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Documents received via
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Date	Subject line	Identifying Excerpt (If Any)	Agencies Mentioned (Click to See Comment)
1-Feb-00	Developments on Ethiopian Adoption Scene	... [O]ne of the main players on the Ethiopian adoption scene, African Cradle, is now off the list of approved agencies with whom the governmental central authority will work. The cause of the break in relations with African Cradle is connected with the case of an orphan previously adopted by Americans who was sent back to Ethiopia with the possible involvement of African Cradle founder Amber Stime.	African Cradle
1-Apr-00	Adoptions in Ethiopia: African Cradle Agency's situation worsens	... [B]oard members of African Cradle adoption agency visited Addis Ababa recently in an effort to patch relations with the government of Ethiopia. However ... a highly negative front page article in a local English-language newspaper. ... contains excerpts of a report prepared by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, which details episodes of child molestation of orphans by a physician working at the African Cradle Clinic.	African Cradle
1-May-00	Adoption in Ethiopia: New Agency Gains Ground, African Cradle's Problems Continue	African Cradle Adoption Agency's situation in Ethiopia continues to be precarious ...	African Cradle
1-Jun-00	Adoptions: African Cradle Loses License in Ethiopia	The government has cancelled African Cradle's license to do business in Ethiopia.	Adoption Advocates Incorporated Adoption Advocates International (AAI) Adoption Associates International (AAI) African Cradle Americans for African Adoption Inc.
1-Jun-00	Ethiopia: Department of Labor Child Labor Study		
1-Aug-03	Ethiopia - American Adoption Agencies - Licensed and Otherwise	... Americans for African Adoptions ... has operated in Ethiopia for many years. The consular section has a very good working relationship with this group. They understand the GOE's adoption requirements, as well as our visa requirements. The children have consistently been true orphans. ... Adoption Advocates International (www.adoptionadvocates.org) has also operated in Ethiopia for years. This is an excellent agency that has a very good working relationship with both the GOE and our embassy. ... Because of recent articles in the New York Times Magazine and Readers Digest, we anticipate explosive growth in the adoption industry, and no let up in the number of individuals attempting to cash in on the process.	A New Arrival Angels' Haven Outreach Adoption Advocates Inc. (AAI) Adoption Advocates International (AAI) African Cradle Americans for African Adoption, Inc. (AFAA) Bethany Christian Services Children's Home Society and Family Services (of Minnesota) Maine Adoption Placement Services Human Brotherhood Organization Precious in His Sight Rainbow Kids Siblings Adoption Vermont Children's Aid Society Wide Horizons for Children Yezelalem Minch Yunona
1-Aug-03	Ethiopian Adoptions- The Law Part II	... The adopted child shall retain his bonds with the family of origin. ... [T]he adoption agreement may be revoked unilaterally at the will of the mother within six months.	

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1-Aug-03	Ethiopian Adoptions- The Law, Part I	<p>... A child merely conceived may be adopted. The adoption may, in such case, be revoked unilaterally at the will of the mother, before or within the three months following the birth of the child.</p> <p>... Adoption may not take place unless there are good reasons for it and unless it offers advantages for the adopted child.</p>	
1-Aug-03	The Ethiopian Adoption Process	<p>... Unfortunately, there are a number of unscrupulous adoption facilitators here too. ... [T]hey have been [known] to submit fraudulent documents to the Ethiopian courts, market children for adoption who are not bona fide orphans, and charge exorbitant fees for these services. ... The strong, cohesive nature of the extended family here makes it unlikely that a child with a living parent will be abandoned. Other relatives or community members often take in children who have lost both parents. This is not true of children orphaned by AIDS, which carries a significant social stigma. ... Ethiopian officials tell us there are many abandoned children of all ages in Addis Ababa. ... Children arrive with a parent, but often are separated from them by the circumstances of life on the streets of this desperately poor capital city. ... The process of identifying orphans, approving adoptions, and processing immigrant visas for them is extremely rigorous here. ... The embassy has heard of adoptive parents paying more than \$10,000 per child for the assistance of an unlicensed facilitator. These facilitators ... go out into the countryside and collect children, sometimes by convincing parents that the children will have a better life abroad. ... There are reports that some children have been kidnapped for adoption</p>	<p>Adoption Advocates International (AAI) Americans for African Adoption, Inc. (AFAA) Wide Horizons for Children</p>
1-Jan-04	Ethiopian Adoptions - The Cost		
29-Jul-04	[Redacted] Adoption: Senator Leahy Interested		
1-Sep-04	Responses to [Redacted]- Senator Leahy Interested	<p>In Ethiopia, it is extremely easy to obtain genuine documents that contain completely false information. Every day Consular Officers encounter bona fide birth, baptismal, school, marriage, divorce and health certificates, court decrees and lawfully-issued Ethiopian passports that contain false information (identity, parentage, origin, age). They are presented in order to support false claims to immigration benefits. The Consular Section largely relies on field investigations to verify claimed relationships and identities that cannot be verified via DNA testing.</p>	
7-Sep-04	Letter to Senator Leahy, September 7, 2004		
1-Oct-04	Addis Ababa - Request for Immigrant Visa Assistance	<p>Ethiopia is a document poor country, and most people never obtain official documents about themselves. The population has a high illiteracy rate and suffers greatly from internal strife, famine and other dislocation. ... [M]any files arrive at post without necessary documentation. ... In December 2002 the New York Times Sunday Magazine published a very positive article on Ethiopian adoptions. It was excerpted a few months later in the Reader's Digest. After each of these, we experienced a jump in adoption cases and in inquiries about the program.</p>	
21-Dec-04	Letter from Senator Leahy to The Honorable Colin Powell		
29-Dec-04	Letter to Senator Leahy, December 29, 2004		

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1-May-05	Senator Inhofe visits adopted granddaughter's orphanage; renews pledge to re-evaluate USG policies on adoption	... Senator Inhofe also emphasized his interest in adoption procedures during a meeting with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, with whom he discussed his Ethiopian-American granddaughter (REFTEL). Prime Minister Meles articulated his gratitude for the increasing number of American citizens adopting orphaned Ethiopian children.	
1-Mar-06	As U.S. adoptions in Ethiopia sharply increase, officers go to the field, increase outreach to GOE, agencies.	Ethiopian officials appear determined to keep adoption in Ethiopia legitimate, and insists on proper documentation before a child is released to a non-Ethiopian family.	Children's Home Society of Minnesota
1-Mar-06	As U.S. adoptions in Ethiopia sharply increase, officers increase outreach to GOE, agencies	Given the ease of processing, low fees, and skyrocketing interest among both Americans and Europeans, the possibility of adoption-related fraud is a major post concern. ... Ethiopia is the fastest-growing source country for adoptions by American citizens, and the rapid growth mimics the troubling pattern of programs that were eventually closed because of fraud concerns.	
1-Apr-06	Post meets with Ethiopian adoption policymakers, discusses the future of intercountry adoptions in Ethiopia	The accreditation process for prospective agencies is led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with input from the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) and the Ministry of Justice.	
1-Feb-07	Ethiopia Adoption Update	Americans are adopting more children from Ethiopia than ever before. Post has seen a nearly 600% increase in the number of orphan visas issues from FY 2002 to FY 2006. ... The number of American adoption agencies is also growing exponentially. Only two agencies were licensed by the government in 2002. ... [F]ifteen American agencies are currently licensed and several more are in the process to be approved... Post is concerned that the growth in demand and players in the Ethiopian adoption field will lead to fraud. One agency recently was found to be working with an American facilitator who has previously presented problematic adoption cases.	
4-Feb-08	Joint Council Meeting 4 February 2008	JCICS is concerned with the huge influx of adoption cases in Ethiopia. -Agencies need to recognize the difference between U.S. law and Ethiopian law, as related to adoption - Agencies need to make sure their local staff are properly trained on U.S. immigration law[.] There must never be any sort of financial benefit to birth families as a result of adoption - No money for the birth family -No goods -Any exchange of money or goods that creates an incentive for a birth family to give up a child "cannot be conducted[.]" No organization should ever send people out into the field to search for children for international adoption[.] ... Agencies should never pay for referrals of specific children from any orphanage. ... There should be some type of counseling available for birth families. ... It is the agencies' responsibility to know how children ended up in institutionalized care. ... -No one working for any agency should ever be paid on a per-case basis. ... If any agency employee is ever pressured to find babies, the JCICS should be contacted immediately.	Adoption Advocates International (AAI) Adoption Avenues Americans for African Adoptions, Inc. (AFAA) Children's Home Society and Family Services (of Minnesota) Christian World Adoption Dove Adoptions Families Thru International Adoption Holt International Wide Horizons for Children
10-Apr-08	Letter to Ruth on Private Adoption April 2008	In the last three or four months, however, the number of private adoptions has increased significantly, to the point where we are getting at least one per week on average. ... comprised 100 percent of Ethio-American adoptive parents, mostly people adopting relatives privately. Almost all of these cases are problematic.	

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1-Jun-08	Ethiopian Foreign Minister Proposes Temporary Halt to Intercountry Adoptions	... Ethiopian Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin said that he planned to recommend that Ethiopia halt all intercountry adoptions for an as-yet-unspecified period of time. ... in response to a scandal in which the government had confirmed that middlemen were actively buying and selling children for intercountry adoptions. ... [W]e were concerned that in the current environment of lax enforcement, such abuses can almost be expected. Conoff cautioned that any sort of halt to processing of intercountry adoptions should be carefully considered and implemented in such a way as to avoid leaving children and parents in limbo. ... If the halt were to apply to children who had already been adopted but before parents take legal custody, the children and parents would be left in a very difficult legal status.	
16-Jun-08	Report On The Trip To Hossaena		
1-Jul-08	Ethiopia decides not to suspend intercountry adoptions. For now	... [I]nvestigations by Ethiopian authorities concluded that middlemen were actively buying and selling children for intercountry adoptions. ... Post argued that reforms that address their concerns have been proposed and are doable, and that a suspension would likely result in thousands of children languishing in orphanages.	
1-Jul-08	Joint Council Urges Change, Offers Resources for Capacity Building	In a series of meeting in Addis Ababa July 6 - 12, Tom DiFilipo, CEO of the Joint Council for International Children's Services (JCICS) urged the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) to consider adopting Standards of Practice, while offering a financial support package to assist the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) in capacity building. In separate meetings with adoption agencies, DiFilipo urged agencies to commit to the Standards to Practice and to voluntarily cap the numbers of adoptions they process while the GoE builds capacity. ... The JCICS has expressed concern over orphanages having agreements with agencies that involve money being paid on a per-child basis, similar to practices that were a problem in Vietnamese orphanages.	
1-Aug-08	Conference Call Ensuring that adoptive children truly qualify as orphans	<p>We do not want to be in the position where we must decide not to approve an immigrant visa for an adopted child. ... In most cases, the adopting parents have entered the process in good faith; they have complied with all the requirements, etc. They are relying upon the agency that they have engaged to know U.S. immigration law and refer them only a child who qualifies as an orphan. They should be able to expect that their agency is competent to know the difference between an adoptable child and one that is not adoptable under U.S. immigration law.</p> <p>We are finding that some agencies know the law very well and have explicit procedures designed to ensure that only adoptable orphans are referred to American adoptable parents.</p> <p>We are also finding that some agencies do not seem to understand the criteria, or believe they are not important, or are not enforced, or are flexible.</p>	

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1-Sep-08	Ethiopia takes measured approach to review of intercountry adoption process	<p>GOE is unlikely, at least in the short term, to revoke the licenses of any American adoption agencies currently licensed to operate in Ethiopia. According to Minelik Alemu, Assistant Director for International Law and Consular Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the government's recent review of all adoption agencies found no problems with any agencies currently licensed to make referrals to American adoptive parents. ...</p> <p>Alemu opined that the orphanages are likely the weakest link in the process. Orphanages are responsible for verifying that children who come into their care have truly been abandoned and are not the victims of trafficking or other unethical practices. ... Ethiopia's federal system makes it difficult for authorities at the national level to exercise oversight over orphanages that are controlled by regional governments.</p>	
20-Oct-08	Review of Adoption Agencies Quarterly Meetings		
29-Oct-08	Notes on Meeting with European Consuls Focus on Adoptions	<p>... Conflict between the Ministry of Justice (Federal First Instance Court) and the Ministry of Women's Affairs has led to shoddy record-keeping and no clear agency in charge. ... - Post-adoption reviews by MOWA are more or less useless because officials are going on a free trip to a nice country, rather than looking at underlying problems in the Ethiopian structure that causes so many children to need intercountry adoption. ... -In such a poor country, the obvious money that washes through agencies is a draw for unscrupulous actors.</p>	
14-Apr-09	RE Ensuring that adoptive children qualify as orphans		
14-May-09	[Redacted] May 14 2009		Hope Adoption Agency
18-May-09	Adoptions of Abandoned Children Halted by Ethiopian Court		Adoption Associates International (AAI) All God's Children
3-Jun-09	Msg to Grace A Pruitt at Hope Adoption Agency US Office and Follow-Up Message Sent to Hope Local Office		Hope Adoption Agency
16-Jun-09	FW: Consular Section Needs to Review Cases BEFORE the interview date and BEFORE adoptive parents travel to Ethiopia	<p>... more troubling for us is that often when Hope staffers are asked detailed questions about how a child came to be available for adoption, the Hope staffer is at a loss to explain. For this reason I have decided we need to review all of Hope's cases in advance of the interview and ideally before the court date.</p>	Hope Adoption Agency
16-Jun-09	Consular Section needs to see adoption cases BEFORE the interview date and BEFORE the court date, when possible	<p>I am writing to advise you that for future adoption cases brought to our Consular Section by Hope, we would like to review the cases in advance of the interview date and before the adoptive parents travel to Ethiopia. ... We do not want to have to delay cases at the point of interview, when the adopting parents are here and when delays are most difficult for everyone involved. ...</p>	Better Futures Adoption Hope Adoption Agency
29-Jun-09	FW: Important from Hope	<p>... Classic Hope shenanigans. They are the worst for sure.</p>	Hope Adoption Agency

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17-Jul-09	Letter from Senator Jack Reed to Roxanne Reed, other documents	... there were emails sent to the families of AFAA email list stating that AFAA was "hurting for funds." ... We were told that many of our children came from Ms. Teferra's orphanage and that unless the money was raised, the orphanage would not help process court dates for us waiting families. ... In December we emailed again and received a reply from Ms. Carter-Shotts stating that she didn't think there were any problems with our adoption case. On January 22, 2009 we spoke to Ms. Carter-Shotts and found out that AFAA had shut down its Ethiopian adoption program and foster home. Our children had been moved at some point without our knowledge back to the orphanage of Haregewoin Teferra. Ms. Carter-Shotts informed us that there was a money dispute between herself and Ms. Teferra.	Americans for African Adoption, Inc. (AFAA)
17-Jul-09	Notes from Meeting with Amb Hilima Mohamed MFA	Post's workload continues to increase at a rate of about 20 percent over last year's total of over 1,800 cases. ... In June, Post asked consular officers from the French Embassy to join it in a series of meetings with Ethiopian authorities. ... in recognition that the GoE needs to seriously address the lack of oversight and control over the intercountry adoption process ...	
6-Sep-09	Concerns about abandonment cases		Better Futures Adoption Hope Adoption Agency
27-Oct-09	Email re: Police colluding with adoption agencies Addis Ababa	Last week I spoke at length with the orphanage director from Kebebe Tsehay government-run orphanage (RE: the needs of the orphanage and how money raised could best be spent). In the course of the conversation, he mentioned that they haven't received any new babies in over a month. Babies are typically brought in by local police, and the average is about 2-3 babies per week. The director is convinced that the police are being paid by private agencies to bring the babies to them. As evidence, he cited that he was at a police station recently and ran into a friend of his who runs private orphanage. He reasoned that his friend had no legitimate reason to be at a police station.	
5-Nov-09	Adoption Contract concluded on giving Child through adoption	On December 21, 2010 the US Embassy reviewed documentation for child [redacted] Gimbi, Ethiopia, from the Children's House International Adoption agency.... This document states "if any contracting party [including the birth mother] tries to revoke this contract shall be fined birr 1,000 to the party obeying the contract" Legal decision to place a child in institutionalized care belongs to government officials, and therefore a contract such as this directly between a birth mother and orphanage is in direct violation of your country's laws. Additionally, the United States find unethical the punitive practice of placing monetary fines on birth parents who may later become able to care for a child or simply realize they made a mistake in relinquishing a child.	Children's House International
2-Dec-09	FW: [Redacted] - American World	This is now the third America World case ... that has caused serious concern. And as a result, we plan to investigate each and every AWA case from here on out. We will do anything from a full paper review of the original case file up to and including a field investigation, and that means that many cases will be delayed in processing. We will tell [redacted] this when we see him on Friday.	American World Adoption Association (AWAA)

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9-Dec-09	Report re: visit to Christian World Adoption	A surprise visit to Christian World Adoption proved highly productive in determining current practices at the agency. The atmosphere is similar to that of an airline after they have experienced a crash, increased controls, training and more transparency of the processes and an increased desire to fix that which appears to be wrong. The increased scrutiny and attention to this agency has them increasing their training with orphanages, and communication with the GOE on rectifying the appearance of corruption that may give rise to additional claims of malfeasance. In all, it seems that CWA had taken a hard look at themselves and the GOE and decided that the best option is to maintain a level of transparency that will help them clear their name. The only question remains, can they sustain this?	Christian World Adoption
29-Dec-09	International Adoption Month Luncheon	...The UNICEF rep stressed the importance of addressing concerns of the upcoming CBS Evening News article by stating that rather than focusing on exposing scandal, the evening news really should focus on the good that has come out of adoption from Ethiopia. Exposures will do nothing to restore children to some type of alternate care that is in the best interest of the child. ...	
15-Jan-10	Report re 2010 visit to Better Futures	Grubby dingy toys crammed in a corner of a corrugated iron room, that was meant to be a garage Cables from the Television hanging down where small hands can easily grab them and pull the television off the stand or worse. Bathrooms with a layer of grey, greasy filth. No need to say more at this time. ... The question then is, where does the money go if not into the transition home and facilities to support the children?	Better Futures Adoption
25-Jan-10	Ethiopian Adoption Update, January 2010	Post found that AWA and Better Futures, which have been the source of multiple cases with incomplete, unclear, or blatantly incorrect files, were disorganized in their recordkeeping practices and staff did not have substantive knowledge about the adoption process of individual cases. Additionally, conoff observed filthy conditions in Better Futures' transition home in children's bedrooms and common areas, including food preparation areas, and inadequate supervision and supplies. ... Despite the recent bad press, our visit to Christian World showed an organized office with knowledgeable staff and full case files for each child. This was particularly encouraging since the surprise inspection found the transition home to be clean and organized, the children's rooms and staff cheerful and daily activities were not affected by the presence of Embassy. ... While the GOE has repeatedly stated its interest in receiving information from post about questionable agency practices, we have yet to see any response that actually penalizes agencies for such behavior.	American World Adoption Association (AWAA) Better Futures Adoption Christian World Adoption
2-Feb-10	Report on Trip to Sidamo	We asked who trains Kebele workers. Turns out they are trained by the Wareda government representatives who are trained by Zonal representatives who are trained by the Bureau of Women's Affairs and MOWA. The end result is similar to playing a game of "telephone" and it seems that the concept of inter-country adoption becomes more of an interpretation of how the practice works rather than strict adherence to a process.	Gladney Center for Adoption Wide Horizons for Children

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5-Feb-10	No. 10-143 Diplomatic Note to GOE	The Embassy of the United States of America ... wishes to express its deep concern about the NGO re-registration process as it has applied to adoption agencies. ... the Embassy was surprised to learn from Ministry of Justice representatives that all U.S. agencies, with the exception of two which have already ceased to operate, were summarily re-registered. The Embassy believes that additional scrutiny of re-registering agencies for compliance with Ethiopian law ... would be invaluable in ensuring the integrity of the adoption process.	
17-Feb-10	FW: Hope Adoption Agency & Mr. Shimeliss Demissie		Hope Adoption Agency
3-Mar-10	FW: Final Correspondence from [redacted]		Hope Adoption Agency
10-Mar-10	Meeting with Hope Adoption Agency	It seems that the agency is guilty of not conducting due diligence for orphanages with whom they work in this case, but it does not mean that this is intentional or malicious wrong doing	Hope Adoption Agency
11-Mar-10	FW [redacted] State of Florida investigation.txt	... concerns about allegations of direct recruitment of children from birth parents	
17-Mar-10	Gelgela trip report from Christine D. Parker	... visited the Gelgela orphanage in Addis Although they may appear to be moving in the right direction, we had some serious concerns about oversight of operations at the local level orphanages, documentation, and filing. ... After our visit and learning that there really is no oversight at the Addis level, the agencies are not demanding accountability or performing due diligence on cases from Gelgela, and the numerous rumors we've heard about Gelgela's branch orphanages' unethical recruitment of children, I do not feel any more confident They said the agencies "never push" for additional documents and rarely ask specific questions about a child's origins (Bethany and AWAA).	American World Adoption Association (AWAA) Better Futures Adoption
26-Mar-10	FW: AP of child from Gelgela	We processed the adoption through America World Adoption (AWAA) in November 2009 Please note: We are very angered to learn that this child was much older than the age listed on his birth certificate. American medical and dental examinations make him closer to the age of 5 1/2 years to 6 years old. ... Please use this information in any way that is most helpful to cause to cease any child trafficking or other illegal activity. Any light you can shed on this particular case would be of utmost interest to us.	American World Adoption Association (AWAA)
29-Mar-10	Report re: trip to Gelgela Orphanage Bench Maji Zone	Gelgela orphanage, Concerns: - The overall condition of the orphanage is very poor; the situation of the rooms, the condition of the children needs more attention. -Record keeping mechanisms of the orphanage needs to be improved. Currently there is no proper filing system, which makes it difficult to trace cases. The information filled in the life history forms and kept by the organization is often misleading. ... -The Kebele uses the same template for all the cases - I found the same information in every cases. The focus is more on establishing the poverty of the relinquishing parent, not legality of the case. They have a tendency to do anything as long as the applicants can bring three witnesses. -There is similarity of all the cases such as all the mother comes from other places, they were pregnant when they came, most of them work in bars and most of them suddenly change their addresses. There seems to be somebody advising the relinquishing mothers to present their cases in such a way to get more acceptance.	

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29-Mar-10	RE: Hope Adoption Agency & Mr. Shimeliss Demissie		Hope Adoption Agency
10-May-10	From AAI Positive Yahoo Forum	... we wanted to alert you that we have had reports from several families recently about possible/suspected sexual abuse at AHOPE. ... We are also carefully attending the children reported as offenders so that other cases will not emerge.	Adoption Advocates International (AAI)
31-Jul-10	Adoption Field Investigation in Ethiopia 7-18 to 7-31-10	[MOWA] indicated that in Ethiopian culture, usually the extended family care for children in need and it is only in exceptional cases when the children are placed in institutions. Children are primarily placed in institutions for care, not for adopting purposes. Adoptions are only from public or private child care institutions. Adoption in Ethiopia is a simple adoption, not a full adoption as the ties with the biological parents remain as indicated in the Ethiopian Family Code. Most children referred for international adoption came from the south and some from Tigray. ... there are issues with records in the regions and there are allegations of cash payments in the adoption process but no hard evidence exists. There are also allegations biological parents are not giving free and informed consent and institutions are giving false promises. ... The DUWAW orphanage (DUWAW means "Doing Good" in the Afar language) is really a school. They feed the children 3 times a day. Adebush Ayele who runs DUWAW has worked with a total of 800 children, most of them living with their parents. She is currently working with 50 children. Some of the children come from HIV+ families. ... Apparently over 50 children have been put into the adoption stream from the Awash area. ... Within the last 3 years, there were a lot of problems in the Sodo area allegations that local orphanages were bribing families to relinquish their children. Parents were given empty promises and did not know where their kids were going.	
11-Aug-10	Letter to US Embassy re clarification of press on adoption agencies	Amharic weekly (July 7) reports reveals that local orphanages sale [sic] children to foreigners through adoption agencies.	
17-Sep-10	Notes from meeting with representative of American World Adoption	In AWA, there was a five day old baby from SNNPR. This shows that birth mother most likely had a pre-arrangement with facilitator prior to birth. Not allowing for sufficient time for post-birth counseling of birth mother. ... Inducements: -Childcare institutions are requesting funding from adoption agencies on a per child basis (e.g., \$20,000 funding quid pro quo 10 child referrals). -Government officials at all levels are receiving inducements in terms of trips to US This is being done through National Coalition on Adoption or Joint Council to avoid National Corruption Acts. -Childcare institution directors request direct deposit into accounts as "top-offs" for salary. Gave example of one person in Hosanna requesting a direct monthly deposit of \$3000. -Birth families are receiving approximately 500 birr for relinquishment or a cow. Gave example of visiting birth family and they specifically asked her for a cow. ... overcrowded childcare institutions where children are sick and/or dying; agencies moving children to SNNPR or other regions to process, false documentation ... It is important to note that these examples are about some of the top eight US agencies; 7 of which are Hague accredited in the US. ... -One specific child care institution takes ill babies as referrals and there is question as to whether she purposely does this to use dead babies' documents to process children with no documentation.	American World Adoption Association (AWAA)

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5-Oct-10	US embassy letter re: Adoption Avenues terminates contract of its Ethiopia Country Director Addis Ababa_10-5-10	... there were over 70 visas issued to Adoption Avenues cases over the past year; given what we know now about their country director and what we find from looking very closely about new cases, we may want to revisit the legality of those previous cases. ... For your information, Embassy staff met with the President of the Board of Adoption Avenues today regarding the termination of [redacted]. Documents provided by Adoption Avenues indicate that he was fired for soliciting funds for his personal gain from prospective adoptive parents, skimming money from agency donations to local orphanages, threatening families, and misrepresenting the agency. There are also allegations of inappropriate behavior to at least one prospective adoptive mother in June 2010.	Adoption Avenues
4-Nov-10	FW: FW: PEAR releases Ethiopia Survey	These allegations [PEAR's survey] just lend credence to what we continue to suspect about what's happening in adoptions here but have yet to be able to confirm. There are so many weaknesses in the process that fraud/mismanagement/misinformation can occur at every level, and this is proof. -The allegations reference a number of agencies - some (like Better Futures, AAI and [redacted]) were on our radar as problematic, but others (Wide Horizons) were more of a surprise. Also, given all of the press on Christian World, we were surprised they were not mentioned at all.	Adoption Advocates International (unclear which AAI) Adoption Associates International (unclear which AAI) Better Futures Adoption Christian World Adoption Wide Horizons for Children
15-Nov-10	RE: possible misconduct/fraud		Holt International
17-Nov-10	No. 10-1628 Diplomatic Note to GOE	... the adoptive parents have told the Embassy that they believe their agency falsified information in order to process [redacted] as siblings, knowing full well that they are not related. Further, the adoptive family believes that their daughter was unwillingly taken from her mother, who is alive, and their son is not an orphan at all.	Holt International
18-Nov-10	RE: Report of Sidam zone Adoption	... I agree that there appears to be something improper about the relationship between the Kebele official and orphanage, and possibly agency, but without proof we've no choice but to move forward on these cases and keep our eye on this particular orphanage/woreda in future cases. ... [Re:] the Hawassa orphanage. ... is a 5 room house, but we did not see any evidence one would expect of accommodating children there: no beds, no toys, no nanny or other attendant, no clothes, no food stores.	
19-Nov-10	Read out from US Embassy Meeting with the Federal First Instance Court	UNICEF presented the terms of a consultancy to establish a manual for adoption judges The French expressed their concern over the integrity of the adoption process and indicated that they are considering a ban on all Ethiopian adoptions (largely based on the French courts concerns about the status of an Ethiopian orphan under French law, a requirement that French parents must go through a 4-6 months after the adoption takes place).	
23-Dec-10	dip note Children's House	... a contract between a birth mother and an orphanage that called for a 1,000 birr fine if the birth mother reneged and decided she wanted the child back.... Only one case had a copy of that contract, but we received several others from CH from that orphanage on the same day and so we're holding them all until we hear from MOWCYA... ...Our conversation with Scott from Gladney US was especially enlightening...He said Gladney was "forced" to trust their local staff, provide them with training, and hope for the best. When Jeff pointed out that the orphanage rep at Initiative in SNNPR, who receives a 20k birr per month (yep) stipend direct from Gladney for "capacity building and development," finally caved and admitted he could not account for all of the money Gladney gave him, Scott (I think) began to see that his agency's negligence was part of the problem.	Children's House International

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13-Jan-11	Letter from US Visa Office re: question about returned petitions	That's not to say that fraudulent or unethical acts on the part of an ASP should be ignored, it's just that where the adjudication is concerned, there are very narrow grounds under which it can affect the outcome.... We also welcome additional guidance on whether we should be returning cases from orphanages in which we've confirmed child-buying is occurring, or through kebeles in which we've confirmed that death certificated for biological parents are being falsified, etc.	
22-Jan-11	Notice from Orphanage Elolam Care for Children		
24-Jan-11	Children's House adoption contract cases for MOWCYA	First, we received a case from the [redacted] adoption agency involving the relinquishment of one twin but not the other....	Children's House International
25-Jan-11	RE: Initiative Ethiopia	Let's add also that we understand from our December conversation that Gladney is not currently reviewing its practices in Ethiopia, and reiterate our strong support for taking such a step at this time... Scott- During our discussions with the director of the orphanage we learned that Gladney is providing the orphanage director is 20,000 birr/month for capacity building, in addition to other expenses associated with operating an orphanage. During these discussions, the director could not articulate, nor account, for what he is doing with these resources. At first, he indicated that these funds were for expenses such as fuel costs. However, Gladney's contract with the orphanage clearly has a separate line item for operational expenses. During my visit to Initiative Ethiopia's facility in Awassa last week I was struck by the lack of any documentation at the facility. Staff were unsure where the documents were being stored for the 32 children currently at the facility. A log book, with the name of the child and date they arrived, is the only form of information available. Further, no one at the orphanage was aware of any capacity building activities.	Gladney Center for Adoption
26-Jan-11	No. 11-163 Diplomatic Note to GOE	In two of these cases, the relinquishing families stated that [redacted] told them that the Shalom orphanage would provide a financial reward to the birth family after the completion of the adoption. One of the families indicated that they believed the purpose of our Consular visit was to provide them with this financial reward. The United States finds unethical the practice of a government employee coercing and offering financial incentives to birth families to relinquish a child. The United States is also concerned that a government employee with the authority to facilitate the relinquishment process is also receiving a substantial and regular salary directly from a private orphanage. This type of relationship between a government official and an orphanage, and practice of offering financial incentives to induce relinquishment, goes against shared beliefs that inter-country adoption and institutionalized care should be the very last resort for children in difficult circumstances.	Bethany Christian Services
27-Jan-11	Correspondence regarding Better Futures Cases 10-23-09 to 1-27-11	Better Futures Cases.... It was brought to our attention that many things that were told to us by the U.S. agency were lies. When we tried to get clear answers from our agency we were threatened.... One of the worst things we saw were some men in and out of the care center and he had a gun... he left the gun on the couch and a toddler picked up the gun. The other concern was the health of the children, a lot of babies that were wasting and should have been hospitalized. The nanny's hygiene was questionable.	Better Futures Adoption
1-Feb-11	Letter from Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to US Embassy re: BFAS License Revoked	In this regard, the Ministry would like to confirm to the esteemed Embassy that the registration of BFAS has been revoked apparently because the organization has been abusing its license by engaging in activities contrary to the welfare of children.	
3-Feb-11	Re: Adoption Complaint for [redacted]		

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9-Feb-11	Trip Report		
10-Feb-11	Hope complaint	... While at the orphanage, I saw donations come in and they were never given to the children.... There was a room of children about 1 year old that were all sitting in a circle staring at each other not moving. There were no toys. We were all told to bring donations of toys when we come.... They are very understaffed considering the money that families provide as part of their fees and considering how inexpensive it is to hire additional help...	Hope Adoption Agency
10-Feb-11	[Redacted]		
1-Mar-11	Letter from Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to US Embassy re Better Futures adoption cases		Better Futures Adoption
4-Mar-11	GOE takes steps to reduce adoptions by 90%, thousands of amcits to be affected	In a meeting with Embassy officials, FFIC President Desalegn acknowledged the GOE's concerns over the integrity of the adoption process but later called the letter a response to a "tug of war" between the court and ket adoption ministry, and implored the Embassy to view this step as an internal discussion within the GOE and not a change in adoption policy. However, in a meeting with UNICEF officials on March 2, the MOWCYA Minister called these measures necessary, serious, and lasting, and indicated that the ministry is "at war with (adoption) agencies." While the Embassy supports GOE efforts to improve the integrity of the adoption process, we fear this abrupt change without a concrete plan behind it could not only slow down the process, but create more opportunities for abuse of the process.	
17-Mar-11	Children's House International / Kingdom Vision		Children's House International
22-Mar-11	Letter from Hague Accreditation to US Embassy re: Children's House International Adoption Agency	This is to acknowledge our receipt of your complaint against Children's House International. Children's House International will be notified of our initiation of an investigation and will be provided with a copy of your complaint.	
28-Mar-11	Hawassa meeting report -- zone admin, Gladney and Initiative Ethiopia	Overall, some 4800 children were placed into ICA from Ethiopia in 2010. Of that total, the U.S. Embassy issued 2513 IR3 and IR4 immigrant visas to Ethiopian children and their American citizen parents, with France, Spain, Italy and other European countries compromising the remaining 2300 children being adopted overseas.	Gladney Center for Adoption
1-Apr-11	Unethical Recruitment, Orphanage Closures, and Reduced Processing Provide Bleak Outlook on Ethiopian Adoptions	...All were cases involving children with unknown biological fathers. However during our interview, the biological mother not only willingly and readily identified the previously unknown father, but indicated that she had been engaged in a relationship with the biological father for a significant period of time... In addition, in one interview, a birth mother stated that she was approached on the street by orphanage staff to relinquish her baby before she had given birth. when she expressed her willingness, orphanage officials paid a visit to her home where they also asked if she would be willing to relinquish her two year old as well.... The birth mother also said that she signed a relinquishment statement at the orphanage but she could not read and therefore did not know what it said. When Embassy staff informed the birth mother that there was no requirement that birth parents receive regular updates, nor that the child they relinquish would return to Ethiopia, she stated repeatedly and definitively that, had she known that information, she would not have relinquished custody of her child.	American World Adoption Association Bethany Christian Services Gladney Center for Adoption
19-Apr-11	RE: Ethiopian Adoption		Hope Adoption Agency
19-Apr-11	FW: Ethiopian Adoption		Hope Adoption Agency

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20-Apr-11	Letter re: Christian World Adoption Ethiopia Case Statistics	<p>...Many agencies we meet with don't even ask for a regular accounting of the funds they give to an orphanage and are often resistant to our suggestions about regular audits. When we do field investigations, we do look at orphanages' books (if they have them) and are often shocked at their inability to account for major sums of funds, especially when more than one agency is contributing....</p> <p>Most agencies do not question the dossiers they are given. They don't independently verify the child's history; they don't notice improbabilities (a child found abandoned in the delivery room of a hospital is one recent case that comes to mind); they don't have a basic understanding of what the GOE/USG requires to support a legal adoption; and they have no idea how the local government or orphanage come to find children who are put into the ICA process. There are basic questions that are never asked until cases get to us.</p>	<p>Bethany Christian Services Christian World Adoption Gladney Center for Adoption</p>
20-Apr-11	No. 11-XXX Diplomatic Note to GOE (4-20-11)	<p>Information presented by Hope International to the Government of Ethiopia and the U.S. Embassy indicated that the birth parents of the child were deceased According to an email received by the U.S. Embassy ... from the adoptive parents, they have discovered that the child's biological mother is alive ... [and] was not aware that her child was being processed for international adoption....</p>	<p>Hope Adoption Agency</p>
21-Apr-11	No. 11-XXX Diplomatic Note to GOE (4-21-11)		<p>Hope Adoption Agency</p>
25-Apr-11	Unethical recruitment, orphanage closures, and reduced processing provide bleak outlook on Ethiopian adoptions	<p>The state of adoptions in Ethiopia has never been more fragile. Evidence obtained during 32 birth mother interviews ... and a field investigation into the practices of two adoption service providers (ASPs) and their partner orphanages concludes that an increasing number of agencies are employing orphanages to unethically recruit children into inter-country adoption (ICA).... The Blessing the Children orphanage also runs a women's empowerment program that provides local women cash grants to start a small business....</p> <p>An orphanage social worker denied the program provides an incentive to women to relinquish their children.... relinquishing families stated that the official told them that the Shalom orphanage would provide a financial reward to the birth family after the completion of the adoption....</p>	<p>American World Adoption Association (AWAA) Bethany Christian Services Gladney Center for Adoption</p>
25-Apr-11	RE: Our pending adoption		
29-Apr-11	FFIC takes action against [redacted]		
1-May-11	GOE Taking Steps to Ratify Hague R200504Z MAY 11		
19-May-11	General report on abandoned children in Awassa		
8-Jun-11	RE:	<p>... You are not the first adoptive parent to express concerns about Hope, and I appreciate your willingness to share.... They tell adoptive families that they are not allowed to meet the birth families which is a red flag for me.</p>	<p>Hope Adoption Agency</p>
13-Jun-11	No. 11-XXX Diplomatic Note to GOE (6-13-11)	<p>... family indicated that recently they received information from a former Hope social worker in Ethiopia, that the child is not from Kambata, but from Addis Ababa, and that her mother is not deceased, but is living in Addis... The family was also told that government officials there are paid by Hope to complete the paperwork and individuals are paid by Hope to appear as the parent of the child to relinquish them....</p>	<p>Hope Adoption Agency</p>

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21-Jun-11	No. 11-979 Diplomatic Note to GOE	Our investigation uncovered that 27 out of 33 children currently in the custody of the Initiative Ethiopia orphanage in Awassa were placed into that facility's care based on fraudulent or suspected fraudulent information, and only six were found to have documentation accurately reflecting their history. Embassy personnel have worked closely with the Gladney Center for Adoption... to independently investigate and confirm the true status of these children.... [allegedly] 20 children were relinquished by a family member after both of their biological parents died. However.... 14 of the 20 actually had living parents....	Gladney Center for Adoption
23-Jun-11	RE: Initiative Ethiopia	... our investigation uncovered links between the IE director and local government officials that cast a more nefarious light on things than Gladney wanted to admit.	Gladney Center for Adoption
14-Jul-11	RE: Our adoption in Ethiopia	... Given that we know these children were falsely documented, the major appear to have been unethically recruited, and the first case we received as 'fully investigated' by Gladney appears to not have ever been investigated at all, we believe we need to take extreme caution with these cases. Of course we don't want to delay PAPs any longer than necessary, but Gladney needs to provide more detailed information for us to move forward.	Gladney Center for Adoption
7-Sep-11	FW:	... We've invested quite a bit of effort in training the ASPs in case file preparation, including holding multiple training sessions where we discuss how we screen cases and providing checklists to agencies to use when preparing case files. Despite these efforts, we've seen almost no improvement in the quality of the case files submitted (with the exception of just a couple of agencies who appear to be making a good effort, like Christian World.)	Christian World Adoption
21-Sep-11	Interview with the brother who relinquished his sister's child	... the head of the local katana (each kebele is divided into katanas) came to his house and told him that he should relinquish his sister's children.... he met with Mr. Gudeta, representative of the Help for Needy Orphanage. Mr. Gudeta told the brother that the orphanage would only take children 3 years old and younger. The brother wanted to relinquish all of his sister's children but was told they were too old.	
1-Oct-11	Adoptions in Ethiopia - It's all About Pre-Screening	The clear message we received is that the GOE is very receptive to an orphan pre-screening process. The assessment we took away is that GOE will need assistance to implement a system and that we need to closely monitor adoption processing in Ethiopia. ... If we can address issues and concerns prior to the I-600 process, we can pinpoint areas that need to be addressed with MoWCYA and FFIC ... and avoid the serious issues PAPs can face when a problem is revealed after an adoption is completed.	
5-Oct-11	FW: Zone info for health care worker/relinquishment concerns	... Our data is based on 50 interviews with birth relatives conducted between June and August, 2011.... In about 50% of the cases, the birth relative interview contradicted the facts of the case as presented in the documents or released new information (an "unknown" birth father was readily identified by name, for example.) In 22% of the interviews, birth relatives stated that they believed the child would permanently return to Ethiopia at the age of 18. These birth relatives cited conversations with orphanage social workers as the principal source of this information. In 8% of the cases the relinquishing relative expected some sort of financial compensation for relinquishing the child. Some of these birth relatives also indicated that they believed the adoptive parents would send financial support to them from the United States, or that they expected the child to send back financial support once they reached the age of 18...	
31-Oct-11	RE: I-600 Request for Evidence to document orphan status		
9-Nov-11	RE: question		
17-Nov-11	Documentation of abandonment cases - US CIS conflicts		

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22-Nov-11	RE:		
29-Nov-11	[Redacted] Adoption 11.29.2011		
Dec-11	How abandoned children cases are processed and handled in Bahar Dar		Dove Adoptions
7-Dec-11	RE: questions	... you should definitely read "Finding Fernanda." It is a good explanation of how this works and [redacted] figures prominently in this book.... We learned that 14 children in the inter-country adoption process would be released following a review of their cases Ten were released and four of the children unfortunately died due to a measles outbreak. We have no information that the child you were matched with, [redacted] was one of the children that perished. The local officials, in coordination with UNICEF, is trying to reunite some of the children ... with their family.	Celebrate Children International (possible reference)
19-Dec-11	RE: [Redacted] Cases 12.19.2011.txt	... the first two are especially disturbing because it appears the PAPs signed the contract of adoption before the child was even physically in the orphanage...	
21-Dec-11	RE: [Redacted] family's Embassy Process	The Embassy began requesting advertisements to be run to search for abandoned children at the end of January 2011.... No evidence was presented that indicated these ads were run in newspapers or posted in the towns. They are simply typed pieces of paper. We suspect that these advertisements are recently created and likely were never posted/run in newspapers.	Ethiostork
22-Dec-11	FW: quick recap of MOWCYA Meeting	MOWCYA... assessed what they believe are the problems associated with orphanages in Ethiopia. This included inadequate investigations, referring children without proper documentation, improper accounting systems, and transferring children in ways that appear to be child trafficking.... Informed ASPs of how they contribute to problems in adoptions in Ethiopia. They do not properly oversee the orphanages, they send money by personal checks, they do not inform authorities when they know something illegal has happened, they sign adoption contracts [stet] when the child is not in the orphanage and they withhold services from orphanages when they have personal conflicts with them.	
6-Jan-12	Allegation against [redacted] family.txt		
23-Jan-12	Dear Yayesh	... We have received information that ASPs are charging "orphanage fees" for referrals, that orphanages are promising relinquishing parents financial "rewards" for relinquishing their children for adoption, and that orphanages and agencies are producing falsified documents in order to misrepresent the identities and ages of relinquished children in order to circumvent Ethiopian and American adoption laws.... Allegedly, the same agency partners with an orphanage that has convinced certain kebeles to require single parents in their jurisdiction to "register" with the local government so that the parents can later be pressured to relinquish their children.... and adoptive parents being told that their children's biological parents are deceased only to find out that the opposite is true once the children are old enough to express themselves in English....	
30-Jan-12	[Redacted] abandonment	... I think this case indicates that even in straightforward abandonments there's probably a local network of people who know who the birth mother is, and that local police can't really be troubled to do a proper search.	

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3-Feb-12	RE: [Redacted]	I think the facts may be even murkier than they appear.	
9-Feb-12	FW: CCI - Blessing the Children Kamashi		Celebrate Children International
24-Feb-12	Hope - Faith Children's Home.txt		Hope Adoption Agency
7-Mar-12	Gladney from a Concerned Ethiopia Adoptive Parent.txt	... There are rumors going around Facebook that Gladney is pressuring Ethiopian birth mothers to relinquish their children.... People do not understand why the court case is preceding [stet] when the mother has decided she wants to keep the child.	Gladney Center for Adoption
7-Mar-12	Ambassador Investigates Adoption in Southern Ethiopia	Director Marshet of MOWCYA provided an update on the status of 305 children who were removed from the 23 orphanages in the [SNNPR] region because of concerns about the practices of these institutions. Of those children, 58 have been reunified with their families, 31 have been permanently placed in child care centers, 32 have been placed in foster care, the families of 51 are still "untraced," and 7 children had been "reintegrated" and provided with a legal guardian....	
3-Apr-12	RE: Cases of 90 birth families in Arba minch demanding kids back	... She said as usual there might be some families demanding their kids back...SOS Arba Minch was the orphanage where the director was accused of illegally transferring several busses of children to Addis Ababa That is also the area that had 160+ "abandoned" children in 2010-early 2011 and 0 after the orphanage closed.	
12-Apr-12	Report on orphanages in Haromaya		
	No. 10-872 Diplomatic Note to GOE		Children's House International