

Tribute to Dr. Patricia Fronck (1960-2024)

Fondly known as Tricia, she was a fearless advocate for the human rights of children, especially those in need of child protection measures. Her social work background provided many important practical insights to debates on preventing family separation and the identification of alternative care options for children, to ensure better alignment with international standards. She was one of the key consultants that supported the Government of Cambodia and UNICEF in drafting prakas for the prevention of family separation, foster care and national adoption from 2016 to 2020. Tricia was also a leading voice for ensuring ethical intercountry adoptions and much appreciated by many adoptees due to her cutting edge research which revealed their many unmet needs.

Based on her decades of professional and academic experience, she was a formidable member of the core group (comma club) that led the drafting of the [Verona Principles for the protection of the rights of the child born through surrogacy](#) from 2016 and which were published in 2021 with the support of the UN CRC Committee. She attended every international and regional consultation that led to the finalisation of these principles as the social work expert including in Cambodia, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, South Africa, Switzerland and the UK. Tricia led the drafting of Principle 5 on pre-surrogacy protections and Principles 7, 8 and 9 on consents from the different parties. Tricia continued to support the comma club with the work for [Child Identity Protection \(CHIP\)](#) who co-drafted the first [UNICEF/CHIP briefing note on surrogacy](#) in 2022 and other advocacy pieces on this issue published in 2023.

In parallel, Tricia, was a key special advisor for CHIP including in the early days when the international NGO was first established in 2020. She helped identify and secure funding from the [Swiss National Science Foundation in collaboration with the University of Geneva on aligning Swiss foster care practices to international standards from 1900 to 2023](#). She guided and supported the team with the execution of the project including undertaking of interviews and case assessment. CHIP was truly lucky to have such a staunch and unfailing supporter for its work.

The entire CHIP team and her “comma club” colleagues will fondly remember Tricia’s smile and candid approach to life, but most importantly her tireless efforts as one of the world’s most effective social work champions for children’s rights.

1 August 2024

[Child Identity Protection team](#)

Comma club members (Claire Achmad, Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Nigel Cantwell, Mia Dambach, Olga Khazova, John Pascoe, David Smolin, Katarina Trimmings and Michael Wells-Greco)

