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# *The Weekly Pulse*

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NEWS FROM ORGANIZATIONS AND COALITIONS IN GLOBAL CHILD ADVOCACY



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Vol. 135: U.S.-Australia Joint Statement, InterAction Farm Bill article, and House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing.

May 29, 2023

Quick Summary

**The U.S. and Australia issued a joint [statement](#) about “An Alliance for our Times” to reinforce their commitments in the Indo-Pacific. In this statement, they agreed to build cyber capacity and protect children online stating that:**

“The United States and Australia recognise the importance of supporting the Pacific to adopt and adapt to new digital technologies, and to manage the risks that accompany these, in order to ensure a more peaceful, prosperous, and resilient region. We commit to working together on cyber security capacity building objectives, approaches, and policies in the Pacific, and to listen to Pacific partner countries’ priorities to inform future cooperation. Online child sexual exploitation and abuse is increasingly prevalent, commodified, organized, and worsened by the speed, scale, and scope of digital technologies. We are steadfast in combating all forms of child exploitation and abuse in

our communities, online and internationally. For this reason, we have decided to take steps to establish the Australia-United States Joint Council on Combating Online Child Sexual Exploitation. The Council will develop and facilitate the implementation of a joint, multidisciplinary work plan which includes cooperation in the Indo-Pacific; driving a trauma-informed and victim and survivor-centered approach; research and development; operational opportunities; policy and legislation; prevention, awareness, and outreach; and Safety by Design.”

To read the full statement, click [here](#).

**InterAction published “Preparing for the Farm Bill Reauthorization at a Time of Critical Need.”** It highlights the rise in global hunger and malnutrition and describes how the Farm Bill would combat it, reiterating its importance as a tool for reversing these trends. Title III of the Farm Bill authorizes several important international food aid programs that save lives in times of emergency and address the root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition. These programs include:

- Food for Peace Title II (“Food for Peace”)
- McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program (“McGovern-Dole Food for Education”)
- Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust
- Food for Progress

They call on Congress to “update and re-authorize the Farm Bill food security programs. Support for these programs will save millions of lives, and reduce insecurity and instability in the future, thus advancing United States moral imperatives and national security interests.” To read this article, click [here](#).

Spotlight

**The U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee held a hearing titled “Bring Abducted Children Home”** with [Michelle Bernier-Toth](#), Special Advisor for Children’s Issues, U.S. Department of State; [Jeffery Morehouse](#), Executive Director, Bring Abducted Children Home; [Noelle Hunter](#), Director, International Child Abduction Prevention and Research Office; and [Patricia Apy](#), Legal Expert on International Parental Child Abduction. The hearing focused on international parental child abduction, which is a crime in the US but not in some other countries.

Special Advisor Bernier-Toth stated that “In the United States, international parental child abduction is recognized as a crime, but that is not true in many other countries. Custody laws also vary from country to country, complicating what are already traumatic

cases. The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (the Convention) was developed to provide a uniform civil legal mechanism to handle parental child abduction cases. The concept is simple – that a child wrongfully removed or retained from their country of habitual residence in violation of a parent’s custodial rights should be returned promptly to that country, where competent authorities are best situated to make a custody determination in the child’s best interests.”

Other witnesses spoke about their experience with international child abduction. They called on Members of Congress to give Congress greater authority and oversight capabilities to respond to and aid constituent requests; fund research on international parental child abduction, governmental performance, and impacts on children and families; fund training across relevant sectors to effectively educate and prepare responders and the legal community to consistently uphold the rule of law concerning internationally kidnapped children and victimized families; and help parents wage and win this costly battle to reunite with their victimized children.

To read more about this hearing, click [here](#).

#### Events

- UN SDG Summit 2023 [virtual event](#) **“SDG Summit 2023 - Informal Stakeholder Dialogue - Inputs to the Zero Draft Political Declaration.”** June 7, 2023, at 9 am ET.
- Basic Education Coalition [webinar](#) **“Holistic Education through Different SEL Approaches.”** June 8, 2023, at 10 am ET.
- The Stimson Center [in-person event](#) **“Civilian Protection and Addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Conflict.”** June 14, 2023, at 2 pm ET in Washington, D.C.
- The Lancet [virtual event](#) **“Spotlight on Health and Climate Change: exploring the health voice in climate policy.”** June 29, 2023, at 9 am ET.

#### Reports, Articles & Resources

- Human Rights Watch [article](#) **“Indonesia: Student Media at Risk- College Journalists Face Intimidation, Censorship, Newsroom Closures.”**
- The Washington Post [op-ed](#) **“Caring for seniors is mandatory. Investing in kids is discretionary.”**
- AP News [article](#) **“Mother of 8-year-old girl who died in Border Patrol custody says pleas for hospital care were denied.”**
- UNICEF Voices of Youth [article](#) **“Let's talk about mental health.”**

- Human Rights Watch [article](#) “**Fresh Details on Russia’s Forcible Transfer of Ukrainian Children: Identification of Children, Reunification with Families Should be Prioritized.**”

## Professional Opportunity

**The United States Institute of Peace ([USIP](#)) is seeking to hire a Program Assistant (PA) for its Women, Peace and Security Team in the Center for Thematic Excellence.** The PA will “provide day-to-day programmatic, operational, resource, and administrative support for the Women, Peace and Security Team in the Center for Thematic Excellence. The PA assists in developing and updating informational and programmatic material, coordinates event logistics and event development, supports budget and contract management activities, and conducts basic research as needed. This position is based in Washington, DC and will report to the Director for the Women, Peace and Security Team.” They are seeking to hire ASAP. To learn more and apply, click [here](#).



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