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SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: CVIS, CASC, KFRD, KOCI, NP
SUBJECT: NEPAL: FRENCH SEEK CONSENSUS ON INTERCOUNTRY
ADOPTIONS

REF: KATHMANDU 00001030

SUMMARY

1. (U) The French Ambassador to Nepal asked for cooperation and consensus among diplomatic missions on intercountry adoptions in Nepal during a visit by the president and managing director of French Adoption Agency and a French Member of Parliament. There is general agreement that the GON's new terms and conditions will do little to curb the corruption that has plagued the process. Please note action item in para 3. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) French Ambassador to Nepal Gilles-Henry Garault hosted a discussion of the state of intercountry adoption in Nepal during a visit by the president and managing director of French Adoption Agency and a French Member of Parliament. Consular representatives of Australia, Canada, Germany, and Italy joined Post conoffs in attendance.
3. (U) The French Embassy objects to a provision of the new terms and conditions on intercountry adoption, already approved by the Nepalese Cabinet but not yet enacted, which would permit prospective adoptive families to submit applications directly to the GON's Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MWCSW) through their respective country's Embassy or Consulate in Nepal. Post continues to recommend that all families adopting in Nepal work through accredited adoption agencies, and agrees with the French and other Missions that accepting families' applications directly would compromise the Embassy's role in the process as well as invite an unsupportable workload. Action requested: Post seeks confirmation from CA/OS/CII whether any U.S. Embassy or Consulate accepts files on behalf of American adopting parents.

4. (U) Citing lack of transparency, evidence of child-buying and fraud, France and Germany had unilaterally suspended the processing of adoptions from Nepal prior to May 2007, when the Government of Nepal initiated its own suspension. Neither Mission believes that its government should lift their own suspensions when the GON begins accepting new files, as there is general agreement that the new terms and conditions will do little to curb the corruption plaguing the GON's process.

5. (U) The MWCSW recently closed an open registration period for international adoption service providers and Nepalese orphanages. Of the 71 international adoption service providers that applied to work in Nepal, 37 are reported to be U.S. agencies, although prior to the suspension, Spain and Italy had been the destinations for half of all children adopted from Nepal. Thirty-eight orphanages and children's homes were approved by the MWCSW to give children for intercountry adoption.

6. (U) The French Ambassador said despite intense pressure from French families who want to adopt at all costs, he will be tough on Spain and Italy in his diplomacy with their Missions in New Delhi (neither country maintains a presence in Nepal aside from honorary consuls) and seeks U.S. and others' cooperation and consensus among stakeholder countries in his continuing efforts to press the GON for real, effective reforms that will protect children from trafficking disguised as adoption.
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7. (SBU)

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