

## DRAFT

Notes taken from Video Conference Lynelle Long  
9 June 2019 - eventing (1,5 hour)

Question X: about the factsheets. About illicit practice. How to know what is illicit. Like donations.

So this is the kind of info they give. As toolkit. Fantastic.

Lots of discussion and debate.

One interesting one about fees. How do agencies, government, turn a blind eye to the outrageous cut? When you hear what goes in around the world.

Being a receiving country, we jump to conclusions. But it may not be so black of white.

I share something, but don't share it outside. It is not good.

One sending country made the point, we don't understand either why it costs that much. Because we here don't have high costs. I never thought about that. For me it made me think twice about my view about sending and receiving countries.

Related to that, it became clear that most countries use outsourcing. Only Australia and the Czech Republic don't source out to agencies. But some of the countries, why the hell have the US so many agencies. Central authorities made clear that is due to regulations. That is why there are such discrepancies between countries.

That is why there is Hague. Now I discovered there is a huge number of Greek adoptions to the US. SO it happened long before the seventies and eighties.

I now understand more.

When this convention is discussed between countries.

UNCRC 200 countries. Hague 150.

It is fair enough that child rights convention is the rights base. A loose framework on how to deal with children. Then you have Hague, together with that. A minimum safeguard on how to deal with ica. UNCRC is much larger. Hague is based on child rights and to define the nuances of adoption.

Together they are the basis. If you do adoptions, you have to do the base line like this.

You don't have to do adoptions, but if you do, you stick to these minimal safeguards. Have a Central Authority. So, that kind of makes sense.

Question: are they accountable if the agreement is not followed

L: Depends. Framework. But if enshrined in law they can be held accountable.

Yes, I had to put my head around it. Hague is not a law. It is like a framework, which countries take into their laws. In this toolkit and the things they talk about. What we do with the historical practices. Do we have a responsibility?

Feeling they want to respond. But legally on since they ratified the Hague. SO for us, adopted before, unless what happened to us it is very difficult to stand on it.

They actually take it to these Commissions. Not all countries are Hague countries. Not all black and white.

They were discussion various scenario. Do fit into Hague box. But no, the majority of that cases fall within 'we are adopted outside Hague'. But we have to understand, as adoptees, that it is not always in their domain to deal with us. Often outside of their scope.

Essentially it means we have to go to every country we came from. But I guess as group, like Guatemala adoptees, is really to tackle things and see if it fell inside Hague. Otherwise deal with the country individually. Hague cannot help you very much.

Question: Adoption and fostering is still in pioneer stage. Enforcement. Adoptees and fostered have to united. I am very new. Overwhelmed by all the organisations. SO many different objectives, and even on adoptees, it is hard to unite.

L: Especially from countries before Hague. We have to unite. Domestic law to be enshrined, if they become a Member later on. Try to get you head around, where is the scope together with the Domestic adoptee... (unclear)

Any other questions. UNCRC and Hague...

Person X: Any invitation to have another adoptee invited. Continuity.

L: Once you are invited, you can stay. I'll stay until completed by 2021. Special Meeting. Have it finalised, decided there.

First meeting 3 years ago. Meeting every 3 years. As adoptees, realise. We can operate quickly, but governments, with 101 countries it can take those years to even change something.

Some of us know, Hague is not a perfect tool. But to get a change to it, will take years. They only meet every five years. Everything takes five years. To get anything agreed upon.

I take my head off for the Permanent Bureau. They need to be independent, be the drivers.

Diplomacy. If it wasn't for the Bureau... this is where we asked. Because of the sponsorship and promotion we were able to get in.

Q: We fall under the migration law in the Netherlands. Not adoptees. We are migrants. In the register, the country of origin is marked as origin, and adoptive parents. But nothing about the adoption. Per law it is very complicated. In the NL it is on the IRD, all about immigration.

Lynelle: Include Hague into legislation

NL again: you have to change the law, in all countries and not only Hague convention. So all countries should change the law and also all non-Hague countries. That is huge.

L: Yes it is huge. Especially for a country like the US where they also adopt from non-Hague countries.

Lynelle seems to think that Central Authorities have no knowledge.

Close to Trish Maskew. Keeps in touch with her.

Depends from legislation what she can do. Trish can do nothing about deportation. That's the authority of immigration. Department of State has limited power.

Central authorities want to help. The 21 CA's I met really want to deal with illicite adoption. The other 80 do not want. Like China and Vietnam, who were not there.

Question: Over last 20 years. Political issues. The model we have in Australia, and the different regions. Central authorities are bound by their restrictions. Frustration.

L: But we have had small changes. Changes in surrogacy, which links with adoption. We had a whole range of apologies. Like adoptions from England etc. Awareness. Keep feeling like a lemming... but continue and we need a voice – apologies. Like Jenny Degeling, why a guide of good practice. She was seconded there, and then when she came back lobbied for the voices of adoptees. A valid voice, valid seat at the table. Continuation. And accounting when legislation... put on the back dinner. Stay long term.

L: Interesting. I was talking to Hague last night. Surrogacy and adoption, what is the likelihood to ever make surrogacy better. She said: in the current climate they would never agree to a Hague Convention on surrogacy. They now realise if you have a detailed convention, you get people like us holding them accountable. So it has a flip effect. The surrogacy will be bad. Not detailed. Surrogate children will have it more difficult. Beyond going trafficking, but transactions, but yet people are treating them as commodities. A lot of energy to form a surrogacy convention, without being detailed or nuanced. Interesting almost the same people in ica are involved in the surrogacy convention being drafted.

51:30

Trish herself involved with the Convention since the beginning. Because of Juvenile Justice law they have... until US can solve this, they cannot solve the convention.

No body that check compliance with the conventions.

Question about Conventions: Failed in India. There is no follow-up.

L: it is not their mandate. It is about cooperation. No requirement to monitor.

Convention is about putting it into a nice framework, but you don't have to stick to it. It is left open. If it would be too prescriptive. Not a single country would sign up. I cannot be held accountable. It is not about accountability. It is not about being measured.

To have any effect, it is a political poke ball. A bargaining chip. Central Authorities Australia goes to a country and negotiate and say: these are our standard. Ethical framework.

Australia has such high standards compared to what the Department of State had.

David (French): Hague 1995. We understand in France there is a new law on adoptions. We can comment on that. We are consulted. \

PRE MEETING

Done at very short notice. To continue to have pre-meetings. We hope to put in place an opportunity to have pre-meetings each time for you guys, individual leaders..... Problem is you have to show that you have international criteria.... Not just in The Netherlands.... But not for the pre-meeting. Very good to have this country approach. Laura is going to work on what we discussed during the pre-meeting. But that will come later. Hopefully that will be a change. Coming to pre-

meetings will give you an opportunity to build trust and relationships over time, we'll have more info.

Your organisation may not have been involved yet.

David (French – ICAA) – We were involved in 2005.

We are elected by the Government as official entity to represent adoptees. Two associations, the other one is La Voix des Adoptees. And we created four year ago, National Council of Adoptees. My organisation is a member. The only one active now. Since 2004.

L: So you cover whole of France

Asha – Indiego sent you a message

L: Maybe she left.

Asha: Message through the App.

L: I see it now.

Indiego: Question about the toolbox. Can we see it eventually

L: we have until end of August for feedback. Doc to be finalised Dec/Jan. To be ready for the 2021 meeting.

I have the option to have a max of four people to review. Heavily monitored security, leaks would be pretty disastrous. Groups that are not friendly.

If you wanna go (Margarita from Italy is a judge) – I am open for hearing to go through all document.

Indiego: It is 08h00 here in Queensland. I have to stop now, getting ready for work.

Cherish: They would have more meetings.

L: No. Now everything will be per email by the PB. August, because their priority is surrogacy now. So until August we can still send them things that were not included. It will be published in Dec/Jan and then all can see the final draft. But how much the input is reflected? It is more diplomatic. It is their working document, for Central Authorities. Not for adoptees.

Cherish: Volunteer to look through the documents.

I am also in the Netherlands, 40 km from Hague. At the Heart of it all.

And I know that Beena ? , who you met, who could not come ... 1:12:40

Is there any desire, resources to make the Hague Convention a monitoring convention. To give it real power? Not desired? Not possible?

Lynelle: Resources partly. They did initially want to be a sort of Independent Panel to advise about adoptions. But countries did not commit resources. They focus on prevention. No resources to be a monitoring board. So the desire is there, but too many restrictions. Countries will not agree to be

monitored. Then not many countries would sign up.

SO that is why it is just the bare minimum framework.

Person XX: problem of fine-tuning of sending countries and receiving countries in regard to.. it is not just that they have 200 kids for adoption. How well do I like America. Negotiations. Trade. Like in other areas.

L: They push back against each other. If you would not push for adoptions, we would not have the trafficking. And you are WOW...

And I guess it is the role of the Hague to keep peace, otherwise it can escalate very fast. Diplomatic. Otherwise one country blaming the other.

Other person: We have to be mindful on how we speak with government. However, if we talk to adoptees and adoptive parents we have another speech. Otherwise we need to be diplomatic. Compliance with conventions. You have to talk like that if you want changes.

INcountry adoptions is a desk top review. It is costs.. etc. AdoptChange, pressure. They have this cold desk top policies. We have to make it real.

They are trying to run things like a process. But not anyone will be monitoring that they follow the toolkits.

INdiego you wrote me a text about...

Indiego: Vletname to be obliged to look at it?

L: Vietnam will be one of the 101 countries to vote in The Hague.

And this should not to be shared outside, but yes Vietnam was called out a number of times by a number of Central Authorities. It is interesting to feel that vibe among governments groups.

Question about the vote: majority

Person: Needs to be decided if it applies to old cases.

But it could help for Vietnam's adoptions now. Like France. Those in France to ask why still adopting from Vietnam. Need legislation change. Best way ... those who take children from Vietnam

L: Did you hear that David  
Gone

L: Other questions, Sophie?

Silence

When we are twenty years older we will still have the same discussions...

Thanking Lynelle. On your own money, your own time. Thank you Thank you.

L: Holy was online. You are from India right? Great to have you on board.

I'll be in contact with all of you.

Cool.

Thank You.