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Russia

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Alert: Legislation to Ban Intercountry Adoption by U.S. Families

On December 28, President Vladimir Putin signed into law Russian Federal Law No. 186614-6, which prohibits the adoption of Russian children by U.S. citizens. This law went into effect on January 1, 2013. The law bans adoption of Russian children by U.S. citizens, bars adoption service providers from assisting U.S. citizens to adopt Russian children, and requires termination of the U.S.- Russia Adoption Agreement.

The United States regrets that the Russian government has decided to ban the adoption of Russian children by U.S. citizens and to terminate the Agreement under Article 17(5). The Agreement entered into force on November 1, 2012, to promote stronger safeguards for children and all parties involved in the intercountry adoption process. Under the termination clause of the Agreement, it will remain in force for one year, until January 1, 2014. Despite the adoption ban, the U.S. government remains committed to implementation and fulfillment of its obligations under the Agreement. The United States continues to urge the Russian government, in the spirit of the Agreement, to allow U.S. families already in the process of adopting a child from Russia to complete their adoptions so that these children may join permanent, loving families.

At this time the Russian government has provided no details on how Russian Federal Law No. 186614-6 will be implemented. The Department of State has no information on whether the Russian government intends to permit the completion of any pending adoptions.

In observance of national holidays, most Russian government offices will be closed through January 8, 2013.

U.S. families in the process of adopting a child from Russia may continue to reach out to the Office of Children's Issues at Russiaadoption@state.gov. The Office of Children's Issues will reach out directly to families as additional information becomes available. Further information regarding intercountry adoption from Russia will also be posted on www.adoption.state.gov.