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JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, December 11, 2013

**U.S., U.K. Law Enforcement Launch Task Force to Counter Online Child Exploitation**

The U.S. Department of Justice today hosted a meeting to launch a joint task force between the United Kingdom and the United States to counter online child exploitation.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Mythili Raman of the Justice Department's Criminal Division and U.K. Minister for Policing, Criminal Justice and Victims Damian Green made the announcement.

"Sexual predators are using technology to exploit and harm children, and we need to consider whether technology-based solutions can help curb this abuse and give parents the tools they need to keep their children safe," said Acting Assistant Attorney General Raman. "Law enforcement is committed to protecting children from abuse, but we know that the help and support of the innovators in the tech community are critical to this important effort. We look forward to collaborating with experts throughout the digital industry on the work of this taskforce."

"Child abuse is a vile crime," said Minister Green. "The UK government is working hard with partners in the US to ensure the Internet cannot be used to sexually abuse children or trade child abuse imagery no matter how technically savvy an offender may be. We have set up the US-UK task force to counter online child exploitation and are drawing on the brightest and best minds from across industry, law enforcement and academia to tackle the dark web, catch abusers and make it much more difficult to access child abuse images online. Today experts from the online industry were invited to attend the first task force meeting, and more companies, both large and small, will be invited to join us in the coming months."

The task force – co-chaired by Acting Assistant Attorney General Raman and Minister Green – was established to find new technological solutions to combat child sexual exploitation crimes on the Internet and to reduce the volume of child sexual exploitation images online. The task force members include the FBI, Homeland Security Investigations of the Department of Homeland Security, and the U.K. National Crime Agency's Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre Command.

The growth of crimes involving the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet is a significant law enforcement challenge shared by all countries. An epidemic volume of child sexual exploitation images is stored and transmitted online by offenders whose crimes are increasingly facilitated by evolving and complex technologies. The task force will seek to leverage the intellectual talent and technical resources of the digital industry by forming and collaborating with an Industry Solutions Group, which will include experts from sectors across the industry to help address the varied and complex technical issues and challenges raised by online child exploitation offenses.

The task force will report back to the U.S. Attorney General and U.K. Prime Minister on its achievements in November 2014.

# # #

13-1299

Criminal Division

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