



**Department of
Health & Children**
AN ROINN SLÁINTE AGUS LEANAÍ



Office of the Minister for
Children and Youth Affairs

Oifig an Aire Leanaí
agus Gnóthaí Óige



21st December 2009

Your Ref No.: Q10/1109

Ms Mary Maguire
Meetings Administrator Corporate Services Department
South Dublin County Council
County Hall
Town Centre
Tallaght
Dublin 24

Dear Ms Maguire

Thank you for your letter concerning Ethiopian adoption.

The Adoption Bill, 2009, is designed to give force of law to the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption. The new legislation, which incorporates the provisions of the Hague Convention, is designed to provide a framework to ensure that appropriate procedures have been followed and that all adoptions are effected in the best interests of the child. Future intercountry adoption arrangements will be governed by the terms of the Adoption Bill 2009 when enacted.

The current policy position, as set out in the Adoption Bill 2009, is that for an adoption to be registered under the Bill it must be effected in a contracting State to the Hague Convention or in a country with which Ireland has a bilateral agreement. For non-Hague countries only those adoptions effected prior to the commencement of the new law can be registered on the Register of Inter-Country Adoptions to be established under the Bill.

The issue of transitional measures for prospective parents who are at a definable stage in the adoption process when the Bill is enacted and who wish to continue to adopt a child from a non-Hague, non-bilateral country, is being examined. Prospective adoptive parents have waited a long time and it is my intention to be as flexible as possible in relation to applicants.

Some submissions made to the Minister have made reference to the "Implementation and Operation of the 1993 Hague Inter-country Adoption Convention: Guide to Good Practice". It should be noted that the measures referred to in the Guide to Good Practice relate to "applications which are already

Cuirfear fáilte roimh chomhfhreagras i nGaeilge

Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs

Hawkins House Dublin 2

Teach Haicín Baile Átha Cliath 2

Tel (01) 671 8142

Fax (01) 671 8985

Email omc@health.gov.ie

Web www.omcya.ie

pending under bilateral agreements". As Ireland does not have a bilateral agreement with Ethiopia, the measures referred to in the Guide to Good Practice are not applicable.

Officials from this department, in consultation with officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs are undertaking preparatory work on a possible bilateral agreement with Ethiopia. Consideration of this is at an early stage. I can confirm that on the 30th of October 2009 the Minister met with the Irish Ethiopian Adoption Organisation to discuss the position.

I hope that this information is helpful to you.

Yours sincerely



Patricia Figgis
Private Secretary to Minister Barry Andrews, TD