

## EU, US in 'global alliance' to hit web child sex

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US Attorney General Eric Holder (L) and EU home affairs commissioner Cecilia Malmstroem give a press conference in Brussels. The 27-nation European Union, the United States and a score of other countries on Wednesday launched a "global alliance" to stamp out trade in online images and videos of child sexual abuse.

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"Child sexual abuse online is a hideous crime and it is also a hidden crime, often perpetrated in the darkest corners of the web," the EU's home affairs commissioner Cecilia Malmstroem said at a joint news conference with US Attorney General Eric Holder.

"It is very hard and painful to talk about it. It is such a horrible thing that sometimes we just want to close our eyes in front of it," she said.

The launch follows an agreement a year ago between Holder and Malmstroem to try to place the fight against the "disgusting crimes" of online child abuse high on the global agenda.

She said images of helpless children being tortured and raped were increasingly circulating on the web, with an estimated one million such images available online and 50,000 new pictures uploaded every year.

"This is why we are here today: to say loud and clear that we are serious about combating child [sexual abuse](#) online," she said.

"When these images are circulated online, they can live on forever. Our responsibility is to protect children wherever they live and to bring [criminals](#) to justice wherever they operate. The only way to achieve this is to team up for more intensive and better coordinated action worldwide", said Malmstroem.

Holder said the initiative "will strengthen our mutual resources to bring more perpetrators to justice, identify more victims of [child sexual abuse](#), and ensure that they receive our help and support,"

Along with the 27 EU members and the US, the members of the Alliance include Albania, Australia, Cambodia, Croatia, Georgia, Ghana, Japan, Moldova, Montenegro, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, the Philippines, [Serbia](#), Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey,

Ukraine and Vietnam.

One of the aims of the alliance is to establish dedicated law enforcement units for these crimes in all countries and make it easier to initiate joint cross-border police investigations.

Countries also committed to making sure that the Interpol international database of [child abuse](#) material grows by 10 percent annually.

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