

# ROME 2024

## International conference

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FOR THE UNIVERSAL ABOLITION  
OF SURROGACY

### PRESS KIT

## Summary

1. **The International Conference for the Universal Abolition of Surrogacy in Rome 5th-6th April 2024.**
2. **Program**
3. **Genesis of the project**
4. **The Declaration of Casablanca  
for the universal abolition of surrogacy**
5. **The proposition of an International Convention**
6. **Some of the signatories and signatory countries**
7. **Practical Information and Contact**

# 1. The International Conference for the Universal Abolition of Surrogacy in Rome

While few countries in the world have legalized surrogacy, all countries are concerned because women are asked to be surrogate mothers or because their citizens travel abroad to have a child through surrogacy.

Faced with this global challenge, **the Casablanca Declaration**, proposed on the **3rd of March 2023** and signed by 100 experts of 75 nationalities, calls on governments to move beyond resignation by condemning surrogacy, taking concrete measures to put an end to this trade, and committing to an international Convention to promote a global context of refusal of surrogacy, likely to draw many countries into this virtuous challenge.

Italy, with the current adoption of a law which criminalizes the use of surrogacy, including outside Italian territory, shows the way to other countries and could play a role on the international stage with a view to an international convention for the global prohibition.

This is why the **International Conference for the Universal Abolition of surrogacy** will convene in **Rome on 5th and 6th April**, with speeches by:

- Reem ALSALEM, UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls
- Velina TODOROVA, Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
- Eugenia ROCCELLA, Italian Minister for the Family
- Olivia MAUREL, born from surrogacy and spokesperson for the Casablanca Declaration.

Specialists from 5 continents to contribute their expertise with a dual objective:

- to inform public decision-makers about the harmful effects of surrogacy
- to provide a legal toolbox for States to defend their population against this market.

**The International Conference in Rome is intended to be a decisive step to support and encourage national and international initiatives, leading to the adoption of an international treaty.**

# 2. Program

## DECLARATION OF CASABLANCA

FOR THE UNIVERSAL ABOLITION  
OF SURROGACY



### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR THE UNIVERSAL ABOLITION OF SURROGACY 5TH TO 6TH OF APRIL 2024 - ROME - ITALY (REGISTRATION REQUIRED)

FRIDAY APRIL 5TH, 2024

#### Committing to the universal abolition of surrogacy

Moderator : **Bernard GARCIA** (France), Doctor of Law, Coordinator of the Declaration of Casablanca  
**Suzanne AHO** (Togo) and **Luis PEDERNEIRA** (Uruguay), members of the UN Committee  
on the Rights of the Child (CRC), are independent observers of the work linked to the Casablanca Declaration

9.00 AM	<b>Coffee welcome</b>
9.15 AM	<b>Welcome of participants</b> <b>Velina TODOROVA</b> (Bulgaria), Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) <b>Francesco BONINI</b> (Italy), Rector, LUMSA <b>Adriano BORDIGNON</b> (Italy), President of the Forum delle Associazioni familiari
9.30 AM	<b>Opening speeches</b> <b>Eugenia ROCCELLA</b> (Italy), Minister for the Family, Births and Equal Opportunities <b>Mirosław WACHOWSKI</b> (Holy See), Under-Secretary for Relations with States and International Organisations
10.00 AM	<b>Breaking out of resignation : Italian political proposals to put an end to the trafficking of maternity</b> Moderator : <b>Adriano BORDIGNON</b> , President of the Forum delle Associazioni familiari <b>Luana ZANELLA</b> , MP, Verdi Sinistra Italiana <b>Elena BONETTI</b> , MP, Azione <b>Simona LOIZZO</b> , MP, Lega <b>Cristina ROSSELLO</b> , MP, Forza Italia <b>Valeria VALENTE</b> , Senator, Partito Democratico <b>Carolina VARCHI</b> , MP, Fratelli d'Italia
11.30 AM	<b>BREAK</b>
12.00 PM	<b>The child as object of the contract: testimony of a woman born of surrogacy</b> <b>Olivia MAUREL</b> (France), Spokesperson for the Declaration of Casablanca
12.20 PM	<b>Discussion</b>
12.45 PM	<b>FREE LUNCH</b>
2.45 PM	<b>A market based on the exploitation of women</b> <b>Jennifer LAHL</b> (USA), Founder of the Center for Bioethics and Culture Network and co-founder of Stop Surrogacy Now
3.05 PM	<b>A global market</b> <b>Herveline URCUN</b> (France), Analyst, Assisted Reproduction Observatory <b>Birgit KELLE</b> (Germany), Journalist, author of <i>I'll buy myself a child: the disgraceful business of surrogacy</i> <b>Kajsa Ekis EKMAN</b> (Sweden), Journalist, author of <i>Being and Being Bought - Prostitution, Surrogacy and the Split Self</i> <b>Eva Maria BACHINGER</b> (Austria), Journalist, author of <i>Kind auf Bestellung (Child on demand)</i>
3.35 PM	<b>Surrogacy : a tragedy for Africa</b> <b>Sonnie EKWOWUSI</b> (Nigeria), Lawyer, Chairman of the Human and Constitutional Rights Committee of the African Bar Association (AFBA)
3.45 PM	<b>Discussion</b>
4.30 PM	<b>BREAK</b>
5.00 PM	<b>The impossibility of ethical surrogacy</b> <b>Diana MUÑOZ</b> (Colombia), Professor, Institute of Family Law, University of La Sabana, Bogotá <b>Emma CICCARELLI</b> (Italy), Forum of family associations Italy
5.30 PM	<b>Convincing international institutions</b> <b>Jorge CARDONA LLORENS</b> (Spain), Lawyer, Professor of International Public Law at the University of Valencia, former member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) <b>Marina TERRAGNI</b> (Italy), Founder of RadFem Italy OME <b>Emmanuel JAUFFRET</b> (France), Jurist, Collective for the Respect of the Person (CoRP)
6.00 PM	<b>Discussions</b>
6.15 PM	<b>Conclusions of the day</b> <b>Vincenzo BASSI</b> (Italy), President of the Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe (FAFCE)

# DECLARATION OF CASABLANCA

FOR THE UNIVERSAL ABOLITION  
OF SURROGACY



**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR THE UNIVERSAL ABOLITION OF SURROGACY**  
5TH TO 6TH OF APRIL 2024 – ROME – ITALY (REGISTRATION REQUIRED)

**SATURDAY APRIL 6TH, 2024**

## **Legal tools for universal abolition of surrogacy**

Moderator : **Nicola SPERANZA** (Italy), General Secretary of the FAFCE

9.00 AM	<b>Coffee Welcome</b>
9.30 AM	<b>9.30 AM Welcome of participants</b> <b>Reem ALSALEM</b> (Jordan), United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls
9.40 AM	<b>Opening speech</b> <b>Alberto GAMBINO</b> (Italie), (Italy), Pro-rector, European University of Rome (UER), Member of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)
10.00 AM	<b>Italian law and the challenge of surrogacy</b> <b>Antonella BRAMBILLA</b> (Italy), Former Judge at the Milan Youth Court
10.20 AM	<b>Discussion</b>
10.30 AM	<b>The financial flows of surrogacy</b> <b>Bénédicte HAMBURA</b> (France), lawyer, and <b>Christophe HAMBURA</b> (France), lawyer, consultant
10.50 AM	<b>Discussions</b>
11.00 AM	<b>BREAK</b>
11.30 AM	<b>Perspectives for national laws</b> <b>National ban and non-recognition of foreign surrogacy contracts</b> <b>Piotr MOSTOWIK</b> (Poland), Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law and Administration of the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, expert at the Institute of Justice in Warsaw <b>Preventing mediation for surrogacy</b> <b>Carmen LAZARO PALAU</b> (Spain), Professor of Law at the International University of Catalonia (UIC), Barcelona <b>Discouraging nationals from having recourse to surrogacy</b> <b>Sandra TRAVERS DE FAULTRIER</b> (France), Former lawyer, former lecturer at Sciences-Po Paris, Collective for the Respect of the Person (CoRP)
12.00 PM	<b>Discussion</b>
12.15 PM	<b>The protection of children born of surrogacy</b> <b>Maria Sara RODRIGUEZ</b> (Chile), Professor of Law at the Universidad de los Andes, Santiago
12.45 PM	<b>Discussion</b>
1.00 PM	<b>FREE LUNCH</b>
3.00 PM	<b>The need for a specific regulation on surrogacy at international level</b> <b>Roberto ANDORNO</b> (Argentina), Associate Professor of Bioethics and Biomedical Law, University of Zurich, Switzerland
3.30 PM	<b>Discussion</b>
3.45 PM	<b>The margin of appreciation of States with regard to international courts</b> <b>The Inter-American Court of Human Rights</b> – <b>Sofia MARURI</b> (Uruguay), Lawyer, Professor of Human Rights at the University of Montevideo <b>The European Court of Human Rights</b> – <b>Aude MIRKOVIC</b> (France), Lecturer in private law <b>The African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights</b> – <b>Sonnie EKWOWUSI</b> (Nigeria), Lawyer, Chairman of the Human and Constitutional Rights Committee of the African Bar Association (AFBA)
4.15 PM	<b>Discussion</b>
4.30 PM	<b>Conclusions</b> <b>Bernard GARCIA</b> (France), Doctor of Law, Coordinator of the Declaration of Casablanca
5.00 PM	<b>Cocktail</b>

### 3. Genesis of the project

The Casablanca Declaration has its roots in a group of experts who are mainly lawyers, doctors, and psychologists, that perform as researchers and practitioners in their respective fields. These professionals have been working for a long time about surrogacy and its impact on individuals and society.

They have reached a mutual consensus on the conclusion that the global dimension of surrogacy requires an international response, and that a multinational convention would be the sole effective approach to ultimately abolish surrogacy.

In order **to draw the attention, and particularly the interest of the States, towards this international approach** requested of them, they have called on their colleagues, experts from all over the world, who also express the global dimension of the problem of surrogacy: 75 nationalities are thus represented among the first 100 signatories of what is now known as the **"Casablanca Declaration" of March 3rd, 2023**, in which experts from every corner of the earth ask States to:

- take measures to combat surrogacy on their territory.
- commit to an international convention with a view to the universal abolition of surrogacy.

Convinced in the necessity of collaborative work to develop the means for such a universal initiative to protect women and children from the global surrogacy market, this team decided to **draft a proposal for an International Convention for the Universal Abolition of surrogacy.**

# Declaration of CASABLANCA 2023

## FOR THE UNIVERSAL ABOLITION OF SURROGACY

We, signatories of this Declaration,

### **Aware of**

- the suffering of the people who may not conceive.
- the attractiveness of the reproductive technologies
- and of the international issue of an efficient protection for human dignity

**Convinced** that the contract through which one or several orderers agree with a woman that she will carry one or several children for the purpose of their delivery upon birth, regardless to the name and terms and conditions of such contract, here below called surrogacy,

- violates human dignity.
- and contributes to the commodification of women and children.

**Require** from the States the prohibition of surrogacy in every modalities and kinds, whether remunerated or not, and the implementation of measures to fight such practice.

For this purpose, we make the following recommendations to the States:

- prohibit surrogacy on their territory
- deny any legal validity to contracts bearing the undertaking from a woman to carry and deliver a child
- punish the individuals and corporations acting as intermediaries\*\*\*\* between the surrogacy mothers\*\* and the orderers\*\*\*
- prosecute the individuals entering into surrogacy on their territory.
- prosecute their nationals entering into surrogacy outside their territory.
- act in favor of the implementation of a legal instrument bearing global prohibition of the surrogacy.

**Attached** to this Declaration, is an international Convention, freely available to the States wishing to commit themselves in such process.

\* Surrogacy, gestational surrogacy, surrogate motherhood, reproductive exploitation, use of a surrogate, is the arrangement by which one or several orderers agree with a woman that she will carry one or several children for the purpose of their delivery upon birth, regardless the arrangement has been entered into directly by them or through one or several third parties.

\*\* Gestational carrier, surrogate, or substitute mother: woman undertaking, to the benefit of one or several orderers, that she will carry for their account one or several children to be delivered to them at birth.

\*\*\* Orderer(s) : individual or individuals, also called clients or intended parents, who enter into an agreement with a woman, for her to carry for their account one or several children to be delivered to them at birth.

\*\*\*\* Intermediaries for the purpose of the surrogacy : individual(s) or corporate body(ies) putting in contact a woman and one or several orderers so that she will carry one or several children and delivered them upon birth and/or mediate between the woman and the orderer(s) for such purpose

## 5. The proposition of an International Convention

The signatory States to this Convention,

### Aware of

- the suffering of the people who may not conceive
- the attractiveness of the reproductive technologies
- and of the international issue of an efficient protection for human dignity

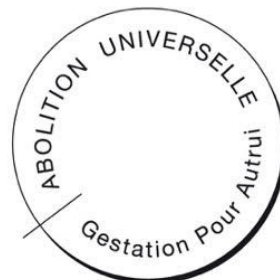
**Convinced** that the contract through which one or several orderers agree with a woman that she will carry one or several children for their delivery upon birth, whatever name and terms and conditions of such contract, here below called surrogacy,

- violates human dignity
- and contributes to the commodification of women and children

**Denounce** surrogacy in any modalities and kinds, whether remunerated or not.

**Undertake** to fight against such practice to protect and preserve human dignity and women's and children's rights, through the implementation of effective measures, including by :

- prohibiting surrogacy on their territory
- denying any legal validity to contracts bearing the undertaking from a woman to carry and deliver a child
- punishing the individuals and corporations acting as intermediaries between the surrogacy mothers and the orderers
- prosecuting the individuals entering into surrogacy on their territory



## 6. The signatories

The signatories of the Casablanca Declaration are experts from different disciplines, mainly lawyers, doctors, psychologists, sociologists, philosophers from all over the world. They operate for **a global commitment to abolish surrogacy and engage at social and political levels** to make this happen.

Many dedicate some or all their research and work to this subject and have numerous publications to their credit.

Their common point? Their willingness to support the request made to States to commit to **an International Convention for the abolition of surrogacy**.

For the rest, they are very different:

- Nationalities and cultures at odds with each other.
- They come from countries that provide surrogacy clients, or on the contrary, from countries whose women are used as surrogate mothers.
- They come from countries that prohibit or conversely authorizes surrogacy.
- They have, without a doubt, varied convictions, and different political commitments.
- Some are involved in NGOs, movements, structures, whilst others are not.
- Thus, they embody the international, human, and universal dimension that they aim to impart to this initiative.

### **Some of the signatories of the Declaration of Casablanca:**

**René Frydman**, Obstetrician, Gynecologist at Paris hospitals and Professor at the Universities of Paris, former Member of the National Consultative Ethics Committee and the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights, France.

**Jorge Cardona Llorens**, Professor of Public International Law at the University of Valencia, Member of International Law Institute, Former Member of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Children, Spain.

**Fatimetou Maham**, SDSR activist, public health, pioneer in the fight against HIV-AIDS. President of the first thematic NGO to combat HIV/AIDS Stop Sida, Mauritania.

**Jiten Singh**, Former Judge of the High Court of Justice, Fiji.

**Hassan Abdelhamid**, Founding Dean of the Faculty of Law, British University in Egypt; Professor of Philosophy of Law and Comparative Law, Ain Shams University, Egypt.



**Denis Chang**, Senior Counsel (Barrister-at-Law), Honorary Professor at Faculty of Law of Hong Kong University, and Chair of Council of Saint Francis University, Hong Kong.

**Eva Maria Bachinger**, Journalist, Author, Feminist, Austria.

**Georges Nawfal**, Doctor in Pediatric Gastroenterology, Lebanon.

**Dyaâ Sfindla**, Professor of Law, Vice-Dean & Director of the Center of Excellence, Ibn Tofail University – Kenitra, Morocco.

**Sonnie Ekwowusi**, Lawyer, Chairman of the Human and Constitutional Rights Committee of the African Bar Association, Nigeria.

**Lindolfo Mendoza**, Physician expert in maternal-fetal medicine, member of the Academy of Medicine, Paraguay.

**Hana Konecna**, Psychologist, University lecturer. Member of the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology, Member of the Ethics Committee of the Czech Ministry of Health, Representative of the Czech Republic in the Steering Committee for Human Rights in Biomedicine and Health of the Council of Europe, Czech Republic.

**Elena Postigo**, Philosopher and Bioethicist. Professor and Director of the Institute of Bioethics at the Francisco de Vitoria University, Spain.

**Faratiana Esoavelomandroso**, Dean of the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences University of Antananarivo, Madagascar.

**Roberto Andorno**, Legal scholar and bioethicist, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law of the University of Zurich, Switzerland.

Etc....

## 7. Practical Information and Contact

- To register for the press conference, click [HERE](#) or refer to the **INVITATION**.
- For online access to the Press Conference, please request the Eventbrite link to the press contact.

**At the end of the press conference, at 12.00 PM, Olivia Maurel, Franco-American, who was born from a surrogate mother, will give her testimony at 12 p.m.**

Then, there will be the possibility to interview some of the signatories and speakers during the conference. Please ask our communication team for more information.

More information:

On **Facebook** : Facebook/AbolitionGPa

On **Twitter** : @CasaDeclaration

Web: [www.declaration-surrogacy-casablanca.org](http://www.declaration-surrogacy-casablanca.org)

**Press contact** and contact details of signatories and speakers for interview:

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