

Judge Emanuel A. Cassimatis graduated in law from Pennsylvania State University and practised as a lawyer in the United States of America until 1978. Throughout his career he has served the community as a volunteer, including being the former President and Director of the United Community Services of York County and a Board Member of the Children's Growth and Development Clinic. Judge Cassimatis was first elected to the Court of Common Pleas in Pennsylvania for a term of ten years beginning in 1978 and has been a Senior Judge since 1996. His assignments have included the Juvenile Court, the Civil Court and the adult Criminal Court. Judge Cassimatis is a member and former President of both the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges and the Pennsylvania Juvenile Judges Commission. He has also been Chairman of the Safe Kids Initiative and Convener of the Juvenile Justice Policy Group in his home State of Pennsylvania. Currently, Judge Cassimatis is a member of the Juvenile Advisory Committee of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and its Victim Services' Advisory Committee. He is the founder and current Co-Chairman of the York County Youth Commission, a community organisation that promotes dialogue, cooperation and improvement of delivery systems and prevention on issues affecting children and families.

Judge Adam Lopatka graduated from the School of Law and Economics in Poland as Master of Law and later received a Doctorate in Law. In 1968 he became professor and in 1973 professor *ordinarius* at the Institute of Law Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences. He was elected Deputy Dean at Poznan University in 1962 and Dean of the School of Law and Administration in 1964. From 1969 to 1987, Professor Lopatka was Director of the Institute of Law Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and from 1979 to 1981 he presided over the Polish Jurists Association. He was elected to the *Seym* (Polish Parliament) in 1976 and again in 1980. In 1982, he was appointed to the *Seym* as the Minister of Religious Affairs, serving in this capacity until he was appointed First President of the Supreme Court of Poland in 1987. In the international field, Judge Lopatka represented Poland before the United Nations Commission on Human Rights where, in 1982, he submitted the Draft Convention on the Rights of the Child, in the capacity of Chairman and Rapporteur (1979-1989) of the Working Group that drafted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Currently, Judge Lopatka is Chair of the general theory of law at the University of Commerce and Law in Warsaw and is a member of the Committee of Political Sciences at the Polish Academy of Sciences, as well as of the International Institute of Human Rights in Strasbourg, the International Academy of Comparative Law, the International Association of Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy, and the Academy of Social Sciences of the Russian Federation. He has been awarded the degree of Doctor *Honoris Causa* by the University of Gainesville Florida in the United States of America.

Judge Vicha Mahakun is the Deputy Chief Justice of the Central Juvenile and Family Court in Thailand as well as being Chairman of the Public Relations Committee of the Juvenile and Family Justice System. Since being appointed to this position in 1994, Judge Mahakun has promoted the reform of the Juvenile and Family Justice System, working with the Government of Thailand and non-governmental organisations to improve training and treatment programmes in juvenile detention institutions to ensure that all rehabilitation efforts are made in the 'best interests of the child', according to Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Judge Mahakun is also Chairman of Children's Protection Centres, a non-governmental organisation supported by UNICEF Thailand Country Office that is dedicated to the protection of children in rural areas. This organisation has trained more than 700 volunteers, including young community leaders, as advocates and protectors of children's rights. Judge Mahakun has now been appointed to the Supreme Court of Thailand and as the President of the Institute for Juvenile and Family Justice Development - the first juvenile and family justice training centre in Thailand.

The rapporteur to the Tribunal, **Dr Judith Ennew**, has been an activist and researcher on children's rights issues since 1979, specialising in the field of street and working children. She is currently a researcher in the Center for Family Research at the University of Cambridge and Visiting Fellow in the Department of Social Anthropology at Goldsmith's College, University of London. She was recently elected to the Academy of Learned Societies in the Social Sciences.