



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL JUSTICE and CONSUMERS

Directorate C: Fundamental rights and Union citizenship
Unit C.1 : Fundamental rights and rights of the child

Brussels,
JUST/C1/MT/ts/1112117s

Mr Arun Dohle
Against Child Trafficking
arundohle@gmail.com

Subject: Intercountry adoptions

Dear Mr Dohle

Thank you for your two emails dated 26 November 2014 on the subject of intercountry adoptions, addressed to Ms C Day, Secretary-General of the European Commission and to Mr S Mordue, Director, DG Enlargement.

The EU is fully committed to the standards set out in the UN Convention on the rights of the child and seeks to promote respect of these standards. Where a child is deprived of parental care, a suitable alternative should first of all be sought in the child's own country, in line with the UN Guidelines for the alternative care of children.¹ If none of the options available is deemed appropriate and a decision is taken on intercountry adoption, the 1993 Hague Convention on the protection of children and cooperation and in respect of intercountry adoption provides legal procedural safeguards to ensure that adoption processes and procedures are compliant with the UN Convention on the rights of the child, and notably that the best interests of the child are the paramount consideration. With regard to your email on Ethiopia, please note that Ethiopia is not a signatory of that Convention. The EU has no competence under the Treaty with regard to international adoptions - they are regulated at national level.

We take note of the concerns you raise with regard to intercountry adoptions and note your allegations with regard to the expert group on de-institutionalisation.

The Commission will ensure that EU actions and initiatives proactively promote the standards of the UN Convention on the rights of the child, for *all* children. EU actions include the support of projects and programmes that address the various roots causes of separation of a child from her/his family (global fight against poverty as a general pattern, limited access to quality basic services in the community, lack of access to economic activities and poor livelihoods, violence against children, disabilities, inefficient child protection systems...). Within the European Union, forthcoming guidance on integrated child protection systems will reference key standards, including the UN Guidelines for the alternative care of children.

Yours sincerely


Chiara Adamo

¹ http://www.unicef.org/protection/alternative_care_Guidelines-English.pdf