



May 21, 2008

Dear Families and Friends,

Simply put, the orphaned and vulnerable children of Vietnam need your help. Please join us on June 2nd by contacting Members of Congress and urging them to join the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Co-Chairs and sign their letter to Secretary Condoleezza Rice in support of the recommendations found in *A Child's Right Campaign for Vietnam*."

A Pending Crisis

The U.S. Department of State has expressed concerns related to corruptive practices associated with intercountry adoption between the U.S. and Vietnam. In response to their concerns, the Department of State will allow the functional closure of adoptions on September 1, 2008 and thereby end one of the most basic of human rights: the right to a safe, permanent and loving family.

Not only will those orphans eligible for adoption continue to suffer the detriments of orphanage life, so will thousands of other orphans and vulnerable children. This is because the service providers engaged in finding U.S. families for Vietnamese orphans also provide a myriad of services to the most vulnerable of children.

As a result, the end of intercountry adoption with Vietnam also brings the end of social services such as family preservation and counseling. It also marks the end of humanitarian services such as educational sponsorships, clean water programs and many health related initiatives.

End Corruption, Not a Child's Right to a Family

While Joint Council shares in many of the Department of State's concerns, we believe the solution is not the termination of adoption and elimination of a child's right to a family. Joint Council, its Member Organizations, NGO's including Ethica—a leading voice for ethical adoption, the Vietnamese government and Members of the United States Congress firmly believe that the solution is a rational child-centered approach designed to strengthen services, regulate providers and prosecute violators.

A Child's Right Campaign for Vietnam

In response to the looming crisis facing the children of Vietnam, Joint Council today--May 21, 2008—initiates *A Child's Right Campaign for Vietnam*. *A Child's Right Campaign for Vietnam* proposes a series of rational recommendations that



address the issues of abuse, protect the integrity of Vietnamese families and ensure the right of every child to a permanent, safe and loving family. The overriding goal of this campaign is very simple: to end corruption, but not a child's right to a family.

As part of this campaign Joint Council delivered a letter to the Congressional Coalition on Adoption (CCA) Co-Chairs: Senator Mary Landrieu; Senator Norm Coleman; Congressman James Oberstar and Congresswoman Ginny Brown-Waite requesting their immediate assistance. We have asked the CCA and all Members of Congress to support the recommendations found within *A Child's Right Campaign for Vietnam* and to work with the Governments of the United States and Vietnam to ensure that an MOA is in place on September 1, 2008.

The Department of State has expressed intent to negotiate and implement a new MOA with the Government of Vietnam. Joint Council applauds the long-term goals of the Department of State, yet finds the short-term path unacceptable. It is clear that the intent is also to allow the current MOA to expire while seeking a new agreement sometime in the future. By all estimates, the Department of State's current path would result in the functional elimination of services, including adoption, for two years or more!

Finding such a scenario intolerable, we ask for your immediate support of this *Campaign*. The following page details how you can help us avoid this pending crisis. Only with your active participation will the children of Vietnam have a right to join a permanent, safe and loving family through ethical, professional and legal adoption.

On behalf of the orphaned and vulnerable children of Vietnam, those of us who work to serve their needs and the Joint Council on International Children's Services, we extend our sincere appreciation for your coming efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom DiFilipo". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Thomas DiFilipo
President / CEO



A Child's Right Campaign for Vietnam

How You Can Help

1. **Today**, please read *A Child's Right Campaign for Vietnam* at www.jcics.org.
2. Send an email in support of *A Child's Right Campaign for Vietnam* to advocate@jcics.org.
 - a. Send your email **no later than May 30th**.
Your email will be included in a petition to Congress.
3. On **June 2nd, 3rd, or 4th**, please contact your Congressional Representatives and Senators and ask them to support *A Child's Right Campaign for Vietnam*.
 - a. Call both of your U.S. Senators and your representative in the U.S. House of Representatives.
 - You can find your Senators' phone numbers and email address at www.senate.gov
 - You can find your Representatives' phone numbers and email address at www.house.gov
 - b. Include the following in your calls and emails.
 - **"I/we urge the Senator/Congressperson to join the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Co-Chairs and sign their letter to Secretary Condoleezza Rice in support of the recommendations found in Joint Council's *A Child's Right Campaign for Vietnam*."**
 - If they have not heard about the Campaign, ask them to contact the Congressional Coalition for Adoption Institute at 202-544-8500 or Joint Council on International Children's Services at 703-535-8045.
 - c. Send an email to everyone you called.
 - The email is important, but the phone call should be placed first.

