

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

**Program 1.1**

**Question No. 56**

**Senator Trood asked the following question at the hearing on 18 October 2010:**

Was the Sister Zenebech Orphanage in Ethiopia among those considered as a partner orphanage? What is the status of that orphanage? Has its suitability been investigated? Please indicate whether it has been deemed suitable, and if not, why it is not.

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

Sister Zenebech's orphanage was visited by a delegation from the Attorney-General's Department on 18 January 2010, and the Principal Migration Officer from the Australian Embassy on 16 August 2010. Both visits were to determine its suitability as a partner orphanage.

While Sister Zenebech's orphanage was found to provide a high level of care to the children in her custody, her policies were found to be inconsistent with Australia's obligations under the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, in particular the principle of subsidiarity which requires that other alternatives for care in-country are considered before intercountry adoption.