



The future of international adoption: some reflections and some questions

ENOC Conference, Helsinki
September 19th-21th 2017

Bruno Vanobbergen
Flemish Children's Rights Commissioner
@KRCommissaris

Why putting this topic on the agenda?

- Last year in Belgium: several public debates on international adoption
- Our office also received several complaints by adoption families and by adopted children
- The voice of adopted children and young people is often missing in the public debate
- In dealing with complaints the need for more collaboration between our different offices becomes the more and more important
 - Sharing views and experiences
 - Close collaboration in dealing with individual complaints

International adoption: some reflections

- Adoption goes along with often mixed feelings among adopted children. It is for them often difficult to express these feelings.
- “The best interest of the child – paramount consideration” (article 21, CRC)
- The need for more international monitoring of the adoption chain/process
- When is a child adoptable? (age, living in poverty, parents still alive,...)

International adoption: some reflections

- The right to have access to information about the parents living in the country of origin
- Communication with parents and family members in the country of origin?
- Protecting the integrity of adopted children (privacy, receiving a new name,...)

International adoption: some questions

- How many complaints does your office receive about international adoption on a yearly basis?
- How do you evaluate 'the best interest of the child' in dealing with cases related to international adoption?
- Do you collaborate with other ENOC members in dealing with these cases?
- Is there a need for a more close collaboration between our different offices? And if so, how can we realise this?