



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on February 4, 2011

Pressure Mounts on Europe to Free Swedish Home-schooler

Nine-year-old Domenic Johansson has been in state custody since he was abducted from his parents by armed police while waiting to take off to India. The family had run afoul of the local social services after deciding to home school, which was legal at the time.

Later, in addition to charging that the parents had been homeschooling without a permit, officials charged that the boy had not received all of his “optional” vaccines and that he had a painless cavity in his baby teeth. The family was planning to treat the cavity with a family member who is a dentist in the mother’s home country of India.



The case caused an [international uproar](#), leading to the involvement of numerous human-rights groups in Sweden and around the world. A flurry of global media coverage put the spotlight on Sweden’s “social system” and sparked a massive outcry across the globe.

The U.S.-based Home School Legal Defense Association, the Alliance Defense Fund, the Nordic Committee on Human Rights, and others have been working ever since to get the case heard at the European level, since it appears that justice will not be obtained easily through Swedish courts. But seven months after the application, the European human-rights tribunal has not assigned the case a number. It also has ignored an emergency motion filed by the litigants.

Now, the European Union-based Alliance of Romania’s Families, a pro-family public interest group, is jumping on board as well, proclaiming solidarity with the torn-apart Johansson family and urging the European Court to hear the case in a timely fashion. “The proper resolution of this case is of utmost institutional importance to Romanian families, home educators and the protection of both parental and children’s rights,” the organization said in a [letter](#) to the court.

“The Alliance of Romanian Families would like to register its voice of solidarity with the Johansson family. It would also request that the Court show greater expediency in dealing with at least the request for emergency measures and provision of a case number,” it said. The letter also noted that no crime or abuse had even been alleged — the sole justification for seizing the boy was homeschooling.

The Romanian group also blasted the court’s apparent bias in processing cases. “The ECHR appears to swiftly accept cases involving issues which are generally subversive to family and Christian values,” the organization’s president, Peter Costea, told [LifeSiteNews.com](#) in an e-mail. “We note that it recently accepted for review the case of two Russian females whose request for a marriage certificate had been denied by Russian authorities.”

Michael Donnelly, the director of international affairs for the Home School Legal Defense Association, also criticized the European court’s delay. He told *The New American* that Sweden was behaving like a “totalitarian” state that had to be reined in, and that the group’s members were writing letters to the



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court urging a quick resolution.

Along with others working on the issue, Donnelly indicated that it was unusual for the court to take this long in at least assigning a number for the case. The court could and should order Sweden to pay the family monetary damages and release the boy immediately, he said, acknowledging that money could never undo the harm that has already been done. The ECHR is charged with enforcing the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty.

Alliance Defense Fund attorney Roger Kiska, who is also working on the case, [told *The New American*](#) last year that the Swedish regime had violated at least three fundamental human rights: the right to family, the right of the family to educate the child at home, and the family's right to travel and move to India. "We're grateful for all of the international support, and we look forward to our day in court — we have the law on our side," he said.

Sweden is a party to European human-rights treaties, and therefore is bound by law to respect human rights. That's why the Johansson family's supporters around the world are so anxious to get the case heard in the European court. "There is nothing else that I think about except that we're going to get Domenic back," Christer Johansson, the boy's father, told *The New American*. "Domenic is coming home. We will not accept anything else."

Sweden's social system has come under increasing international scrutiny in recent months, with new reports over the last few days illustrating the frequency of these sorts of tragedies. The Moscow-based Russia Today TV network, for example, [highlighted](#) a case of a Russian mother in Sweden whose 13-year-old twins were seized recently over allegations of "psychological" issues.

The network interviewed a series of experts, who said these cases are a common phenomenon. One Swedish family lawyer said children could be abducted "even if there is no evidence of problems." Another explained that government-sponsored child trafficking was a lucrative business. An international law expert noted that Sweden is a "consensus" country, so most people just go along with whatever the government does. But the international community is paying attention.

But problems in Sweden go even deeper. A [Swedish government report](#) released in 2009 revealed that half of all children who had gone through Sweden's foster care system over the last 70 years had been sexually abused — in the system. "We also have serious examples of how perpetrators were protected rather than the children's stories being heard," [the man](#) who led the study told a Swedish TV station.

The top cop in Uppsala, one of Sweden's biggest cities, was recently [busted for rape, child rape, sex trafficking](#), and more. He was arrested on his way to meet a 14-year-old girl. And a man convicted of raping children was [exposed](#) earlier this week running three Swedish high schools.

Sweden also came under international fire last year when it passed a new law [banning home schooling](#) and "independent" schools providing religious instruction. Starting this summer, all schools in the Scandinavian kingdom must teach the same exact government curriculum, which, among other things, has as a goal the elimination of "gender" differences.

News organizations around the world have picked up and intensely followed the Johansson story as events unfold. From Poland to Vietnam — and especially in the United States with WorldNetDaily, LifeSiteNews, Christian Broadcasting Network, and many more — media reports have blasted the Swedish authorities' actions. According to critics, the Domenic Johansson case has severely tarnished the international reputation of the Swedish regime. At least one other family had their child seized by the state over homeschooling, but they prefer anonymity in their quest to recover their child.



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