



HAGUE CONVENTION ON INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTIONS

Convention Facts

- ◆ The United States intends to ratify the Hague Adoption Convention in late 2007.
- ◆ More than 70 countries have joined the Convention.
- ◆ The Convention strengthens protections for adopted children. Its key principles include: 1) Ensuring that intercountry adoptions take place in the best interests of children; and 2) Preventing the abduction, exploitation, sale, or trafficking of children.
- ◆ Once the Convention enters into force, private adoption service providers will generally need to be accredited, temporarily accredited, approved, or operate as a supervised provider to provide adoption services in Convention adoptions.

U.S. Intercountry Adoption Facts

- Over the last decade, the number of intercountry adoptions to the U.S. more than doubled. From October 2005-September 2006 (FY 2006), US citizens adopted over 20,600 orphans from around the world, the majority of which come from Convention countries.

Top 5 Countries from which U.S. Citizens Adopted in Fiscal Year 2006	
COUNTRY	No. of Adoptions
1. China	6493
2. Guatemala*	4135
3. Russia	3706
4. South Korea	1376
5. Ethiopia	732

*Although Guatemala is a party to the Convention, its adoption procedures do not meet the standards of the Convention.

Highlights of the Convention and Preparations For U.S. Ratification

- ➔ The Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000 names the Department of State as the U.S. Central Authority for the Convention.
- ➔ The Department completed four rules dealing with: accreditation, records retention, issuance of Hague certificates for emigrating children and reporting and statistics involving emigrating children. Another proposed rule on orphan visa processing was published for comment and the DHS plans to publish its regulation regarding home study preparation.
- ➔ Some benefits of the Convention include transparent fees, homestudies that are approved by an accredited adoption service provider and mandatory training for prospective adoptive parents.
- ➔ The Adoptions Tracking Service with Convention case information and the Hague Complaint Registry used to report on complaints about adoption service providers will both be deployed when the U.S. begins Convention adoptions.
- ➔ The two designated accrediting entities (the Council on Accreditation and Colorado's Department of Human Services) received more than 300 applications prior to the November 17, 2006 transitional application deadline and have begun the accreditation process.
- ➔ The Department set the deadline for initial accreditation or approval for February 15, 2008.
- ➔ The Hague Implementation Unit in the Office of Children's Issues is coordinating ratification efforts. Additional information is on our website at travel.state.gov or by e-mail: AdoptionUSCA@state.gov.

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