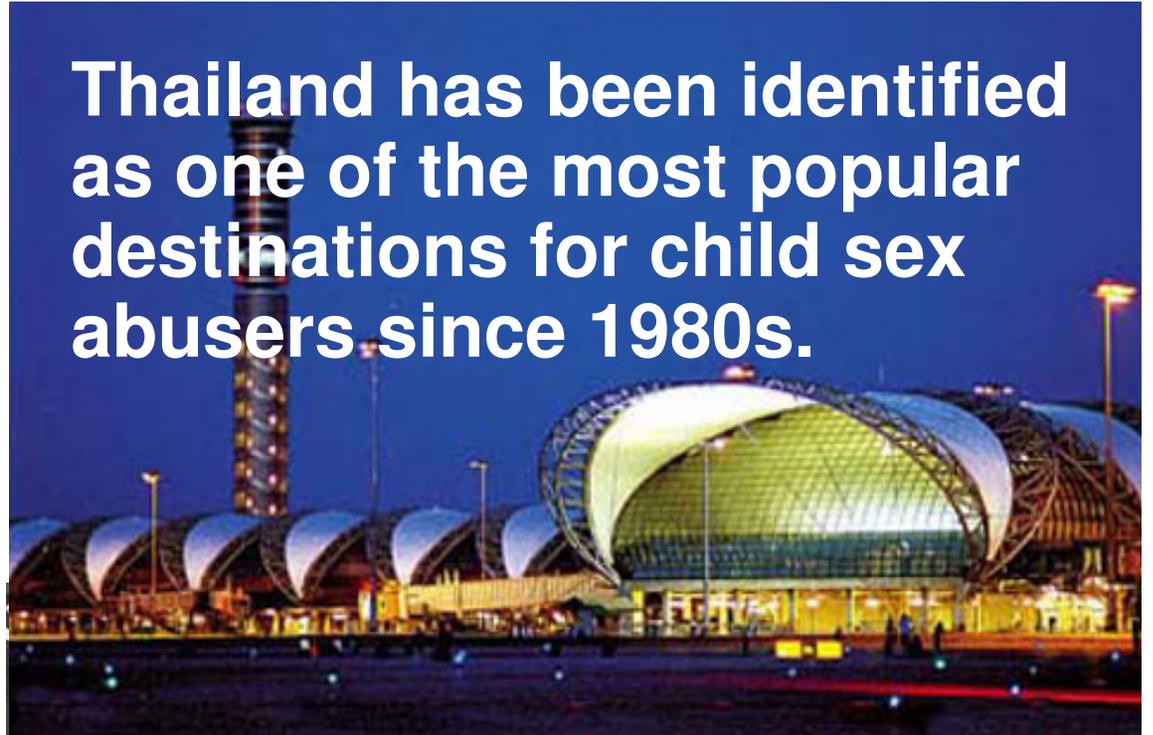


Thailand's Response to Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation: Its Progress and Challenges

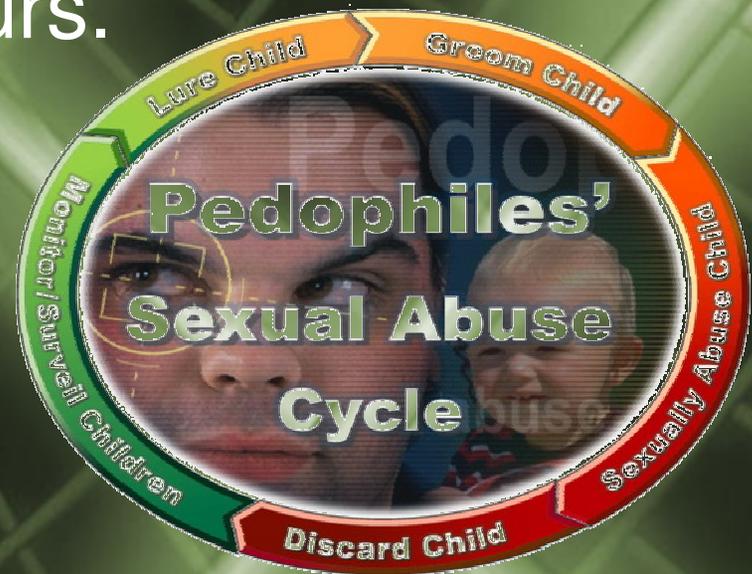
*Pol.Col.Naras Savestanan, Ph.D.
Deputy Director-General
Department of Special Investigation
Ministry of Justice, Thailand*

The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice: 20th CCPCJ
April 12, 2011, Vienna, Austria

Thailand has been identified as one of the most popular destinations for child sex abusers since 1980s.



- Offline and online child sexual abuse and exploitation in Thailand has gone from bad to worse by sex tour organizers and child molesters' misuse of the Internet to distribute pornography and advertise sex tours.



- In 2007, there were 500,000 sexually seductive web pages and 250 websites showing nude video clips of teenagers in Thailand.

http://www

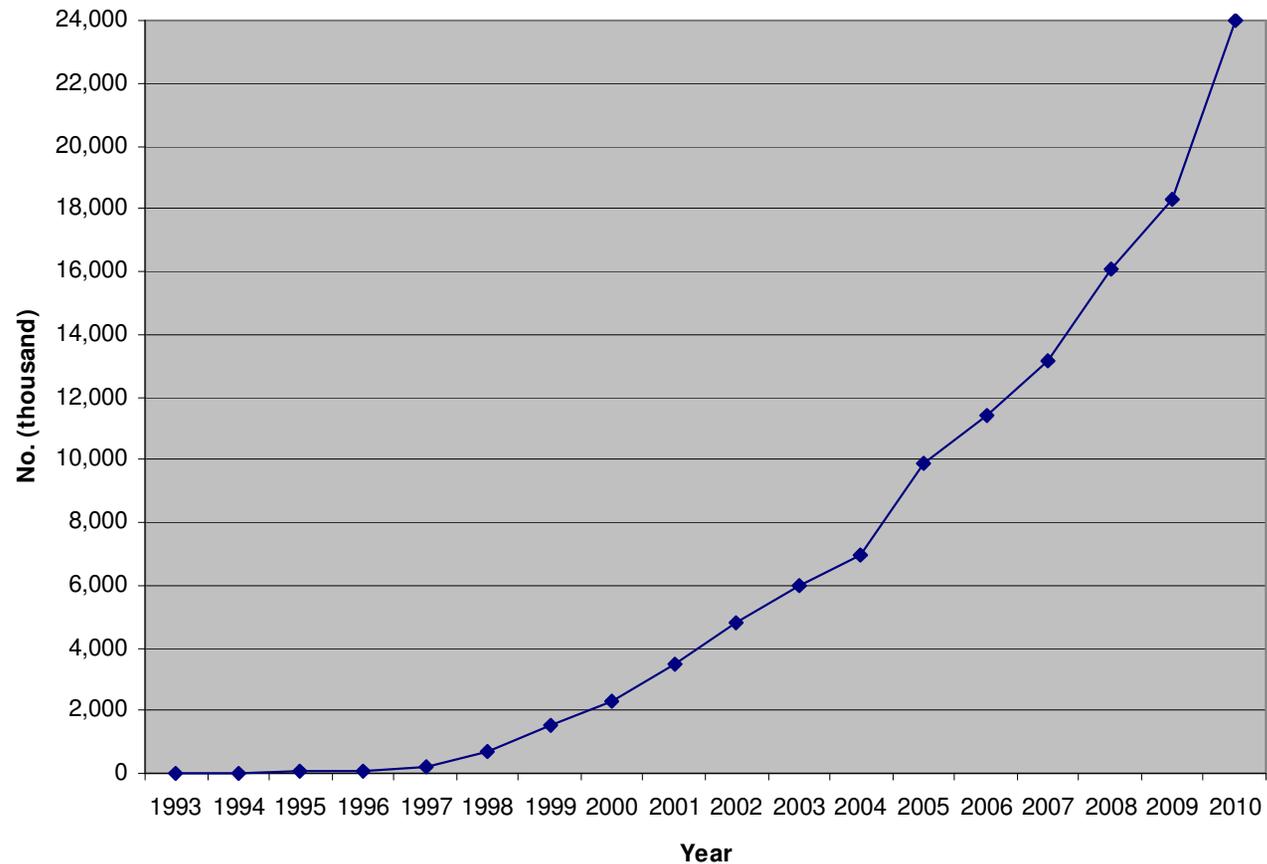




- Between 2000 and 2010, internet users in Thailand grew more than 660%, rising from 3.5 million in 2001 to 24 million in 2010.



Internet Users



Source:

<http://th.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E0%B8%AD%E0%B8%B4%...>

Thaweesak Koanantakool, Important Statistics of Thailand, August 24, 2007, pp.3-8.

Thailand Internet Statistics-Asia Finest Discussion Forum

Wikipedia, Internet in Thailand (http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?hl=th&q=catche:b8_qzcrYo6M...)

<http://www.marketingoops.com/reports/matrix/Thai-net.user-2>

<http://www.asiafinest.com/forum/index.php?showtopic=220821&mode=threa...>

Jiraporn Boonnoon, "Social media role continues to grow", The Nation. (<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/home/2010/04/01/technology/Social-media...>)

<http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>

- Thai teenagers who put themselves at risk of being manipulated by sexual exploiters and pedophiles are on the rise.
 - 44.8% met their virtual friends in person. (Survey in 1999)
 - 92 % had been persuaded to chat about sex online. (2000)
 - 74% were alone when online. (2002)
 - 21% used web cams, 22% had record themselves, and 13% had posted their personal details. (2004)
 - 13% had sex with their virtual friends after face-to-face meeting. (2006)

- The last research (2010) indicated 23 million Thai youths spent 3 hours a day surfing the Internet, 91% had experiences pornography.
- **How many youth are at risk?**



- Thai people are aware of online child sexual abuse since 2000 after Thai Rath, a local newspaper in Thailand, on 8 Dec. 2000, reported the case of a 17-year-old girl who was raped and murdered by someone she met through the Internet.



- Apart from Thai men, the majority of child sexual abusers and exploiters in Thailand, Australian made up a largest portion of foreign sex offenders against children in Thailand between 1995 and 2006. Other were French, British, German and Scandinavian nationals.

- Thailand's response to offline and online child sexual abuse and exploitation cover domestic and international approaches.
 - Prevention
 - Law enforcement
 - Suppression
 - International cooperation



Prevention

- A National Plan of Action to Combat the Trafficking of Children and Women for Sexual Abuse (1994)
- A National Policy and Plan of Action for the Prevention and Eradication of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (1996)
- Tourist Authority of Thailand joined the global fight against sexual exploitation of children (2000)
- Immigration Bureau of Thailand developed a registry of known child sex offenders (2006)

Prevention (Cont.)

- Projects under the cooperation of the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Information and Communication Technology for students, parents and teachers.
 - Online Safety
 - Hotline
 - Web-Guard
 - Cyber Clean
 - Gate Keeper
 - House Keeper



Prevention (Cont.)

- Project on Partners in Learning, a 5-year project under the Cooperation between private and public sectors, provides training on ICT skill to 20,000 teachers.

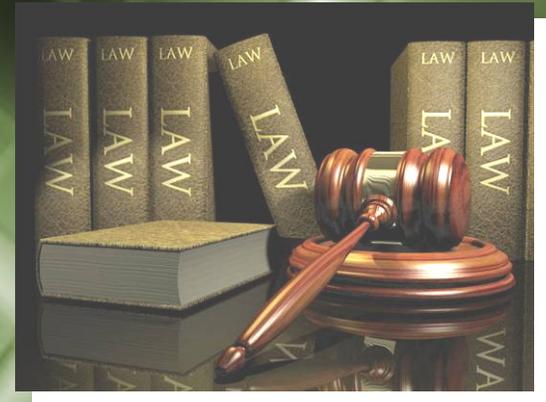
Prevention (Cont.)

- **Cyber Scout Project**, *the joint project of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Information and Communication Technology in 2010*, aims to build a network of 20,000 volunteers comprises students, teachers, government officials and private sector officers who will monitor inappropriate content on the Internet and become online volunteer scouts to help the government screen website.



Law Enforcement

- Thailand has developed and strengthened its laws to protect teenagers from sexual abuse and exploitation.
 - Penal Code
 - Penal Procedure Code
 - Prevention and Suppression of Prostitution Act
 - Labor Protection Act
 - Immigration Act
 - Child Protection Act
 - Computer Crime Act
 - Anti-Trafficking Act in Persons Act



Law Enforcement (Cont.)

- The **Computer Crime Act (2007)** is first legal tool that Thailand use to address porn websites. (60% of illicit websites in Thailand) With court approval, Ministry of ICT has power to shut down pornographic websites but only those use the host based in Thailand.

Law Enforcement (Cont.)

- On March 31, 2010, the Ministry of Justice convened a seminar for law enforcement officer and the public prosecutors to brainstorm and set a Protocol on Criminal Justice Response to Child Sexual Exploitation.



Law Enforcement (Cont.)

- Some suggestions made by the participants are:
 - to increase value of securities deposited for provisional release to prevent foreign offender from fleeing after being granted bail
 - to develop prevention measures to prevent fleeing by monitoring the foreign offenders on provisional release such as seizing the passport, putting on probation, and setting down regulations during the period of provisional release
 - to improve the system of forwarding information of foreign offenders granted provisional release to related organizations for rapidity and safety

Suppression

- **Child Exploitation Tracking System**, a new Internet tracking software, has been used in Thailand since 2007.
- 15,000 pornographic and improper sex-related websites were blocked in 2007
- In 2009, 2,888 people were charged with having sex with children under 15 in Thailand.



International Cooperation

- Thailand has become a State Party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child since 26 Apr. 1992 and a State Party to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography since 11 Jan. 2006

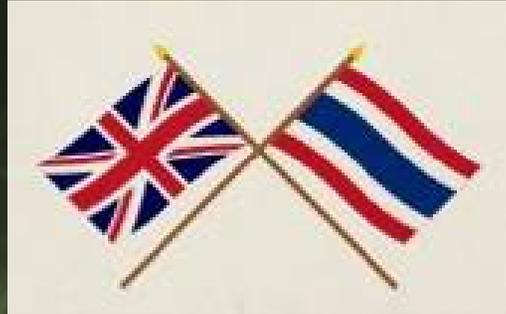
International Cooperation

- Thai government has worked closely with governments, *especially those having law enforcement representatives in Thailand to liaise with Thai law enforcement agencies, law enforcement agencies in other countries and international organizations aiming at preventing known sex offenders, publishers of pornography and their customers from entering Thailand.*

International Cooperation (Cont.)

- A few examples demonstrating a fruitful cooperation between law enforcement agencies of Thailand and foreign countries in apprehending pedophiles.
- **US-Thai law enforcement cooperation**
 - the arrest of Eric Franklin Rosser in 2001
 - the arrest of John Mark Carr in 2006
 - the arrest of Mikhail Georgevich Komov in 2008
(the cooperation between the FBI and the Royal Thai Police)

International Cooperation (Cont.)



- **UK-Thai law enforcement cooperation**
 - 24 Britons were arrested in Thailand between 2004 and 2009
 - The arrest of Roderick William Robinson in 2011
(UK law enforcement agencies--CEOP and SOCA)

International Cooperation (Cont.)

- 5 biggest cases of the DSI since the establishing the Anti-Human Trafficking Center in 2008.



International Cooperation (Cont.)

- Cooperation of Thailand (the DSI and the Royal Thai Police), the US (FBI) and France (French police based at the French Embassy in Thailand)
 - the arrest of Jean Eric Lopez, a 47-year French on charge of sexually abusing child and providing children aged between 12 and 20 to his customers on January 26, 2010.



International Cooperation (Cont.)

- **Cooperation of Thailand (the DSI and the Royal Thai Police), the UK (SOCA)**
 - the arrest of Roger Leslie Pettit, a 67-year British charged with sexual abuse of Thai youths and drug possession on March 29, 2010



International Cooperation (Cont.)

- **Cooperation of Thailand (the DSI and the Royal Thai Police DSI), the Belgian Embassy in Thailand**
 - the arrest of Phillippe Albert Teleshorre Francois, a 41-year Belgian charged with sexual abuse of Thai boys aged under 15 on August 25, 2010.

International Cooperation (Cont.)



International Cooperation (Cont.)

- **Cooperation of Thailand (the DSI and the Royal Thai Police DSI), the British Embassy in Thailand**
 - the arrest of Kevin Victor Rider, a 49-year British charged with sexual abuse of Thai children, both boys and girls on December 9, 2010.

International Cooperation (Cont.)



International Cooperation (Cont.)

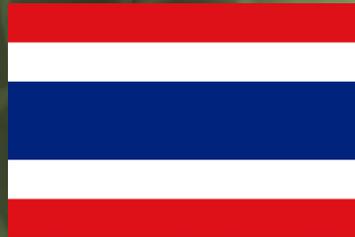
- **Cooperation of Thailand (the DSI and the Royal Thai Police DSI), the Israeli Embassy in Thailand**
 - the arrest of Eyal Tanami, a 35-year Israeli charged with sex-abuse against children aged under 15 and related to several other transnational networks of child-abuse and cyber-pornography on January 4, 2011.

International Cooperation (Cont.)



International Cooperation (Cont.)

- Thailand signed MOU on Combating Human Trafficking with neighboring countries in the Greater Mekong Sub-region
 - MOU between Thailand and Cambodia (May 2003)
 - MOU between Thailand and Laos (July 2005)
 - MOU between Thailand and Vietnam (March 2008)
 - MOU between Thailand and Myanmar (April 2009)



Thailand's challenges

- Being a country located in the areas named as one of the fastest growing sex trade hubs, Thailand, inevitably, faces more challenges to address online child sexual abuse and exploitation



Thailand's challenges (Cont.)

- Investigations into online child sexual abuse and exploitation are hard because of anonymity of predators and the difficulty in locating and identifying the offenders.
- Children's trusting natures and innocence make them perfect targets for perpetrators both peoples they know and those they do not.

Thailand's challenges (Cont.)

- Law enforcement agencies and related agencies lack the experience and expertise to confront the problem.
- Most of law enforcement officers and caregivers can not distinguish situational perpetrators or preferential perpetrators from pedophiles, their actions will be ineffective in terms of prevention and suppression.

Thailand's challenges (Cont.)

- Lack of cooperation from some embassies, who in spite of being in form of charges against their nationals, still provide or re-issue passports to their traveling citizens to replace the passports that are being held while these persons are being investigated.

Thailand's opportunities



CHILD PROTECTION
PARTNERSHIP/CPP

- The Canada-based Child Protection Partnership (CPP) has chosen Thailand as a hub for fighting child exploitation on the Internet in Southeast Asia. Thai police and child protection officials received essential knowledge about the best techniques of evidence gathering and victim identification and technology from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Conclusion

- Thailand can not overlook the problem of online child sexual abuse and exploitation although the research of Save the Children Denmark indicates that traveling sex offenders are now targeting other countries such as Ecuador, Cambodia and Indonesia after Thailand has increased their vigilance and child protection systems.

Conclusion (Cont.)

- The success in addressing online child exploitation, a complex one that needs a tremendous amount of time and expertise and requires all round cooperation at all levels, will arrive only through creative multi-faceted responses that mirror the multifaceted nature of the Internet itself.

Thank You