

BUILDING GLOBAL CAPACITY

ICMEC Regional Offices and Representation focus on:

- ❖ Promoting National and Regional Financial Coalitions Against Child Pornography, an alliance between private industry (financial and IT) and the public sector (law enforcement and NGOs) in the fight against commercial child pornography;
- ❖ Supporting the development and strengthening of laws, treaties, and systems to protect children in the region, including championing ICMEC's Model Child pornography Legislation and model legislation on protection of children from exploitation;
- ❖ Training and capacity building for law enforcement; and
- ❖ Assisting with the expansion of ICMEC's Global Missing Children's Network and promoting the implementation of missing children policies and programs such as a child abduction Alert Plans.

ICMEC Regional Office: Singapore

In June 2009, ICMEC created the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children Limited ("ICMEC Singapore"), a Singapore "public company limited by guarantee", to direct ICMEC's policy and programmatic initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region. The creation of the office demonstrates a strategic decision to expand ICMEC's efforts to a key part of the world, giving ICMEC greater visibility and a platform for growth in the region. ICMEC Singapore has built a diverse regional and has successfully convened seven APAC-FCACP forums in Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.

Working closely with regional bodies and international organizations present in the region, ICMEC Singapore has raised the level of awareness of the existence of child sexual exploitation and online child sexual abuse in the region. ICMEC Singapore is working to bring the issue to the national agenda in select countries in the region.

ICMEC Latin America & Caribbean Representation

In January 2011, the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC) announced the establishment of a Latin America & Caribbean Representation in Brazil (ICMEC LAC), to direct ICMEC's policy and programmatic initiatives in the region. While the representation is still in its infancy, key progress has already been made, slowly giving ICMEC greater visibility and a platform for growth in the region.

Working closely with regional bodies and international organizations present in the region, ICMEC LAC has been able to directly influence strategic regional decisions on child protection matters. Most recently, through this representation, ICMEC received funding for the Missing Children's Research Project from UNICEF's Regional Office to Latin America and the Caribbean. And the region has increased its awareness of missing children's issues exponentially, through the representation's coordination of International Missing Children's Day events in Brazil and other countries, the hosting of the Global Missing Children's Network (GMCN) Conference in Brasilia and a simultaneous event in coordination with two local partners – the Secretariat of Human Rights (SDH) and the Secretariat of Social Development and Income Transfer of Federal District (SEDEST), both governmental agencies in Brazil.

ICMEC Northeast Asia Regional Representation's Achievements

In July 2012, ICMEC approved the establishment of a Northeast Asia Regional Representation in Seoul, South Korea, to further support the work of the Asia Pacific office, continue to build networks amongst law

enforcement, government, civil society and industry in Northeast Asia, and to respond to the need for a common regional approach in addressing the problem of missing and exploited children.

The strategy for the region has been to network and build contacts with relevant civil society, government and industry representatives in the region to maximize ICMEC's resources and impact. In addition, due to the extensive networks with government officials, Congresspersons and police officers of ICMEC's two new regional representatives, Mrs. Jimin Lim and Mr. Jeongmin Hong, ICMEC can influence draft legislation as well as government policy.

The Northeast Asia Regional Representation of ICMEC focuses on:

- ❖ supporting the creation of National Operational Centers, and providing links among them;
- ❖ advancing ICMEC policy, research initiatives and legislative reform alongside of the Singapore office;
- ❖ expanding the Financial Coalition Against Child Pornography, including building regional networks and providing services such as CyberTipline, models, and best practices alongside of the Singapore Office;
- ❖ supporting the Global Missing Children's Network and promoting child abduction Alert Plans;
- ❖ networking and building contacts with governments, police, civil society, and industry; and
- ❖ identifying regional programs including Law Enforcement Training to address specific needs.

The plans for the coming year are to continue to participate in regional and local forums, to enhance cooperation with already established partners, to expand network and official relationships with relevant NGOs and governmental bodies in the region, as well as in South Korea, and to seek feasible and sustainable funding from Samsung and Microsoft Korea through the participating social responsibility programs of each company.

Creating Operational Centers Abroad

The search for missing and exploited children and the protection of children from victimization requires a coordinated, comprehensive, and global approach. That is why ICMEC encourages the creation of new national (or regional) operational centers that are based on a public-private partnership model and that are established with the support of the national government. In light of the worldwide phenomenon of missing and exploited children, it is imperative that child victims be protected and resources be made available to the victims, their families, and the professionals who serve them.

The need to eliminate child abduction and exploitation on a global level is immense; however, an American solution cannot be applied to the problem. Thus, the creation of centers to meet regional and national goals is vital. Such operational centers work closely with government, law enforcement, civil society, and the general public on cases and issues involving missing and sexually exploited children.

National operational centers currently exist in Belgium (Child Focus), Greece (The Smile of the Child), Romania (FOCUS, the Romanian Center for Missing & Sexually Exploited Children), South Africa (South African Centre for Missing & Exploited Children), and the United States (NCMEC). In the fall of 2010, the Southeastern Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (SEEC) opened its doors in Athens and Thessaloniki. As the first regional operational center, SEEC will serve as a hub for 13 countries.

ICMEC is actively working with Belarus and Russia on the creation of national operational centers.