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BOSTON MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CHARGES IN COMMERCIAL CHILD PORNOGRAPHY WEBSITE CASE

WASHINGTON – A Boston man has pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to sell, transport, reproduce, distribute and receive child pornography, and one count of money laundering, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney John L. Brownlee of the Western District of Virginia announced today.

Aaron Campbell Brown entered the plea today before U.S. District Court Judge Samuel G. Wilson at the federal court in Roanoke, Va. Brown pleaded guilty to two counts from a superseding indictment returned on March 28, 2007. The remaining counts, including allegations of conspiracy to produce and advertise child pornography; conspiracy to produce child pornography for importation into the United States; transportation, receipt, distribution, and sale of child pornography; and other money laundering counts, were dismissed.

In his guilty plea, Brown admitted that the conspiracy spanned more than five years and involved a number of commercial child pornography websites. These Web sites included *mexicofriends.com* and *justinsfriends.com*, which were created, developed, hosted, and operated by co-conspirators Brown, Gregory John Mitchel, Timothy Ryan Richards and a cooperating witness. The *mexicofriends.com* and *justinsfriends.com* Web sites contained child pornography and offered memberships to the Web sites for a subscription fee. Through his company NEOVA.NET, Brown provided services and other support to the *mexicofriends.com* and *justinsfriends.com* Web sites, including Web site hosting, technical assistance, and customer payment processing. For example, Brown would assist subscribers to the these Web sites in many ways, including not only processing their credit card transactions, but also troubleshooting access to the child pornography Web sites. He would also field complaints about the nature of the images. Brown disbursed the proceeds generated from the sale of subscriptions to the *mexicofriends.com* and *justinsfriends.com* Web sites to himself, Mitchel, Richards and the cooperating witness.

“One of the highest priorities of the U.S. Attorney’s Office is to protect our children from predators. Mr. Brown was involved not only in exploiting these children, but also in making money from this horrible crime. We hope this case sends a message that we will aggressively pursue anyone who is involved in the exploitation of our children,” said U.S. Attorney John L. Brownlee.

As part of his plea agreement, Brown faces a sentence between 108 and 135 months in prison, a fine of \$250,000, and a period of supervised release up to the remainder of his life following his release from prison. On July 14, 2006, Mitchel was sentenced to 150 years in prison by the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Virginia for his participation in child pornography offenses. On Oct. 26, 2006, Richards was convicted on 10 counts of child

pornography offenses in the Middle District of Tennessee; he faces a minimum of 15 years in prison at his sentencing on Aug. 19, 2007.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph W. H. Mott of the United States Attorney's Office for the Western District of Virginia, Deputy Chief Sherri A. Stephan of the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, and Trial Attorney Bonnie L. Kane of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section. The case is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Computer forensics analysis was provided by Assistant to the Chief for Computer Forensics and Investigations James M. Fottrell and Computer Forensics Specialist Kristi Witsman of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section's High Technology Investigative Unit.

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