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## Mexico a Haven for Child Abductors; U.S. State Department Ineffective at Getting them Back

February 17th, 2011 by Robert Franklin, Esq.

*The following was submitted by a long-time Fathers and Families supporter.*

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I am writing this to bring to your attention the gross negligence and indifference of our country in the recovery of children who have been abducted by a parent and taken to a foreign country.

Our story starts when my boyfriend's son, Andrew Richardson, was 16 months old. On August 7, 2007, my boyfriend, Trevor Richardson, went to pick up Andrew from his daycare center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. When Trevor arrived to take Andrew home, he discovered that Andrew's mother, Mariana Farah Saldivar, had not brought Andrew to the daycare center thereby violating custody orders. Trevor's ex-wife was able, despite Andrew's expired Mexican passport and no authorization from either Trevor or the Milwaukee County Family Court, to take Andrew to Mexico.

Because of these actions by Andrew's mother, the State of Wisconsin issued two felony charges and a warrant for her arrest. However, despite her known location in Mexico, the FBI refused to request her extradition from Mexico.

So Trevor pursued the return of his son using the only legal tool available to him, the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, to which Mexico is a signatory country. According to the treaty, the decision regarding Andrew's return to his father in the USA should have been decided in less than two months. But the abduction of Andrew happened over three years ago, in August of 2007. So you can see that the Mexican government has failed miserably to comply with the Hague Treaty.

Trevor's case recently (January 2011) took a turn for the worse. During this most recent visit to Mexico (with his parents and me) to participate in the Mexican court-ordered proceedings that are to determine Andrew's placement under the Hague Convention, Trevor was falsely accused by Andrew's mother of several criminal actions.

Due to the unstable/unpredictable nature of the Mexican legal system and the risk of being arrested under Mariana's false accusations, as well as threats of physical harm by Mariana's father, we were forced to flee Mexico before Trevor's last court appointment could be completed.

Most disappointing for all of us this January was that we were not able to see Andrew during the court-scheduled visitation. During the three and a half years that Andrew has been sequestered in Mexico by his mother and her family, Trevor has only been allowed to see him twice.

This latest turn of events underscores the disadvantage that Trevor (and so many other left-behind parents like him) have faced and continue to face with little or no assistance from our State Department. Now Trevor cannot see his son until the criminal charges falsely filed against him in Mexico have been overturned/dismissed. Tragically, due to these circumstances, he cannot even participate in Hague Convention proceedings that are supposed to decide whether or not the Mexican government will allow the return of his son.

It is most unfortunate that the U.S. government has failed Trevor and his son in so many ways, starting with the ability of Mariana to illegally take Andrew with an expired passport to Mexico in violation of the custody orders and without the consent of his father, to the refusal of the FBI to extradite Mariana for criminal charges, to the indifference of our State Department in this and almost all parental child abduction cases. What's worse is that in our research for developing Andrew's website ([www.bringandrewhome.com](http://www.bringandrewhome.com)) we have seen countless similar cases in many countries.

Mexico continues to be the most flagrant non-compliant Hague Convention signatory. This year (2010), the State Department's annual compliance report labels Mexico "Non-Compliant". The most frightening part is that Mexico has, by far, the most Hague cases as compared to any other country. Furthermore, the number of applications and unresolved cases continues to climb every year. We are approaching a crisis with Mexico regarding international child abductions and we must take action to prevent and remedy these abductions.

My sharing of this story with you is a plea for the media to help us bring awareness of our case and the cases of all of the other left-behind parents as well as their family and friends, and to call on our State Department to take action on our behalf as they did in the highly publicized Sean Goldman case (<http://www.bringseanhome.com>). In that case, Secretary of State Hilary Clinton and Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) were directly involved with the case in

Brazil, which helped bring Sean home to his American father.

Parental child abduction is considered child abuse and has lasting psychological and emotional effects on both the child and the left-behind parent. It is so important for the media to take up stories like ours and to expose our government's failure to protect both its citizens who are left-behind and its children who have been abducted.

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[Victory: Solomon Metalwala's Daughter Comes Home to Dad](#)  
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[F & F Criticizes NJ 'Deadbeat' Roundup in Jersey Journal, NJ.com](#)  
(12/13/11)

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[Rein in Orange County Department of Child Support Services](#)  
(Orange County Register, 12/10/11)

[Yahoo's Carol Bengle Gilbert Slams F & F's Campaign to Reunite Solomon Metalwala with His Daughter Maile](#)  
(12/6/11)

[Action Alert: F & F Joins with ACLU to Fight Michigan Legislation Targeting Husbands, Boyfriends](#)  
(12/5/11)

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[Huffington Post: State Receives Hundreds Of Messages Supporting Reunion of Sky's Sister And Father](#) (12/5/11)

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[F & F Appears on KIRO TV in Seattle: 'Maile Metalwala Needs to Be Reunited with Her Father' \(Video Available\)](#)  
(12/3/11)

[News.Gather.com: Sky Metalwala Shocking Update: Mother Contradicts Herself](#)  
(12/3/11)

**F & F Discusses Metalwala Campaign on Newslines with Ken Schram on KOMO News Radio in Seattle**  
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[WA DSHS Responds to Fathers and Families' Campaign to Reunite Solomon Metalwala with Daughter Maile](#)