

## **Hong Kong (HK) Adoption Unit**

### ***Procedure for Searching (known in Hong Kong as Root Tracing)***

There are no charges for the procedure of search and reunion in Hong Kong, initiated by the Adoptee.

If an adoptee wishes to search in Hong Kong these are the following steps:

Contact the HK Adoption Unit by emailing to the following address

[auenq@swd.gov.hk](mailto:auenq@swd.gov.hk)

In the letter you need to stipulate the reasoning for contact and why you are root tracing. You may wish to consider the following questions:

- Are you seeking identifying information such as history of birth or medical information?
- Are you seeking information regarding names or last known location of birth parents?
- Are you wishing to establish contact with birth family?

When requesting information from the HK Adoption Unit, please attach your signed request letter and include a copy of your:

1. Passport
2. Adoption order
3. Adoption certificate

All 3 must be certified by a Justice of the Peace (JP).

If the adoptee is under the age of 18 years old, a letter of consent is also required from the adoptive parents. The HK Adoption Unit also suggests that the adoptee has contact with adoptee parents at each stage of the search and reunion.

Once the HK Adoption Unit receive your documentation, they start a search for your file in their archives. When they locate your documentation they will send a very basic letter to the last known address of your birthparents, should there be one. The adoption unit is prepared to send a request letter on two separate occasions, in case mail gets lost or if the occupants are out of town. If the HK Adoption Unit receive a response back from the occupants of the address advising the addressee no longer resides there, the HK Adoption Unit will approach the HK Immigration Unit to assist with the search.

If this all goes well and the birth parents do want to make contact with the adoptee, it is suggested by the Department to have a mediator involved to assist with sending of letters and photos before actually meeting. The HK Adoption Unit does offer a translation service for both parties. They will also arrange the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting with the birthparents and adoptee and any continuous contact between both parties if required.

If the adoptee happens to be in Hong Kong at any stage, the HK Adoption Unit will offer counselling to all parties involved in the adoption i.e., the birth parents, adoptee,

and adoptive parents. The purpose of the counselling is to discuss the expectations of both parties and to help both parties prepare for the reunion.

Please note, this process is specific for Root Tracing initiated by adoptees. Should a birth family member in HK wish to initiate a search for you, the adoptee - the HK Adoption Unit will make contact only with your adoptive parents (in case you are unaware of your adoption).

*Many thanks to Anna Davison (ICASN Hong Kong Country of Origin Representative) for making this information possible by visiting the HK Adoption Unit on her recent (Jan09) trip to Hong Kong!*