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Adopted from China, Raised in USA

- **Document children's origins extensively.** Governments and agencies must financially invest in resources to verify a child's origin to ensure transparency and ethicality in the adoption process. Provide comprehensive training for welfare workers to recognize signs of suspicious activity and falsified documents, and increase instruction for law enforcement to combat human trafficking.

Additionally, all birth and adoption records must be preserved and accessible to adoptees. Age restrictions on adoptees' access to these documents should be removed.

- **Provide ample compensation for victims of illicit adoptions.** All medical, psychological, and financial support for children *and* birth parents should be fully funded. The priority must be to address and minimize the effects of traumatic experiences that occur as a result of systems' failures.
- **Investigate influxes of intercountry adoptions.** Unregulated adoption practices and obtainment of children run rampant in societal upheaval, acting as breeding grounds for human trafficking and other crimes. Governments that are unable to maintain control in times of crisis must take responsibility for and combat illicit activity as well.

International human rights regulators should investigate drastic increases in intercountry adoptions. Influxes are often linked to other ethical violations. What societal pressures are leading to an increase in intercountry adoptions, and what can be done to mitigate the separation of children from their biological parents?

- **Support efforts to decriminalize poverty and end systematic racism.** Children are often unlawfully taken from economically disadvantaged parents who have little-to-nonexistent resources. Marginalized communities are further suppressed by legislation and the legal system; meanwhile, foster parents receive government financial aid to care for children. Invest in impoverished communities, recovery programs, and mental health initiatives.
- **Remove financial incentives.** The sole priority of adoption should be what is best for the child, finding a family for children, *not* finding children for families. Agencies should not receive monetary incentives, as it promotes adoption as a lucrative business. Countries that view adoption as economically advantageous are less invested in regulating ethical adoptions.

Adoption organizations should also be fully transparent with financial records, and greater oversight should be placed to ensure funds are used appropriately. Immediately

defund organizations that are found guilty of illegal operations.

- **Strictly regulate independent and private adoptions.** Take every possible measure to ensure that a child's placement with a family is best for the child *before* finalization, especially for children with health conditions or impairments.

Increase investigations on social media, where many illegal adoptions and unethical rehomings occur. A legally-binding document should be signed that re-homing is not a viable option except in the most extreme circumstances (i.e. abusive households, cases of endangerment). Administer harsher punishments to individuals found guilty of unethical behavior.

- **Prioritize placing children in homes that reflect their culture of origin, preferably within their country of origin.** Transracial and international adoptees face ethnic identity issues when growing up in households that ill-equip them for life as a person of color. A guardian's responsibility *must* include preparing children for adversity, discrimination, and how they will be perceived by others. Dealing with racism is difficult at any stage of life, regardless of upbringing, but the shock and damage that comes from a lack of guidance and solidarity can lead to debilitating consequences.

The more differences there are between an infant's first mother and a new caretaker, the more distress an infant will feel. Make every effort to keep children with willing guardians who will diminish the harmful effects of relinquishment trauma.

- **Intensify background checks for transracial adoptive parents.** When an appropriate family cannot be found within the child's own culture or country, evaluate and document prospective parents' perspectives toward their child's country of origin and first parents in social work interviews. Prospective parents must exhibit a strong dedication to immersing themselves in their child's culture of origin, implementing a thorough plan to maintain their child's connection with their heritage, and understanding and providing support for their child's complex emotions.

Investigate organizations with strong religiously-motivated messaging to avoid instillation of saviorist mentalities in parents. Saviorism disregards a child's profound loss and reduces children to entities in need of rescue rather than as human beings.

Discourage "color blind" parenting. The world sees color, and ignoring this reality precludes a child from seeing their culture as a place of belonging and a way of building character. Diversity drives innovation and adds richness to society. Internalize an open, inclusive mindset that embraces seeing differences as assets.

- **Increase public education.** Knowledgeable authorities cannot be everywhere at once. Take initiatives to inform everyday citizens to recognize signs of illicit adoption practices both on and offline, and streamline ways for individuals to report these.