



# Dutch Pedophile Acquitted Because of Lack of Evidence

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THE CAMBODIA DAILY

The Siem Reap Provincial Court yesterday acquitted Dutch pedophile Sebastian Reuyl of molesting five children, citing a lack of evidence, court officials said.

"He was acquitted due to a lack of proof," said Judge Sok Sarin. "If the prosecutor or plaintiff appeal, we'll see what happens then."

Mr. Reuyl, who has been convicted of sexually abusing a boy in the Netherlands, was charged in October with committing indecent acts against four boys and one girl between the ages of 7 and 13. Anti-pedophile NGO Action pour les Enfants (APLE) said earlier this month that Mr. Reuyl has been living with three of the children he was accused of sexually abusing, a violation of the terms of his bail agreement.

Chhor Lytha, Mr. Reuyl's lawyer, called yesterday's verdict fair. "This is justice," said Mr. Lytha. "According to the evidence and the children's testimony, he is not guilty."

Mr. Reuyl also professed his innocence in an interview on Tuesday, and accused the media of presuming his guilt. "I am innocent," he said. "The media convicted me already before my trial.... It's trial by media."

The Dutchman accused child protection NGOs of using his 2004 conviction of sexually abusing a minor in the Netherlands to label him a threat to children in Cambodia.

"The case in the Netherlands is one case, and it's more than 10 years ago. In Holland, I made mistakes.... Now, it is 10 years later and my life is completely different," he said.

Mr. Reuyl was convicted by a court in the Netherlands of sexually abusing a 12-year-old boy who attended a

sailing camp he owned and operated, and was later convicted of threatening and harassing the victim and his family, according to Dutch journalist Peter de Vries, who followed the case.

The pedophile was several times the subject of Mr. de Vries' TV show: "Peter R. de Vries: Crime Reporter," and the journalist came to Cambodia in 2010 to report on Mr. Reuyl.

Speaking by telephone from the Netherlands, Mr. de Vries called Mr. Reuyl a "notorious pedophile," and a persistent danger to children.

"In my opinion, and I was there, I was in Cambodia, he is a very dangerous person and nobody should [allow] him to be alone with children," he said. "That's his personality. That [abuse] will continue this year, the next year and after that."

APLE country director Samleang Seila conceded that the testimony given by Mr. Reuyl's alleged

victims was inconsistent with their earlier statements to police.

But, Mr. Seila said, "It was obvious that he paid the victims and the families," adding that although APLE cannot appeal a criminal case, the organization would encourage the provincial court prosecutor and prosecutor general of the Appeal Court to do so.

"This verdict means he will be a threat to the safety of children," he added. "We will urge the government to deport him from the country based on the immigration law. He is a dangerous person, so they can do that."

Provincial anti-human trafficking police chief Duong Thavary, however, said that unless he commits another crime, Mr. Reuyl is a free man.

"I know that he was with the children, but there was no proof," Ms. Thavary said. "If he does it again, we'll take action.... Let's see."