Questions
1. When was Tavilan established and does it continue to operate?
2. Please provide any background material on Tavilan, eg. its size, form of membership, activities, physical location/address, key personnel, or other information that might be relevant to establishing if a person has had direct contact with the organisation?

RESPONSE

1. When was Tavilan established and does it continue to operate?

Sources indicate that Tavilan was established in about March/April 1999, but no definitive information could be found in the searches conducted to determine if Tavilan still operates.

An Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada report from December 2003 indicates that Tavilan “became Mongolia’s first lesbian and gay rights group” in April 1999 (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2003, MNG42200.E – Mongolia: Update to MNG31446.E of 26 March 1999 on the current treatment of homosexuals by the authorities, 5 December – Attachment 1).

A July 2006 conference paper by Anaraa Nyamdorj Olhonuud also provided information on Tavilan (also known as Тавилан or ‘Destiny’):

Тавилан/Destiny

Founded in March 1999 by several Mongolian gay men and expatriate gay men then living in Mongolia. Funding source: private donations. It was an officially registered non-governmental organisation that was officially active between the early 1999 to 2000, and beginning from 2000 March, upon expiration of the NGO’s registration license, it continued

Little information could be found on the recent activities of Tavilan. An Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada report from March 2007 seems to suggest that Tavilan was still active in 2006, as it noted that “A doctoral candidate in social welfare at the University of California in Berkeley, who lived in Mongolia between 1995 and 1999…referred to a conversation in November 2006 with a Tavilan representative who claims that “harassment and maltreatment, including death threats” directed against gays and lesbians is “ongoing” in Mongolia (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2007, MNG102126.E – Mongolia: The treatment of homosexuals by authorities and by society in general; recourse available to those who have been harassed based on their sexual orientation (2004 – March 2007), 16 March http://www.cisr-irb.gc.ca/en/research/rir/?action=record.viewrec&gotorec=451031 – Accessed 27 March 2008 – Attachment 3).

Beyond this, no other information could be found in the searches conducted on the recent activities of Tavilan.

2. Please provide any background material on Tavilan, eg. its size, form of membership, activities, physical location/address, key personnel, or other information that might be relevant to establishing if a person has had direct contact with the organisation?


Sources indicate that Tavilan opened a small office in Ulaanbataar with the aim of protecting and promoting the rights of GLBT groups, and to provide a social forum for GLBT people in Mongolia (‘Mongolian Gay & Lesbian group formed’ 1999, Queer Resources Directory website, 6 July http://www.qrd.org/qrd/world/asia/mongolia/first.gay.and.lesbian.group.formed-07.06.99 - Accessed 4 July 2008 – Link).

Beyond this point, the activities of Tavilan become more difficult to trace. The founder of Tavilan posted an internet message in 2002 complaining about the lack of support for GLBT movements in Mongolia, and, as noted above, an Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada report from March 2007 mentions a doctoral candidate’s contact with “a Tavilan representative” in November 2006 (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2003, MNG42200.E – Mongolia: Update to MNG31446.E of 26 March 1999 on the current treatment of homosexuals by the authorities, 5 December – Link; Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2007, MNG102126.E – Mongolia: The treatment of homosexuals by authorities and by society in general; recourse available to those who have been harassed based on their sexual orientation (2004 – March 2007), 16 March http://www.cisr-irb.gc.ca/en/research/rir/?action=record.viewrec&gorec=451031 – Accessed 27 March 2008 – Link).

Further details on Tavilan appear in the following references, which have been provided in approximate order of relevance (these are not attached, they are hyperlinked only):


- Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2003, MNG42200.E – Mongolia: Update to MNG31446.E of 26 March 1999 on the current treatment of homosexuals by the authorities, 5 December – Link – Provides a general background of Tavilan

- ‘Tavilan: the organisation for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Mongolia’ (undated), Chris ‘A web site for various purposes’ website http://www.cix.co.uk/~cjeffries/tavilan/index.htm – Accessed 21 July 2006 – Link – Provides a general background of Tavilan


• RRT Research & Information 2008, Research Response MNG32859, 4 February – Link – Information on GLBT groups in Mongolia, including Tavilan.

• RRT Research & Information 2008, Research Response MNG33229, 14 April – Link – Information on Tavilan

• RRT Country Research 2002, Research Response MNG15421, 20 September – Link – Information on Tavilan


List of Sources Consulted

Internet Sources:
All the web http://www.alltheweb.com/
Altavista http://www.altavista.com/
Ask http://www.ask.com/?ax=5
Exalead http://www.exalead.com/search
Yahoo! http://search.yahoo.com/

Government Information & Reports
Immigration & Refugee Board of Canada http://www.irb.gc.ca/
UK Home Office http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk
US Department of State http://www.state.gov/

Non-Government Organisations
Amnesty International website http://www.amnesty.org/
Human Rights Watch http://www.hrw.org/

International News & Politics
BBC News http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/index.shtml

Databases:
BACIS (DIMA Country Information database)
REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)
ISYS (RRT Country Research database, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US Department of State Reports)
RRT Library Catalogue

List of Attachments
