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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

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March 4, 2016

His Excellency François Balumuene
The Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
1100 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 725
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Ambassador Balumuene:

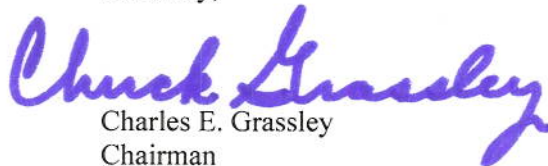
Since first presenting your credentials as Ambassador to the United States last September, your office has been subject to the outcry of Americans affected by the crisis of pending adoptions from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Allow me to thank you for your work in helping families in the United States, for meeting with me and other members of the U.S. Senate, and for advocating for a review of the remaining adoption cases. As a result, more than 200 children have recently been allowed to be united with their adoptive parents.

On behalf of families across the country, including my home state of Iowa, I appreciate the progress made to review the cases and to lift the exit permit suspension. I was grateful to hear, on February 23, that more than 150 children were finally given exit permits and that, a week later on February 27, more than 80 families were told that they'd also receive exit permits. I know that this would not have been possible without your tireless efforts in the face of difficult circumstances to make progress on this issue.

But while Members of Congress are greatly encouraged and grateful for the progress made, we cannot forget about the nearly two hundred American families who remain separated across oceans from their legally adopted children. For them, the crisis continues. These children continue living without the loving homes they deserve, while their anxious parents struggle to support them from abroad.

I understand the Congolese government will continue to review the remaining cases. I hope that these cases will receive the same consideration and outcome as the two hundred other families already given exit permits by your government. Until then, American families and Members of Congress will persist in our advocacy and desire to work collaboratively with you. Your efforts have been instrumental to the recent ground gained in this effort, and I ask that you keep pressing for change until every case is resolved. The United States stands ready to help you in any way until each case is reviewed and resolved.

Sincerely,


Charles E. Grassley
Chairman