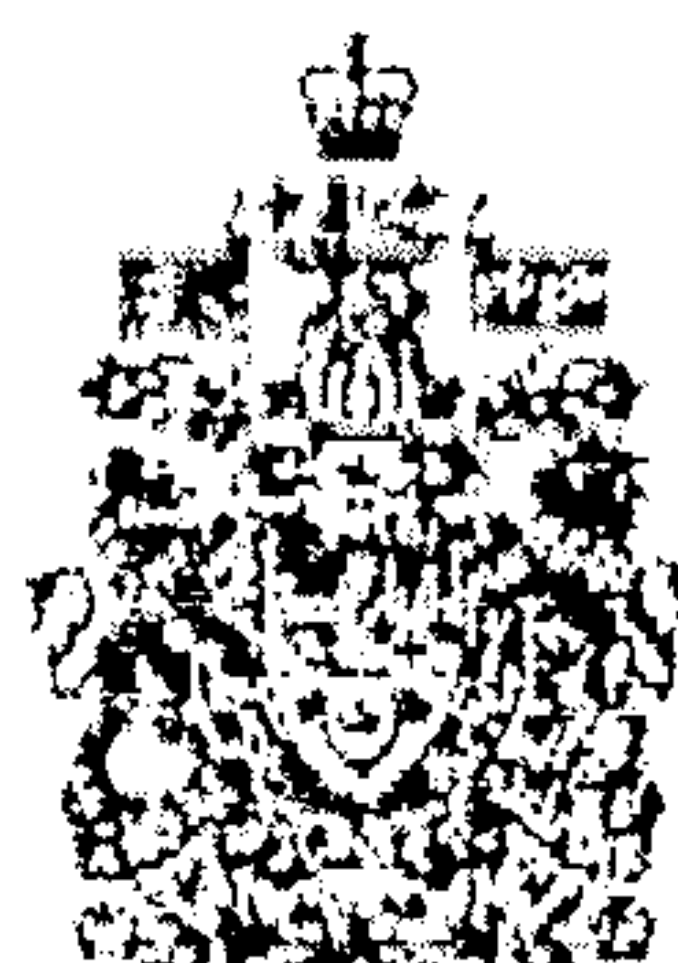


Embassy of Canada



Ambassade du Canada

## **Vancouver Police to Thank Cambodians for Assistance in Securing Conviction of a Canadian Pedophile.**

On May 25<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 at the Cambodiana Hotel, the Vancouver Police Department and H.E. Donica Pottie, Ambassador of Canada will host a ceremony to present certificates of appreciation to members of the Cambodian National Police and NGOs including Licadho, World Vision and the International Justice Mission. The media is cordially invited to attend.

The certificates, signed by the Vancouver Police Department Chief Constable Jamie H. Graham, are being awarded in recognition of the exceptional support that was provided by Cambodian police members and civil society in the 2004 investigation of Donald Bakker. As a result, Mr. Bakker was convicted in Canada of sexually assaulting seven Cambodian children. He was sentenced to 10 years incarceration in June 2005.

Mr. Bakker's conviction was a landmark Canadian case. It was the first conviction under Canadian legislation that permits the Crown to charge Canadians for sexually assaulting children abroad (commonly known as Canada's Child Sex Tourism legislation).

According to the lead Canadian investigator, Inspector Thomas McCluskie, "Cooperation by the Cambodian national police was key to Mr. Bakker's conviction". The Inspector added that "the work of NGOs in identifying and supporting victims was also a major factor in the investigation's success", noting that he was pleased to have the opportunity to present certificates of awareness to police members and NGO professionals.

Canadian Ambassador Donica Pottie noted that "this conviction sends a message to Canadians that sexual contact with children is a crime that can be prosecuted in Canada, no matter where in the world the crime is committed". She indicated that she was delighted that the Vancouver Police had decided to send investigators back to Cambodia to present certificates of appreciation, as this recognition had been well-deserved.

For more information, Cambodian media can contact Phaneth Chheng, Embassy of Canada, at 023 213 470 ext 426.