

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **UNICEF urges quick government action on child pornography**

**Bangkok, 11 October 2010** – The UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) is urging Thai authorities to bring to bear “the full force of the law” on those found to be producing, distributing or selling videos or any other material related to the sexual exploitation of children.

Tomoo Hozumi, the UNICEF Representative in Thailand, called upon authorities to “act quickly” on recent newspaper reports about the open display and sale of graphic sexual videos involving children.

“The sale of such material is a blatant and serious violation of children’s rights, and it must not be tolerated for another day.” Hozumi said.

The recent reports in the Bangkok Post newspaper highlighted the display and sale of child pornography DVDs and VCDs along Sukhumvit Road, from Sukhumvit Soi 3 to Soi 21.

“Thailand has made great progress in protecting children from sexual exploitation and other forms of abuse,” Hozumi said. “But by not responding quickly to these reports, it is in danger of damaging its reputation as a country that is working hard to stop the exploitation of children.”

In addition to stopping the sale of such videos, which the reports said featured children from several countries, including Thailand, Hozumi said authorities also should investigate where and how such videos are being produced and distributed to vendors.

“Authorities need to bring to bear the full force of the law on anyone found to be producing, distributing or selling videos or any other materials related to the sexual exploitation of children.” Hozumi said.

Under Thai law, selling pornographic material is a criminal offense carrying a maximum penalty of three years imprisonment and a maximum fine of Baht 6,000.

**For further information, please contact:**

Mark Thomas, UNICEF Thailand, 081 172 9903

Nattha Keenapan, UNICEF Thailand, 086 616 7555