

Brown, Melissa A

RELEASED IN FULL

From: Bond, Michele T
Sent: Sunday, January 27, 2008 12:38 PM
To: Alexander, Eric M (Hanoi); Fuller, Gerry W; 'michael.valverde@dhs.gov'
Cc: Bernier-Toth, Michelle; Saint-Victor, Marc; Brown, Melissa A
Subject: Re: Proposed Conference Call with NOID Families

Thanks, Eric, that is an excellent point. We will all continue working with post to provide information, make ourselves available to answer questions and minimize as much as possible the families' sense of things being bleak and beyond their control.

Michele

 This email was sent from a wireless Blackberry device.

This e-mail is unclassified based on the definitions provided in E.O. 12958

----- Original Message -----

From: Alexander, Eric M (Hanoi)
To: Fuller, Gerry W; 'Valverde, Michael' <michael.valverde@dhs.gov>
Cc: Bond, Michele T; Bernier-Toth, Michelle; Saint-Victor, Marc; Brown, Melissa A
Sent: Sun Jan 27 00:30:44 2008
Subject: RE: Proposed Conference Call with NOID Families

All,

On a side note, when the Regional Psychiatrist was visiting Hanoi I asked her to meet with my staff to talk about working with the NOID families and others who face difficulties in the adoption process. One point that she made was that our natural tendency is to think of the families as being in grief. However, she said that grief is a process that moves towards acceptance of a loss. From these families perspective, they have not lost anything. Instead she said they are going thru a trauma. In other words they feel that they are in a situation that is adversely affecting them and one where they have lost control. Thus they are seeking to gain control and know when the situation will end. Of course, they are also seeking compassion and understanding, but they crave information and a solution.

I found this to be a useful comment, and thought that as Washington considers meeting with the families, it might be useful information to keep in mind.

Eric

From: Fuller, Gerry W
Sent: Saturday, January 26, 2008 1:25 AM
To: 'Valverde, Michael'; 'Moore, Sean (Boxer)'
Cc: Bond, Michele T; Bernier-Toth, Michelle; Saint-Victor, Marc; Brown, Melissa A; Alexander, Eric M (Hanoi)
Subject: Proposed Conference Call with NOID Families

Mike,

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Sean and I talked a little about how best to respond to Sean's concern that we need to improve communication with the NOID families.

We agreed that a conference call for these families might be a way to make sure that they understood the process. The State Department would be willing to host such a call and participate. However, as we have repeatedly noted, the NOID process is essentially a DHS/USCIS responsibility and we would not want to do anything without your full participation and support.

So, my question is whether USCIS is able to participate.

Let me provide a little more of my thoughts on logistics and assumptions, so you can see what I'm thinking--based on experience with similar situations.

- * As noted, State would be willing to set up and host the call. People would call in.
- * The focus of the call would be to make sure that the 11 families understand the process. We would not be able or willing to discuss specifics of individual cases.
- * Participants would be reps from State, DHS, and the 11 families.

My initial thought is that we would limit participation to the families themselves so that we could have a genuine give-and-take. (This would exclude their lawyers and their congressional representatives--both of whom will probably want to be involved, but I think that participation beyond the families would discourage a forthright exchange of information. I'm willing to hear opposing points of view. I realize that the question of the participation legal representatives may be an issue since these people are engaged in a legal process with the USG.)

As I told Sean, we also need to realize that these families are in grief, so we need to be realistic as to what we can expect to achieve.

I know that you said you would be traveling this afternoon. But could you please raise this with your superiors and see if we can make this happen? Once/If we agree, we can talk about how to get the call-in information out to the families. There are some timing issues that we'll need to consider (current developments in the cases and to how much time it will take to set up the discussion). I'd like families to have time to prepare, and from past experience the quality of the conversation is increased if they send us their major questions before the call so that we are sure to have the information ready to address those concerns.

Gerry W. Fuller
Bilateral Adoptions Unit Chief
Office of Children's Issues
Department of State
Telephone: 202 663-2928