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Lord Chief Justice's judgment sets a new standard in UK human rights

JUSTICE, the all-party legal human rights organisation, today welcomed a 'careful and balanced' judgment by the Lord Chief Justice in the case of Robert Thompson and Jon Venables.

Kate Akester, Criminal Justice Director at JUSTICE, said: 'Lord Woolf has produced a thoughtful and reasoned decision, in line with the requirements of the Human Rights Act. He has taken into account several key factors which have emerged in the course of this case:

- That rehabilitation and release at the optimum moment is in the public interest;
- The impact upon the victim's family;
- The exceptional progress made by the two young men while in detention, and the interests of their welfare.

'This is a careful and balanced judgment. Lord Woolf has made it clear that detention must have a constructive purpose. Although his decision means that the tariff expires today, it will still be for the Parole Board to set a release date, once it is satisfied that the young men no longer pose a risk to society.'