



## INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE MISSION CANADA

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#### VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT RECOGNIZES INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION RESULTING IN SEX TOURIST CONVICTION

*IJM brothel rescues in Cambodia contributed to historic conviction of Canadian man for sado-sexual crimes against young children.*

VANCOUVER, BC – July 10, 2006– In recognition of their vital assistance in obtaining the conviction of Donald Bakker one year ago, Jamie Graham, chief constable of the Vancouver Police Department, today presented a Certificate of Appreciation to International Justice Mission. Jamie McIntosh, executive director of International Justice Mission Canada, received the award on behalf of U.S.-based IJM. Commenting on the collaboration between the VPD and IJM, Graham said, "This conviction was obtained through the combined efforts of our dedicated investigators and IJM's team of retired and actively serving law enforcement officials. It is a clear demonstration of IJM's investigative capabilities that they helped us bring the perpetrator of these heinous crimes to justice."

Donald Bakker pleaded guilty in a Vancouver court on June 1, 2005 to 10 counts of sexual assault, seven counts relating to sex crimes against children in Cambodia. He was sentenced the next day to 10 years in prison. Canadian police investigating the case were assisted by IJM, which earlier conducted a related investigation of sex crimes against children in Svay Pak, Cambodia. In that investigation, IJM worked with local authorities to facilitate raids of several brothels that resulted in the rescue of 37 girls, the youngest of whom was five years old. This raid was covered by a primetime network television program and aired in the United States and Canada in January 2004. A Canadian officer was watching one of the airings of the broadcast and found similarities between the Bakker case he was investigating and the footage on the program.

At the time he viewed the network broadcast, the Canadian investigator had already viewed confiscated tapes recorded by Bakker of his acts against children. Canadian officials contacted IJM to learn more about the potential connection. IJM cooperated with Canadian officials to provide additional information and evidence leading to the charging of Bakker on multiple counts of sexual assault on children. IJM investigators provided specific information about victims they had rescued who appeared on Bakker's tape, as well as information about victims they had previously investigated but were unable to rescue.

Amendments to the Criminal Code of Canada allow Canada to prosecute sex offenses committed by a Canadian on foreign soil regardless of that country's own laws. Bakker was the first person to face trial under the 2002 amendments. "Vigorous prosecution under this new law will go far to protect children from sex tourists and we are encouraged to see the diligence of Canadian authorities in seeking justice in this case," said Sharon Cohn, vice president of interventions for International Justice Mission. "This case states it plainly – if

you choose to abuse children at home or abroad you will go to jail. The miles you travel from your home to commit these crimes will not insulate you from justice.” Cohn was the lead attorney in IJM’s investigation in Svay Pak, and stated, “In my experience both with the U.S. Department of Justice and with IJM, I have never been involved in a case involving such savagery against children so young.”

Bakker began serving a 10-year sentence on June 2, 2005. When his conviction was announced, McIntosh said, “This is a bright dawn of justice for both Canada and Cambodia. This ground-breaking conviction serves to ensure that Canadian pedophiles will be held accountable for unspeakable acts perpetrated upon little girls or boys overseas. It is encouraging to see Canada joining the fight to protect vulnerable children in this vital way.”

Bakker was arrested in December 2003 after a prostitute was heard screaming in a Vancouver park. Bakker was following her with a bag that contained a video camera and other equipment, as well as footage of violent sexual acts against adult sex workers.

### **About International Justice Mission Canada**

International Justice Mission Canada is a human rights organization that rescues victims of violence, sexual exploitation, slavery and oppression. International Justice Mission was founded by Gary Haugen who was the Officer in Charge of the U.N. investigation into the Rwandan genocide. A multi-national team of law enforcement professionals and a highly qualified legal staff conduct criminal investigations and collect evidence to rescue victims and bring perpetrators to justice. The work of IJM has been featured on “Dateline” NBC, FOX News, CNN, MSNBC, in Forbes magazine, The New York Times Magazine, The Wall Street Journal and other media outlets.

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