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Democratic Republic of the Congo

October 22, 2013

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Alert: Democratic Republic of the Congo Authorities Announce Changes to Suspension Exceptions and New Prohibition on Adoptions by Single Parents

Changes to limited exceptions to suspension on exit permit issuances:

On October 22, the Congolese Ministry of Interior and Security, General Direction of Migration (DGM) clarified limited exceptions to the suspension of exit permit issuance referred to in the Department of State's [October 8 adoption notice](#). The DGM will issue exit permits to adopted Congolese children whose adoptions were approved by the Congolese Ministry of Gender and Family's interministerial adoption committee before September 25, 2013. The DGM provided the U.S. Embassy in Kinshasa with a list of children whose adoptions meet this requirement. The U.S. Department of State will contact the families whose children are on the DGM's list by October 28. Adoptive parents are advised that the possession of a U.S. immigrant visa may not, on its own, be sufficient for the DGM to issue an exit permit to an adopted Congolese child.

Adoptive parents whose Congolese children's cases fall under the exception must apply in person to the DGM's Administrative Secretary for exit permits. Please note there is no fee for the service. The DGM usually takes a minimum of seven days to process exit permits for adopted children. The DGM Administrative Secretary may be reached at:

Mr. Albert Luyinu, Administrative Secretary
Direction Generale d'Immigration
65, Boulevard du 30 juin,
Commune de la Gombe
Ville de Kinshasa, R.D.Congo

The DGM further clarified that the Ministry of Gender and Family will not process any pending or new applications for approval of adoptions during the suspension on exit permit issuances.

New prohibition on adoptions by single parents:

On October 22, the DGM informed the U.S. Embassy in Kinshasa that it will no longer issue exit permits to Congolese children adopted by single parents, unless the adoption meets the above criteria for limited exceptions. The DGM contends that certain provisions of Congolese law prohibit single individuals from adopting Congolese children. This prohibition applies to single individuals from all countries and is intended to be permanent. The U.S. Embassy in Kinshasa is seeking clarification on the prohibition's impact on children whose adoptions by U.S. families were already completed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo before the suspension.

Adoptions in progress:

Prospective adoptive parents and adoption service providers are reminded that adopted Congolese children cannot depart the Democratic Republic of the Congo without an exit permit. Therefore, while the courts may continue processing adoptions, the children adopted during the suspension will not be able to obtain exit permits to depart the country.

Please direct questions related to this alert or a specific adoption to the Department of State, Office of Children's Issues at 1-888-407-4747 within the United States, or 202-501-4444 from outside the United States. Email inquiries may be directed to AskCI@state.gov. We will also post new information as it becomes available on www.adoption.state.gov.

