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Joint Council of Europe and European Commission Conference
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**CHALLENGES IN ADOPTION PROCEDURES IN EUROPE:
ENSURING THE BEST INTERESTS S OF THE CHILD**

30 November - 1 December 2009

Strasbourg, Palais de l'Europe
Room 1

DRAFT PROGRAMME

**The revised European Convention on the Adoption of Children:
From regulation to practice**

- 8.00 – 9.00** Registration of participants
- 9.00 – 9.15** Opening speech
Maud de BOER-BUQUICCHIO, Deputy Secretary General, Council of Europe
- 9.15 – 10.15** **Session I – Child in the adoption process**
Chair and Moderator - Werner SCHÜTZ, Directorate General for Civil Law and Legislation (retired), Federal Ministry of Justice, Austria, Chair of Working Party which drafted the 2008 Adoption Convention
- **The case-law of the European Court of Human Rights concerning adoption**
Isabelle BERRO-LEFEVRE, Judge at the European Court of Human Rights
 - **The child's legal status in adoption**
Nigel LOWE, Professor of family law, Cardiff University, United Kingdom
 - **The child's consultation and consent in adoption**
Speaker/s TBC
 - **An example of national practice**
Jeyran RAHMATULLAYEVA, Deputy Chair holder, State Committee on Family, Women and Children's issues, Azerbaijan (TBC)
- 10.15 – 11.00** General discussion
- 11.00 – 11.15** *Coffee break*
- 11.15 – 12.00** **Session II – Adults in the adoption process**
Chair and Moderator – Frédérique GRANET, Professor of Family Law, Robert Schumann University, Responsible for legal studies at the International Commission on Civil Status, Strasbourg, France
- **The consent of the birth parents to the adoption**
Brian SLOAN, Lecturer in Law, King's College, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom
 - **Who can adopt? Taking into account societal changes**
Robert WINTEMUTE, Professor of Human Rights Law, King's College, London, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom
 - **An example of national practice**
Riitta LEPPINIEMI, Attorney at law, Helsinki, Finland (TBC)
- 12.00 – 12.45** General discussion
- 12.45 – 2.15** *Lunch break*

2.15 – 3.00

Session III – Role and responsibility of state authorities

Chair and Moderator – Ulrike JANZEN, Chair of the Council of Europe's committee on family law (CJ-FA), Ministry of Justice, Germany

- **The private and public bodies responsible for adoption procedures**
Letitia DUMONT, Lawyer, Brussels, Belgium
- **Preliminary enquiries to the adoption**
Maria HERCZOG, Committee on the Rights of the Child
- **Making national adoption easier: the view from Russia**
Olga KHAZOVA, Professor, Institute of State and Law, Moscow, Russian Federation

3.00 – 3.45

General discussion

3.45 – 4.00

Coffee break

4.00 – 4.45

Session IV – Access to one's origins: striking the right balance

Chair and Moderator – Ambassador Irma ERTMAN, Council of Europe Thematic Coordinator on Children (TBC)

- **Access to one's origins as a human right**
Professor Dragoljub POPOVIĆ, Judge, European Court of Human Rights
- **Access to one's origins from a psychological point of view**
Philip JAFFE, Professor of children's rights, Director of the University Institute Kurt Bösch, Sion, Switzerland
- **Experience of an adopted person**

4.45 – 5.30

General discussion

5.30

End of work

8.00

Dinner

Intercountry Adoption: lessons learned, problems and perspectives

9.00 – 9.45 Session V –The 1993 Hague Convention on Adoption: Protecting the best interests of children in intercountry adoption

Chair and Moderator – TBC

- **Review of the operation of the 1993 Hague Convention: a global perspective**
Speaker TBC
- **How the 1993 Hague Convention helps to Protect the best interests of children in inter country adoption**
Jenny DEGELING, Secretary, Hague Conference on Private International Law
- **The role and responsibilities of Receiving Countries: the importance of the inter country adoption technical assistance programme**
Laura MARTINEZ MORA, Coordinator Technical Assistance programme

9.45 – 10.30 General discussion

10.30 – 10.45 *Coffee break*

10.45 – 11.30 Session VI – The right to a family in the legal international framework and in the practical experience

Chair and Moderator – Jean-Marie CAVADA, MEP, Member of the European Parliament

- **The right to a family: analysis of the existing legal framework**
Isabelle LAMMERANT, docteur en droit de l'Université Catholique de Louvain et expert national et international en matière d'adoption et de droits de l'enfant.
- **The long-term institutional and foster care and the best interests of the child**
Kevin BROWNE, Liverpool School of Psychology (TBC)
- **Preventing abuses in adoption procedures: suggestions and best practices**
Marlène HOFSTETTER, *Terres des Hommes*, Head of International Adoption Sector
- **The case of Romania**
Edmond MCLOUGHNEY, President UNICEF Romania
- **The case of Bulgaria**
Speaker TBC

- 11.30 – 12.30** General discussion
- 12.15 – 2.00** *Lunch break*
- 2.00 – 2.45** **Session VII – Towards a European Adoption Policy?**
- Chair and Moderator - Salla SAASTAMOINEN, Head of Unit JLS.E.2 “Civil Justice” (European Commission)
- **Thinking ahead of the present situation: is a European adoption policy desirable?**
Jean-Marie CAVADA, MEP, Member of the European Parliament
 - **The results of the study carried out by the European Parliament**
Speaker TBC
 - **The results of the study carried out by the European Commission**
Patrizia DE LUCA, European Commission, Directorate General Justice, Freedom and Security, Civil Justice Unit
 - **Experience of an adoptive parents: the lack of recognition of adoption decisions as an obstacle to the free movement of person in the European Union**
Speaker TBC
- 2.45 – 3.30** General discussion
- 3.30 – 3.45** *Coffee break*
- 3.45 – 4.15** **Theme VIII – Conclusions and Recommendations**
- Conclusions**
Salla SAASTAMOINEN and Regina JENSDÓTTIR
- Recommendations**
Chairs and Moderators
- Final remarks**
Alain BRUN acting Director, Directorate E "Justice", Directorate-General Justice, Freedom and Security, European Commission
- 4.15 – 4.30** End of work – Closing