



11am, Monday, January 26, 2009

Press Statement

Shane Downer, CEO

The IAA Welcomes the Adoption Bill 2009

“The International Adoption Association (IAA) welcomes the publication of the Adoption Bill 2009. This bill will ultimately allow Ireland to ratify the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. The IAA will be reviewing the bill in detail to ensure that it enables the continuing provision of loving, secure and happy homes for children who need them.

Of most importance, will be the provisions and actions of the Minister to ensure that appropriate Bi-lateral Agreements are established with non-Hague countries from which Irish families have adopted well over 1,400 children to date, and with which we do not have a current Bi-Lateral Agreement.

This Bill will make it imperative that the Government speedily establishes such Bi-lateral agreements with several countries to ensure that children in need are not excluded from the possibility of securing family life instead of languishing in institutions.

The IAA will also be checking for the inclusion of a “grandfather-clause”¹ as recommended by the Law Reform Commission, mechanisms which can reduce the appalling waiting lists for assessment, and support for post-adoption services for the children.

It is not preferable to keep any child in an institution when the possibility of a suitable permanent placement abroad exists. It is a sad fact that there are many more children residing in institutions than are adopted either domestically or internationally in this world. We hope this bill will enable Ireland to help as many of these children as possible.

¹ “Grandfather-Clause” – a provision which allows families who have already adopted a child from a non-Hague or Bi-lateral country to adopt a subsequent child from the same country.



The IAA supports the right of every child to belong to, and to grow up within a loving and secure family. We promote intercountry adoption as a means of achieving this for children for whom other options are not available, or suitable.

The Hague Convention sets minimum standards to guide the process of intercountry adoption, and consistently strives to ensure that the interests of the children are of paramount importance in all decisions.

The IAA recognizes that applicants in Ireland are already assessed to the standards of the Hague Convention. Irish families currently provide loving and secure homes to over 5,000 children adopted abroad. These children are thriving, and in line with international research these children catch-up and attach securely with their adoptive parents.

We commend Minister Andrews for publishing this bill – which has been in development for over a decade.”

Shane Downer, Chief Executive

The International Adoption Association:

The IAA is the leading support organization for families engaged in intercountry adoption into Ireland, and represents over 4,000 parents and children. Founded in 1990, the IAA offers an Information and Education programme for people interested and engaged in intercountry adoption, as well as fostering this growing community of families and children.

Contact Details:

Shane Downer shane@iaaireland.org 01 499 2206