

## **BREAKING: Hundreds Charged Worldwide In Takedown Of Largest Child Pornography Website**

POSTED BY: DINO PORRAZZO SEPTEMBER 20, 2020

**South Korean national and hundreds of others charged worldwide in the takedown of the largest darknet child pornography website funded by bitcoin**

*Dozens of minor victims who were being actively abused by site users rescued*

WASHINGTON – Jong Woo Son, 23, a South Korean national, was indicted by a federal grand jury in the District of Columbia for his operation of **Welcome To Video**, the largest child sexual exploitation market by volume of content. The nine-count indictment was unsealed along with a parallel civil forfeiture action.

Son has also been charged and convicted in South Korea and is currently in custody serving his sentence in South Korea. An additional 337 site users residing in Alabama, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington State and Washington, D.C. as well as the United Kingdom, South Korea, Germany, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the Czech Republic, Canada, Ireland, Spain, Brazil and Australia have been arrested and charged.

Acting Executive Associate Director Alysa Erichs of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)'s Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Assistant Attorney General Brian A. Benczkowski of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney Jessie K. Liu for the District of Columbia, and Chief Don Fort of IRS Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI) made the announcement.

"Children are our most vulnerable population, and crimes such as these are unthinkable," said HSI Acting Executive Associate Director Alysa Erichs. "Sadly, advances in technology have enabled child predators to hide behind the dark web and cryptocurrency to further their criminal activity. However, today's indictment sends a strong message to criminals that no matter how sophisticated the technology or how widespread the network, child exploitation will not be tolerated in the United States. Our entire justice system will stop at nothing to prevent these heinous crimes, safeguard our children, and bring justice to all."

"Darknet sites that profit from the sexual exploitation of children are among the most vile and reprehensible forms of criminal behavior," said Assistant Attorney General Brian A. Benczkowski of the Justice Department's Criminal Division. "This Administration will not allow child predators to use lawless online spaces as a shield. Today's announcement demonstrates that the Department of Justice remains firmly committed to working closely with our partners in South

Korea and around the world to rescue child victims and bring to justice the perpetrators of these abhorrent crimes.”

“Children around the world are safer because of the actions taken by U.S. and foreign law enforcement to prosecute this case and recover funds for victims,” said U.S. Attorney Jessie K. Liu. “We will continue to pursue such criminals on and off the darknet in the United States and abroad, to ensure they receive the punishment their terrible crimes deserve.”

“Through the sophisticated tracing of bitcoin transactions, IRS-CI special agents were able to determine the location of the Darknet server, identify the administrator of the website and ultimately track down the website server’s physical location in South Korea,” said IRS-CI Chief Don Fort. “This largescale criminal enterprise that endangered the safety of children around the world is no more. Regardless of the illicit scheme, and whether the proceeds are virtual or tangible, we will continue to work with our federal and international partners to track down these disgusting organizations and bring them to justice.”

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