



Conference 3 September 2022, Paris

## FIGHT AGAINST CHILD ABUSE

Subject : Report, balance sheet

### 1 - Organisational review

#### 1.1 - Welcome speeches :

- Marie-Christine PONOMALÉ, Outremer360°
- Jacques MARTIAL, City of Paris
- Jean-Laurent LASTELLE, Ministry of Overseas France
- George PAU LANGEVIN, Deputy Ombudsman
- Elisabeth RABESANDRATANA, President France Initiative Justice
- Guido FLURI, Guido FLURI Foundation

Discourses by institutional representatives in solidarity with the FEDD's struggle, but sometimes out of step with the subsequent testimonies of victims of abuse within the institution and not within the family.

The situation of abusive placement in France was not addressed in these keynote speeches.

#### 1.2 - Participating French associations : 10

- . AFFA, Association Francophone des Femmes Autistes (Marie RABATEL)
- . APED, Association Parents en Détresse (Chantal GATIEN)
- . CADCO, Coordination des actions pour le droit à la connaissance des Origine (Arthur KERMALVEZEN)
- . CPV, Communiquer Pour Vivre (Sylvie CASTRO)
- . FEDD, Fédération des Enfants Déracinés des Départements et Régions d'Outre-Mer (Valérie ANDANSON)
- . IAM, Illégale Adoption Monde (Javier)
- . IED, Innocence en Danger (Chantal D'ABOVILLE)
- . OPH, Observatoire des Politiques du Handicap (Jonathan SELLAM)
- . Thermouthis (Sylvie MOREAU)
- . UPEF, Unis pour nos enfants (Carole MENDY)

### **1.3 - Non-French participating associations : 5**

- . AMB/MVB Association Métis de Belgique BE (Jacqueline GOEGEBEUR)
- . ANIR, Asociación Nacional Infancia Robada (Association Nationale Enfance volée) - Espagne - (Ana CUEVAS)
- . BDB, Bébé diisparus de Belgrade (Milena JANKOVIC)
- . FGF, Fondation Guido FLURI, CH (Pascal KRAUTHAMMEUR)
- . IAC, Instituto de Apoio à Criança PT (Lucia MITTERMAYER)

### **1.4 - European countries represented: 12 including France**

Belgium	France	Kosovo	Romania
Spain	Greece	Netherlands	Serbia
Finland	Italy	Portugal	Switzerland

## **2 - Assessment of content**

### **Theme 1: Evidence of child abuse in and out of parental care**

#### **Moderators :**

- . Anne DAVID - Administrative and financial
- . Pierre VERDIER - Lawyer

#### **Speakers on stage :**

- . Ankie VANDERKERCKHOVE, Belgium
- . Chantal GATIEN : APED (Association Parents en Détresse), France
- . Javier I AM (Illégales Adoption Monde, France)

#### **Speakers from the floor :**

- . Arthur KERMALVEZEN : CADCO (Coordination des actions pour le droit à la connaissance des Origines), France
- . Pauline BOURGOIN : "maman désenfantée", France
- . Denise MANOLY : mère d'enfants abusivement placés, France
- . Benoît VERMEERBERGEN, né sous X, généalogiste, Belgium
- . Marie RABATEL : AFFA (Association Francophone des Femmes Autistes), France
- . Nadine PLESTAN, APED (Association Parents en Détresse), France

## **Theme 2 : Responding to and dealing with child abuse in the criminal justice system**

### **Moderators :**

. Marc MAKPAWO – Lawyer

### **Speakers on stage :**

. Ana CUEVAS, ANIR (Asociación Nacional Infancia Robada (Association Nationale Enfance volée), Spain

. Sylvie CASTRO, CPV (Communiquer Pour Vivre), France

. Philippe MARTAGUET (éducateur spécialisé, écrivain), France

### **Speakers from the floor :**

. Jonathan SELLAM, OPH (Observatoire des politiques du handicap), France

. Keiko OGAWA, (mère d'enfants abusivement placés), France

. Nadine PLESTAN (mère d'enfants abusivement placés), France

## **Theme 3 : Repair, care, bandage, heal**

### **Moderators :**

. Sylviane PAULINET - ex-Fonctionnaire au ministère, retraitée

. Jean-Claude GIANNOTTA - Ingénieur de recherche

### **Speakers on stage :**

. Lucia MITTERMAYER SARAIVA, Instituto de Apoio à Criança, Portugal

. Sylvie MOREAU, Thermouthis, France

. Valérie ANDANSON, FEDD (Fédération des Enfants Déracinés des Département et Régions d'Outre-Mer), France

### **Speakers from the floor :**

. Jacqueline GOEGEBEUR, AMB/MVB (Association Métis de Belgique), Belgium

. Chantal D'ABOVILLE (Innocence en Danger), France

. Fawzy MEKNI, ex-enfant placé, France

. Ziyadali HEYDARI (peintre, père d'enfants abusivement placés), France

The different interventions presented a situation where the child in our "modern European western" society was subjected to abuse (psychological, physical, sexual violence), the risks of which were all the higher as the criteria of vulnerability were accumulated.

The moments of vulnerability of the family (cultural differences, particular moments of separation of the parents), vulnerability of the child in situation of disability, in particular autism, systematized these abuses in the daily life of today and was not only the fact of situations of the past.

As the child's present later becomes the adult's past (or vice versa), it is necessary to unite the struggles of associations opposing the abuses committed today with actions to recognise and repair situations of past abuse.

The testimonies showed that these situations of abuse are not only caused by individual acts but often within the institution (Child Welfare, medical and social centres, religious, sports, medical structures, etc.).

Throughout the day, there were many testimonies from adults who were abused during their childhood in placement institutions and from parents whose children were taken away from them without any legal reason. In France today, we are talking about 100,000 to 200,000 children. False reports from the ASE are enough to order placement, while the same parents are never brought before the criminal courts because the real reasons for their mistreatment do not exist.

The child, an object of commodification, has been mentioned in various situations (illegal international adoptions motivated by "contracts", abusive placements to justify the budgets and staffing levels of care facilities, placements of children with disabilities, and in particular autistic children, to satisfy the "medical-social" lobby). The effects of institutional abuse (separation from loving parents, physical and psychological harassment, rape, etc.) are made invisible by placing the responsibility on the original situation, invented or real, rather than on institutional abuse.

The colloquium was an expression of anger at the injustice suffered, as well as at the lack of understanding of the situation on the part of the representatives of the public authorities who spoke at the colloquium in particular, but also of a whole section of society in general. At the same time, the conference was an expression of solidarity. It gives great hope because such a gathering seems to be a first for many of the participants within this European perimeter.

The day ended with the presentation and adoption of a so-called Paris citizens' motion against child abuse. This motion is presented as a set of recommendations to be followed in order to put in place a responsibility to protect children and is based on four main principles of protection: a duty to protect, a duty to be more vigilant, a duty to sanction and a duty to repair.

### **3 - Summary of participants' satisfaction :**

Many participants expressed their satisfaction at having taken part in this conference. They leave strengthened in their fight and expect France Initiative Justice to provide real support for their daily actions.

### **4 - Planned actions after the conference :**

#### **4.1 - Development of the AFIJ website**

. Development of a website allowing each association in the France Initiative Justice France Initiative Justice.

. Work on the graphics, the tree structure, the administration

#### **4.2 - Periodic conference visits (monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly ?)**

. Sharing news from French associations supporting the France Justice Initiative

. Definition of common actions



## Justice Initiative Campaign in France

Main objectives	Targets	Means
<p><b>Objective 1 : awareness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. To understand and have recognised the different facets of child abuse children</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective 1 targets :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. To bring together all the associations in France and Europe concerned by child abuse of children</li> </ul>	<p><b>Means for objective 1 :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Conference on 3 September</li> <li>. Exhibition of photographs of shame</li> <li>. Launch a campaign to raise awareness and support through signatures</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 2 : Empowerment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Legitimizing and legalizing financial reparations</li> <li>. Obtain a public apology from the government for massive and systemic abuses</li> <li>. Implementing memorial reparations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective 2 targets :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Make proposals to the government to improve, change, densify the laws on the basis of common European law</li> </ul>	<p><b>Means for objective 2 :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Paris Citizens' Motion</li> <li>. Re-understand the notion of the best interests of the child / child welfare</li> <li>. Establish a national commission to redress massive and systemic abuse</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 3 : Prevention</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Organise robust prevention mechanisms : risk situations / care in charge</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective 3 targets :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Review all the modes of organisation and operation of child protection services</li> </ul>	<p><b>Means for objective 3 :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Establish an observatory system (delegates of rights defenders with direct access to the child)</li> <li>. Legitimise and legalise the place of families, recognised associations in the child protection systems</li> <li>. Set up a national commission to instruct the modes of organisation and operation of child protection services.</li> </ul>