



Confédération internationale  
Société de Saint Vincent de Paul



### **Oral statement for ITEM 3 - ID with the SR on the sale of children - at HRC46, COVID-19 exacerbating the situation of children at risk.**

We thank the Special Rapporteur for her excellent report.

During the COVID-19 pandemic sexual predators have increasingly targeted children.

In March 2020, when Australia entered its initial lockdown period Australian police officers saw those websites crashing, which were hosting online child sexual abuse material because of an increased volume of traffic.<sup>1</sup>

Europol, also reported significant increases in the downloading of CSEM (Child Sexual Exploitation Materials) and attempts to access CSEM websites in March 2020.<sup>2</sup>

In the past few months, law enforcement authorities have seen the volume of child sexual exploitation material shared online increase globally. This is happening as children and sexual offenders are confined at home.

Webcam videos involving offenders and child victims have increased considerably in offenders' forums. These very often include videos depicting children who have been forced or coerced into participating in these criminal activities.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-media/media-releases/predators-exploiting-kids-online-during-virus-second-wave> , accessed on 22.02.2021

<sup>2</sup>

[https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/catching\\_the\\_virus\\_cybercrime\\_disinformation\\_and\\_the\\_covid-19\\_pandemic\\_0.pdf](https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/catching_the_virus_cybercrime_disinformation_and_the_covid-19_pandemic_0.pdf), page 7

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.europol.europa.eu/newsroom/news/exploiting-isolation-sexual-predators-increasingly-targeting-children-during-covid-pandemic>

'Child abusers have created and shared an online grooming manual describing in detail ways of manipulating and exploiting an increased number of children at home and online during Covid- 19<sup>4</sup>

This is a technology enabled crime which requires technology-based solutions, we recommend states to:

Create legislation that allows technology companies to detect and report the online sexual abuse of children and

Support and ensure the development of technologies which interrupt and prevent the sexual exploitation of children.

Repel impunity and ensure psychological treatment for both – survivors and perpetrators.

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<sup>4</sup><https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/may/14/child-abuse-predator-handbook-lists-ways-to-target-children-during-coronavirus-lockdown>