



Monthly Review

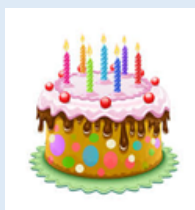
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EDITORIAL

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The ISS/IRC celebrates the 20th anniversary of its Monthly Review and will also celebrate its 25 years of existence in 2018



The Monthly Review, which has given worldwide visibility to ISS's International Reference Centre, is celebrating 20 years of existence this year. Other lines of action preceded the Monthly Review, as from the adoption of the 1993 Hague Convention, developed on the basis of the funding received. These included the analysis of domestic legislation and practices, support to countries faced with sudden, serious abuse, such as Romania and Albania, and the setting up of a documentation centre.

However, it was truly as from the publication of the Monthly Review that the ISS/IRC achieved its original objective: to be an international tool for progress in the protection of children who are deprived, or are at risk of being deprived, of a family.

Based on recent international instruments, such as the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 1993 Hague Convention.

By *facilitating* the creation of bonds amongst those persons involved in some way or another in the fate of these children, either in the receiving country or in the country of origin, from governmental or non governmental bodies, those

not belonging to any entity, professionals, parents or adoptees.

By *enabling* them to know each other, to develop a mutual trust, to build a relationship of solidarity, aimed at sharing information, ideas and methods, to help each other, and to create together.

It is thanks to the trust of the Hague Conference on International Private Law, Central Authorities and governmental bodies, that ISS, an NGO, has been able to establish the ISS/IRC and its international network. First of all, for Central Authorities, which, when able to do so, took the risk of financing the project when it was still only a utopia. Then, for all those, which progressively joined the dynamics of mutual respect and sharing between extremely diverse participants.

I can honestly say that the international network that the ISS has created within the framework of the IRC has become, over the years, a tool to respond to the interests of children. Yet, more needs to be done, especially as the developments of science and changes within society render the problems ever more complex.

In conclusion, I would like to share with you a concern, which has been with me throughout my time with the ISS, and particularly the IRC. We are all aware that adoption and the protection of children deprived, or at risk of being deprived, of a family can be highly controversial subjects, with underlying ideologies or conflicting interests. To state what may be the 'best interests of the child' is not always obvious. The international conventions and domestic laws are indispensable guidelines and frameworks. However, wherever each one of us acts, let us ensure that we implement them, without falling into a rigid straightjacket, and transforming the humanist

spirit into something narrow and strict. I believe that flexibility, kindness, humility and questioning, the acceptance of specific characteristics, the consideration of uniqueness and the kindness of the various involved parties, are essential in those actions, decisions, advice and written materials of those persons acting in the lives of other human beings.

Chantal Saclier,
Founder of the International Reference Centre
for the Rights of Children Deprived of their Family

