



USCIS Update

Oct. 16, 2008

ADOPTIONS FROM VIETNAM TO THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT RESUME WITHOUT A NEW BILATERAL AGREEMENT *Action Taken to Establish Safeguards that Protect Children and Families*

WASHINGTON – United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and the Department of State (DOS) issued a joint statement with the government of Vietnam announcing that the processing of new adoption cases will not resume until both countries sign a new bilateral agreement.

The governments of the United States and Vietnam are taking this action jointly because both governments recognize the complexity of issues relating to intercountry adoptions and the importance of developing a transparent adoption system that protects all parties. The United States continues to strongly support the Vietnamese government's efforts to establish an appropriate child adoption system with sound safeguards and protections for children and families. Until a new bilateral agreement is reached, USCIS and DOS have concluded it is in the best interest of children and families to not process any post-Sept. 1, 2008 adoption cases. This action does not affect cases where the prospective adoptive parents were matched with a child before Sept. 1, 2008, the date the previous bilateral agreement expired.

USCIS and DOS will continue to process Vietnamese intercountry adoption cases where the child was matched with the prospective adoptive family before Sept. 1, 2008. Prospective adoptive parents, who may need clarification of the status of their case, may verify whether their adoption petition qualifies as a pre-Sept. 1 case by e-mailing the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi at: hanoiadoptions@state.gov. The Embassy strongly advises prospective adoptive parents not to travel to Vietnam until they have received notification from the Embassy that their case is ready for final processing and travel is appropriate.

The United States government is committed to supporting Vietnam in its efforts to establish practices necessary to appropriately process intercountry adoptions. We have therefore expressed our willingness to begin negotiations on a new bilateral agreement with the government of Vietnam that addresses the deficiencies in their current system. We cannot predict when a new bilateral adoption agreement with adequate safeguards for all parties will be concluded.

The joint statement between the United States and Vietnam is available online at:
http://www.travel.state.gov/family/adoption/country/country_4373.html

Additional information on international adoptions is available online at www.travel.state.gov, or www.uscis.gov.

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