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Lesotho

February 28, 2013

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Adoptions from Lesotho to Begin Under the Hague Adoption Convention

The *Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-Operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption* (Convention) entered into force for Lesotho on December 1, 2012. At that time, Lesotho did not yet have a fully functional Convention process in place and elected to suspend intercountry adoptions. The Government of Lesotho notified the U.S. Embassy in Maseru that the current suspension on intercountry adoptions will cease on **February 28, 2013**. The United States determined that it will be able to process Convention intercountry adoptions initiated from Lesotho on or after March 1, 2013. However, please note that minor delays may be encountered while the Ministry of Social Development finalizes its structure for in-country fees, which the Ministry expects to publish in April 2013.

The Government of Lesotho also notified the U.S. Embassy in Maseru that accredited adoption service provider Small World, Inc. is now authorized to provide services in Convention adoptions from Lesotho. This is the **only** U.S. adoption service provider currently authorized to operate in Lesotho. Adoption service providers interested in seeking authorization should contact Lesotho's Ministry of Social Development.

The Department of State cautions U.S. prospective adoptive parents and adoption service providers that the Ministry of Social Development does not expect to publish a fee structure for in-country fees until approximately April 1, 2013. The Department of State reminds adoption service providers that, in accordance with the accreditation and approval standards, prospective adoptive parents must receive a detailed fee schedule for the entire process, including foreign country program expenses, when deciding whether to contract with a specific adoption service provider.

The Department of State will provide updated information on [adoption.state.gov](#) as it becomes available. If you have any questions about this notice, please contact the 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 AdoptionUSCA@state.gov.