

**Statement of Rep. Joseph R. Pitts
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe**

**“Belgium’s Chairmanship of the OSCE”
June 28, 2006**

Mr. Minister, I will be leading the U.S. Delegation to the OSCE PA Annual Session taking place in Brussels next week. You may be aware of an initiative we will be raising in Brussels concerning the truly global problem of child pornography.

This is a concern that deserves priority consideration by the OSCE and the participating States is the exploitation and abuse resulting from child pornography. The International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC) surveyed 184 Interpol member countries, including the OSCE participating States. Their recently released study reveals significant gaps in the legal framework that hamper the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies to combat international child pornography networks operating across borders, principally via the Internet. A survey of OSCE countries finds that:

- 6 countries lack any laws criminalizing any aspect of child pornography
- 32 countries lack any legal definition of child pornography
- 16 countries have failed to make the possession of child pornography a crime
- 20 countries lack laws criminalizing the electronic distribution of child pornography via the Internet
- 50 countries do not require Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to report suspected child pornography to law enforcement

Of OSCE countries, only Belgium, France and the United States have enacted comprehensive laws combating child pornography. I say this not to hold up our countries, for we must also recognize that much of the demand originates right here in this country. Ernie Allen, ICMEC president and CEO who will be participating is a special event in Brussels in conjunction with the OSCE PA meeting has observed, “We know that many world leaders do not yet recognize that child pornography has become a multi-billion dollar industry and that the world’s children are paying the price.” Mr. Minister, I urge you to use your leadership position in OSCE to pursue this issue in the lead up to the Brussels Ministerial and beyond.