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Press Release

Silence does not solve problems

On Friday 22 April 2011 a 78 year old man was convicted in the Palmerston North District Court for historic sexual offending over three decades against victims including his own family. The man was found guilty of 21 charges including forcing his own children to have sex and raping his son's girlfriend. He was sentenced to 14 years in jail.

"This is a truly awful example of a person victimising his own family and exerting control over them to try and maintain a pattern of offending without being detected or prosecuted" says Alan Bell, Director of ECPAT Child ALERT. "The damage he inflicted on his victims will last forever – much longer than the 14 year sentence imposed. His son likened him to being worse than a killer and said his father had killed his soul and spirit."

The Police made a statement encouraging all adult victims of historic sexual offences to bring their cases forward with a confidence that they would be fully investigated. The Police work in cooperation with other agencies such as Child Youth & Family and are determined to bring resolution to these cases.

Mr. Bell states "The reluctance of some victims to report sexual offences is understandable. The trauma experienced is something that the victims do not want to re-live in the courts. All too often such cases have resulted in a difficult and stressful process that does not always result on a positive outcome for them. However I believe that any cases of exploitation whether it be physical such as this case or if the sexual exploitation happened on line it should be reported. The investigations will bring any guilty parties to justice and possibly protect other potential victims being similarly exploited. To keep silent does not deter the offenders and does not allow the victim to heal from their abuse. Due to a number of factors many sexual abuse cases are not reported and the offending continues."

ECPAT Child ALERT is a registered charitable trust working to prevent the sexual exploitation of children.

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