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### **Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**

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#### **Item 3 (b) of the provisional agenda\***

**Thematic discussion: effective crime prevention and  
criminal justice responses to combat sexual exploitation of  
children; sharing of successful practices to combat sexual  
exploitation of children**

### **Thematic discussion: effective crime prevention and criminal justice responses to combat sexual exploitation of children; sharing of successful practices to combat sexual exploitation of children**

#### **Statement submitted by the International Police Association\*\***

The Secretary-General has received the following statement,  
which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of  
Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

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\* E/CN.15/2007/1.

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Children are very often as well victims as women. The psychological impact on the victims of child sexual abuse varies from case to case. For some there maybe no outward sign of the abuse having affected them, but for the others it has resulted in alcoholism, petty crime, mental health problems and, in extreme cases, suicide. Experiencing abuse as a child is also a risk factor that may influence whether someone becomes an offender. However, there is no proven causal link and there are a number of other risk factors. Child sex offender do not fit a standard profile. They come from all social and ethnic backgrounds and any walk of life. They have varying levels of intelligence and interpersonal skills. Most identified child sex offenders act alone. However, there is extensive criminal networking. Offenders networking in order to exchange indecent images and fantasies, to gain access to victims and to justify and “normalize” their offending.

Child pornography includes the production, distribution, exportation, transmission, importation, intention, possession and advertising of child pornography. Experience shows that the internet is used extensively for providing and selling pornographic material.

### **Prevention**

The advice given by the police primarily refers to unknown offenders, where appropriate preventive behaviour and defense actions are promising. By issuing their recommendations, the police do not intend to restrict the personal freedom of women and their children. However, certain precautionary measures are part of safe and conscious behaviour, and this behaviour also sets an example for children (for example, a definite “NO” to hitchhiking). When trying to prevent criminal offences, security must take priority over personal freedom. With offenders who are family members or friends, it is difficult for the police to address the target persons. Here prevention can only stem from a change in awareness. The principle “Anyone who looks away is also guilty”, has to be stressed in order to change the attitude of witnesses. Offences have to be examined thoroughly in order to develop strategies for prevention. By providing information to parents, teachers, and young people, everyone will be made more aware of the problem. Young people should be given the opportunity to pursue their own goals and should be taught to overcome personal conflict constructively. Experience shows that prevention does not function by “trying to talk somebody out of something”, but only by offering new and better alternatives. It makes no sense for example, to tell young people that drugs are dangerous- they know this. We must offer new perspectives.

We urge all governments to give victims (children) of sexual exploitation more attention and assistance.