



DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
STATEMENT  
OF  
HENRY H. HAND  
DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S ISSUES  
BUREAU OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS  
BEFORE THE  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL  
HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS  
HEARING  
ON  
JUNE 11, 2015

**Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Bass, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee** – Thank you for this opportunity to appear before the Subcommittee regarding our work in the Office of Children’s Issues, to prevent and resolve international parental child abductions and to implement the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, the International Child Abduction Remedies Act, and the Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act (ICAPRA). I welcome the chance to provide further detail and answer your questions about the Department of State’s first annual report under the new law.

Our office worked hard since the new law was enacted last August to analyze and translate its provisions into concrete actions, such as collecting 40 new data fields for every case. Our focus was on ensuring this first report contained all the information required by the law. The information in the 2014 report naturally is different than the previous annual compliance reports on international parental child abduction, which were drafted under previous legislation.

The 2014 report represents a first effort that we understand does not meet all expectations and we value discussions like this to make it more effective. We compiled it under a compressed timeline with data gathered in the months after the new law came into effect. We worked diligently to make sure that, as we implemented the law, we maintained the Office’s ongoing work in support of families affected by international child abduction.

## **Conclusion**

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Bass, distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, we are committed to fully implementing ICAPRA and making it the most effective tool we can in service of our shared goals of preventing international child abduction and bringing abducted children home. We very much appreciate the feedback we already have received, and seek your comments and questions to inform the work we are doing.

Thank you.