

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JCICS: (703) 535-8045 or jcics@jcics.org

NCFA: (703) 299-6633 or lallen@infantadopt.org

Ukraine Suspends Intercountry Adoptions until U.S. Families Comply with Post-Placement Reporting Requirements

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA, February 3, 2006 –According to Assistant U.S. Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Maura Harty, Ukraine will likely maintain its current policy of not accepting new dossiers from U.S. prospective adoptive parents until the Ukrainian government sees significant improvement in the compliance rate on past cases.

The Ukrainian government reports delinquent post-placement reports for approximately 900 of the more than 5,760 children adopted by U.S. citizens between 1996 and 2004. Ukrainian adoption officials have indicated that unless families submit these missing reports, Ukraine will not allow Ukrainian children to be adopted by U.S. families. At the present time, only the few children who fit into one of the following three categories are eligible for intercountry adoption to the U.S.: 1) the child is older than 10 years of age; 2) the child has an identified handicap; or 3) the child has biological siblings who have been adopted by the family pursuing his or her adoption.

“It is important for adoptive parents to understand that submitting post-placement reports, even late, will not jeopardize their finalized adoptions. Equally critical, they must understand that submitting annual reports was a commitment they made to the Ukrainian government at the time of adoption,” said Joint Council on International Children’s Services (JCICS) Executive Director, Meghan Hendy. “It is possible that many families are not aware of their failure to comply with post-placement reporting or of the impact that their failure to comply could have on children waiting in Ukraine.”

All families who have adopted, and all adoption professionals who have assisted in Ukrainian placements, since 1996 are asked to review records and confirm that they have provided post-placement reports to the Ukrainian government. According to Ukrainian policy, reports must be submitted annually for the first three years after adoption, and then once every three years until the child reaches the age of 18. The detailed report should include information on the child’s living conditions and personal development, as well as 10-15 pictures of the child and the family. A sample form and details of where to submit the reports can be found at the Ukraine Embassy’s website at <http://www.ukraineinfo.us/consular/adoption.html>. Additional questions should be directed to the Consular Office of the Embassy of Ukraine via facsimile at (202) 333-7510 or by email address at adoption@ukremb.com.

“Countries of origin have the right to impose adoption requirements and policies, and families and adoption professionals are obligated to comply,” says National Council For Adoption (NCFA) President and CEO Thomas Atwood. “This disregard for Ukrainian law is inexcusable, and has tragic implications for Ukrainian orphans. How many

hundreds of children will be denied the opportunity to find loving families while we wait for families to provide promised reports?"

NCFA, JCICS, and others in the adoption community are imploring adoptive families to immediately comply with post-placement reporting requirements and for adoption professionals to lend their assistance and support in this critical effort. Intercountry adoption provides a loving and safe home for millions of orphaned children around the world and, together, we want to ensure that the children of Ukraine have this opportunity as well.

About JCICS

Joint Council on International Children's Services (JCICS) is one of the oldest and largest membership associations of licensed, non-profit international adoption agencies, child advocacy groups, parent support groups and medical clinics in the world. For 30 years JCICS has advocated on behalf of children in need of permanency and promoted ethical practices in intercountry adoption. For more information please visit www.jcics.org.

About NCFA

Since 1980, NCFA has been a leading voice among national adoption and child welfare organizations. NCFA is a research, education, and advocacy nonprofit that provides adoption information, promotes ethical adoption practices, informs public policy and opinion about adoption issues, and serves as a resource to women with unplanned pregnancies, to adoptive families, to those seeking to adopt, and to adoption professionals. Visit NCFA's Web site for more information: www.adoptioncouncil.org.

#####