



Statement regarding allegations concerning Terre des hommes' international adoption and specialised care programmes

Lausanne, 24 June 2026 – Terre des hommes has taken note of the allegations published by the newspaper Beobachter and reported by the daily newspaper Le Temps on 22 June 2026, and takes them very seriously. Our thoughts are first and foremost with all those affected by or concerned about these allegations. As an organisation whose mission is to promote and defend children's rights, we fully recognise the significance of these issues have for those directly concerned.

The allegations relate to two former programmes run by the foundation, both of which have now been closed:

- On the one hand, Terre des hommes' role as an intermediary accredited and recognised at the federal level in the field of **international adoptions** in Switzerland, which it carried out from 1960 to 2016.
- On the other hand, the **'specialised care' programme**, established in 1963 in partnership with Swiss and European hospitals, aimed at enabling children to receive vital medical treatment - notably heart surgery - that was not available in their country of origin. Terre des hommes ended its active participation in this programme in 2022.

As a **federally accredited and recognised intermediary**, Terre des hommes facilitated international adoptions in Switzerland from 1960 to 2016. In 2023, all individual adoption files were transferred to the cantonal authorities, in accordance with the Federal Ordinance on Adoption (OAdo), which requires any organisation that has ceased its activities as an intermediary to hand over these files to the relevant cantonal authorities. When contacted, Terre des hommes refers individuals to the relevant cantonal authorities to support them with their search in their search for their origins and provides assistance to the cantons where necessary.

The **specialised care programme** was established in 1963 and aimed to enable children to receive vital medical treatment in Switzerland and other European countries that was not available in their country of residence, thereby offering them a chance of survival and a future. The children who benefited from this programme included, for example, those born with serious heart conditions. To ensure these children received the best possible care, Terre des hommes worked, among others, in partnership with several Swiss hospitals. During their stay in Switzerland, these children were accommodated and cared for in Massongex, at the Maison Terre des hommes and with foster families. Terre des hommes Lausanne ended its involvement in this programme in 2022.

Terre des hommes recognises the need for a **systematic review of its past role and practices regarding international adoptions and specialised care programmes**. This work has been reprioritised and strengthened since the start of 2026, despite limited resources. A comprehensive analysis of all available archives and internal documents will take the time required, given their volume and age. It will be conducted with rigour and independence.

Terre des hommes fully recognises the seriousness of these allegations and is committed to making all the results of its investigations available in a fully transparent manner. The protection of children's rights and the primacy of their best interests have always been, and remain, the foundation of all the foundation's actions.

Terre des hommes remains available to all those concerned.

Further information:

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About the Terre des hommes Foundation

The Terre des hommes Foundation (Tdh) is Switzerland's largest organisation dedicated to defending children's rights, with over 2,000 staff members worldwide. We stand alongside children to defend their rights, protect their lives and promote their well-being. Since 1960, we have been active in challenging contexts – in countries at war, in regions affected by natural disasters, and in places where children are affected by poverty, malnutrition and forced migration. We work with local and international partners in around 30 countries to implement innovative programmes in the fields of health, migration and access to justice. www.tdh.org/en