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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**LET THE PUBLIC KNOW WHO/WHERE CONVICTED SEX OFFENDERS ARE,  
MAKE THE SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY PUBLIC NOW – HEAR THE CHILDREN’S  
CRY**

- *The public has a right to know who and where convicted sexual offenders are*
- *Parents need to be even more vigilant in supervising children*
- *Hailing the herculean efforts by police, multi-agency groups and citizens in the searches for Phylisa Prussia and Winshae Barrett*

In response to the abduction of two children in less than a week, possibly by the same male predator, the children’s advocacy organization Hear The Children’s Cry is once again demanding that the Government make the contents of the Sex Offender Registry accessible to the Jamaican public immediately. According to the police, the man seen on CCTV with the first abducted child is currently before the courts on charges of rape and illegal possession of a firearm. Hear The Children’s Cry would like to know, why is such a person out on bail?

Established in July 2014, the Sex Offender Registry is managed by the Department of Correctional Services, but the names, addresses and other important details it contains about convicted sex offenders are available to only the police, persons engaged in professional counseling of sex offenders, persons managing educational institutions where they are enrolled or seeking to be enrolled, persons managing facilities that treat vulnerable persons, as well as

prospective employers and employees of sex offenders. Parents, families and the general public do not have access to the information on convicted sexual offenders.

Children's Advocate Betty Ann Blaine, Founder of Hear The Children's Cry, points out that the abduction of not one but two children, believed to be by the same man, in one small rural community in the past few days, illustrates the critical need for public access to this Registry, as well as increased alertness by families and communities in the interest of keeping children safe. Since we're told by the experts that pedophilia is incurable, the child advocate argues, we are bound with the responsibility to protect the children.

"It is inconceivable that a predator could abduct two children so swiftly, and apparently so effortlessly, in the same community," she says, noting further:

"Hear The Children's Cry offers our sincere sympathy to the families of nine year old Phylisa Prussia, now recovered, and of 13-year-old Winshae Barrett, who is still missing. This has got to be a parent's worst nightmare. We pray for the safe recovery of Winshae, and for the healing from trauma, and the well being of both girls.

"Hear The Children's Cry is urging all parents, family and community members to recognize that we need to be even more vigilant about protecting our children," Mrs. Blaine continues, "We can never take their safety for granted – not even for a moment.

"We have to recognize that times have changed, and that children are more vulnerable than ever before. This means that children have to be more closely supervised by parents and family members, and that community members must be "the eyes and ears" in order to ensure children's safety. It means warning the children to be wary of strangers; it means warning older children and care givers about the need to be extra careful of the children they are supervising.

"On the positive side, Jamaicans can be truly proud of the herculean efforts made by so many caring citizens, to find these two children. We say, very well done, to the over 500 strong, police-led, multi-agency groups and community members involved in these intensive searches for Phylisa and Winshae. This continues to be a real blessing. We also applaud the use of the CCTV cameras in Bath, St. Thomas, and we urge the speedy deployment of this vital technology across all of our communities islandwide."

Hear The Children' s Cry, which is a member of the Global Missing Children Network (GMCN), has been working on the serious national challenge of missing and abducted children since the abduction and murder of Ananda Dean 13 years ago. The organization has recently launched a social media campaign asking parents and family members to contact Hear The Children's Cry if their child has been missing for a long period of time.

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