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Lesotho

December 4, 2012

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Alert: The Hague Adoption Convention Enters into Force for Lesotho

On December 1, 2012 the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-Operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (Convention) entered into force for Lesotho.

However, the Government of Lesotho notified the U.S. Embassy in Maseru that the Government of Lesotho is suspending receipt of new adoption applications from all receiving states until March 1, 2013, to give the country time to put a fully functional Convention process in place.

Adoptions initiated prior to December 1, 2012 may be considered transition cases, and therefore will be able to complete the pre-Convention adoption process. Transition cases are defined as those in which:

- Prior to December 1, 2012, a prospective adoptive parent filed a Form I-600A with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services identifying Lesotho as the country of origin, filed a Form I-600, or completed the adoption; and
- The child was "officially matched" with prospective adoptive parents prior to December 1, 2012. The Ministry of Social Development defines an official match as one in which the match was made during a matching meeting chaired by a Ministry official, and involving representatives of Lesotho childcare facilities and adoption service providers.

We caution adoption service providers and prospective adoptive parents that intercountry adoptions between the United States and Lesotho will not resume until steps are taken to ensure that intercountry adoptions from Lesotho comply with the Convention. Adoption service providers should neither initiate nor claim to initiate adoption programs in Lesotho until the Department of State notifies them that the Government of Lesotho has lifted its temporary suspension of intercountry adoptions and that Lesotho's procedures meet the requirements of the Convention.

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.