

ACTION OCS-00

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REVIEW AUTHORITY: Robert Strand, Senior Reviewer

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: CASC, CMGT, OREP, CVIS, ET  
SUBJECT: SENATOR INHOFE VISITS ADOPTED GRANDDAUGHTER'S  
ORPHANAGE; RENEWS PLEDGE TO RE-EVALUATE USG POLICIES ON  
ADOPTION

REFTEL: Addis Ababa 1276

1. (U) SUMMARY. Senator James M. Inhofe (R-Oklahoma),  
member of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption,  
visited the Addis Ababa orphanage where [redacted]  
[redacted] appeared to  
spur Senator Inhofe's interest in the reform of USG  
procedures on international adoptions. END SUMMARY.

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2. (U) During a March 2005 Congressional Delegation  
visit to the region (delegation also included Sen. Mike  
Enzi (R-Wyoming) and Rep. John Boozeman (R-Arkansas)),  
Senator James M. Inhofe and Mrs. Inhofe requested a  
visit to the orphanage where their [redacted]

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[redacted] Senator and Mrs.  
Inhofe visited the GOE-supported Kibebe Tsehay  
Orphanage in Addis Ababa, where they met with Orphanage  
Director Sofia Motta, orphanage staff, and the 39  
children resident there. During a tour of the  
facility, [redacted]  
[redacted] and met with  
orphanage staff who cared for her during her stay.  
Director Motta presented Senator Inhofe [redacted]

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[redacted] Senator Inhofe presented Director  
Motta with a large package of children's shoes and  
pencils, donated by U.S. Embassy personnel.

3. (SBU) During the visit, Deputy ConChief briefed the  
Senator on adoption procedures in Addis Ababa's  
consular section. Senator Inhofe expressed general

concern about the length of time that Americans often have to wait to adopt internationally, and expressed his opinion that the paperwork required for these adoptions might be excessive. Deputy ConChief briefed on the significant increase in AmCit adoptions of Ethiopians (approximately a 35% increase every six months since 2003) and described some of the challenges that the Embassy has faced with private adoption facilitators in Ethiopia. Senator Inhofe was sympathetic on these points, as well as the risks of human trafficking. He requested that Deputy act as a point of contact for his staff in their review of international adoption procedures.

4. (SBU) 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. PM Meles further indicated that the adoption process for foreigners adopting Ethiopian children had been improved, and offered to update Senator Inhofe about any further changes in adoption procedures. (NOTE: The Prime Minister likely was referring to the GOE licensing of two additional U.S. adoption agencies, which has helped smooth the overall adoptions process for Americans using those agencies).

5. (SBU) COMMENT. Senator Inhofe's visit to the Kibebe Tsehay Orphanage was an enjoyable experience for the Senator, Mrs. Inhofe, and his staff, all of whom expressed their deep appreciation for the opportunity. The visit also highlighted the importance of international adoption for Senator Inhofe, and seemed to reinvigorate his interest in reforming the joint DHS/State adoption process. END COMMENT.

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