



Ministers' Declaration

The Risk to Children Posed by Child Pornography Offenders

G-8 Justice and Home Affairs Ministers

(Rome - 30th May, 2009)

Two years ago, we gathered in Munich, Germany, and pledged our collective efforts to enforce the international fight against child pornography. In light of what we learned about this growing threat to children everywhere, we undertook two specific commitments:

- 1) to ensure the implementation and effectiveness of our own laws relating to child pornography, and to taking steps to update and improve those laws when necessary and where appropriate, and*
- 2) to highlight the importance of the fight against child pornography in international dialogue and to encourage cooperation both within and outside the G8.*

Despite our common will to the contrary, there remains an incomplete understanding of the harm child pornography presents. Thus, in some countries, effective legislation has not yet been adopted.

Last year, we welcomed the decision under the G8 Presidency of Japan to reiterate our strong condemnation and denunciation of all forms of sexual exploitation of children and renewed our pledge to continue with the fight against the sexual exploitation of children, noting in particular the alarming flood of child pornography - which are images of sexual abuse of children of children - on the Internet. While we recognize that all forms of child sexual exploitation require our concerted efforts, we also acknowledge that exploitation through child pornography raises new concerns and challenges, as well as poses new risks to children, particularly as a result of the use of new technologies, such as the Internet, to commit these offences.

We are pleased to report today on an important step to address this gap. Last month, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, in the United States, experts from around the world met at a G8-sponsored symposium to discuss and assess the risk to children posed by child pornography offenders. Psychologists, medical doctors, criminologists, professors, sociologists, and computer scientists, among others, from G8 and non-G8 countries met to share the findings from their research and develop consensus on the risks to children associated with child pornography.

The work of this body will be published and, we hope, disseminated worldwide in due course. Today we express our appreciation to all the participating experts and take note of their findings, which are included in the final report of the symposium attached to this Declaration.

The results of this Symposium help make clear the immediate need for effective and comprehensive action against child pornography in every country. They have inspired us today to pledge our renewed efforts to fulfill the commitments we made in Munich guided by these findings. We request that the Roma/Lyon Group consider what additional future work may be appropriate in light of these results, and report back to Justice and Home Affairs Ministers in 2010.