Warning: Adoptions Initiated in Guatemala on or after April 1, 2008

April 1, 2008

The Department of State advises potential adoptive parents and adoption service providers not to initiate new adoptions from Guatemala because the Department cannot process such adoptions from Guatemala to completion at this time.

The *Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption* (the Convention) entered into force with respect to the United States on April 1, 2008. Effective April 1, 2008, newly initiated intercountry adoptions between the United States and other Convention countries must comply with the Convention's standards.

Guatemala acceded to the Hague Intercountry Adoption Convention in March 2003. Guatemala, however, has not yet established the regulations and infrastructure necessary to meet its obligations under the Convention. As a result, the Department of State cannot issue the documentation required by the Intercountry Adoption Act (IAA) for issuance of an immigrant visa for Convention adoption cases.

The Department has advised USCIS of its finding, and has been informed that, until further notice, USCIS will not approve a Form I-800, *Petition to Classify Convention Adoptee as an Immediate Relative*, filed for an adoption from Guatemala.

The Department will continue to monitor the adoption practices of Guatemala. We cannot predict whether or when we will be able to start processing new adoptions from Guatemala. We will update this web page regularly with any new information.

With regard to currently pending adoptions (those initiated in Guatemala before 12/31/2007), the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala remains committed to processing adoptions under previous rules. The Embassy is working closely with the government of Guatemala to complete those cases as soon as possible.