computers, albeit the suspect may have access to enormous volumes of such material. It seems that private-public partnerships are ways to address this, but further possibilities and practices should be discussed.

### **3. *Enhancing efforts to increase public awareness of the risks posed by children's activities online, including grooming and self-production of images that result in the production of new child pornography that may be distributed online***

Operational Goal: Develop, improve, or support appropriate public awareness campaigns or other measures which educate parents, children, teachers and others responsible for children regarding the risks that children's online conduct poses and the steps they can take to minimize those risks.

### Taking stock

In Sweden a specific government agency, The Swedish Media Council, has been set up with the primary task to promote the empowering of minors as conscious media users and to protect them from harmful media influences. The Media Council gathers relevant research and disseminates information on media development, media effects and media use regarding children, adolescents and young people.

The Swedish Media Council operates the Swedish Safer Internet Centre for a safer use of the Internet and other digital media among children and young people, and represents Sweden in the pan-European network Insafe. The project is run in collaboration with BRIS (Children's rights in Society) and is co-funded by the European Commission's Safer Internet Programme.

Children and young people are the ultimate target group, but parents, educators, social workers, media and Internet industry as well as policy makers are also important target audiences and stakeholders for the Safer Internet Centre. Through a well established network of national stakeholders the Safer Internet Centre have access to all relevant target groups.

To ensure the direct involvement of children, adolescents and young people, the Swedish Safer Internet Centre have set up two kinds of youth panels: local panels taking part at dissemination activities and a permanent panel used primarily for internal consultation purposes. The youth panels play an important role in ensuring the quality of the development of awareness tools, as well as in providing a youth perspective on the work. The members of the youth panels are also involved in different kinds of media activities.

The Council has developed information and educational material to be used by parents, educators and people who meet children, adolescents and young people in their profession.

The Media Council also publishes reports and other material on developments in the media, media effects and the media situation of children and young people. The Council also follows research in its field.

The website of the Swedish Media Council is an important platform for dissemination of awareness tools and knowledge. All resources can be ordered or downloaded free of charge from the website.

#### Future developments

- The Media Council will continue its work and develop new initiatives as appropriate.

Operational Goal: Share best practices among Global Alliance countries for effective strategies to inform the public about the risks posed by online, self-exploitative conduct in order to reduce the production of new child pornography.

### Taking stock

- i) The National Board of Youth Affairs has a commission extending over several years to prevent sexual exploitation and exposure of adolescents and young people via the Internet. In 2008 the Government commissioned the National Board of Youth Affairs to apply measures to increase knowledge about sexual exploitation of children and young people via the internet and other interactive media. The commission, which was conclusively presented on 31 December 2010, consisted of four parts: (1) carrying out a study of the target group regarding experiences of and attitudes to sexual exposure and exploitation; (2) producing method materials to be used by secondary school teachers; (3) organising training directed at staff in schools, leisure centres and social services; (4) organising training directed at girls' shelters and similar facilities for boys. The study "See me – young people about sex and the Internet" filled a knowledge gap in efforts directed at young people. As an example, the study has been downloaded from the National Board's website 15 342 times.

In 2010 the National Board of Youth Affairs carried out a series of training programmes based on the materials on methods it had produced. The material includes a number of films and interviews which can be seen on YouTube. In all about 4 000 people participated in the training programmes held by the National Board of Youth Affairs as part of the commission.

The measure contributed to developing knowledge on the issue and gave staff working with young people today the opportunity of learning about how they can work preventively to reduce the vulnerability of young people. In 2011 the National Board of Youth Affairs was commissioned to continue its training initiatives aimed at preventing the sexual exploitation of adolescents and young people via the internet and other interactive media.

To further strengthen the measures, the National Board of Youth Affairs was commissioned in 2012 to produce special information material aimed at girls and boys to prevent their sexual exploitation via the internet and other interactive media. In the course of producing the material, the National Board of Youth Affairs is to seek out the opinions of adolescents and young people. The commissions are to be presented in their final form in February 2014.

- ii) The National Board of Health and Welfare has produced training material about support to children, adolescents and young people – concerning children and young people who are paid for sex, girls and boys subjected to

human trafficking for sexual purposes, and children who live with parents who sell sex. The aim is for professionals who come into contact with persons selling sex or who are subjected to human trafficking for sexual purposes better to be able to meet these individuals' need for support and assistance. The material is to provide staff in social services, health and medical care, youth clinics etc. with several tools for identifying, communicating with and drawing in children and young people who risk coming to harm or are coming to harm due to selling sex, children who are subject to human trafficking for sexual purposes and sexual exploitation, and children who come to harm due to living with an adult who sells sex. The training material is knowledge based, i.e. based on the best available knowledge, the experience based knowledge of professionals and individuals' experiences of selling sex.

#### Future developments

- Given the presence of the Internet in every-day life in Sweden and the risks it poses particularly for children and adolescents, future measures aiming at raising awareness and preventing risk behaviour online will be taken.

#### **4. *Reducing as much possible the availability of child pornography online and reducing as much possible the re-victimization of children whose sexual abuse is depicted***

Operational Goal: Encourage participation by the private sector in identifying and removing known child pornography material located in the relevant State, including increasing as much as possible the volume of system data examined for child pornography images.

#### Taking stock

- In 2007 a Financial Coalition against Child Pornography on the Internet was established in Sweden. It brings together actors from the payment industry (around 25 banks and credit card companies), ISP's, software companies, NGO's (ECPAT) and the National Bureau of Investigation. The Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance and the Financial Inspection are observers. In particular ECPAT and Skandiabanken were the drivers of this initiative. The Financial Coalition has through its collaborative approach been able to stop payments for child pornography and today it is difficult to purchase child sexual abuse material by means of credit cards from Sweden. Furthermore, the National Bureau of Investigation is actively working within the European Financial Coalition.

- iii) In this section, the indispensable contribution of ECPAT Sweden should be mentioned. ECPAT has since the mid-nineties inexhaustibly been in the front-line of demanding and developing new measures against child sexual abuse. As regards online abuse, ECPAT has in particular been involved in the development of the blocking cooperation and the establishment of the Financial Coalition. Consequently, ECPAT is taking part in most of the collaborative efforts that are undertaken in Sweden.
- iv) On private-public partnerships, see also above on filtering (Netclean) and grooming as well as below on blocking.

#### Future developments

- A sub-group of the Financial Coalition is now undertaking efforts to see how other means of payment than by credit card for child sexual abuse material can be blocked. Over the past few years, there has been an explosion of payment methods.

Electronic wallets on the Internet and payments by means of a cell-phone are but two examples that need to be covered. The Financial Coalition is taking steps in order to involve mobile phone operators in the work.

- It can be expected that ECPAT Sweden will continue to give civil society a strong and valuable voice against child sexual abuse online.

Operational Goal: Increase the speed of notice and takedown procedures as much as possible without jeopardizing criminal investigation.

#### Taking stock

In Sweden, a legal obligation to block websites would conflict with the Swedish constitutional protection of the freedom of expression and information, i.e. the freedom to disseminate, procure and receive information and otherwise to acquaint oneself with the utterances of others. This is due to the fact that it is not technically possible to block only the illegal information that is the aim of the measure, but that also legitimate information that anyone has the right to procure would be blocked at the same time. For this reason, the blocking of websites with a child pornographic content in Sweden is carried out in **voluntary** cooperation between the Police and the Internet Service Providers. Over 90% of subscribers to the Internet in Sweden are covered in this voluntary cooperation.

The cooperation operates in the following way: The Police receives information on child pornographic websites from different channels such

as Europol, Interpol, child right organisations or the general public. Information is also collected by the Police in its daily work on acting against child pornography on the Internet.

The information is verified and then shared with the Internet Service Providers who make the technical arrangements for **blocking at the level of the end user**. This means that anyone trying to access the website in question, instead will see a message (see annex) saying that this site is blocked due to its child pornographic content. The formal borders of the EU do not make any difference as to whether an ISP in cooperation with the SE Police will block a website or not. In other words websites with child pornographic content will be blocked and made not accessible in Sweden regardless of whether the site is located within or outside the EU.

In the procedure to verify that the website contains child pornographic material, the Police also check the location of the website. In connection with the blocking and on that basis, information is sent to the appropriate judicial or law enforcement authority in the country where the website is located. This information informs the authority that a website located on its territory contains illegal material. However, no further steps are taken since it might interfere with for instance an ongoing investigation in that country.

The message is displayed between 30000 to 70000 times a day, however with great variation depending on the day of the week (for instance Sundays being more frequent than Mondays). The figure does not say anything on the number of individuals attempting to get access, it merely states the number of displays of the message and includes therefore, most likely, series of attempts from one individual and side effects of "pornsurfing".

#### Future developments

- The voluntary cooperation in Sweden on blocking child sexual abuse material at the level of the end-user is perceived to be effective. It is hoped that additional coverage of Internet subscribers can be achieved through the cooperation.

## **Summary list of Swedish action points for the Global Alliance against Child Sexual Abuse Online**

### ***Two present concerns***

- Child sex tourism should be given significantly increased attention. Sweden proposes that a conference is organised in Brussels, including participation from Global Alliance countries.
- Sweden proposes that real-time abuse over the Internet is addressed by the Global Alliance and is included as a potential action of the Global Alliance.

### ***Policy target 1 - Enhancing efforts to identify victims and ensuring that they receive necessary assistance, support and protection***

- The National Bureau of Investigation has been given a clearer mandate and a coordinating role in the work across 21 regional police services against child sexual abuse online. This will in turn help strengthening the ability to contribute at international level.
- Sweden has deployed extra investigators to the National Bureau dedicated to the issue to increase the number of identified children appearing in child sexual abuse material. It is clear that there is a correlation between the investment in the number of dedicated investigators on identification and the increase in number of children identified.
- The software used by the Interpol network on the ICSE database does not allow too many users to be logged on at the same time. It is therefore desirable to initiate discussions about the technical support for the network around the ICSE database.

### ***Policy target 2 - Enhancing efforts to investigate cases of child sexual abuse online and to identify and prosecute offenders***

- The Swedish legal framework is at present up-to-date and continuously under review.
- It is important to focus not only on child sexual abuse material being criminal to possess and distribute, but also as evidence of sexual abuse of children, in particular if the material is not known or recently produced. This approach goes hand in hand with the

increased attention given to the issue of identification and also allows for intrusive and covert investigative measures.

- An expected evaluation of grooming in June 2013 will shed new light on this and together with the improved understanding of the phenomenon by the intelligence gathering carried out by the National Bureau, new approaches to counteract grooming will hopefully emerge.
- Sweden is supporting inter alia the IN-4-MATION EU-project by the Netherlands and others that aim at a more effective and efficient exchange of child abuse images in connection with the ICSE database.
- The National Bureau of Investigation will make further efforts on training, both within the law enforcement services and in relation to other relevant actors.

***Policy target 3 - Enhancing efforts to increase public awareness of the risks posed by children's activities online, including grooming and self-production of images that result in the production of new child pornography that may be distributed online***

- The specific government agency, the Media Council, has been set up with the primary task to promote the empowering of minors as conscious media users and to protect them from harmful media influences. It will continue its work and develop new initiatives as appropriate.
- Given the presence of the Internet in every-day life in Sweden and the risks it poses particularly for children and adolescents, future measures aiming at raising awareness and preventing risk behaviour online will be taken.

***5. Policy target 4 - Reducing as much possible the availability of child pornography online and reducing as much possible the re-victimization of children whose sexual abuse is depicted***

- The Swedish Financial Coalition is presently undertaking efforts to address other methods of payment than credit cards for child sexual abuse material.
- It can be expected that ECPAT Sweden will continue to give civil society a strong and valuable voice against child sexual abuse online.
- The voluntary cooperation in Sweden on blocking child sexual abuse material at the level of the end-user is perceived to be effective. It is hoped that additional coverage, above the 90% already covered, of Internet subscribers can be achieved through the cooperation.

## Annex 2



Your web browser has tried to access an Internet website that is used for the distribution of child abuse material. Distribution is punishable according to Swedish legislation.

**The Penal Code, chapter 16, §10a.**

In case you have any objections against the blocking of this Internet website, do not hesitate to contact the Child Protection Team at the Swedish National Criminal Police on [childabuse@rkp.police.se](mailto:childabuse@rkp.police.se)

If you are the domain owner and wish to make a complaint about blocked online content issues, please read information provided [here](#)

For further information visit [www.polisen.se](http://www.polisen.se)

**Please report sexual abuse against children to the Swedish National Criminal Police.**

**[www.polisen.se/tips](http://www.polisen.se/tips)**

The Swedish National Criminal Police and the Internet Service Providers working together against the abuse of children on the Internet.



The Child Sexual Abuse Anti-Distribution Filter (CSAADF) is part of the COSPOL Internet Related Child Abusive Material Project (CIRCAMP). The project is initiated by the European Chief of Police Task Force - aimed at combating organized criminal groups behind commercial sexual exploitation of children.