

**Congressman Chris Smith (R-NJ) Expresses "Grave Concern" that the International Criminal Court Remains in the Hague While Questions Still Remain Unanswered About Pedophilia Accusations Against Former High-Ranking Dutch Justice Ministry Official Joris Demmink**

WASHINGTON – APRIL 19, 2013 -- Chairman Chris Smith (NJ-04) of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Human Rights and International Organizations of the Committee on Foreign Affairs continued pressing for answers on pedophilia accusations against former Dutch Justice Ministry Secretary-General Joris Demmink during an April 18 Congressional hearing "Tier Rankings and the Fight Against Human Trafficking."

During the subcommittee hearing, Chairman Smith noted the October 4, 2012 Helsinki Commission briefing he chaired on trafficking in the Netherlands and recalled the serious claims made by a victim from the Netherlands who stated that Joris Demmink, then the Secretary of General of the Ministry of Justice in the Netherlands, raped him. Rep. Smith stated that his office made the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) office aware of the rape allegations made against Demmink, but that to date the Chairman reported that he had not heard a "strong response." Smith reminded the Members of the Subcommittee that the International Criminal Court is at Hague in the Netherlands and that this is of "grave concern" to him.

Chairman Smith noted in his opening statement that the Tier rankings are used to rate whether a country fully complies with the minimum standards for the elimination of sex trafficking specified in the Trafficking in Persons Protection Act. To date, some 186 countries are ranked on the extent of anti-trafficking efforts in three major areas: prevention, prosecution and protection.

"The Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report" states Chairman Smith "is used as the international gold standard and primary means of anti-trafficking accountability around the world." This hearing is the first of several hearings that will closely examine the 2012 Tier rankings of countries. If the Department of State (DOS) determines that a country no longer merits a fully compliant ranking of Tier 1 then the DOS "must downgrade" the country or "risk undermining the credibility and demonstrated power of the TIP Report" said Smith.

Smith is the lead sponsor of H.Res. 62 calling upon the U.S. Secretary of State to move the International Criminal Court from the Hague in the Netherlands, citing the findings of the Helsinki Commission briefing as the rationale for the move.

Cassie Statuto Bevan, President of the Board of Directors, the Rebecca Project for Human Rights, stated after the hearing that she "remains hopeful that the TIP office will take the lack of investigation of Joris Demmink's sexual assault of young boys in the Netherlands and in Turkey seriously and that Holland's Tier 1 ranking will be downgraded."

For more information on the criminal complaints against Dutch Justice Ministry Secretary-General Joris Demmink, please visit [www.ArrestDemmink.com](http://www.ArrestDemmink.com).

The Rebecca Project for Human Rights (RPHR) is a transformational organization that advocates for justice, dignity, and reform for vulnerable women and girls in the United States and Africa. For more information, please visit: <http://www.rebeccaproject.org/index.php>