



file adoption
United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

OCT 30 2000

Mr. William Pierce
Consultant on the Hague Convention
On Intercountry Adoption
National Council for Adoption
1930 17th St., NW
Washington DC 20009

Dear Mr. Pierce:

I have been asked to respond to your September 26 letter to Melanne Verveer concerning the employment status of Peter Pfund. You expressed concern that Mr. Pfund would no longer be employed by this office. Mr. Pfund has consented to our providing you with the following information.

Mr. Pfund, who has had a long and very distinguished career at the Office of the Legal Adviser, reached the mandatory retirement age of 65 for Foreign Service employees in October 1997. Since his retirement he has been employed by this office as a part-time employee. He has continued to make important contributions to the work of the Department in the area of private international law, including a small amount of his time on the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

Mr. Pfund will continue to be employed by this office for the foreseeable future on a "when actually employed" ("WAE") basis to work on special projects, including the Hague Abduction Convention. We are pleased that he has been invited to chair the next review session of the Hague Conference on the Abduction Convention and will support his attendance in that capacity.

Thank you for your interest in our work, and for the kind remarks about Mr. Pfund.

Yours sincerely,

James H. Thessin
Acting Legal Adviser

Sent By: NCEA;

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Sep-28-00 8:14PM;

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September 26, 2000

Melanie Verveer
Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff to the First Lady
By fax 202-456-6244

Dear Ms. Verveer:

Peter Pfund, the person in DOS who has the most knowledge about the Abduction Convention and who has the ability to network more effectively than any other person I am aware of on behalf of the Administration at The Hague in pursuit of the goals of the Convention, reached mandatory retirement age last year. He has been a contract employee of DOS. Through a foul-up of some sort, his slot and funding are not presently available in L/PIL, the most appropriate location from which he can be of service. I know from my conversations with Hans van Loon, Secretary General of The Hague Conference on Private International Law, that HCPIIL was intending to invite Pfund to chair the next session discussing the Abduction Convention. It would be a loss of expertise and momentum if this public servant were not enabled to continue his work for the Administration's goals after Oct. 1. Given the interest of Congress and others in this important and thorny issue, perhaps you would be kind enough to look into the matter?

Sincerely,

William Pierce
Consultant on The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption

WP/ms

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