

# Children abducted by their mother return to Quebec

After four years of absence

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(CP) - Kidnapped by their Costa Rican mother in 1999, two seven- and ten-year-olds will spend the holidays with their father, a Quebec resident, after a lengthy legal debate that culminated in the signing of a convention between the two parties.

"I'm so happy to see my kids again after four years. It's total happiness. It's a beautiful story of Christmas reunion. I live a lot of emotions," exclaimed Daniel Bédard, father of the two young, at the exit of the court, Monday, at the courthouse of Quebec.

"Thanks and good Christmas to all. I recognize the heart of Canada," said Sandra Specht Ubath, mother of two children.

She brought them back to Canada on the night of Saturday to Sunday. The couple has been separated for more than four years. Specht Ubath, 44, served a seven-month pre-trial detention between February and September in Quebec City for abducting her children, Dominic and David, and fled to Costa Rica on December 1, 1999.

With an international arrest warrant, she was arrested on February 12, 2003, in Atlanta, USA, in the absence of her children.

While in detention, the children were staying with their maternal grandmother in Costa Rica. Mr. Bédard obtained from the Superior Court the legal custody of children in Quebec. Ms. Specht Ubath had also secured their custody in Costa Rica.

Given that the two parties signed an interim agreement on November 17, given the accused's pre-trial detention and subsequent probation, and given the lawyers' common suggestions, Gaston Desjardins J. gave absolution conditional, on Monday, to Mrs. Specht Ubath.

She is therefore not sentenced for the offense she has committed but must comply with certain conditions, particularly with regard to her travel outside Costa Rica and those of her children.

The interim agreement is in effect until the end of August 2004, after which parents will resume talks on shared custody of their children.

Dominic and David will stay in Costa Rica but will spend the holidays with their dad and will be able to see him for a week in the spring and a month this summer.

Desjardins JA congratulated the lawyers for their "open-mindedness" and thanked the people who collaborated on the file.

In video, see the report of Sophie Bérubé.

Source: <https://www.tvanouvelles.ca/2003/12/22/des-enfants-enlevés-par-leur-mère-rentrent-au-quebec>