

UN expert: child porn on Internet increases

16 September 2009, By ELIANE ENGELER , Associated Press Writer

(AP) -- The number of Web sites containing child pornography is increasing and more images show serious abuses, a U.N. expert said Wednesday.

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More than 4 million Web sites worldwide show images of children being sexually exploited, said the U.N. investigator on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, Najat M'jid Maalla.

"There is an increase in the number of sites recorded," she told the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva, citing research by the U.K.-industry group [Internet Watch Foundation](#).

"The number of images showing serious exploitation quadrupled between 2003 and 2007, showing abject images of brutal rape, bondage, oral sex and other forms of debasement," Maalla said. She did not give precise figures.

Over 750,000 people are using child porn sites at any time, said Maalla, a Moroccan medical doctor who was appointed to the unpaid U.N. post last year.

Internet chat rooms have become the main method for child abusers to recruit children, she told the 47-nation council.

A study by the U.S. National Center on Missing and Exploited Children found 83 percent of people who had child pornography possessed images of children aged 6 to 12 years old, 39 percent had images of children between the ages of 3 and 5, and 19 percent had images of children younger than 3 years old, she said.

Maalla urged international cooperation to stop the child pornography industry, which she estimated to be worth between \$3 billion and \$20 billion. She recommended countries share information on sites containing child pornography in order to block them faster.

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