



September 25, 2013

Teona Shalamberidze
Marketing and Public Relations Coordinator
Abt Associates Incorporated - Georgia, USAID Health System Strengthening Project
19/8 I. Petritsi street,
Didi Digomi, Tbilisi,
Georgia 0132
Via Email: tshalamberidze@hssp.org.ge

Re: Letter of Invitation to attend the American Public Health Association's (APHA) Annual Meeting & Exposition

Full Name: Teona Shalamberidze
Country of Citizenship: Georgia
Country of Residency: Georgia
Passport Number: 10CC63361
Place of Employment: Abt Associates Incorporated - Georgia, USAID Health System Strengthening Project
Position: Marketing and Public Relations Coordinator
Country of Birth: Georgia
Date of Birth: 01 Sep 1984

Dear Teona Shalamberidze :

We would like to invite you to attend the American Public Health Association's 141st Annual Meeting and Exposition to be held November 2-6, 2013 in Boston, MA. APHA hopes that you will participate in this important educational activity.

The APHA Annual Meeting is the largest gathering of public health professionals in the world (last year over 12,000 people attended). More than 900 scientific sessions are planned and over 4,000 scientific papers will be presented during the course of the meeting. APHA promotes the scientific and professional foundation of public health practice and policy, advocates the conditions for a healthy global society, emphasizes prevention and enhances the ability of members to promote and protect environmental and community health. By attending this meeting and exposition, you will be able to become familiar with the latest information and resources which may benefit you professionally. You will also be in the position to share your public health experiences with a broad spectrum of people from the US and around the world. This year's Annual Meeting theme is: **"Think Global, Act Local."** This is the one event where all aspects of public health are discussed. There will be numerous scientific sessions focusing on international health issues, as well as opportunities for networking and professional development. We encourage the attendance and involvement of people from around the world!

Regretfully, APHA is not in a position to provide funding for transportation, registration, hotel accommodations, or other meeting-related expenses. Also, it is the sole responsibility of the participant to obtain the necessary paperwork for entry to the US. We recommend that you start the process early as it can be quite time consuming. Page 2 of this letter is a visa information sheet.

We look forward to seeing you this year in Boston. For more information and to view the online program, you may visit our website, www.apha.org/meetings/AnnualMeeting or contact apharegistration@jspargo.com or invitationletter@apha.org.

Sincerely,

Vina HuLamm
Global Health Manager
Center for Public Health Policy and Practice
American Public Health Association



NOTE TO INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPANTS

A US visa allows a foreign citizen to travel to a United States port of entry and request admission into the U.S. from a U.S. Immigration Inspector. Since September 11, visa applications have been subject to a greater degree of scrutiny than in the past. The time frames for visa processing today are difficult to predict with accuracy for any individual applicant and could vary significantly by country. **Advance planning on the part of travelers is essential to receive a visa in time for their visit the United States.** General information about obtaining a visa can be found at http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html.

For the 36 countries in the Visa Waiver Program, citizens meeting the visa waiver criteria will not need a visa, but they must have a machine-readable passport. Please refer to http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without_1990.html for more information on the Visa Waiver Program. Canadian citizens do not need a visa, but should visit http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without_1260.html for more information.

The U.S. Embassy Consular Section will decide, per immigration law, about a particular applicant's eligibility for a given visa type based on the information and documentation presented to the consular officer. Except for Canadians and those who can travel on the visa waiver program, anyone who wants to attend a business, educational, professional, or amateur sports event, conference or meeting who is not a government official, will generally need a visitor visa (B-1). Media and journalists, including citizens from visa waiver program countries, will generally need an "I" or media visa. Government officials traveling for official purposes would need an "A" visa. **Advance planning by foreign travelers is critical. We recommend all foreign travelers consider the following when making their plans to travel to the United States:**

As soon as travel to the U.S. is considered, foreign travelers should identify whether a visa is needed. If the traveler already has a U.S. visa appropriate for this travel, check the expiration date on the visa to make sure the visa will not expire before the planned travel date. Contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate Consular Section in their homeland to determine any additional visa procedures, the timeframe required to set up an appointment for the interview, and schedule an appointment for the interview. An interview is required for most visa applicants. The waiting time for an interview appointment for most applicants is a few weeks or less, but for some embassy consular sections it can be considerably longer. Some applicants will need additional screening and will be notified when they apply. We recommend contacting the Consular Section via the Internet at <http://www.usembassy.gov/>. For a few countries, foreign travelers will need to contact the Consular Section by telephone. **If a visa is needed, foreign travelers should apply for his/her visa as soon as possible, but no later than 60 days before the travel date. If the conference is scientific in nature, or the applicant has a scientific background, the visa application should be made no later than 90 days in advance of the travel. Applicants should apply to the U.S. Embassy Consular Section in his/her country of residence.**

Under immigration law, the applicant will need to overcome the presumption that he/she is an intending immigrant. This is done by establishing, to the consular officer's satisfaction, that he/she is not going to stay in the U.S. based on strong compelling ties to his/her home country. The applicant must establish that he/she plans to come to the U.S. for a definite temporary period and that he/she has access to sufficient funds to cover the entire trip. This letter cannot guarantee the issuance of a visa. Applicants for nonimmigrant visas must show that they qualify individually on their own merit per provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Applicants must demonstrate that they are properly classifiable as non-immigrants under U.S. law and not on the basis of an American sponsor's assurance.

The Department of State recommends their web site as the first source of up-to-date visitor visa information. Information about visitor visas, what a person needs to apply and fees is available on their web site at: <http://travel.state.gov>.

Please note that Consular Sections overseas have sole responsibility for issuance of visas, and they generally are the first point of contact for visa processing status. Visa Services at the Department of State is neither able to expedite nor monitor the processing of visa applications.