

Attorneys Jeffery M. Leving and James Hagler Advise State Department Officials on International Child Abduction

CHICAGO, Nov. 3 / On October 27, Attorneys Jeffery Leving and James Hagler (<http://dadsrights.com>) were tapped as resources in a private meeting with high ranking State Department officials to provide strategic recommendations on enforcement of the Hague Convention on International Child Abduction cases in Mexico, Brazil, and other non-compliant countries. They also discussed the urgent need to convince non-participating countries to sign this international treaty to protect American children from abduction. Department of State Division Chief Marco Tedesco of the Department of Children's Issues told Leving and Hagler that President Obama's agenda may address concerns regarding Japan's failure to return any allegedly abducted US children during an upcoming diplomatic visit to Japan.

In Brazil, State Department reports indicate that courts show pervasive bias in favor of Brazilian mothers and have a history of treating convention cases as custody disputes. In the nationally reported case of Sean Goldman, a Brazilian court gave the child's father, a US citizen, access to his son, Sean. However, David Goldman, Sean's father, remains in Brazil, financially destroyed and unable to get permission from the Brazilian court to come home with his boy to the USA.

An estimated 101 US children have been abducted to Japan by non-custodial parents and reportedly, not one has been returned to the US. In October, Christopher Savoie was arrested in Japan for trying to regain US court ordered custody of his children, who were allegedly abducted there by their Japanese mother. His children watched his police apprehension in front of the US Consulate while he pleaded with Consulate officials to open the gates. Savoie's release after 17 days in prison allowed him to return home but was accompanied by an order to leave Japan and have no further contact with his children.

Leving and Hagler hope that their recommendations and advice given during the meeting contribute to improvements in Hague enforcement and bring abducted US children back home to their parents.

Known for advocating strong family bonds, attorney Jeffery Leving and his firm have reunited fathers and children since 1981. He helped reunite Elian Gonzalez with his father in Cuba, winning international support. In August, Leving and Hagler were selected as expert resources for the first White House Town Hall Meeting on Responsible Fatherhood.