

# *The Maria Foundation*

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## **The Maria Foundation – NEWS - update**

07<sup>th</sup> July 2006

Another big Hello to everyone!!

Following on from our Feb. Newsletter, Inna went to Moscow a few weeks ago and spent a couple of days with Maria.

Maria is doing very well and is extremely happy with her refurbished legs - in May 2006 Jamie Gillespie, Össur's prosthetist, arranged for Maria to visit a local prosthetic clinic where her legs and sockets were completely overhauled and new feet were added. She was also given new temporary cosmesis covers. We are now just waiting for Heather Mills to complete the project and supply the final definitive quality covering - although with everything that is going on in Heather's life at present we are not sure how long this will take. We will try to contact her again around the end of August, once Maria has adapted to her renovated legs and after things have settled down a bit for Heather. Hopefully she will then be able to arrange for Maria's legs to be shipped to the UK, covered and returned. Once this has been done, the project of getting Maria new legs will be finally complete – almost three years after instigation!!!

Since we first met Maria, her personal life has also changed significantly. She no longer sits in the squalid, dirty metro station begging but works as a child-minder in her local village. She still lives in a cramped one-room hostel, with seven people sharing the room next door, so her priority now is to save for a slightly bigger apartment.

We are still eager to bring Maria to the UK for a brief holiday and Inna and I are slowly saving. We were hoping to have her here over after the summer this year but due to my illness for a few months at Christmas we simply can't afford it, so this has been postponed until 2007. We have plans to take her to London and, of course, to our home city of Norwich. Because of her specific needs she will have to stay at hotels, (even in Norwich as we live in a first floor apartment). If anyone has any contacts for sponsorship (hotels, flights, financial etc) please let us know!!

Thanks once again and, as always, we wish you the very best.

Robin and Inna



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