

INTRODUCTION

IA post-Hague is in crisis:

- headed down in numbers last 4 years after 6 decades up**
- Central & South America largely closed**

Only matters if IA a good thing for children – Debate on this

- Some say not really, at best a last resort**
- Others yes serves kids & could serve many more and better by placing early in life**

Today I hope get discussion of:

1. Crisis: what's happening in US and in sending countries, why the cutback in IA, what impact on kids

2. What should happen in future

– Should IA be one of options for homeless kids? Nobody thinks it's only option. But does it help or hurt in larger goal of serving all the kids? Those who argue Last Resort seem to think or sometimes argue it hurts. What's the evidence on both sides?

– If should be then how shape? What laws/policies should we pursue to make IA work for kids?

Our IA Policy Statement & supporting Report: in packet: One answer – will talk in Panel 3

PARTICIPATORY: many in audience are as/more expert – Panelists stick to time

PANEL 3

Topic: Future Directions

Panel will address:

- Nature of overall kid problems**
- Where does IA fit in strategy of addressing**
- What specifically in law/policies should we do to shape IA**

Intros:

Speak in this order with me following at end

EB COMMENTS at end:

My A to central Q: IA is compatible, is needed for kids, so then need to shape so works for kids

IA Policy Statement & Report: bc want others to endorse, & bc takes positions need to take in law & official policy

– By contrast to the Permanency for Orphans Act: problem is too vague, and can be read to = UNICEF position, promote only in-country permanency

– IA Pol Stmt takes on the tough issues:

1. IA is part of panoply of options for kids should pursue, consistent with not in opposition to

2. Heritage value over-rated by those opposing IA. Priority shld be on placing kids who can't be re-united in permanent

adoptive homes asap. Therefore:

- Preference IA over foster care or other “perm” solutions (as general matter)**
- No holding periods while seek in-country solution**

3. Adoption Abuses shld not be used to shut down IA

- Enforce the laws vs Abuses, jail the criminals; Don’t imprison the kids in institutions**
- Don’t shut down Private Adoption in sending countries**

Not enough for us to say we’re “for” IA. The most committed enemies of IA say the same.

They say that want simply to value Heritage by seeking in-country solutions and to oppose abuses by requiring Government control of IA. But these are the policies that are effectively shutting down IA.

If truly want to keep IA on table as option for kids must face up to these issues.