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27 October 2005

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China/Canada/United States: Passport issuance procedures for Chinese nationals at diplomatic missions in Canada and in the United States; whether a Chinese national who is wanted by authorities in China would be issued a passport abroad (2003 - 2005)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

In an 11 October 2005 meeting with the Research Directorate, the consul general of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Ottawa provided the following information on passport issuance procedures. To apply for the renewal of a passport, a Chinese citizen in Canada must go in person to the Chinese embassy or consulate and present his or her current passport, along with his or her permit to be in Canada, such as a student permit or work permit. If the permit is deemed to be valid, then the person will be issued a renewed passport. It is not normally necessary for the embassy to complete background checks, but if the embassy has any questions about the authenticity of the Canadian permit, then the embassy will verify any questionable information with the appropriate Canadian government department. The first secretary of the embassy added in a subsequent telephone call to the Research Directorate that renewed passports take about 30 days to process because applications must be sent to the Chinese consulate in New York, from which renewed passports are issued and sent back to the embassy in Ottawa (18 Oct. 2005).

Information in Chinese contained on the Website of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Washington, DC, and translated by the Translation Bureau of the Government of Canada, indicates that Chinese citizens who wish to renew their passports may do so one to six months before the expiry date of the current passport (China 1 Aug. 2005). However, a passport expired by no more than six months can also be renewed, provided that the passport holder include in the application an explanation of why the passport was not renewed before the expiry date (ibid.). Citizens must fill out an application form and submit the original passport as well as the pages, "with photograph and personal information, previous endorsements or extensions, and visas for entry into the United States" along with a passport photograph meeting embassy specifications (ibid.). Green card holders must also provide the original card plus a photocopy thereof (ibid.). Applications may be submitted in person or by mail, and the renewed passport may be sent by mail to the requestor for an additional fee (ibid.). Applications for the renewal of a passport take four working days to process (ibid.). Passports may be renewed twice, each time for a period no greater than the period of validity of the original passport (ibid.).

The Website of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Washington, DC also notes that

[a] passport of the old type may be used until its date of expiry, but an application for the new type of passport shall be made after the old one expires. The old type of passport has the following distinguishing characteristics: personal information and photograph are not on the same page, and extensions are printed with the characters "____ (day), ____ (month), 19__."

Further information on passport issuance procedures, including whether the procedures described above are standard across Chinese diplomatic missions in Canada and in the United States, and on whether a Chinese

national who is wanted by authorities in China would be issued a passport abroad could not be found among the sources consulted within time constraints.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

People's Republic of China. 18 October 2005. Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Ottawa. Telephone call from the First Secretary.

_____. 11 October 2005. Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Ottawa. Meeting with the Consul General and the First Secretary.

_____. 1 August 2005. Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Washington, D.C. "Extension of Ordinary Private Passports." (Original in Chinese, translation by Multilingual Translation Directorate, Translation Bureau, Public Works and Government Services, Canada) <<http://www.china-embassy.org/chn/hzqz/hzlxz/t84203.htm>> [Accessed 12 Oct. 2005]

Additional Sources Consulted

The Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Washington, DC did not provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

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