

Protocol: Search of origins process in Sri Lanka

The following describes the procedure for undertaking search for origins related to adoption as agreed by the Sri Lankan Central Authority and some European Central Adoption Authorities (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland) under the 1993 Hague Convention. This protocol was drafted as an outcome of a meeting on 18 January 2018 between the aforementioned authorities.

Steps to undertake

This protocol establishing an official search channel ensures that when undertaking a search for origins (in accordance with the data protection laws of the countries involved), the information is available about procedures, support and possible risks – all necessary to protect the adoptee, family of origin and adoptive family during these endeavors. All Central Authorities highlighted the importance of using the available official channels (as mentioned below) to conduct a search for origins.

Step 1: An adoptee undertaking search for origins should contact the [Central Adoption Authority](#) / Competent Authority¹ of his or her country of domicile to identify what laws and procedures exist relating to search for origins as well as what professional support exists in the country including specialized accredited adoption body, or other recommended organizations. Such support would not be for undertaking the search which will be managed by Sri Lankan and concerned authorities but may be helpful to search preparation, manage expectations and outcomes.

Step 2: As much information as possible about adoption records will need to be gathered through the adoptive family as well as authorities in the receiving country where the child was adopted into (e.g. [Central Adoption Authority and/or accredited adoption body](#), courts, civil registries etc.). Adoption records should ideally include the adoptee's birth certificate, adoption Order (form No 4) affidavit given by natural mother or guardian (form No: 2), name of the children's home where the adoptee lived at the time of adoption, approval documents, intervening persons, case worker, any photos etc. It is important to gather everything related to the adoption.

Step 3: Based on the information gathered, a request should be sent either through the Central Authority, directly by the adoptee or respective Foreign Embassies in Sri Lanka to the Sri Lankan Central Adoption Authority:

Mrs. P.Chandima Sigera

The Commissioner, Head of Central Authority

Department of Probation and Child Care Services,

3rd Floor, Sethsiripaya Stage11, Wing B, Battaramulla, Sri Lanka.

e-mail: pcc@sltnet.lk and chandimads@yahoo.com

Contact No: 0112187283

Web: www.probation.gov.lk

Step 4: Once the request has been received by the Sri Lankan authorities, they will send official requests to the *Probation officer* in the provinces, Child Right Promotion Officer in Divisional

¹ In case that under national law, the competence for search of origins does not fall on the Central Authority, and in order to enable direct communication with the Central Authority of Sri Lanka.

Secretariats or other relevant national / Divisional /District authorities. It is important to note the court case numbers of the adoption records to facilitate Registry tracing. There is no cost for this search for origins in Sri Lanka.

Step 5: The Sri Lankan authorities will take at least six months to complete its investigation and will inform the other Central Authority or the adoptee directly of the outcomes in due course.

Other information:

- **DNA database:** At this stage there is no intention to set up a large-scale database, although DNA testing may be considered in individual cases with the prior consent of all parties. It will likely involve a cost.
- **General research of origins resources:** Before an official search is undertaken, it may be useful to consult the publication “Intercountry Adoption and search for origins: a guide for adoptees” (ISS, 2018) which outlines in detail the different protective measures along the process.
- **Illicit adoption practices²:** Official complaints regarding any alleged illicit act concerning a past adoption will need to be filed with the Inspector General of Police, Department of Police in Sri Lanka detailing the reasons for the allegations. It is recommended to also inform the Central Authority of Sri Lanka.

² Illegal adoption is ‘an adoption resulting from abuses, such as abduction, the sale of, traffic in, and other illegal or illicit activities against children’, as defined in the HCCH Guide to Good Practice No. 1. In other words, it will always imply illegal acts prior to the adoption order being made, but may or may not imply illegality in the granting of the order itself.