



Mr Brent Yoder  
Executive Director  
Adoption Options, Inc.  
411 Camino Del Rio South, Suite 200  
SAN DIEGO, California 92108  
United States of America

THE HAGUE, 21 January 2011

Your ref. :

Our ref. : 50813(11)CB/MW

Dear Mr Yoder,

I am writing to you in my capacity as First Secretary of the Hague Conference on Private International Law with primary responsibility for the Hague Conference's work in relation to the *Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Public Documents* ("Apostille Convention"). It is under the Apostille Convention that Apostilles are issued to facilitate the international circulation of public documents.

The Permanent Bureau has recently been contacted by the Notary Public Section of the Secretary of State's Office in California concerning a request they received from a client of Adoption Options, Ms Jill Kleinman, for a letter confirming the issuance of Apostilles in relation to certain documents being used for adoption proceedings in the Russian Federation. As the Secretary of State's Office previously explained to Ms Kleinman, issuing such a letter is contrary to the Apostille Convention and risks undermining the simplified procedure it establishes for the international circulation of foreign public documents.

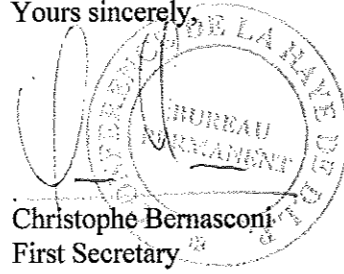
In response to a follow-up request by the Secretary of State's Office, the Permanent Bureau has prepared a letter to the nominated court in the Russian Federation explaining this position, and informing it that the issuance of Apostilles can be verified by contacting the authority that issued the Apostille directly (as contemplated in the Apostille Convention). This letter is enclosed (in duplicate). The Permanent Bureau understands that you have been instructed by your client to forward this letter to the court; as a result, the Permanent Bureau will not be sending the letter to the court itself.

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In view of the circumstances, the Permanent Bureau suggests that Adoption Options advise its clients against requesting confirmation letters from US state authorities in respect of Apostilles. We note that the US Department of State has also advised state authorities against issuing such letters.

Yours sincerely,



Christophe Bernasconi  
First Secretary

./ Enclosure mentioned