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**REVIEW AUTHORITY: Robert Strand, Senior Reviewer**

Meeting with Hope Adoption Agency

**RELEASED IN PART  
B4,B7(A),B6**

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

On Wednesday March 10<sup>th</sup> Laurie Eisenmann, the US based representative from Hope International met with the Consular staff at the US Embassy. Ms. Eisenmann had requested the meeting to discuss the recently instituted time line for investigations prior to processing adoptions from their agency. The consular staff had also asked her to come prepared to discuss three adoptive family cases as well as the situation concerning their former country assistant representative [redacted]

[redacted]

B4  
B6

[redacted]

B7(A)

In the case of [redacted] the two children referred to this family had been referred in error. The orphanage where the children live is not registered for inter-country adoption. When the agency informed the adoptive parent that they could not process the children referred to them for adoption from the Bethel Children's Home Orphanage, the [redacted] would not accept that it was not possible. Instead they are accusing [redacted] of wrong doing. 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, just bad planning on HOPE's part. Out of the three families who had received referrals from Bethel Children's home through HOPE, two of the three family's cases have been processed. The [redacted] case happens to be the one that could not be processed. Somehow they are interpreting this as malicious behavior when it could simply be that HOPE has made a mistake that they cannot correct.

B6

In the case of [redacted], the children referred to her had medical complications beyond what the family was informed. Since the children had been referred from Betazatha, it can be deduced that the initial intake medical forms were not included in the adoption packet, and that it would be hard to recreate these documents since the children had passed through the orphanage several years ago. Ms.

[redacted] It stands to reason that they have far more advanced medical facilities at their disposal than exist in Ethiopia. If they are finding medical complications after the fact it should be no surprise.

B6

Finally, Ms. Eisenmann informed the consular staff that the Federal First Instance Court had passed down the decision today that adoptive families need to appear in court on the date scheduled for their child's adoption. This was vital news indeed and will change the pattern of adoptions in Ethiopia dramatically.