The State Department at Work

in the 21st century

Global Actions

Foreign Policy Agenda

U.S. Department of State / Bureau of International Information Programs

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COVER PHOTOS: (center) President George W. Bush talks with a sixth-grade student in Indonesia [© AP Images/Charles Dharapak]; (clockwise from the upper left) Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Karen Hughes (left), American Public Diplomacy Envoy Michelle Kwan (center), and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice [U.S. Department of State/Janine Sides]; Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs Maura Harty at an orphanage in Guangzhou, China [U.S. Department of State]; Under Secretary for Political Affairs R. Nicholas Burns [© AP Images/Virginia Mayo]; Under Secretary for Management Henrietta H. Fore at the American Corner in Salvador, Brazil [U.S. Department of State]; and Under Secretary for Global Affairs Paula J. Dobriansky at The George Washington University [U.S. Department of State].

The Bureau of International Information Programs of the U.S. Department of State publishes electronic journals in five thematic areas under the eJournal USA logo—*Economic Perspectives, Global Issues, Issues of Democracy, Foreign Policy Agenda,* and *Society & Values.* These journals examine major issues facing the United States and the international community, as well as U.S. society, values, thought, and institutions.

One new journal is published monthly in English and followed by versions in French, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Selected editions also appear in Arabic, Chinese, and Persian. Each journal is catalogued by volume (the number of years in publication) and by number (the number of issues that appear during the year).

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About This Issue

Since its creation in 1790 with fewer than 10 employees, the U.S. Department of State has evolved into a large, complex organization. Today its more than 55,000 employees work together to accomplish the department's mission—"to create a more secure, democratic, and prosperous world for the benefit of the American people and the international community."

The department is organized around both "regional" bureaus, each of which focuses on a specific geographical region (Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Eurasia, the Near East, South and Central Asia, and the Western Hemisphere), and "functional" bureaus, which have worldwide responsibility for particular issues. Our September 2006 *eJournal USA* presented essays by the leaders of the regional bureaus describing their perspectives on the policy objectives and priorities of U.S. diplomacy. This journal provides a picture of the "global actions" of some of the functional bureaus and their role in furthering U.S. policies.

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President George W. Bush and Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte in the Oval Office of the White House.

The current leader of the Department of State is the 67th Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice. Her predecessors include famous Americans such as Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, John Quincy Adams, Henry Clay, Martin Van Buren, Daniel Webster, John C. Calhoun, James Buchanan, William Jennings Bryan, Charles Evans Hughes, Cordell Hull, George C. Marshall, John Foster Dulles, Dean Rusk, Henry Kissinger, Madeleine K. Albright, and Colin Powell.

Below the secretary of state is the deputy secretary of state, John Negroponte, and then six under secretaries and the counselor of the department. The under secretary for public diplomacy and public affairs is responsible for the Bureaus of International Information Programs, Educational and Cultural Affairs, and Public Affairs. The under secretary for political affairs is responsible for the six regional bureaus, as well as the Bureau of International Organizations and the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, which are described in this journal. The under secretary for economic, energy, and agricultural affairs is over the Bureau of Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs. The under secretary for management leads several bureaus related to managing the department, three of which—Consular Affairs, Human Resources, and Overseas Buildings Operations—contributed articles. The under secretary for democracy and global affairs heads the Bureaus of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor; Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs; and Population, Refugees, and Migration; as well as the Office of International Women's Issues, the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, and the Special Representative on Avian and Pandemic Influenza. There are several more bureaus and offices within the State Department, but these are the ones that submitted essays describing how they contribute to accomplishing the diplomatic goals of the U.S. government.

We thank our colleagues throughout the department who have contributed to this edition of *eJournal USA* and hope it will give readers around the world an inside look at the operations of the U.S. Department of State.

The Editors

Foreign Policy Agenda

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"Waging Peace" – A New Paradigm for Public Diplomacy

Karen P. Hughes
Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs

The challenging times that we face around the world today demand a new post-Cold War paradigm for public diplomacy. The way people communicate and access information in today's world is rapidly changing, so our diplomatic efforts are adjusting to meet the times.

When people talk about the contest of ideas in the 21st century, the comparison often is made to the Cold War. That was the era when broadcast services like Voice of America and Radio Free Europe were launched to promote democratic values by broadcasting information and ideas to people behind the Iron Curtain.

© AP Images/Fernando Vergara

Karen P. Hughes

But today's communications environment is dramatically different.

When I started my career in television back in the mid-'70s in Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas, one of my first jobs as an intern at the TV station was to make what was called "the meet," getting in the car in Dallas and driving halfway to Fort Worth on the freeway in order to meet a person who had driven by car from Forth Worth, so film could be transferred by hand to be taken back to Fort Worth for processing for that night's news. Within a year, the "meet" was totally irrelevant because we'd gone digital and electronic. When I served as communications director during President Bush's 2000 presidential campaign, I didn't have a BlackBerry. By 2004, I couldn't imagine how you would participate in a campaign without one.

So the technology has changed and the political landscape has changed. In the Cold War, we were primarily trying to get information into largely closed societies where people were hungry for that information. Today we are competing for audiences in a very crowded communications environment.

Today the United States must compete for attention and for credibility. We must reach the grandchildren of the World War II generation and their children. Sometimes governments have a hard time keeping up with such dramatic changes, but a new U.S. architecture for public diplomacy has been steadily evolving. Today's public diplomacy has to be rapid, it has to be global, it has to be multimedia, it has to be people-centric, and it has to be a team effort because all of us are involved in painting a very complex tapestry that is the picture of America across the world.

I like to describe that new diplomatic paradigm as "waging peace"—reaching out to the rest of the world in a spirit of respect and partnership.

Three Strategic Priorities

Three strategic priorities are guiding all of our public diplomacy programs:

First, America must continue to offer people across the world a positive vision of hope that is rooted in our deepest values, our belief in liberty, in justice, in opportunity, in respect for all. I saw an interview of a young man in Morocco who was asked: "What do you think when you think of America?" And he said: "For me, America represents the hope of a better life." Our country must continue to be that beacon of hope.

U.S. Department of State/Janine Sides

In October 2006, Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Karen Hughes interacts with worshippers following an Eid-ul-Fitr service sponsored by the All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS) in Fairfax, Virginia.

Our second strategic imperative is to isolate and marginalize the violent extremists who threaten the civilized world and confront their ideology of tyranny and hate. We have to undermine their efforts to portray the West as somehow in conflict with Islam, because that simply isn't true. Islam, as a world religion, is also part of the west and an important part of America itself. As a government official, I represent an estimated seven million American Muslims who live and work and worship freely in this great country. One of the things I've worked to do is to empower their voices and to demonstrate respect for Muslim cultures and contributions. In many instances, the number one thing we can do to improve a relationship is show that we respect the contributions and cultures of others. That's why I've spent a great deal of my time as under secretary reaching out to Muslims in America, because I believe they're an important bridge to Muslim communities across the world. We are also encouraging greater interfaith dialogue. It's vitally important that we bring people of different faiths together to encourage dialogue and understanding. We have hosted multiple programs at the State Department to bring people of different faiths together to talk about what they have in common, to talk about what they believe and to share that with our employees who are going out to work around the world.

Our third strategic imperative is to foster a sense of common interests and common values between, Americans and people of different countries and cultures across the world. That's what we are seeking to do with public diplomacy—nurture the sense that Americans and people of different countries, cultures, and faiths have much more in common than the issues that divide us.

The Scope of Foreign Outreach

America's public diplomacy involves reaching out to the entire world.

It is about providing books in Arabic for children in Jordan as well as broadcasting news. It is about talking to citizens in Internet chat rooms as well as to leaders in high office. It's about bringing many more students to study in the United States and teaching women in the Middle East skills to run their own businesses. It's about providing life-saving surgery for victims of the Southeast Asia tsunami on American hospital ships.

Our country has been expanding its outreach in many ways, and yet the expansion has been taking shape so gradually and in so many parts that it is not yet recognized as the post-Cold War paradigm that it is. Few people around the world know that outreach on such a large scale—the "diplomacy of deeds"—is being done by the United States in the far corners of the world.

Across the world, America feeds the poor, educates the illiterate, cares for the sick, and responds to disasters. The United States does so many different development projects, in fact, that we often get no credit for any of them.

While it's understandable that the world's attention has been focused on the pressing need to resolve the conflict in Iraq, it is also important to remind people around the world that the United States is also "waging peace" around the world. The diplomacy of deeds is the heart of that effort.

What we do as a country is just as important as what we say. Our diplomacy of deeds sends the message that the American people care deeply about the well-being of people in other lands. Americans reach out to help people in need because of who we are and because of what we believe. We share with others because of our conviction that all people are equal and each person is uniquely valuable.

Today, American compassion reaches around the world as never before:

The United States is by far the largest donor to the stricken Darfur region, supplying more than half the emergency food aid.

The United States is the largest bilateral donor to the Palestinian people, providing $234 million in 2006 through nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

Americans were the largest providers of help to Muslims affected by the tsunami in Indonesia and the earthquake in Pakistan.

The United States leads the world in support for the fight against AIDS, contributing more than one-half of all bilateral global HIV/AIDS funding.

We are the largest donor to the United Nations World Food Program, providing $4.83 billion in food aid since 2003.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation has approved nearly $3 billion to reduce poverty by supporting sustainable economic growth in 25 of the world's poorest countries.

U.S. Department of State/Janine Sides

Under Secretary Karen Hughes addresses the Public Diplomacy Council at The George Washington University in October 2005.

People-to-people programs demonstrate American values in a concrete way that relates directly to people of any nationality or religion. I have talked with the women in our literacy programs in Morocco, who expressed gratitude that for the first time in their lives, they can now mail a letter, read their children's homework, and read the labels on food for their families.

Such testimonials may not fit with the traditional image of formal statecraft, but the realities of today's world demand that modern diplomacy have a more human face. Our diplomats today not only have to think about winning over government officials, but also the people to whom those leaders are ultimately accountable.

We are, therefore, reaching out in different ways and on a more personal level. A new emphasis is being put on programs that directly benefit individuals, such as micro-finance loans to help women start small businesses and summer camps to help youngsters learn English.

The New Model for Diplomacy

The new model for diplomacy will require more flexible embassy spaces, balancing the need for security and public accessibility for such things as information programs.

This is already happening through American Presence Posts, which are offices in secondary cities in larger countries, with outreach as their primary role. We are also establishing more American Corners, which are essentially reading rooms, usually in public libraries. More and more, we are using technology to go over the walls to people:

Web pages are being aimed at specific regions.

Online chats with U.S. officials are explaining visa regulations or policy issues.

Cell phone text-messages are being sent to exchange program alumni or journalists.

Podcasts carry video of speeches and projects around the world.

It is imperative that we reach young people through media they favor before their views become entrenched. That's why we are putting TV cameras in the hands of our exchange students, so their experiences can become part of the YouTube phenomenon.

Exchange Programs

Exchange programs have been our single-most effective public diplomacy tool of the last 50 years. Everyone you talk to who has participated in an exchange program says that his or her life was forever changed. And what better way to tell the story of America than to bring young people here and let them see American life for themselves? We are increasing exchange programs of every kind and working aggressively to recruit more students to study in the United States so they can experience the country for themselves and make up their own minds.

We are also reinvigorating cultural programs, another effective way to communicate our values. Funding for cultural diplomacy has more than tripled since 2001.

In addition to art exhibits, recitals, and literary talks, we are using cultural diplomacy in new ways—our public affairs office in Nepal partnered with NGOs to present a rock concert combined with a major voter registration drive for youth called "Rock the Vote."

And because we believe freedom of expression is an essential part of an interconnected, tolerant society, we are partnering with journalism schools and the Aspen Institute to provide professional training for journalists from around the world.

We are placing a greater focus in public diplomacy on the areas that touch people's lives most directly, especially education and health.

Our education programs today range from fellowships for training teachers from the Middle East to English-language camps for youngsters in Russia. We provide language training in some 90 countries, which often is the first step toward mutual understanding.

Reaching out with compassionate health care is one of the most effective ways to demonstrate American goodwill. Under the president's Malaria Initiative, for example, 15 of the hardest-hit countries in Africa will receive an infusion of expertise and $1.5 billion to prevent the disease.

Assisting and empowering women is another way that the new brand of public diplomacy diverges from previous generations. Promoting education for women and girls will be essential for the development of democracy—women who read can decide for themselves, manage their own businesses, and sustain healthier families.

That's why we are increasing scholarships for young girls in places like Africa, literacy classes for women in the Middle East and Latin America, and micro-grant programs for women around the world.

Citizen Emissaries

More and more, our citizens are becoming our emissaries.

We have sent several delegations of American Muslims as citizen envoys to the Middle East. That program grew out of a conversation I had with a Turkish woman who felt isolated in her Muslim community in Germany. I asked her if I could visit her community and meet with people there. She told me, quite bluntly, "no." "We're not interested in meeting with our own government," she said. "Why would we want to meet with yours?" I asked back, "Could I send some Muslim-American citizens?" She nodded and said, "yes," that would be wonderful. Based on that, we recently launched a "citizen dialogue" program, sending Muslim-Americans to reach out to Islamic communities and engage in dialogue. Those abroad need to hear the voices of Muslim-Americans—and we, as Americans, need to hear feedback from other cultures and other peoples.

The public diplomacy of the future and the embassy of the future must be people-centric. As former director of the U.S. Information Agency, Edward R. Murrow said, the most important part of public diplomacy is that last three feet. It is that person-to-person contact that often counts the most.

The point is to engage with people on a personal level and explain our policies in person. As Secretary Rice has said, our goal should be to have a dialogue with the world, not a monologue. ■

http://www.state.gov/r/

Building Bridges

Dina Habib Powell
Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs

U.S. Department of State
Dina Habib Powell

People-to-people exchanges, such as those sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), are a vital component of our national security strategy and perhaps our most valuable public diplomacy asset. Many exchange participants report that they are "forever changed" by their direct involvement with the American people. Considering that more than 230 current and former heads of state and government are alumni of ECA programs, the State Department has a tremendous opportunity to reach the leaders of tomorrow through exchanges and expose them to how democratic values animate our thinking and our society.

We have made it a priority to engage with previously underrepresented communities, be they youth or those who influence youth—women, teachers, religious leaders, and media figures.

Education

Recently in Cairo, where I met with exchange alumni, embassy staff, and program participants, we announced a new Community College Scholarship Exchange Initiative. This program, a State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development partnership, will bring to the United States 1,000 Egyptian vocational students and a significant number of faculty and administrators. The students will receive training leading to professional certificates and associate degrees in computer and other fields of study, enabling the United States to reach out to Egyptian youth and help them to gain self-esteem by gaining the skills to enter the Egyptian workforce.

I also had the opportunity in Cairo to visit with some extraordinary 12- to 15-year-olds, benefiting from our English ACCESS Microscholarship program. This initiative is the cornerstone of our pledge to help young people on the margins of society. The girls and boys who receive these ACCESS Microscholarships for English study will not only receive an important communication and economic tool, but will also gain a sense of hope and self-confidence to become candidates of our exchange programs and future leaders of their societies. This year, more than 10,000 students will benefit from ACCESS.

The Community College and ACCESS programs are just two components of a much broader strategy to bring together international education and America's national interest. In January 2006, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings co-hosted a summit with leaders of U.S. higher education to jump-start a partnership to strengthen international education. The summit initiated a broad dialogue on the need for the U.S. government to work collaboratively with the nongovernmental sector on the future of U.S. higher education in a global arena.

To this end, we launched the first ever Fulbright International Science and Technology award, to bring the most talented students from abroad to the United States for Ph.D. study in science and technology fields. The program is designed to showcase U.S. leadership in science and technology and to demonstrate that the United States continues to welcome international students in those fields.

Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings and I led a delegation of 12 American university presidents on a tour to China, Japan, and Korea. Our purpose was to highlight the United States as the destination of choice for talented foreign students and to underscore the desire of the U.S. government and American colleges and universities to

collaborate with our counterparts abroad. Other high-level delegations are being planned to our key markets around the world.

Secretary Rice has stressed that America is understood best through a dialogue, not a monologue. This theme fits perfectly with the mission of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, where mutual understanding is the foundation of everything we do. And in our programming, we can never underestimate the need to educate America's citizens through exchange programs.

President Bush, who attended the opening of the University Presidents Summit, clearly underlined our mandate and the need to serve our citizens when he announced the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI) at the summit. NSLI is an interagency initiative of the Departments of State, Education, and Defense, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, designed to increase the number of Americans learning critical-need foreign languages.

These institutes—some sponsored by Academic Programs and some by Youth Exchange—were held in Jordan, Tunisia, Yemen, Egypt, Turkey, China, Bangladesh, and India (for both Hindi and Urdu).

Sports, Culture, and the Arts

We also recognize the important role played by sports, culture, and the arts in bringing people together. The arts and sports create common understanding that transcends language and borders.

First Lady Laura Bush helped us launch ECA's Global Cultural Initiative (GCI) in September 2006. GCI is designed to enhance the department's capabilities in the performing and visual arts through collaboration with the private sector. Our initial partnerships include the Kennedy Center, the American Film Institute, and the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities.

Secretary Rice also named Olympic skater and U.S. champion Michelle Kwan as our first American Public Diplomacy Envoy. Michelle's story brings American values to life. She recently made her first trip to China.

Michelle also represents the strength of American women and, by example, the potential that all women, especially those living under oppressive conditions, have to realize their dreams. I believe very strongly as an immigrant myself in the power of the American dream to encourage individuals everywhere to realize their full potential.

Women

That is why I have given a high priority to creating new programs to empower women around the world. We know that educating women and including them in all aspects of society is the only way for a modern society to flourish.

We are working to empower women through the *Fortune*/State Department International Women's Exchange Program, a public-private partnership that brings young women business leaders from around the world to mentor with some of our top female executives. Just last year the chief executive officers of Xerox, Avon, and Time Inc., and the top vice president of Microsoft, were involved in this successful initiative.

Journalists

Journalists, unlike women business leaders, have been participants in ECA exchange programs for many years. However, never before this past year had we considered journalists as a single, global community in program terms. We invented another public-private partnership for this purpose and named the program after former U.S. Information Agency director and esteemed American journalist Edward R. Murrow. We did this because his name stands for journalistic integrity.

Some 140 journalists from every region of the world participated in the largest gathering of professional exchange participants ever mounted. Seven American schools of journalism donated their expertise, facilities, and resources to host the participants during their three-week program. They interacted with American colleagues and journalism students and professors.

At the closing symposium, one of the participants approached me with an interesting observation. Several of the participants had been critical of the Bush administration. He asked me in total disbelief how we could allow such criticism to be voiced in a government building in front of outside guests. I replied: "That is what freedom of speech is all about." That lesson, hammered in many different ways over time, is so vital to the defense and, indeed, growth of freedom and democracy around the world.

Exchanges are about building relationships that change attitudes and open minds.

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Van Stokes (left), the head of the U.S. freestyle wrestling team, which was sent to Iran by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and an unidentified Iranian watch the match between American wrestler Zach Roberson (in red) and Iranian Mehdi Rahimi during a tournament in Bandar Abbas, Iran, in January 2007.

Iran

There are few relationships more sensitive and more critical to the United States than that with Iran. ECA has been asked by Secretary Rice to play a vital role, and we are doing so.

In November 2006, ECA's International Visitor office hosted the first group of Iranian visitors since 1979 on a three-week medical exchange program. Sixteen medical professionals from Iran participated in a symposium hosted jointly by the Aspen Institute and the State Department that focused on cardiovascular, cancer, and infectious diseases. This program was a great success—in a long tradition of successful use of exchanges to build bridges where few or none exist.

The Iranians came to the United States with serious apprehensions and misinformation; but they returned to Iran much better informed about U.S. society, culture, institutions, and medical care. A young doctor explained that the trip had reunited him with his "American brothers and sisters after a separation that has lasted much too long."

We currently have eight Iranian Foreign Language Teaching Assistants helping American youth better understand the language and the culture of the Iranian people. We fully anticipate expanding this program in partnership with Iranian universities.

We are working on several additional exchange programs with Iran for 2007, including an exchange between USAWrestling and the Iranian Wrestling Federation.

The wonderful thing about bridges, and that is what exchange programs really are, is that you can cross in both directions. Thus we will all benefit from the positive change that public diplomacy will foster through people-to-people exchange programs. ■

http://exchanges.state.gov/

A New Arena for the Competition of Ideas

Jeremy F. Curtin
Acting Coordinator for the Bureau of International Information Programs

U.S. Department of State

Jeremy F. Curtin

"Just as our diplomatic institutions must adapt so that we can reach out to others, we also need a different and more comprehensive approach to public information efforts that can help people around the world learn about and understand America. The war on terrorism is not a clash of civilizations. … This is a struggle of ideas, and this is an area where America must excel." President George W. Bush, 2003

After September 11, 2001, U.S. public diplomacy information programs have faced a challenge of new urgency and intensity—countering a message of ideological extremism that, surprisingly to most people in the West, struck a responsive cord among many in the Middle East and elsewhere. We face this challenge on a battleground of ideas shaped by technologies that did not exist in the previous ideological struggle during the Cold War. New technologies, especially satellite television and the Internet, have taken the 24-hour news cycle global and created a very complex and dynamic information environment in which being heard and understood is much more difficult than in the past. With direction from Under Secretary Karen Hughes and working with others in the State Department and the interagency community, we in the Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) have added cyberspace to our traditional mission of information outreach exemplified by the U.S. Speaker Program, print publications, and our bureau's USINFO Web site, itself a relatively new information platform.

IIP is finding its way in this new arena, developing capabilities for international dialogue in Webchats, Webcasts, and blogs, and exploring whether such emerging phenomena as the virtual world of Second Life hold promise for engaging foreign publics on issues of policy, society, and values. Our flagship initiative in cyberspace is the IIP Digital Outreach Team, a still-small unit of Foreign Service Officers, Arabic-language specialists, and analysts who monitor Arabic blogs and discussion forums, offering the U.S. perspective—in Arabic—on front-line issues like Iraq, Iran, terrorism, and the Middle East peace process.

A Counter-Voice to Distortions

The Digital Outreach Team offers a counter-voice to the distortions and lies that characterize so much of even mainstream Arabic discussion on the Internet. The defining characteristic of the team is that it seeks to generate

U.S. Department of State

Journalists in Lahore, Pakistan, participate in an IIP-sponsored Webchat related to the September 2006 *eJournal USA*, "Rebuilding and Resilience: Five Years After 9/11."

dialogue, employing an informal, credible voice, speaking knowledgeably. Credibility is key, an essential but extremely difficult goal to achieve over the Internet. In public diplomacy, we talk about taking the message "the last three feet," in Edward R. Murrow's construction, the final distance crossed through personal contacts and relationships of trust built between our diplomats and their interlocutors in the field, "one person talking to another." In cyberspace, we need to find other ways to connect, so that the U.S point of view is at least present in the conversation.

The Digital Outreach Team is IIP's primary initial effort to connect in the new global information environment, characterized by speed and a tremendous cacophony of voices, serious and silly, important and trivial, competing for public attention. We plan to expand the capability of the Digital Outreach Team and develop new mechanisms, including a counter-terrorism information center that will monitor, analyze, and engage on the Internet and in other media more comprehensively and rapidly than we can now manage.

Still Crossing the Last Three Feet

If IIP has focused with increased urgency on the public diplomacy challenges of emerging technologies, we have not abandoned our traditional programs. Important as the Internet and electronic outreach are in many parts of the world—including the Middle East, where statistics on low Internet penetration might indicate otherwise—much of the world is a long way from being wired, as our public affairs officers serving in those areas can well attest. In many countries, including some of critical importance in the ideological struggle, the last three feet may still be crossed literally when an officer or a Foreign Service National employee from the host country walks across the street to hand a newspaper editor the text of a speech or a fact sheet on a U.S. initiative.

IIP continues to support our colleagues in areas where technology has yet to emerge. We are strengthening key programs like the U.S Speaker Program—with a new Strategic Speaker Initiative—the monthly electronic publication *eJournal USA* on current policy priorities, print publications, and even the venerable poster show, all ways of delivering information that, we realize, remain of value to many embassies. We are revamping and enhancing our main public Web site, USINFO, both as a global outreach tool and as an information source for embassies. And we are developing our internal Web site, INFOCENTRAL, the place embassies

U.S. Department of State/Janine Sides

Acting Coordinator of the Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) Jeremy Curtin listens to Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy in September 2006.

and U.S. military commands overseas increasingly turn to for policy background and key messages important to their own information outreach efforts.

IIP is adapting to the technological and political challenges of the 21st century information environment and the post-9/11 world. During the Cold War, the Voice of America and a handful of other western short-wave radio stations could dominate the information stream into Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Even during the first Gulf War in 1990-91, if people in the Middle East wanted a view of events other than that offered by their own state media, they turned to CNN or a very few other international broadcasters in English. Today, those same audiences have a multitude of information sources, particularly satellite TV and the Internet, that offer a myriad of opinions, facts, and misinformation in Arabic and any number of other languages. The competition of ideas is fiercer and more crowded than ever before. In this competition, the United States needs to deploy all the instruments of public diplomacy we can muster, from educational and professional exchanges to direct radio and television broadcasting. Information outreach, increasingly through the channels of high technology, is a primary instrument of public diplomacy. IIP is committed to ensuring that the latest technologies are deployed to greatest effect, serving our foreign policy priorities and national interests everywhere in the world. ■

http://usinfo.state.gov

The State Department's Management Team

Henrietta H. Fore
Under Secretary of State for Management

My responsibilities are for the people, security, resources, facilities, and technology of the Department of State, as well as our consular affairs program. The latter includes the department function many of you know best—the issuance of visas. The bureaus and offices of this management team that report to me together have a budget of $3.6 billion and 7,200 full-time employees, as well as tens of thousands of contractors.

U.S. Department of State

Henrietta H. Fore

Our management team provides the diplomatic platform for more than 70,000 Americans and foreign nationals from more than 40 U.S. government agencies at more than 260 American embassies, consulates, and missions worldwide. We are a global enterprise with the goal of providing world-class services 24/7/365. We are very pleased that the Department of State recently became only the second of the 26 largest agencies in the U.S. government to achieve top scores across-the-board on all the initiatives of the President's Management Agenda, which is the Bush administration's strategy for improving the management and performance of our government.

All countries' foreign ministries have many of the same administrative functions for which I am responsible at the U.S. Department of State. And, like us, many of your ministries are searching for ways to be more efficient, effective, and customer-oriented in their provision of administrative services—through reforms such as shared services, regionalization, centralization, or a standardized management platform. I have discussed these questions with a number of foreign ambassadors stationed here in Washington, D.C.

Three Bureaus

The three following essays—the Bureau of Consular Affairs, the Bureau of Human Resources, and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations represent only a portion of the work of the management family In addition to the visa function discussed in the essay on the Bureau of Consular Affairs, that bureau is also responsible for the issuance of passports to Americans and for providing support to American citizens worldwide. In the Human Resources piece, you will read about our dedicated foreign national employees. You may not be aware that more than 40,000 foreign nationals are employed directly by the U.S. government around the world and that thousands more serve as contractors, including as security guards, at our embassies and consulates. Moreover, we are looking at how we can increase the responsibilities of our foreign national employees and thereby improve our partnership. The Bureau of Human Resources is also responsible for our American foreign service and civil service employees and support to the family members of Americans serving overseas.

The article on Overseas Buildings Operations explains our aggressive program to build state-of-the-art, secure embassies to replace many aging buildings; to maintain, repair, and rehabilitate our existing facilities; and overall to manage more than 12,000 properties worldwide.

Other Bureaus and Offices

Other bureaus and offices on the management team are the Bureaus of Administration, Diplomatic Security,

U.S. Department of State

Under Secretary for Management Henrietta Fore (right) inaugurated the Benjamin Franklin American Corner in Salvador, Brazil, on October 27, 2006. American Corners provide the opportunity to learn about the United States.

Information Resource Management, and Resource Management, as well as the Foreign Service Institute and the Offices of Civil Rights, Management Policy, Medical Services, and Rightsizing. Let me explain briefly the focus of some of these other bureaus.

The Bureau of Administration provides major support operations for the Department of State. Its essential functions include logistics, acquisitions, domestic facilities and emergency management, the diplomatic pouch and mail, and support to overseas schools attended by children of many nationalities. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security is responsible for the protection of the personnel, information, and facilities of the Department of State in both the United States and overseas. It protects the secretary of state and designated foreign dignitaries working in or visiting the United States, investigates passport and visa fraud, manages the Diplomatic Courier Service, provides professional security training, and performs the background investigations on new employees.

The Bureau of Information Resource Management is responsible for ensuring that the Department of State has secure modern technology that provides timely and accurate information and the means to communicate throughout the U.S. government's foreign affairs community to our desktop computers and handheld devices. Specific examples include: providing worldwide information technology, infrastructure such as secure telecommunications between Washington and our posts overseas; and information management services, such as computer software applications, hardware maintenance, and network management.

The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) is the primary training institution for the diplomats and other professionals of the American foreign affairs community. It provides more than 500 courses, including some 70 foreign languages, to more than 40,000 enrollees a year. While some of our foreign nationals travel to Washington, D.C., to attend FSI courses, they—as well as our diplomats and their families stationed overseas—are more and more able to receive training via distance learning over the Internet. We have more than 80 interactive custom-designed courses and more than 3,000 courses available from FasTrac, a commercial provider. In 2006, FasTrac completions jumped to more than 7,100, nearly double the previous year. Our employees completed more than 3,900 FSI-produced distance courses in 2006, representing an increase of 40 percent over 2005.

Welcome to Management. These are activities we perform every day in communities around the world, reaching out to the peoples around the world. This is essential work of the Department of State's management team in supporting American diplomacy. ■

http://www.state.gov/m/

Secure Borders, Open Doors

Maura Harty
Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs

Current Visa Issues

U.S. Department of State

Maura Harty

Visa processing by the U.S. State Department is carried out by the Bureau of Consular Affairs, an organization of some 8,000 people working in 211 embassies and consulates around the world, in Washington, D.C., and in two visa processing centers in the United States. We are charged with thoroughly and fairly adjudicating immigrant and nonimmigrant visas for citizens of foreign countries who seek to come to the United States. In performing this function, we play a key role in enhancing U.S. border security while facilitating legitimate travel to the United States.

America's approach to visa and immigration issues reflects our history and our common ideals. The United States is a "nation of nations" and has always welcomed visitors from all over the globe. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, in her confirmation hearings, reaffirmed the department's commitment to that tradition when she said:

> Our interaction with the rest of the world must be a conversation, not a monologue, and America must remain open to visitors and workers and students from around the world. We do not and will not compromise our security standards, yet if our public diplomacy efforts are to succeed, we cannot close ourselves off from the rest of the world.

Secure Borders, Open Doors

The context for current visa procedures is, quite simply, September 11, 2001. On that terrible day, when so many Americans—and citizens from 90 other nations—lost their lives, we saw the lengths to which some would go to do us harm. We had to act swiftly and decisively to address our nation's border security needs and make America safe for our citizens and our foreign visitors.

While security must always be our primary concern, we must also ensure that our country's doors remain open to those whose presence we encourage and value. Welcoming visitors is central to U.S. national security. Last year some 50 million foreign visitors accounted for $104.8 billion in spending and other economic activity in the United States. International students contribute an additional $13 billion each year.

The United States welcomes international visitors because we know that the best advertisement for America *is* America. The best way for foreign visitors and students to understand America, to truly appreciate our country and our people, is for them to see America with their own eyes. The understanding that comes from such exchange is priceless. Visitors return home usually with positive impressions of the United States based on first-hand experiences, rather than third-hand stories.

The challenge of securing our borders while keeping our doors open is not an easy one, but these objectives are not mutually exclusive. We must and we can do both. Every day, consular officers around the world are on the front lines of the Global War on Terror and actively implementing our policy of Secure Borders and Open Doors.

U.S. Department of State/Kenneth White

Amy Senneke plays the part of a consular officer and Kelly Daniel that of a visa applicant having her fingerprints scanned in a training session at the State Department's Foreign Service Institute in Arlington, Virginia. The facility was designed to resemble an overseas consular section, complete with interview windows, computers with functioning consular applications, fingerscanners, and a waiting room.

Improvements in the Visa Process

Since 9/11, the Bureau of Consular Affairs has worked tirelessly to improve the transparency, predictability, and efficiency of the visa process. We have a lot of good news to report. For example:

- More than 97 percent of all visa applicants who are interviewed and approved receive their visa in one or two days. For the 2.5 percent of visa applicants who need extra screening, we have streamlined the process to ensure a prompt response.
- We have invested heavily in technology to speed the adjudication process, as well as to enhance access to information from other U.S. government agencies and share our information with them.
- We devoted increased resources to visa processing by creating 570 new consular positions since September 2001.
- We publish current visa appointment wait times and processing times for each visa-issuing post on our Internet Web site at *http://www.travel.state.gov/*, so visa applicants will have more information to plan their travel.

Student Visa Issues

The United States is preeminent in the field of higher education and gained that standing with the contributions of countless students and academics from all over the world. The United States welcomes more international students than any other nation—and the Department of State plays a key role in making that welcome possible.

In 2006, we issued 591,050 student and exchange visitor visas—an all-time high. The increases from China, South Korea, India, and the Middle East are particularly notable, but we've seen increases from every region in the world.

Here are just a few of the ways we continue to encourage international students to choose our country:

- All of our embassies and consulates give students and exchange visitors priority in making visa appointments and processing visas.
- Students can now apply for visas 120 days before their studies begin.
- Many of our embassies provide educational counseling services to foreign students. The department's Web site, *http://www.educationusa.state.gov*, provides a wealth of information on the excellent educational opportunities in the United States.

Business Visas

Recognizing that a vibrant business relationship with all nations contributes to progress toward a more secure and prosperous world, the Department of State has developed several initiatives to assist business travelers:

- We expanded visa reciprocity agreements with many nations so that we have flexibility to issue visas that are valid for a longer period.
- We instructed our embassies and consulates to establish mechanisms to expedite appointments for legitimate business travelers. Consular sections from Buenos Aires to Bratislava have imaginative programs to facilitate business and tourist travel.
- The Business Visa Center (BVC) in Washington, D.C., explains the visa process to U.S. companies and convention organizers who invite employees or current and prospective business clients to the United States. The BVC receives hundreds of inquiries, and

© AP Images/Elizabeth Dalziel

Chinese visa seekers look through U.S. visa application forms outside the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, China, in April 2006. More Chinese received U.S. visas last year than in any other year over the past century.

we estimate that it indirectly assists more than 20,000 international travelers each month.

Visa Appointment Wait Times

The first step in applying for a nonimmigrant visa (NIV) is to make an appointment for an interview. To keep the wait time for an NIV appointment as short as possible, the department has added staff, improved space in consular sections at many posts, and streamlined visa processing procedures. Most posts now have appointment wait times of less than one week, but we urge applicants to apply for appointments as far in advance of planned travel as possible. Posts with waiting periods have established mechanisms to expedite appointments for students and exchange visitors, applicants seeking emergency medical care, and legitimate business travelers with urgent needs.

While these steps have proven effective, there are still some posts where the wait for an appointment can exceed 30 days, especially during peak travel times. We are working with these posts to devise creative solutions to reduce appointment wait times.

Visa Refusals

One of our most frequently asked questions is why visa applicants are refused, and whether a refusal is permanent. Under U.S. immigration law, all applicants for nonimmigrant visas must satisfy the interviewing officer that they are entitled to the type of visa for which they apply. While the requirements of each nonimmigrant visa category differ, one of the most common is for applicants to demonstrate they have a residence in a foreign country that they do not intend to abandon. Applicants usually meet this requirement by showing the consular officer that they have strong professional, employment, educational, family, and/or social ties overseas that would ensure their return to a foreign country after a temporary visit to the United States. Applicants can demonstrate these ties in a variety of ways; there is no specific document that an applicant must have to demonstrate such ties, nor does lack of a document necessarily mean an applicant cannot obtain a visa.

If an applicant cannot demonstrate that he/she qualifies, the consular officer is legally required to refuse the visa. This type of refusal, however, is never permanent. The applicant may reapply if he or she believes there is additional evidence to demonstrate his or her qualifications for a visa, or if personal circumstances change and the applicant develops such ties in the future.

A Welcoming Country

There have been many changes in U.S. visa procedures over the past four years. What has not changed, however, is that America is still the welcoming country it has always been. We want visitors from every corner of the globe to continue to visit the United States and experience everything this country has to offer. The Bureau of Consular Affairs will continue to work every day to facilitate legitimate international travel while protecting U.S. national security. ■

http://travel.state.gov/

Platforms for Diplomacy

The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations

U.S. Department of State

Major General Charles E. Williams, U.S. Army, Retired, is director of the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations.

In January 2006, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced an ambitious foreign policy initiative that she called "transformational diplomacy." She defined the objective of transformational diplomacy this way: "To work with our many partners around the world, to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system."

The task of the State Department's Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) is to provide and maintain secure, safe, functional physical facilities to accomplish the department's objectives. OBO's mission is to provide the department's employees with the tools essential to achieving U.S. foreign policy objectives.

To achieve this mission, OBO has established four priority goals that advance diplomatic readiness, are aligned to the Department of State's objectives, and reflect the priorities outlined in the secretary's Transformational Diplomacy Initiative and the President's Management Agenda. These goals are:

- **Capital Security Construction.** Award contracts for the capital security construction projects that have been identified by the department after consultation with other agencies, and complete the construction on time and within budget. These projects are listed in the six-year Long-Range Overseas Buildings Plan (LROBP), which is published by OBO each year in conjunction with the release of the president's annual budget.
- **Compound and Physical Security.** Provide physical security upgrades and compound security to State Department overseas facilities to protect employees from terrorists and other security threats. This program also provides security upgrades for soft targets such as schools, recreational facilities, and residences.
- **Maintenance of Assets.** Maintain, repair, and rehabilitate existing overseas diplomatic and consular facilities in an effective manner that enhances the quality of life of visitors as well as employees by allowing them to work in secure, safe, and functional facilities.

U.S. Department of State

The new U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, was opened in March 2006.

- **Asset Management.** Acquire, dispose of, and manage the department's overseas real property in a professional manner that meets department needs on terms favorable to the U.S. government and satisfies the concerns of the president, Congress, and the American public.

Organization

In support of these four goals, each component of the OBO organization has established performance targets that benchmark critical functions. Management reviews performance against these targets monthly to identify potential problems and ensure effective performance. OBO management also meets quarterly with its Industry Advisory Panel to review and discuss issues with the aim of maximizing the free exchange of ideas and best practices between the government and the private sector.

OBO operates through four primary program offices: Planning and Development, Real Estate, Project Execution, and Operations and Maintenance.

Planning and Development. Proper planning is the most critical component of OBO's philosophy of "getting it right." The Planning and Development Office provides the central focus for overseas facility planning efforts and is the linchpin in OBO's efforts to change over from a "budget drives planning" mindset to one of "planning drives the budget." This office is responsible for producing the LROBP and the Asset Management Plan. It also leads strategic planning, prepares business case analyses, and provides the detailed long-range facility planning, space-requirements planning, project development, and cost-management analyses necessary to design and construct new facilities and renovate existing ones.

Real Estate. Site selection and acquisition are critical steps in the success of any new construction project, but they can be the most difficult to negotiate and complete. The Real Estate Office supports all aspects of real property acquisition, management, and disposal. This responsibility includes oversight of all leases of office and residential property—more than 12,000 properties around the world.

Project Execution. This office has responsibility for engineering design, construction, and the commissioning of all facilities. Its U.S. and on-site construction management staffs oversee the work of the general contractors building and renovating the State Department's overseas facilities. The office also provides assistance in soliciting and negotiating architectural service contracts and reviewing project drawings, specifications, and associated documents. In addition, the office provides security measures that safeguard overseas construction projects from potentially hostile terrorist acts and intelligence efforts.

Operations and Maintenance. This office is accountable for the operation and maintenance of overseas U.S. government-owned and leased structures, providing for the upkeep of the department's existing property inventory. The office manages a major rehabilitation program that rehabilitates, upgrades, and, when necessary, replaces worn-out building systems that can no longer be physically or economically maintained by routine preventative and unscheduled maintenance and repair activities. Its facility management program provides technical assistance and support to overseas posts to maintain major building systems, as well as all maintenance-related activities associated with the planning and execution of the New Embassy Compound program. The office also includes fire protection and environmental safety and health programs.

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During the ground-breaking ceremony for a new permanent U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, in August 2000, U.S. Ambassador to Kenya Johnnie Carson (third from left) symbolically mixes soil from the former U.S. Embassy site with soil of the new site. Other officials are (from the left) Kenya's Minister for Lands Joseph Nyaga, then-Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Buildings Operations Patsy Thomasson, and the Deputy Mayor of Nairobi, Joe Akech.

© AP Images/Jan Bauer

The new U.S. Embassy in Berlin, Germany, shown in October 2006, is scheduled to open in 2008.

OBO's industry event brings together a stimulating mix of developers, contractors, engineers, consultants, government officials, and architects.

OBO has also moved aggressively to establish standardized building sizes and design parameters, which in turn have led to standardized designs and capped construction costs. These designs are adapted to reflect the particular requirements of the specific posts and provide significant cost and time savings. Under this approach, there are four primary standard embassy design sizes and cost categories: super small, small, medium, and large. Super-small buildings are generally less than 3,000 gross square meters (gsm) and cost about $31 million to construct. Small buildings are between 3,000 and 4,300 gross square meters and cost about $52 million. Medium-sized buildings are generally between 4,300 and 7,400 gsm and cost about $75 million. Large projects generally are between 7,400 and 11,300 gsm and cost about $97 million. In 2005 General Williams introduced "New Ways to Think and New Ways to Build," which established the Williams 20 Program Management Concepts: 20 carefully crafted concepts that clearly fine-tuned the project planning and execution process (analysis, control, measurement). Focusing on process improvement, OBO adopted the "Six Sigma" model and is now introducing "lean-management" concepts to enable us to reduce waste, improve process flow, identify value, manage the value stream, and increase process flexibility.

These improved management techniques, combined with a dedicated professional staff, will ensure the efficient execution of the facilities programs that will provide the Department of State with the physical platforms it needs to pursue its transformational diplomacy objectives. ■

http://www.state.gov/obo/

Impressive Performance

The journey to a new level of performance started in 2001. Upon his appointment as director and chief operating officer, retired Major General Charles E. Williams revamped the new Overseas Buildings Operations Bureau and instituted changes to create a results-based organization leveraging commercial best practices.

After almost six years, the results have been amazing. With some 36 New Embassy Compounds completed over the past six years, 40 projects under management, and four more New Embassy Compounds scheduled for award before the end of the year, OBO has become a results-based organization that focuses on accountability, performance, credibility, and discipline.

One key element of this progression has been the creation of a strong partnership between OBO and the construction industry. Since its inception five years ago, OBO's Industry Day event has become extremely popular among industry and the government. What was once an annual one-day event has progressed to a two-day matchmaking event, with industry and government officials hosting one-on-one meetings the second day.

Foreign Service Nationals: America's Bridge

The Bureau of Human Resources

U.S. Department of State

Chairin Ma'Roef (right) discusses the process of immunofluorescence analysis as Ambassador John E. Lange views influenza viruses in the U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit Viral Isolation Laboratory in Jakarta, Indonesia.

America's Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) comprise the bulk of the 42,000 locally employed staff members working at more than 250 U.S. embassies and consulates worldwide. They perform vital foreign policy program and support functions, and provide the unique knowledge and understanding of local culture and conditions that are so important to America's transformational diplomacy. In addition to the U.S. Department of State, all U.S. government agencies abroad, such as the Department of Agriculture, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, rely heavily on the FSN community and the continuity it provides. Their knowledge, special skills, and rich network of local contacts are priceless. They are America's bridge to the other nations of the world.

The FSN community is integral to America's transformational diplomacy across the globe. Over the years, in many parts of the world, U.S. embassy FSNs have helped advance the ideals and strengthen the institutions of democracy on every continent. Libraries and cultural centers in closed countries, for example, provide a refuge where readers gain free and open access to a diversity of thought and opinion. Local national staff of these centers regularly host democracy study groups and book debates, teach English and Internet-searching skills, and facilitate advanced research. FSNs work closely with clients ranging from university students to supreme court judges. As Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has stated: "There is no higher calling than to help other people fulfill their aspirations for a better life, a more democratic future, and a more peaceful world."

Economic development is another important area in which America's FSNs contribute. Many find this field particularly rewarding as they pursue initiatives that advance the economic success of their home countries while expanding the global marketplace. An FSN economics specialist in Praia, for instance, used her expertise to help Cape Verde increase its export of finished textiles six-fold in one year, resulting in 600 new jobs for her country.

FSN scientists and researchers are key to the world's scientific cooperation. Avian flu and HIV/AIDS are just two of the innumerable concerns America's foreign national employees are working to solve with host-country colleagues. For example, an FSN in Estonia worked closely with American colleagues to convince Estonian government officials that HIV/AIDS is as much a threat to her nation as it is elsewhere. As a result of her efforts, Estonia became the first country in the region to receive a $10 million grant from the U.N. Global Fund on HIV, AIDS, and Tuberculosis.

Similarly, at the grassroots level, a maintenance worker at the U.S. Embassy in Mozambique has created a traveling theater group to present HIV/AIDS skits and productions to school and private sector audiences. These performances

Andrew McClearn, U.S. Embassy Mexico City

Mexico City Foreign Service National employee Victor Ponce is sorting visa application forms for shipment to the Kentucky Consular Center where they will be processed.

close with honest and frank discussions with U.S. health experts. Smiles, laughter, and pensive looks are proof that the important messages of these amateur "road shows" are being heard.

When American citizens find themselves in a distant country hurt or lost or without a passport, an FSN is often the first person they speak to at the U.S. embassy or consulate. Consular FSNs assist more than one million Americans every year with a range of services, from replacement passports to guidance on local health care services to aiding the return of abducted children. When the tsunami hit Southeast Asia in December 2004, America's steadfast FSNs stepped in to aid the many U.S. visitors in their countries. Undaunted by the chaos, dangers, or long hours, many traveled to the disaster areas to immediately establish a visible American embassy presence and offer first-response assistance to stranded U.S. citizens. They provided transportation to hospitals, gave meals and clothing, assisted with communications to family and friends, and even generously opened their homes to some of the dispossessed travelers.

At the same time, these FSNs worked hard to support their own communities, playing a crucial role in the global response to the 2004 tsunami, the largest international humanitarian relief effort in history: They coordinated between donors and government officials and other diplomatic missions, organized blood drives and shuttled donating employees to local hospitals, and packed trucks with food, clothing, and medicine.

The community of 42,000 FSNs is unique, and its members work hard to support each other and build bonds across their borders. A good example of this is the FSN staff of the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade who coordinated and organized a recent indoor soccer tournament for FSN teams from across the region. The event was so popular that they plan to make the tournament an annual event.

FSNs also support each other financially when serious hardship befalls their own. The global corps has given assistance to employees in earthquake-wracked Pakistan, war-torn Liberia, and hurricane-ravaged Haiti. In addition to support for their FSN colleagues after the terrorist attacks in Jeddah, Nairobi, and Dar es Salaam, 70 FSNs who lost homes and property to civil unrest in Harare, Zimbabwe, also received aid from the worldwide FSN community. This strength of fellowship goes back as far as 1983 and the bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, when FSNs from as far away as El Salvador sent contributions to the families of those FSNs killed and injured. The FSN Relief Fund—with contributions from both FSNs and Americans—has granted more than $300,000 to fellow employees in more than 22 countries.

America's Foreign Service Nationals are the glue that holds our embassies together. These local national employees are an integral part of the U.S. diplomatic team, as only they best understand how to serve as a bridge for Americans to the cultural and political environment of their homelands. ■

http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/

U.S. Department of State

Foreign Service National employees from Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Podgorica (Montenegro) in the finals of an indoor football tournament hosted by the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade, Serbia. Other participating teams were from Belgrade, Budapest (Hungary), Zagreb (Croatia), and Sofia (Bulgaria). Podgorica won the finals 2-1.

Regional and Bilateral Policy Issues

The Office of the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

U.S. Department of State/Janine Sides

R. Nicholas Burns

Under Secretary for Political Affairs R. Nicholas Burns is the State Department's third-ranking official and its senior career diplomat. He serves as the day-to-day manager of overall regional and bilateral policy issues, and oversees the bureaus for Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Eurasia, the Near East, South and Central Asia, and the Western Hemisphere; the Bureau of International Organization Affairs; and the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs.

The assistant secretaries of the geographic bureaus and offices advise the under secretary and guide the operation of the U.S. diplomatic missions within their regional jurisdiction. They are assisted by deputy assistant secretaries, office directors, post management officers, and country desk officers. These officials work closely with U.S. embassies and consulates overseas and with foreign embassies in Washington, D.C. The work of the geographic bureaus was described in the September 2006 edition of *eJournal USA*, "U.S. Foreign Policy in the 21st Century: Regional Issues."

This issue presents the Bureau of International Organization Affairs and the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs.

The Bureau of International Organization Affairs (IO) develops and implements the policies of the U.S. government within the United Nations and its affiliated agencies, as well as within certain other international organizations. The IO Bureau engages in what is known as multilateral diplomacy to promote and defend the many overlapping interests of the American people. The IO Bureau also promotes effective and efficient management within international organizations.

The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) advises the U.S. government on the development of policies and programs to combat international narcotics and crime. INL programs support the department's strategic goals of reducing the entry of illegal drugs into the United States and minimizing the impact of international crime on the United States and its citizens. Counter-narcotics and anticrime programs also complement the war on terrorism by supporting foreign criminal justice systems and law enforcement agencies charged with the counterterrorism mission. ■

http://www.state.gov/p/

Working With International Organizations

Kristen Silverberg
Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs

U.S. Department of State

Kristen Silverberg

The Bureau of International Organization Affairs (IO) was created by Secretary of State Dean Acheson in the aftermath of World War II, as part of the United States' efforts to deal with the emergence of a new international order. IO was designed to manage the United States' relationship with the newly formed United Nations, which had been founded by the United States and its allies to work, in the words of the U.N. Charter, "to maintain international peace and security … to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of all peoples, and … to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all."

© AP Images/Tatan Syuflana

An Indonesian soldier says goodbye to his son as his unit prepares to leave for their U.N. peacekeeping assignment in Lebanon in November 2006.

The founders of the United Nations, including the United States, believed that this new institution could play a central role in supporting the growth of freedom around the globe. In the post-9/11 world, when terrorism, intolerance, and hatred threaten the United States and many other countries, a United Nations that lives up to the high hopes of its founders is even more critical. As President George W. Bush said in his second inaugural address, "The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands." He committed the United States "to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture." This is a historic effort that cannot be undertaken by the United States alone. As a result, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has challenged all of us at the Department of State to "work with our many partners around the world to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system."

As an important part of that endeavor, my bureau works with 82 international organizations and programs to promote international peace and security, to spread freedom and defend human rights, to promote development through trade and free enterprise, and to fight poverty and disease. In my role as assistant secretary, I oversee the work of 469 exceptional American diplomats, both here in Washington, D.C., and at our posts in New York, Paris, Rome, Geneva, Vienna, Montreal, and Nairobi, who work everyday to solve some of the most vital foreign policy issues confronting our country.

Peace and Security

As one of five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, the United States plays a central role in every significant council action. Within the past year, the United States has led Security Council efforts

to impose sanctions on North Korea in response to its nuclear weapon and missile programs (resolutions 1718 and 1695), to take steps to address the humanitarian crisis in Darfur (resolution 1706), to require Syria to respect the sovereignty and integrity of Lebanon, and to require the Iranian government to abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons (resolution 1696). This year, IO also worked in the Security Council to renew the mandate of its 1540 Committee, which oversees implementation of obligations imposed by the council on all U.N. member states to halt the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery (resolution 1673). The council's counterterrorism committees continued their work to help U.N. member states improve their antiterror capacities and to prevent the flow of assets to al-Qaida and Taliban-related individuals and entities. At the instigation of the United States, the Security Council for the first time agreed to put Burma on its agenda, ensuring increased international focus on the grave human rights and humanitarian situation in that country, which has undermined regional peace and stability. And finally, the United States worked with other council members to elect a new secretary-general to lead the United Nations for the next five years.

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A Turkish Navy Blackhawk helicopter, with the frigate USS *Nicholas* in the background, hovers over a merchant ship during the Anatolian Sun-06 military exercise in the Mediterranean in May 2006. In a mock drill, Turkish commandos rappelled from military helicopters onto a merchant ship that intelligence said was carrying weapons of mass destruction, as U.S. commandos raced to join them from a nearby warship. The exercise, with 34 countries participating, was a practice session to prepare for intercepting weapons materials before they reach a country like Iran, Turkey's neighbor.

Failed States and Peacekeeping

The United States has also worked to help put failed or failing states on a path toward political and economic recovery by supporting United Nations' peacekeeping, humanitarian intervention, and post-conflict stabilization efforts. The United Nations has more than 80,000 military and police personnel and more than 15,000 civilians deployed in 18 peacekeeping missions around the world to provide stability and security in situations where local or regional solutions are inadequate and direct U.S. military engagement is not appropriate. The IO Bureau has worked closely over the last year with the U.N.'s Department of Peacekeeping Operations to shape the U.N.'s response to Hezbollah's attacks on Israel, to promote security in states such as Haiti, and to support the transition from internal armed conflict to democratic governance in countries such as Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The United States also worked within the U.N.'s General Assembly and Security Council to help found the U.N.'s Peace Building Commission, which works to put countries emerging from civil war and natural disasters on the path to long-term recovery.

Democracy and Human Rights

The United States works within multilateral institutions to defend human dignity and to call international attention to egregious human rights abuses. In the General Assembly's Third Committee this year, we helped to pass resolutions on the critical human rights crises in Belarus, Burma, Iran, and North Korea. We've worked with others to highlight the Burmese military's use of rape as a tool of terror. We led the way in highlighting the dangers of anti-Semitism. And in the General Assembly, we called on states to take steps to increase women's political participation.

We also work within international organizations to provide technical assistance to those working to extend human rights and democracy. In 2004, President Bush proposed a new U.N. Democracy Fund, which has now awarded grants to 125 applicants, including Hungary's International Center for Democratic Transition and the "I KNOW Politics" program, which uses the Internet to promote women's political participation.

© AP Images/Marcelo Hernandez

A group of children run to receive food at the New Hope refugee camp in Nabuangongo, Angola, 20 kilometers northeast of Luanda, in 2002. Since that time, many refugees have been able to return to their homes. The U.S. government works with the United Nations and other international organizations to feed refugees and to assist in their repatriation.

Development and Humanitarian Relief

The United States, which is the world's largest single donor of bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA), contributes more than $500 million of ODA annually to the United Nations. By partnering with U.N. organizations, the United States has worked to broaden support for policies and values that underpin development, sound economic growth, and poverty alleviation. In 2005, for example, the bureau negotiated the United Nation's 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, which reaffirmed the view that development depends on trade and private investment, which in turn depend on good governance, the rule of law, freedom, and respect for human rights.

In addition, the United States supports:

- **The World Food Program (WFP)**, which helps to feed 100 million people in more than 80 countries every year. The United States has been the leading supporter of the WFP since its founding, and continues to provide almost half of WFP resources. Likewise, we work through the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to advance sound agricultural science and policies to benefit the many developing world economies that remain fundamentally agrarian;
- **The U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF)**, which helps to feed, vaccinate, educate, and protect children in more than 157 countries;
- **The U.N. Development Program (UNDP)**, the lead U.N. development agency, which works to eliminate poverty and promotes democratic governance, crisis prevention and recovery, a cleaner environment, and prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS. The United States has long been a major donor, providing more than $100 million in funding each year;

© AP Images/Mikhail Metzel

Sam Nunn (right) co-chairman of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a U.S. nonprofit group that works on preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, talks with Alexander Gagarin, first deputy director of the Ulba Metal Plant in the city of Ust-Kamenogorsk in eastern Kazakhstan in 2005. Kazakh officials and U.S. nonproliferation experts have agreed on a joint project to eliminate tons of weapons-grade nuclear fuel that could be used to make dozens of atomic bombs.

- **The Human Settlements Program (UN-HABITAT)**, which grapples with the challenge that 90 percent of the world's population will live in cities of the developing world by 2020, and that one of every three city dwellers today lives in slum conditions;
- **The U.N. Environment Program (UNEP)**, which addresses environmental problems that transcend borders and potentially affect the health and prosperity of U.S. citizens. The United States supports UNEP's core programs of early warning and assessment of environmental threats, the regional seas program, capacity building for domestic environmental governance in developing countries, and the global program of action to combat land-based sources of marine pollution.

This is a busy and challenging time in multilateral diplomacy, but the United States has been able to engage effectively and cooperatively with others to promote a freer, safer, and more prosperous world. We remain committed to strengthening our partnerships with international organizations in the years ahead. ■

http://www.state.gov/p/io/

Combating International Crime

Anne W. Patterson

Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs

U.S. Department of State

Anne W. Patterson

International drug traffickers, transnational organized crime, terrorist groups, and lack of institutionalized rule of law threaten Americans at home, U.S. interests abroad, and our allies in every region of the world. No country, and no society, is immune. Combating these threats is an essential component to other shared and equally important goals such as security, public health, economic development, and, in particular, the growth of legitimate democracy and respect for human rights.

Through the funding provided by the U.S. Congress to the State Department's Bureau for International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), we carry out programs valued at more than $2 billion, manage a diverse range of programs in more than 100 countries, and participate in regional and global initiatives aimed at combating illegal cultivation, trafficking, and abuse, especially through assistance to host-nation institutions. INL's programs also focus on enhancing the institutional capability of law enforcement officials and the criminal justice system in emerging democracies around the world, creating a system of partners in the fight against international organized crime.

Representing the bulk of foreign assistance housed in INL are two core programs, the multiple-year Andean Counter-Drug Initiative (ACI), and the policies and programs with our international partners to turn back the illegal drug trade in Afghanistan and establish rule of law in both Afghanistan and Iraq. The issue of controlling precursor chemicals and amphetamine-type stimulants is the third important area addressed by INL, in response to the rapidly growing worldwide amphetamine-abuse problem. INL also gives attention to the issue of demand reduction, since this is a multifaceted problem.

Andean Counter-Drug Initiative

Virtually all of the world's cocaine, as well as most of the illegal heroin entering the United States, come from the Andean region of Latin America. ACI, a region-wide

U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jose Lopez Jr.

A Peruvian navy ship passes under the Bridge of the Americas in Panama as it prepares to participate in a multinational training exercise involving the United States, Central and South American countries, and Caribbean nations. The exercise is designed to train the multinational force in a variety of surface, air, and mine countermeasures, as well as the detection, monitoring, and interdiction of vessels.

© AP Images

A tractor tears up a field planted with opium poppies, as workers and security guards stand by, in Nangarhar province, east of Kabul, Afghanistan, in March 2006. A U.S. antidrug official said that Afghan poppies would be sprayed with herbicide to combat an opium trade that produced a record heroin haul in 2006.

campaign to curb the production and trafficking of these drugs, focuses on Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Brazil, Panama, and Venezuela. Complicating the fight against drugs is the symbiotic relationship between drug traffickers and international terrorist organizations, which have successfully gained control of territory within sovereign nations fighting to extend the rule of law. Despite these serious problems, progress has been pronounced.

To succeed, a careful balance of antinarcotics education, eradication of illicit drug crops, interdiction and law enforcement, prevention and treatment, as well as the development of alternative livelihoods for reformed coca farmers, is required. Experience indicates that programs in alternative livelihoods work best when combined with a robust eradication effort, both forced and voluntary. The United States has in recent years provided nearly $280 million in alternative development assistance to Colombia alone, which produces 90 percent of the cocaine entering the United States. In the mid-1990s, Colombia was on the verge of collapse from a campaign of violence by drug cartels and terrorist groups, some of which were also involved in drug trafficking. Over the past few years, cocaine production has leveled off, political violence is down, public security has improved, and the Colombian economy has rebounded to the point that the World Bank recently termed it an attractive investment climate—a major turnaround.

The war is far from over, however. Although U.N. estimates indicate that Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia have reduced their coca cultivation over the past five years, the Andean countries must work even harder to achieve permanent reductions in the region's illegal crops. Recent trends, especially in Bolivia, indicate that the success that has been achieved may be at risk. The United States opposes the Morales administration's effort to find so-called commercial uses for illegal coca, which contradicts Bolivia's commitments under key U.N. drug conventions. Our concern is that more coca leaf under cultivation means that more cocaine will inevitably be produced.

Confronting Afghan Opium Poppy/ Heroin Production

Afghanistan is the world's leading producer of illicit opiates, accounting for nearly 92 percent of the global supply and an export value estimated at $3.1 billion in 2006, or nearly 50 percent of Afghanistan's GDP. The street value of heroin and opium is, of course, many times higher. The Afghan opium problem represents much more than just a drug problem for us and the region. As in Colombia, the cultivation, production, and trafficking of opiates is a destabilizing influence, but it is especially dangerous in an emerging democracy like Afghanistan, struggling for stability. Continued support to counter-narcotics efforts in Afghanistan is an essential component of overall U.S. and international policy in Afghanistan, directly connected to the success of the nation's economic development, rule of law, and democratic processes, and undercutting a resurgent Taliban that could foment regional instability.

In December of 2005, the Afghan government laid a legal foundation to combat illegal drugs by enacting the comprehensive Anti-Narcotics Law. The law criminalizes all forms of narcotics trafficking, plus many narcotics-related offenses such as money laundering, corruption, and violent offenses. It also gives a legal framework for the modern investigative and prosecutorial procedures necessary to fight narcotics trafficking in Afghanistan. Implementing this law requires an unprecedented collaboration of our international partners and the Afghan government to implement and refine a five-pillar strategy for combating narcotics. These include 1) effective public information dissemination, 2) alternative livelihoods to create economic alternatives to poppy cultivation, 3) law enforcement and justice reform to support Afghan efforts to arrest, prosecute, and punish convicted traffickers and officials who are found to be corrupt, 4) law enforcement

© AP Images/Lee Jin-man

Japanese coast guard policemen control narcotics traffickers on a boat during an exercise of the North Pacific Coast Guard Forum in Busan, South Korea, in June 2006. Participants in the exercise included members of the coast guards of South Korea, Japan, the United States, China, Canada, and Russia.

interdiction, and 5) poppy eradication, including discouraging plantings in the first place. The seriousness of Afghanistan's illegal opium poppy problem calls for a long-term commitment on the part of the entire international community.

Iraqi Rule of Law

Our Iraqi Criminal Justice Program supports the continuing development of police, prosecutorial, judicial, and correctional institutions in support of the rule of law and democratic governance in Iraq. In the fall of 2003, INL established a police training facility near Amman, Jordan, the Jordan International Police Training Center (JIPTC), using up to 60 trainers from 16 different countries. Since that time, the facility has served as a primary venue for training for more than 15,600 police recruits. INL-funded trainers also played a key role in expanding training to a new Department of Defense-refurbished facility in Baghdad and12 INL-constructed regional facilities that have trained more than 14,000 police. In addition to training new recruits, INL also provided transition and integration training for some 34,000 existing police, many of whose skills were outmoded or virtually nonexistent. An additional 12,000 police have also received advanced and specialized training. As part of needed follow-on field training, INL has positioned 500 police advisors and mentors in Iraq, but their ability to operate in the field has been limited by the security situation. In the justice sector, INL provided training for 175 judges and assisted in the reopening of the Iraq Central Criminal Court, which is

© AP Images/Apichart Weerawong

Two Thai officials prepare packs of drugs for a destruction ceremony in central Thailand on June 26, 2006, the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, when Thai authorities destroyed about 3.5 tons of confiscated narcotics.

now processing cases involving terrorism. Finally, U.S. advisors have provided basic academy training for more than 2,000 Iraqi correctional officers and are providing on-the-job training in prisons throughout the country.

Chemical Drug Control

The United Nations and other reliable sources report that abuse of methamphetamine and similar toxic substances, such as Ecstasy, is a growing problem throughout the world, including the United States. This awareness prompted the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to launch its first-ever *U.S. Synthetic Drug Control Strategy*. In March 2006, INL worked with the U.N. Commission on Narcotic Drugs to have that body adopt a resolution designed to improve international monitoring of key precursor chemicals used in the production of synthetic drugs and help prevent their diversion for illicit use. That same month, Congress enacted the Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act, which strengthens U.S. monitoring of the international flow, including major exporters and importers, of key precursor chemicals.

The relative ease of producing methamphetamine, along with the high profit margins it generates, make this debilitating drug especially attractive to criminal groups. INL is collaborating with many countries to help them control precursor chemicals needed to make these toxic drugs. We are working especially well with our immediate neighbors—Canada and Mexico—in this important area.

Demand Reduction

While most of the department's efforts focus on disrupting the supply of drugs, INL also works with foreign governments and private organizations to help them deal with the problem of domestic drug abuse, which has been growing rapidly countries that previously thought themselves largely immune to the lure of drugs. Such programs focus on the sharing of best practices, which are transmitted through extensive formal and informal networking among governments and NGOs, including several hundred Islamic organizations engaged in drug education, prevention, and treatment.

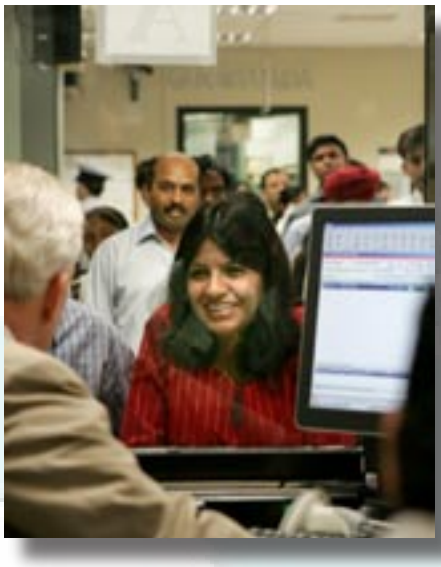
A Mutual Responsibility

The drug issue has been difficult to address, but the international community has made a difference. As examples, Thailand, Pakistan, and Laos are virtually opium poppy free; significant strides have been made against illegal cultivations in the Andes; seizures, arrests, and convictions against many of the biggest traffickers are on the rise; and all over the world young people have a better understanding of the perils of illegal drug use and are acting accordingly. The Andean Counter-Drug Initiative, narcotics control in Afghanistan, and our mutual efforts to combat methamphetamine-type drugs and related chemicals, remind us that we have developed a strong international consensus that the drug trade threatens all nations, and it is our mutual responsibility to counter drug cultivation, trafficking, and abuse. INL worked with Congress to sponsor Colombian drug control experts' travel to Kabul to meet Afghan counterparts to share their expertise. Information-sharing to help jump-start countries facing problems similar to those elsewhere in the world is an extremely important part of our overall effort.

As called for in the 2006 U.N. annual drug report, we must continue our international cooperation to significantly reduce the threat posed by international drug production, trafficking, and abuse. In this sense, the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs plays an essential role. In the fight against international organized crime, we are also leading the way through policies and programs that make it easier for law enforcement officials to collaborate, share information, and disrupt international networks. And as we help train new police officers and criminal justice experts in Afghanistan and Iraq, we give the rule of law and democracy an opportunity to take root. ■

http://www.state.gov/p/inl/

Global Actions



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U.S. Ambassador to India David C. Mulford (left) interviews an Indian woman seeking a visa in the consular section of the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, India, in October 2006.

Andrew McClearn, U.S. Embassy Mexico City

Foreign Service National (FSN) employee Amelia Alvarez responds to a public inquiry in the nonimmigrant visa section of the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, Mexico.

U.S. Department of State

Leaders of the Bureau of Management (left to right): J. Patrick Truhn, Director of the Office of Rightsizing the USG Overseas Presence; Bradford R. Higgins, Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Resource Management and Chief Financial Officer; Richard J. Griffin, Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and Director of the Office of Foreign Missions; George M. Staples, Director General; Henrietta H. Fore, Under Secretary of State for Management; Rajkumar Chellaraj, Assistant Secretary for Administration; Ruth A. Whiteside, Director of the Foreign Service Institute; James H. Thessin, Principal Deputy Legal Advisor; Maura Harty, Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Consular Affairs; James Van Derhoff, Chief Information Officer, Bureau of Information Resource Management; Charles E. Williams, Director of Overseas Buildings Operations; Laurence G. Brown, Director of the Office of Medical Services; Marguerite Coffey, Managing Director of the Office of Management Policy; William H. Moser, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration, Logistics Management; Barry L. Wells, Director of the Office of Civil Rights and Chief Diversity Officer; Kim H. Nickles, White House Liaison to the State Department; and Ann D. Greenberg, Director of the Family Liaison Office.

Global Actions

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U.S. Ambassador to China Clark Randt (third from right) shovels dirt at the ground-breaking ceremony for a new U.S. Embassy in Beijing in February 2004. The building is expected to be completed in 2008.

Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs R. Nicholas Burns oversees overall regional and bilateral policy issues, managing the geographic bureaus as well as the Bureau of International Organization Affairs and the Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs.

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U.S. Air Force Photo by Tech. Sergeant Joseph McLean

In Mombasa, Kenya, Kenyan Minister of State for Defense Njenga Karume (left) and U.S. Ambassador to Kenya Michael E. Ranneberger walk to a dedication ceremony for boats that will help Kenyan authorities to combat arms and drug trafficking.

Global Actions

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In December 2006, U.S. Air Force crew members rest during a relief mission to deliver supplies to Kenya's Dadaab area, where three refugee camps had been cut off by catastrophic floods.

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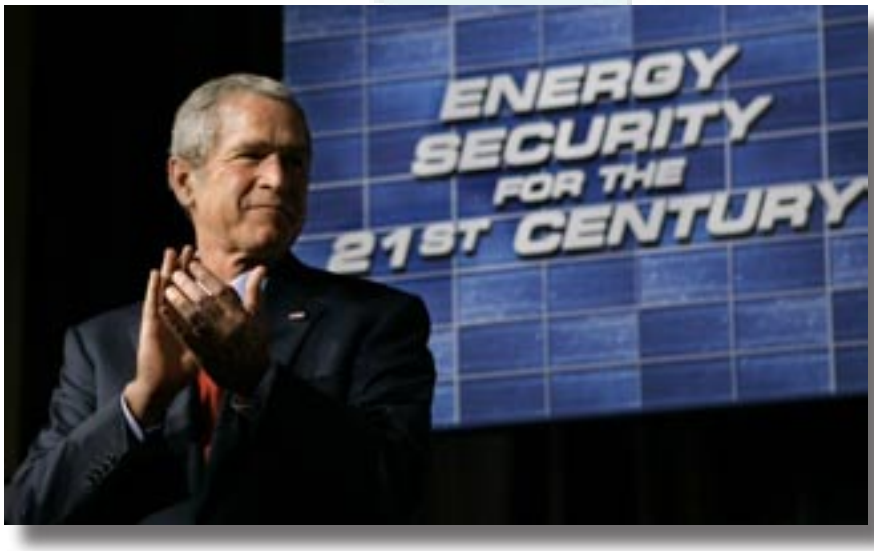
Colombian Interdiction Chief Lieutenant Colonel Oscar Atehortua (left) and Afghan Deputy Minister of Interior for Counter-Narcotics General Mohammad Daud Daud at a joint press conference in Kabul, Afghanistan, in August 2006. The Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs sponsors such meetings to help combat international narcotics and crime.

President George W. Bush applauds the efforts of Congress in passing the Energy Policy Act of 2005, designed to diversify the U.S. energy supply and make America less dependent on foreign oil.



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A Somali refugee woman and her daughter in a refugee camp outside Dadaab, Kenya. During a 2006 visit to the camp by Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration Ellen Sauerbrey, a protocol on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse was adopted.

U.S. Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky (left) talks with U.K. Minister of State for Climate Change and Environment Elliot Morley at the 10th International Convention on Climate Change in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in December 2004.

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U.S. Department of State

Assistant Secretary Ellen Sauerbrey gathers with children at the Umpiem Mai Burmese refugee camp, which the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration helps fund.

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Indian Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Murli Deora; Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry Akira Amari; Chinese National Development and Reform Commission Chairman Ma Kai; South Korean Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Energy Chung Sye-kyun; and U.S. Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman in Beijing, China, in December 2006.

Global Actions

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During a recent visit to Antarctica, Assistant Secretary for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs Claudia A. McMurray was briefed on climate change and other global environmental issues being studied at the McMurdo Station, the destination of these scientists and other passengers and supplies.

Kay Cherush for the U.S. State Department

This woman in her early 20s was trafficked into a blue jeans sweatshop. The Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons assists in the coordination of anti-trafficking efforts.

U.S. Department of State

U.S. Department of Labor Secretary Elaine Chao and Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Deputy Assistant Secretary Jeff Krilla represented the United States at the June 2006 International Labor Organization conference, where delegates held a special session on forced labor in Burma.

Global Actions

U.S. Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Karen Hughes shows a young Moroccan girl an Internet site during a ceremony to open Morocco's second American Corner in June 2006.

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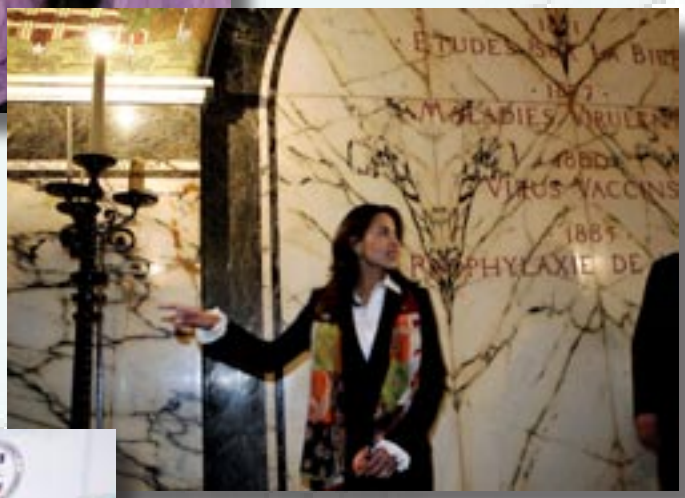

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Dina Powell leads the State Department's bureau that administers exchange and cultural programs. These activities are among the most effective tools of public diplomacy.

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U.S. Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates Michele Sison (left) talks with Anwar Wajdi, deputy director of Dubai Ports World, in the United Arab Emirates during a press conference about U.S. humanitarian aid for Lebanon in August 2006.

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A U.S. Navy soldier unloads a box of relief goods at Manila's international airport in December 2006. The goods were donated in response to the humanitarian needs following Typhoon Durian.

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Global Actions

President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush tour the avian influenza laboratory in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

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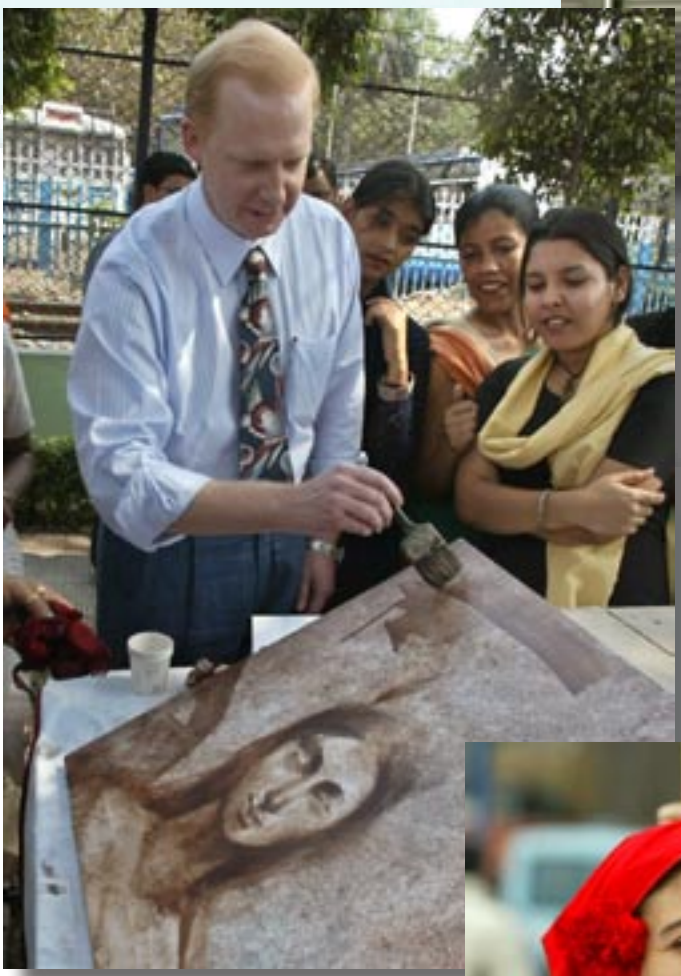

U.S. Consul General in Kolkata, India, Henry V. Jardine works on a painting during a March 2006 workshop for painters in their campaign to stop violence against women and children.

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Turkish women in an Istanbul square protest violence against women as part of a World Women's Day activity. The Office of International Women's Issues promotes women's political and economic participation.

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International Economic Policy

The Office of the Under Secretary of State for Economic, Energy, and Agricultural Affairs

U.S. Department of State

Josette Sheeran

Under Secretary for Economic, Energy and Agricultural Affairs Josette Sheeran serves as the senior economic official at the State Department, advises the secretary of state on international economic policy, and leads the work of the department on issues ranging from trade, agriculture, and aviation to bilateral relations with America's economic partners.

She oversees programs such as the "Businesses Building Bridges" (BBB) initiative to highlight the importance of the private sector in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Introduced by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Afghan President Hamid Karzai in January 2006, this initiative is designed to tap the knowledge, creativity, vision, and good will of high-level American business leaders who can provide strategic vision and guidance to Afghan leaders on how best to activate private sector growth in Afghanistan.

The Bureau of Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs, which is described in the following article by Assistant Secretary Daniel S. Sullivan comes under the Office of Under Secretary Sheeran. It has five units, each headed by a deputy assistant secretary:

- Energy, Sanctions, and Commodities
- International Communications and Information Policy
- International Finance and Development
- Trade Policy and Programs
- Transportation Affairs

Bureau staff develop U.S. policy, administer programs, negotiate, and represent the State Department before Congress, U.S. business and industry, and international organizations.

Under Secretary Sheeran has been named Executive Director of the World Food Program, a post which she is scheduled to assume in April 2007. ■

Fostering Economic Prosperity at Home and Abroad

Daniel S. Sullivan
Assistant Secretary of State for Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs

U.S. Department of State

Daniel S. Sullivan

At the State Department, where we use diplomacy to help foster economic prosperity at home and abroad to reinforce America's national security, energy has taken on a new and special importance.

Record world economic growth, the emergence of major new energy consumers such as China and India, and concerns about supplies have strained world energy markets. Energy security will be a central U.S. foreign policy concern far into the future. Secretary Rice has underscored our commitment to meeting America's energy future by assuring that the State Department organizes itself effectively to deal with this challenge.

Energy

This recognition of energy's importance has prompted some name changes. The Department of State's senior economic official is now the under secretary for economic, energy, and agricultural affairs—assuring that energy will continue to be addressed from the very top. My bureau now has "Energy" in its title, deepening our focus. To help coordinate among the many State Department bureaus and offices that touch on energy—economic, environmental, regional, and others—Secretary Rice named a special advisor and international energy coordinator, Gregory Manuel. Mr. Manuel will work to ensure that the department collaborates more effectively internally and with other federal agencies on the many foreign-policy-related energy challenges.

This new emphasis supports our efforts to advance the four key elements of U.S. energy-security policy: diversification of sources of supply, coordination with other oil-consuming nations, dialogue with oil exporters, and reducing global dependence on oil.

Reliable, affordable, and sufficient sources of energy are indispensable to the overriding U.S. policy objective of fostering growth in the United States and the global economies. To that end, the United States works closely with other industrialized consumer nations through the International Energy Agency and other fora on questions of strategic oil reserves and enhancing energy efficiency. We are helping China and India shape secure, sustainable energy policies through a variety of bilateral and multilateral dialogues.

© AP Images/Lenny Ignelzi

San Diego State University engineering professor Jim Burns sits at the wheel of his hybrid auto at his campus laboratory in October 2005 in San Diego, California. The dashboard consists of a computer screen to monitor all the car's functions. The hybrid gets more than 34 kilometers per liter and goes from zero to 96.56 kilometers per hour in 4.3 seconds.

© AP Images/J. Scott Applewhite

At the Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, New Mexico, President Bush tours the Department of Energy's National Solar Thermal Test Facility, where mirrored dishes and solar panels generate electricity. He is joined by Sandia's president, Thomas O. Hunter (left), and Senator Peter Domenici, Republican of New Mexico.

Sustained Economic Growth

Even as we work to secure energy supplies, the United States is also advancing other specific policies to create the conditions for sustained economic growth.

First, we are working worldwide to encourage strong protections for investment and to open new markets for American exports. The U.S. economy is competitive because it is already among the most open in the world. We benefit from our exports, which have risen nearly 60 percent during the last 10 years, and from our imports, which improve our competitiveness by lowering production costs, helping control inflation, and boosting demand for our exports.

Hence, we strongly support the successful conclusion of the Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations and are working vigorously to advance the process. Further reducing barriers to trade and investment flows would be one of the most effective ways to set the stage for economic growth and higher living standards around the world.

The United States also opens markets through regional and bilateral trade agreements. The largest is the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Since NAFTA went into effect in 1994, U.S. trade with its two partners—Canada and Mexico—has more than doubled. The new seven-country U.S.-Central America/Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement is also beginning to show results.

The United States has bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) with Bahrain, Chile, Jordan, Israel, Morocco, Oman, and Singapore. FTA negotiations have been initiated or completed with Colombia, Ecuador, Malaysia, Panama, Peru, South Korea, Thailand, and the United Arab Emirates. We also negotiate bilateral investment treaties (BITs), with provisions nearly identical to those in our FTAs. A BIT with Uruguay entered into force in 2006, and others are under negotiation.

We also work to ensure open markets and a level playing field with our second largest trading partner, China. Trade in goods between our two countries surpassed $300 billion last year. To strengthen the U.S.-China economic relationship, China must live up to its commitments to the United States and others in the World Trade Organization (WTO). To help accomplish this, the administration has initiated the U.S.-China Strategic Economic Dialogue. Led by the Treasury Department, this will be an ongoing dialogue with semiannual high-level meetings in alternating capitals.

Aviation, the Internet, Biotechnology, and IPR

To further support trade and growth, our bureau has played a central role in making international aviation more open to the transport of people and goods through a more liberal legal and regulatory framework. The State Department has led U.S. delegations that negotiated almost 80 "Open Skies" agreements since 1992, expanding trade, investment, employment, and travel by increasing service options and reducing fares.

The bureau is also at the forefront of promoting the economic development and the freedom of the Internet. Secretary Rice established the Global Internet Freedom Task Force (GIFT) in February 2006 to track efforts to censor the Internet. The task force reports on ways governments use technology and regulation to restrict the free flow of information. The bureau is involved in other initiatives for Internet freedom, to promote the U.S. telecommunications sector, and to better manage international satellite communications.

Our bureau also has a central role in U.S. policy to promote agricultural biotechnology and biotech crops. These crops offer enormous potential, and worldwide plantings have increased more than 50-fold since they were

© AP Images/Al Grillo

Two caribou pause as they walk down a road at the Prudhoe Bay oil field on Alaska's North Slope in August 2006. The hundreds of caribou that wander around the oil field have the right of way and are not allowed to be interfered with. Vehicles are prohibited from honking their horns and must yield to the animals and wait for them to leave the road.

introduced in 1996. The State Department has worked with interagency colleagues to engage foreign governments to reduce unjustified barriers to biotech crop exports. Together with Canada and Argentina, we are very pleased with the recent decision by the WTO Dispute Resolution Settlement panel that the European Union and its member states provided no basis for banning certain biotech crops.

Promoting growth also means fighting intellectual property rights violations, such as piracy of patents and copyrights and counterfeiting of trademarks, which cost U.S. industry up to $250 billion a year, according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. We work through various fora, including the G-8, the U.S.-European Union IP Working Group, the WTO, the World Intellectual Property Organization, and bilateral and regional free trade agreements, to prosecute violators.

Terrorism

Terrorism is a potent threat to economic growth. Our bureau performs an important role in fighting terrorism by seeking to stop its financing. The Office of Terrorist Financing and Economic Sanctions Policy is a key player in efforts to freeze terrorist assets and disrupt the activities of terrorist organizations. We work to build international support for antiterrorist efforts, to encourage countries to freeze terrorist assets, and to develop new initiatives to strengthen international cooperation against terrorist finance.

We also face the prospects of failed states with few economic prospects that can export terrorist threats that could reach our shores. While poverty abroad does not cause terrorism, by addressing poverty and disease and promoting economic growth, reform, and anticorruption around the world, we can help eliminate conditions that breed the kind of hopelessness and despair that give terrorists the opportunity for recruitment.

Reconstruction and Anticorruption

The bureau participates in reconstruction efforts in post-conflict countries such as Haiti, Iraq, Lebanon, and Liberia. We are helping to develop the Iraq Compact, which explains to donor governments and organizations the Iraqi government's objectives and the basis for international support.

We have also led anticorruption efforts that help improve the investment climate and the prospects for private-sector-led growth around the world. These include President Bush's Kleptocracy Strategy and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). The United States supports the U.N. Convention Against Corruption as the first truly global anticorruption forum.

The bureau is also involved in initiatives to provide debt relief and debt stability to the poorest countries. We are monitoring a new challenge of substantial commercial lending to low-income developing countries by large emerging market countries that have not participated in debt relief efforts. We are working to improve creditor coordination and to restrain non-concessional lending to debt relief recipients.

The range of our work at the Economic Bureau is very broad, from trade with the largest countries to debt relief for the poorest. Linking them together is our overriding priority to foster economic growth at home and abroad. With our new focus on assuring the security of critical energy supplies, we will help create the conditions to encourage growth throughout the 21st century. ■

http://www.state.gov/e/

Transcending National Boundaries

Paula J. Dobriansky
Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs

In today's world, any number of challenges affect all of us around the globe. Among the most important issues that America and the international community face are those that transcend national boundaries: for example, the development and use of new technologies and scientific advances; the observance of human rights; public health; stewardship of the environment; and energy resources.

U.S. Department of State

Paula J. Dobriansky

An increasingly globalized world generates immense opportunities for improving the lives of Americans and people around the world. Yet there are also significant transnational threats. We know that oppression and extremism in one region or country can lead to terrible consequences across the globe. Infectious diseases, such as malaria, AIDS, tuberculosis, and influenza, do not respect regional or national boundaries, and a catastrophic outbreak of a pandemic influenza for which we were not prepared could result in outcomes on the scale of a major military conflict. The effects of resource constraints or environmental degradation in one area can quickly impact others. The scourge of human trafficking devastates lives, erodes government authority, and fuels organized crime.

The bureaus and offices that comprise the State Department's Office of Democracy and Global Affairs focus on global issues. We are at the forefront of America's efforts around the world to expand freedom and human rights for all people, regardless of sex, race, or religion; preserve a cleaner, sustainable environment; and alleviate human suffering by combating poverty and promoting health and education. We pursue those goals because it is the right thing to do, and because we thereby embrace our heritage, our opportunity, and our global responsibility. At the same time, we promote our vital interests: Global issues directly and deeply impact our national security.

The U.S. National Intelligence Council, in close consultation with private sector experts, has issued a set of reports that look to global trends 15 years in the future. One of its key conclusions is that "the quality of governance, both nationally and internationally, will substantially determine how well states and societies cope with … global forces." The reports make clear, as experience has borne out, that authoritarian and failed states often lead to internal conflict, forced migration, the exportation of terrorism and other violence, and mismanagement of resources, and create conditions that stall economic development and the advancement of health. How governments treat not just other nations but their own people, in other words, helps determine global opportunities and challenges that affect us all. Secretary Rice has emphasized that a key component of U.S. foreign policy is transformational diplomacy, through which we work with partners around the world to foster and sustain democratic, well-governed states that respond to the needs of their people and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system. Our bureaus and offices help lead that crucial work. The point is not to impose our precise model on others, but to pursue positive change—to employ our diplomatic strength to assist foreign citizens in bettering their lives and taking control of their own futures.

In that work and in our other endeavors, we seek and implement innovative approaches to addressing global challenges. We coordinate extensively with other

countries around the world, and we engage in efforts that bring governments and the private sector together to achieve progress on transnational issues. For example, the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate brings together the governments and private sectors of six key countries to address energy, economic, and environmental goals through concrete, effective steps; the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza promotes timely and sustained high-level cooperation in countering the threat posed by pandemic influenza; and the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council helps provide Afghan women the skills, education, and microfinancing that will allow them to improve the lives of all Afghans. And we work closely with nongovernmental organizations and other elements of civil society on the ground in particular countries, to ensure that strategic goals translate into concrete, effective results. Our bureaus and offices also engage with established multinational organizations, as well as new ones that can play important roles, such as the Community of Democracies and the U.N. Democracy Fund.

I thank you for reading about the bureaus and offices in the State Department that are dedicated to global affairs. The issues that we work on are complex, dynamic, and vitally important. Our mission is to pursue adaptive, effective approaches to those issues. In the essays that follow, I hope you get a sense of the efforts we are taking—every day, around the world—to do so. ■

http://www.state.gov/g/

U.S. Department of State

After delivering remarks on "Finishing the Global Fight Against Polio" at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C., Under Secretary Paula Dobriansky (right) talks with Michael E. Brown (center), the dean of the Elliott School of International Affairs, and Meredith Stakem, a student at the school.

Advancing Democracy Throughout the World

Barry F. Lowenkron
Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

U.S. Department of State

Barry F. Lowenkron

We can all point to extraordinary people and stories that inspire us. For me, it is the story of how the first Helsinki monitoring group was formed in 1976. A small circle of human rights activists held a press conference in the Moscow apartment of Nobel Laureate Andrei Sakharov to announce that they had formed a citizen's group to promote the Soviet Union's implementation of the 1975 Helsinki accord—an agreement linking security among states to respect for human rights within states. The group's leader, physicist Yuri Orlov, asked all those present to join him in the traditional toast of Soviet dissidents. He then raised a glass of vodka, smiled, and said: "To the success of our hopeless cause!" Hopeless? It seemed so at the time. Yet thanks in great measure to the courage, perseverance, and sacrifice of the Moscow Helsinki Group and other groups like them, and to the moral support they received from the United States and other free nations, we have seen hopeless causes transformed into historic changes. Today, like four decades ago, we face great challenges and hear many who say it can't be done. And today, as in decades past, the United States is leading the international community in advancing democracy throughout the world and in defending those who are courageous enough to press for their own rights.

Policy

The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) was created by Congress in 1977. From its inception, DRL has been a leader within the U.S. government in advancing freedom. We promote democracy and defend human rights as a matter of principle and as a foundational component of U.S. national security. Our political system and national identity are grounded in the belief that all people share fundamental rights that are best protected by capable, democratic governance. At the same time, as outlined in President Bush's Freedom Agenda and National Security Strategy, good governance and democracy promotion are central to our national security and war on terror. Failed and authoritarian states that do not respond to the needs of their people or respect international human rights and democratic norms pose a long-term threat to the security of the United States and other democracies.

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U.S. Ambassador to the Organization of American States (OAS) John Maisto speaks to reporters during a news conference in Montevideo, Uruguay, in May 2006. The OAS is one of many international organizations through which the United States works to promote democratic reforms and offer technical assistance to other countries.

Principles

Every day, my bureau helps to fashion and carry out policies to advance fundamental freedoms and democratic principles. In so doing, we are guided by a number of realities:

- That democracy cannot be imposed, but that it can be nurtured. It is incumbent, especially upon democratic

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Cuban men read luminescent messages displayed along the fifth floor of the U.S. mission building in Havana, Cuba, in January 2006. The American mission in Cuba began publishing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights along an electronic news "zipper" on its seafront building.

nations, to offer our support to men and women across the globe who are pressing for human rights and democratic freedoms.

- That there is no "one size fits all" model for every region and country. As President Bush has said: "Our goal instead is to help others find their own voice, attain their own freedom, and make their own way."
- That elections alone do not a democracy make. Elections are a key component, but respect for human rights and a robust civil society, and accountable, transparent, effective institutions of government, are also essential.
- That there is no perfect democracy and that democracy promotion is about working hard to get the trajectory right. Some countries may remain fragile for quite some time. Others may backslide.
- That democracy promotion is a multigenerational effort, requiring long-term commitments of support. But, as Secretary Rice says, it is urgent work that must not be delayed.

Tools

In our efforts to promote respect for human rights and advance democratic principles, we employ three main tools: diplomacy, programs, and reports.

Our diplomatic efforts include direct bilateral dialogues to encourage countries to move forward on human rights. We also work with like-minded partners in the United Nations and regional organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Organization of American States (OAS) to promote democratic reforms; offer technical assistance; and—when necessary—to call governments to account.

Our programs consist of competitive grants to U.S.-based NGOs, which implement focused, short-term, high-impact projects with in-country NGO partners to help government and civil society develop the capacity to create and sustain their own democratic processes and institutions.

Our reports bring international attention to government abuses, highlight advances and improvements, and inform publics about what we are doing to advance the cause of freedom. DRL publishes annual country reports on human rights practices, on how the United States is supporting human rights and democracy across the globe, and on the state of international religious freedom.

We focus our activities on core areas:

Rule of Law and Human Rights: Advancing and protecting human rights as embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and promoting societies in which the state and its citizens are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced, and independently adjudicated.

Good Governance: Promoting democratic institutions that are effective, responsive, sustainable, and accountable to the people.

Political Competition and Consensus Building: Supporting the development of transparent and inclusive electoral processes; democratic and responsive political

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The 15th Annual Session of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Parliamentary Assembly at the building of the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium, in July 2006. The OSCE is one of several international organizations with which the United States works to promote democracy.

parties; and consensus building among government, political parties, and civil society in order to advance a common democratic agenda.

Civil Society: Empowering individuals to peacefully exercise their rights of expression, association, and assembly, including through participation in nongovernmental organizations and unions. We also seek to protect and promote a free, open, and independent media, including the Internet.

Challenges Ahead

Defending human rights and promoting democracy requires a long-term commitment and often multigenerational effort, not just by governments, but also by publics. Success cannot be assured, nor is progress likely to be linear.

We must be able to respond rapidly and effectively to unforeseen events to help consolidate democratic openings and prevent backsliding on human rights. Such efforts include standing in solidarity with nongovernmental organizations and other human rights defenders under siege by governments; supporting reform; responding to restrictions on media and Internet freedom; and helping faltering democracies better deliver democracy's blessings to their people by strengthening their institutions of government and the rule of law.

In all of these efforts on behalf of human rights and democracy, we welcome the partnership of other governments and the ideas and expertise of NGOs who do the hard work of defending human rights and building democracy citizen by citizen, institution by institution, and country by country each and every day. ■

http://www.state.gov/g/drl/

Providing Help and Hope Around the World

Ellen R. Sauerbrey
Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration

U.S. Department of State

Ellen R. Sauerbrey

As I write these words, it is estimated that more than 12 million people around the world are living as refugees: people who have left their country and cannot return because of a legitimate fear of persecution based on their political or religious beliefs, their race, nationality, or membership in a social group. There are millions more living in similar straits, people who have not crossed an international border but have been driven from their homes by conflict or discrimination.

There are many reasons for the world to be concerned with the plight of refugees. Above all, their situation reminds us that the international community must continue to address the root causes of refugee flows—intolerance and discrimination, lack of freedom and of democratic rights and principles. But alleviating the suffering of refugees, and finding solutions for them, is a humanitarian imperative.

Imagine that you, yourself, lost your home, your possessions, your livelihood, simply because of who you are. Imagine living with the uncertainty of the refugee situation—will you ever be able to go home? Where, when, how can you start your life again and build a future for your family? It is a challenge to keep hope alive in such a situation. This is why refugees in many cases are also vulnerable to recruitment into armed conflict, thus feeding a cycle of violence.

I am particularly moved by the plight of refugee children, so many of whom grow up with no knowledge of life beyond the confines of a refugee camp.

The United States is committed to upholding the human dignity of refugees and victims of conflict around the world. This work demonstrates the generosity and compassion of the American people.

By assisting people faced with persecution and violence, we help to transform societies and support goals that are important to the entire global community: championing human rights and defusing regional conflicts.

The United States is a global leader in protecting and assisting refugees and victims of conflict. The United States has historically been the largest single-country donor to the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and the International Organization for Migration. The

© AP Images/Sakchai Lalit

Two Karen boys stand inside their temporary home at Tham Hin Refugee Camp south of Bangkok, Thailand, in August 2006. Assistant Secretary Ellen R. Sauerbrey facilitated the recent resettlement to the United States of some 2,700 such refugees from Burma.

© AP Images/Gemunu Amarasinghe

Workers spread a flag of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on the jetty in front of a passenger vessel chartered by ICRC to rescue passengers stranded by fighting between government forces and the Tamil Tiger rebels in Jaffna, about 240 kilometers northeast of Colombo, Sri Lanka, in August 2006.

Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) manages more than $800 million in annual appropriations for programs that range from meeting the basic needs of displaced individuals and communities to providing lasting solutions for millions of refugees. Since World War II, more refugees have found permanent homes in the United States than in any other country.

Protecting and Assisting Vulnerable People

The U.S. Department of State supports implementing partners to help ensure both the legal and physical protection of refugees and other extremely vulnerable people in the world. Programs have included national and community education initiatives to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, a microenterprise project for trafficking victims in India, and a youth education and athletic program for Sudanese refugees from Darfur to reduce recruitment of child soldiers.

Other programs support life-sustaining and capacity-building assistance efforts that address water and sanitation, food, health, shelter, education, social and economic empowerment, and other needs. This support ranges from keeping food aid flowing to refugee camps in Kenya, to providing kitchen kits for newly displaced Colombians, to sponsoring education and skills courses for Afghan women refugees and returnees.

These activities enable victims of persecution and conflict to reclaim their lives, whether by returning home once conditions are safe, building a new life in their country of asylum, or resettling permanently in another country.

A New Beginning

In some cases, resettlement is the best option. Resettlement provides refugees with the opportunity to rebuild their lives. The United States, the world's leading resettlement country, has offered this opportunity to more than 2.6 million refugees since 1975. The president consults with Congress to determine the number of refugees who can be admitted each year. We have expanded our refugee processing capacity around the world in recent years, and the United States welcomes an increasingly diverse group of refugees. More than 40,000 refugees from 68 countries started new lives in the United States in 2005 alone. Our program is successful because of the preparation and care we take to promote opportunity and self-sufficiency for refugees once they arrive in the United States.

We have a long track record of successfully integrating refugees from all backgrounds. It is important to note that we select applicants for our program on the basis of need—we do not make selections for our program based upon level of education, job-related skills, or other such criteria. However, once refugees are selected for U.S. resettlement, every effort is made to ensure their successful integration into American life. Before leaving for the United States, they participate in an orientation program to introduce them to American culture, values, and laws.

On arrival, refugees are helped with education, language training, and job skills to give them every chance for a successful new beginning. Most refugees who come to the United States are able to find jobs and support their families. After five years, resettled refugees become eligible to apply for American citizenship, and the vast majority take this opportunity.

The work of integrating refugees is carried out by a network of public and private agencies, depending on a great deal of voluntary support. This program is a wonderful public-private partnership, and I have been deeply impressed with the dedication of people working with refugees. I think the enthusiasm with which U.S. communities welcome these new arrivals truly reflects

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Hollywood actor and United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) Goodwill Ambassador Angelina Jolie before a meeting with India's junior minister for external affairs in New Delhi, India, in November 2006. Jolie visited the Indian capital and spent some time with Sikh Afghan and Myanmar refugees.

America's belief in freedom, human rights, and equality. This faith is rewarded by the many contributions of former refugees. I have been honored to meet with many former refugees who have gone on to success in all areas and who are moved themselves to give back to the society that gave them the opportunity.

Leadership in Population Diplomacy

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration not only leads U.S. efforts to protect and assist refugees and victims of conflict, but also coordinates U.S. foreign policy on population and international migration issues.

The goal of U.S. policy is to promote healthy and educated populations. The United States supports voluntary and informed decision making regarding family planning so that all couples can achieve healthy families of the size they desire. The U.S. government provides substantial foreign assistance to improve maternal health and to combat maternal, infant, and child mortality.

Promoting Orderly and Humane Migration

People migrate for many reasons: to escape conflict, to avoid environmental degradation or natural disasters, to seek economic opportunities, or to reunite with family. Effectively managed migration is a priority of the United States, as about 20 percent of the world's estimated 191 million migrants reside here.

Through PRM, the U.S. Department of State promotes safe, lawful, orderly, and humane international migration practices by working with governments to share best practices and cooperate on a range of region-specific issues, including border security, asylum procedures, and the protection of the human rights of migrants. Among migrants, women and children are especially vulnerable to extreme exploitation, such as trafficking for labor or sex. PRM is part of a comprehensive interagency effort that works with governments and international and nongovernmental organizations in the fight against trafficking in persons.

Universal Values

Our goal in our work on behalf of refugees, and in population and migration policy, is to provide help and to provide hope. Through the work of the U.S. State Department Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, the United States is upholding values we believe are universal, and promoting human dignity and freedom. ■

http://www.state.gov/g/prm/

Global Challenges

The Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs

© AP Images/Matt Hage

A bipartisan group of 30 mayors from across the United States attending a two-day conference on climate change take a tour of the Exit Glacier in Kenai Fjords National Park outside of Seward, Alaska, in September 2006. The focus of the meeting was to demonstrate how actions can be taken at a local level to prepare for climate change and reduce emissions.

The State Department's Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES) works on a broad portfolio that includes some of the most important challenges of our time: climate change, pandemic influenza, providing clean energy and safe drinking water to developing nations, and saving our oceans, forests, and wildlife.

Never before have these issues been more critical to our diplomacy. As Secretary Rice has noted: "In this world, it is impossible to draw neat, clear lines between our security interests, our development efforts, and our democratic ideals. American diplomacy must integrate and advance all of these goals together." America's global leadership on environment, science, and health issues is an essential tool for answering today's problems.

Our agenda, while diverse, is driven by three key areas of focus. First, certain issues are so critical that they command our immediate attention. These include the urgent task of working to prevent or mitigate the risk of an avian flu pandemic and addressing climate change in a manner that will support energy independence for the United States and our allies. Second, our bureau is charged with representing the United States as a party to a large number of international treaties dealing with environmental and natural resource issues. These are important legal obligations, and we take them very seriously. Finally, the bureau has created and maintains several collaborative international partnerships to promote environmental protection and natural resource conservation.

Critical Issues

To address a potential avian flu pandemic, the Department of State coordinates the activities of the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza established in 2006. This partnership brings together key nations and international organizations to improve global readiness by coordinating efforts, mobilizing resources, and building capacity to identify, contain, and respond to a pandemic.

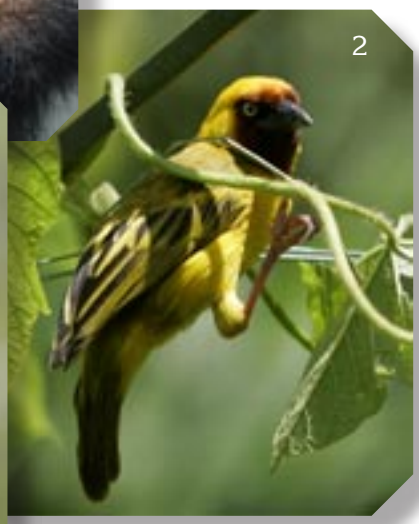
We are working to address the equally pressing issue of climate change on a number of fronts. For example, in 2006 we launched the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate with five key nations—Australia, China, India, Japan, and South Korea. These countries account for about half of the world's population and more than half of the world's energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. This effort was groundbreaking because it represents the first time that we have actively engaged some of these countries on the climate change issue. Through this initiative, partner nations will meet real commitments by real deadlines.

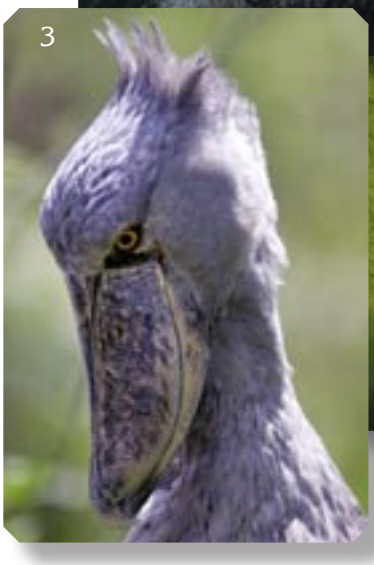
International Treaties

The bureau also represents the United States as a party to a number of international treaties. One such treaty is the Montreal Protocol, which aims to ban the manufacture and use of certain chemicals that destroy the earth's protective ozone layer.

Since 1987, the 189 countries that are parties to the protocol have phased out more than 92 percent of the ozone-depleting substances covered by the treaty. It is truly remarkable that in less than 20 years, the international community has been able to phase out these extremely useful but harmful chemicals and find replacement products that do not damage the atmosphere. As a result of our efforts and the efforts of many other countries across the globe, an estimated 20 million cases of skin cancer have been prevented.

Another set of treaties on which the bureau leads concerns fisheries and other living marine resources. These agreements seek to reverse the overfishing that has depleted many fish stocks and thus ensure a sustainable supply of fish for consumers while protecting the ocean environment from destructive fishing practices. Perhaps the most significant agreement in this field is the 1995 United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, which sets groundbreaking rules for managing fisheries that cross jurisdictional lines in the seas. In 2006, the United States led the development of measures to address problems that beset many international fisheries, including overfishing and the excess fishing capacity of the world's fleets.





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Public-Private Partnerships

Although a good deal of our time is consumed with urgent issues and treaties, we also use key public-private partnerships to solve international problems. Partnerships such as the Clean Energy Initiative, the Water for the Poor Initiative, the President's Initiative Against Illegal Logging, and the Coalition Against Wildlife Trafficking provide a critical link between internationally agreed environmental goals and the practical solutions needed to reach them.

For example, the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles is improving air quality and the health of millions—especially children—around the world. In countries such as Mexico, Chile, Thailand, China, and India, we work to reduce the harm to health and the environment from leaded gasoline and obsolete diesel engines. In adults, lead poisoning causes a number of serious health problems. For children, it can mean organ failure, mental retardation, and even death.

We have already achieved tremendous results in the developing world. Through the efforts of this partnership, all 49 sub-Saharan African countries stopped refining and importing leaded gasoline during 2005. Through this single program, we have managed to affect the health of 733 million people in a positive way.

In that region, we have also worked closely with USAID to implement the Water for the Poor Initiative, which seeks to improve access to clean water and sanitation services. The U.S. Congress reinforced our mandate by passing the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act, which required the State Department to develop an overall strategy to ensure access to safe water and sanitation in developing countries. In the next few years, the bureau will focus on building capacity in developing countries through regional institutions and on lowering institutional barriers for improved access to clean water.

These animals—(1) a chimpanzee, (2) a black-headed yellow weaver, and (3) a shoe bill stork—have been rescued by the Uganda Wildlife Education Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, which rescues wild animals that are seized from poachers or traffickers, or are injured in the wild.

© AP Images/Lisa Poole

Dock worker Rick Libero of Gloucester, Massachusetts, processes herring at the Jodrey State Fish Pier in Gloucester. A team of ecologists and economists warned in a report in the November 3, 2006, issue of the journal *Science* that, if current trends of overfishing and pollution continue, many populations of seafood face collapse by 2048.

Through several partnerships, OES works to protect natural resources. For example, we launched the Coalition Against Wildlife Trafficking, which aims to halt the illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife parts.

This $10 billion illegal trade presents a tremendous threat to wildlife conservation efforts around the world. It affects human life as well—encouraging organized crime and posing a threat to health from animal diseases that spread to humans.

Our first efforts have been focused on law enforcement in Southeast Asia, as this region is the center for the largest amount of illegal trade. We have spearheaded an effort by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to develop a network of law enforcement to arrest and prosecute wildlife smugglers. This initiative is still young, but among its successes has been the return of 54 smuggled orangutans to their native habitat through the collaborative efforts of law enforcement officials from Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

The coalition is also designed to raise public awareness. President Bush has discussed wildlife trafficking at several international meetings, including the summit of the G-8 leaders and summits with President Lula of Brazil and Prime Minister Singh of India. On the domestic front, Bo Derek, as the secretary of state's special envoy on wildlife trafficking issues, and OES staff have visited several cities to educate American consumers on how to recognize and avoid products that contribute to the illegal trade in wildlife.

To protect Africa's precious forest resources, OES launched the most ambitious and largest conservation project ever undertaken in Africa, the Congo Basin Forest Partnership.

The Congo Basin Partnership marks a commitment by the United States, the international community, and the countries of the Congo Basin to establish networks of protected areas across central Africa. The partnership works to conserve one of the two largest tropical forests by combating illegal logging and by offering local people a stake in the conservation of their resources.

In the three years since the launch of this initiative, we have made great strides toward preserving this globally important ecosystem. Gabon has established 13 national parks covering 11 percent of the country. In Equatorial Guinea, 500,000 hectares of logging concessions were transformed into a national forest, making it the country with the highest percentage of protected area in the world. Cameroon declared a 900,000-hectare tract—one of the last large intact forest blocks in that country—a protected area, and imposed a moratorium on granting logging concessions there.

It may seem counterintuitive to link the preservation of these forests to our larger diplomatic agenda. But there is a connection. Any time we can set aside swaths of open space and improve the livelihoods of those who take care of it, it serves as a reminder of our common natural heritage and sows the seeds of good will between the United States and the developing world.

The successes cited here and other ongoing international commitments give us reason to be hopeful, but there is much work still to be done. We remain dedicated to promoting environmental protection and good governance, both at home and abroad, so that future generations can enjoy the vast resources of this planet. ■

http://www.state.gov/g/oes/

2007: The Year of Abolition

The Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons

Kay Cherush for the U.S. State Department

The drawing is a self-portrait by a 15-year-old trafficking victim. One of nine siblings in an impoverished and abusive family, "Kala" ran away from home and was sold into a brothel in India, where she was subjected to unspeakable brutality. On hearing that she was going to be trafficked to the Persian Gulf, she managed to escape. With the help of a passerby, she told her story to the police. In spite of threats, she filed a complaint against the brothel keeper and her protectors in court, leading to their conviction and incarceration. Kala now lives at a Catholic shelter for rescued girls. Her dream is to become a social worker to help "those who are trapped in evil."

The United Nations has adopted a resolution to commemorate, in 2007, the outlawing of slavery by the British Parliament in 1807. March 25, 2007, has been set aside as the International Day for the Commemoration of the Two-Hundredth Anniversary of the Abolition of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

While the slave trade of the 19th century was state-sanctioned and focused on race, 200 years later a modern slave trade exists. Largely an illegal, global phenomenon, modern-day slavery is fueled not by race, but primarily by commercial gain.

For example, U.S. federal and local law officials recently raided nearly a dozen brothels disguised as acupuncture clinics, health spas, and massage parlors in half a dozen U.S. states and the District of Columbia. Altogether, the raids resulted in 31 arrests on charges of trafficking in persons and the rescue of more than 70 suspected sex slaves, who were sheltered and provided food, counseling, and health care.

Most Americans are surprised to find that slavery still exists in the United States, let alone the rest of the world. According to U.S. government estimates, between 600,000 and 800,000 men, women, and children are trafficked across international borders each year. Millions more are forced, duped, or coerced into slavery within their own borders.

The Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP) of the U.S. Department of State was created to advance a 21st-century abolitionist movement against slavery, emphasizing the three "P's": prosecuting traffickers, protecting and assisting victims, and preventing trafficking from occurring or continuing. Human trafficking deprives people of their human rights and freedoms, which is the most prominent reason that the U.S. government is working to confront this despicable practice. The TIP office is the U.S. government's coordinating center for antislavery activities by some 12 federal departments and agencies.

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A student at Benin University in Benin City, Nigeria, walks past a billboard on the university campus encouraging young women to fight against prostitution and human trafficking. Nigerian authorities estimate that thousands of people are trafficked every year—often to provide workers for the European sex industry—but only a small proportion of cases are reported.

Human Trafficking Defined

By definition, human trafficking involves force, fraud, or coercion—legal terms that cover intimidation, kidnapping, beatings, rape, deceit, abandonment, and murder. Some victims are slaves in factories and farms. Others—primarily women and girls—are slaves in brothels in cities around the world. Still others are held in domestic servitude. Children are kidnapped as child soldiers, forced to become street beggars, or lured and abused as slaves to an underground industry known as child sex tourism.

Victims obtained from a foreign country are often lured by deceptive schemes. They usually arrive indebted to their handlers, seldom know where they are, rarely speak the local language, and have no one to turn to after the traffickers seize their passports and documentation.

Under the control of the traffickers, victims are subjected to overwhelming physical and mental pressures. Confined by beatings and threats against their families back home, trafficking victims surrender their dignity to poor living conditions and long hours in order to enrich their captors.

Human trafficking has also become a multidimensional threat. It is a global health risk, profoundly harming individual victims and facilitating the transmission of diseases, including HIV/AIDS. And it is a threat to the safety and security of nations because it undermines the rule of law. Slavery goes hand-in-hand with corruption, document forgery, criminal networks, money laundering, and lawlessness.

The Annual Trafficking in Persons Report

In response, the Bush administration has spent more than $400 million in international anti-trafficking assistance. Meanwhile, the Department of State issues an annual *Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report* to expose the problems in each country. A separate report is issued on the United States.

The *TIP Report* is the most comprehensive worldwide report on the efforts of governments to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons. A country-by-country assessment of the international effort to combat human trafficking by prosecuting perpetrators, protecting their victims, and working to prevent future trafficking crimes, its findings have raised global awareness and encouraged countries to take effective actions to counter human trafficking.

At the top of the report's tiered rankings are those governments that meet minimum standards for prosecution, protection, and prevention. Languishing at the other end of the report are "Tier 3" countries, whose governments face possible U.S. revocation of non-humanitarian, non-trade-related assistance for failing to comply with even the minimum standards for the elimination of modern-day slavery.

The report has steadily increased its country assessment total each year—from 124 governments reviewed in 2003 to 158 countries assessed in the 2006 *TIP Report*. Annual release of the report has also generated increasing media coverage, helping raise global consciousness of the existence and widespread problem of modern-day slavery.

Today, the *TIP Report* is the essential reference for global benchmarks that challenge all governments to join the 21st-century abolitionist movement. The annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* serves as the primary diplomatic tool through which the U.S. government

Kay Cherush for the U.S. State Department

Escaping desperate conditions of forced labor and political repression at home, these Burmese laborers look to commercial fishing in Thailand as a way to a better life. Like illegal or marginalized immigrants everywhere, they are prey to unscrupulous traffickers who sell them to greedy ship captains and exploiters.

encourages partnership and increased determination in the fight against forced labor, sexual exploitation, and modern-day slavery.

Worldwide, that effort has paid off: Anti-trafficking convictions worldwide increased from several hundred in 2001 to more than 4,700 in 2005—an increase from about 3,000 the year before. That increase was especially dramatic among countries in Africa (from 29 TIP convictions in 2004 to 58 in 2005) and among East Asian and Pacific nations (from 348 TIP convictions in 2004 to 2,347 in 2005).

Even the threat of sanctions has proved to be a powerful prod when coupled with increased public awareness. All over the world, the number of trafficking convictions and trafficking shelters is rising. Still, every country—even the United States—can and must do more to thwart forced labor and domestic servitude, sexual slavery, and child sex tourism.

Interagency Work Against Trafficking

In 2001, the president established a cabinet-level task force to coordinate federal efforts to combat human trafficking. The President's Interagency Task Force (PITF) is chaired by the secretary of state and meets at least once a year. In 2003, a senior working-level group, the Senior Policy Operating Group (SPOG), was created to follow up on PITF initiatives and to implement U.S. government anti-trafficking policies and guidelines. The SPOG meets quarterly.

Members of the PITF and SPOG include the Departments of State, Justice, Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, Labor, and Defense, together with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Office of Management and Budget, and the Office of the Directorate of National Intelligence. The National Security Council also regularly participates. Most recently, the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and the Department of Education have participated.

The year 2007 marks the bicentennial of the abolition of the slave trade in the British colonies. Two hundred years later, the United States is engaging the world to end the modern-day slave trade—determined to settle for nothing short of the abolition of this terrible international crime. As President Bush has said: "No one is fit to be a master, and no one deserves to be a slave." ■

http://www.state.gov/g/tip/

Promoting Women's Empowerment

The Office of the Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues

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President Bush smiles during the signing of the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 in the Oval Office of the White House in January 2006. From the left are Representative Mark Green (Republican, Wisconsin), First Lady Laura Bush, Senator Orrin Hatch (Republican, Utah), Representative James Sensenbrenner (Republican, Wisconsin), President Bush, Representative Richard Larsen (Democrat, Washington), and Representative Hilda Solis (Democrat, California)

The Office of the Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues is the focal point in the State Department for U.S. policies and programs to promote women's empowerment around the globe. We stand for women's equal political, social, and economic rights and opportunities, and their full participation in every society. This objective is an integral part of the overall U.S. strategy of transformational diplomacy, which seeks to advance reform and promote freedom around the world in the interest of national security.

Our office offers policy direction, serves as a clearinghouse for ideas and information, and brokers partnerships on key projects with other players inside and outside government. As a result, sometimes we are informally described as the "conscience" of the foreign policy community on these common concerns. We report directly to Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs Dr. Paula Dobriansky.

In the past few years, and for the foreseeable future, our top priorities have included the large region offering the most urgent challenges (and also opportunities) for U.S. transformational diplomacy: the Broader Middle East. This, of course, includes Afghanistan and Iraq, but also extends to many other countries in this vast and diverse region. At the same time, we have placed considerable focus as well on other important challenges, from Africa to Latin America to South Asia and beyond. Here is a brief look at some of our activities.

Iraqi Women's Democracy Initiative

In December 2006, we hosted in Washington, D.C., a delegation of staff members, mostly female, from two Iraqi government ministries for a week of intensive training in project management and budgeting, women's legal rights, leadership and advocacy strategies, and related subjects. The training was provided by a variety of leading institutions with a proven track record of success in these areas, including the International Republican Institute, the National Women's Business Center, the U.S. Institute of Peace, the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation, and others. In addition, we hosted meetings and roundtable discussions with U.S. officials at both

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Pakistani women stage a rally for their rights before the tomb of Pakistan's founder, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, in Karachi, Pakistan, in March 2006. Thousands of women demonstrated in nationwide rallies on International Women's Day, demanding freedom, equal rights, and an end to discriminatory laws in this Muslim nation. The banner in the center reads "March 8 Is International Women's Day."

the working and senior levels. Our visitors were able to return to Iraq with the enhanced skills, confidence, and professional contacts that will help them to assume their rightful role in their fledgling democracy.

This program is just one example of the ongoing efforts that make up our Iraqi Women's Democracy Initiative, which has provided around $15 million over three years for training and practical programs of this kind—almost all of it on the ground inside Iraq. We are in the process of expanding our coverage to include support from the private sector, with a new gift fund to assist Iraqi women and a new framework for mobilizing other types of professional support. For example, we will soon activate a network of virtual mentoring relationships between American businesswomen and their aspiring Iraqi counterparts, and a series of long-distance e-learning connections to help them with the skills they need to put their enormous talents to the most productive uses. Such programs will offer a way to help overcome some of the security problems that many Iraqi women unfortunately face today.

In December 2006, staff from this office and from the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor traveled to Iraq to take a fresh, first-hand look at some of these issues and programs on the ground, and report back so that we could brainstorm effectively about how to fine-tune and improve upon our programs.

U.S.-Afghan Women's Council

For Afghanistan, looking ahead, we continue to focus on the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council, a significant public-private partnership supporting practical projects to benefit Afghan women by linking them with each other

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In August 2006, a woman in traditional tribal dress attends a gathering in Pretoria, South Africa, as thousands of people marched to government headquarters in a festive re-enactment of a famed anti-apartheid protest by women against the old regime's racial segregation policies 50 years ago.

and with U.S. resources and expertise. The council was set up by President Bush and Afghan President Hamid Karzai at their very first meeting in January 2002, right after Afghanistan was liberated from the tyranny of the Taliban and their ruthless oppression of women. It brings together leading government officials, private companies, NGOs, and others from both countries, under the chairmanship of Under Secretary Dobriansky and the Afghan ministers of foreign affairs and of women's affairs. Over the past four years, council programs have helped many deserving Afghan women gain the literacy, education, and access to health care and small loans they need to become more fully productive and independent members of their society. In the months immediately ahead, we look forward to activating more such programs with grants we provide through a special gift fund created for this specific purpose.

Mideast Women Leaders

Another exciting project in which we took part is the Mideast Women Leaders in Science and Technology Conference, held in Kuwait from January 8 to10, 2007. This was yet another collaborative effort, a public-private partnership in the best sense of the term. Inside the State Department, our office worked hand in hand with the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES). This project brought together regional governments, universities, NGOs, and high-tech firms, all focused on promoting greater progress for women from that region in the crucial fields of science, technology, and engineering. In addition to 100 Kuwaiti women students and scientists, another hundred or so delegates from all around the region took part. On the U.S. side, Under Secretary Dobriansky addressed the conference, along with other senior officials, leading scholars, corporate and foundation executives, and a female astronaut. This unique event provided unprecedented hands-on workshops on proposal writing, publishing, scholarships, marketing, and exchanges of best practices and ideas for aspiring women scientists and engineers. Follow-up professional networks and other activities will further empower these women to pursue useful research and rewarding careers and to lead a broad effort to promoting greater modernization in their societies. We were genuinely impressed with the enthusiasm and expertise of the local hosts, the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research.

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Ela Bhatt, microcredit expert and president of Sewa Bank in India, speaks to reporters at a press conference organized by Women Together on the issue of "Women, Development, and Microcredit" held at the United Nations headquarters in New York in April 2006.

Other Regions

Looking at other regions of the world, we hosted a special forum in December 2006 on a critical issue for many women in Africa and South Asia: their lack of property rights and the impact this has for poverty, domestic violence, and the incidence of HIV/AIDS. This forum, modeled after a conference we hosted on the issue of child marriage in July 2006, featured presentations by leading NGOs, such as the International Center for Research on Women, Human Rights Watch, and the Centre for the Rehabilitation and Education of Abused Women in Nairobi, Kenya. This event not only raised awareness of these issues among our colleagues, both inside and outside the State Department, but also stimulated a valuable discussion about new methods that are being used on the ground to address these conditions affecting women.

Finally, turning to the Western Hemisphere, a member of our office recently took part in a major annual multilateral meeting, the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the Organization of American States (OAS). Through this commission, we are involved in formulating a common hemispheric approach to broad issues affecting women, with an emphasis at this time on domestic violence and HIV/AIDS. This multilateral dialogue will help to pave the way for the next high-level effort to come to grips with these problems at the OAS General Assembly, scheduled to take place in June 2007. ■

http://www.state.gov/g/wi/

Avian and Pandemic Influenza: The U.S. International Strategy

Ambassador John E. Lange
Special Representative on Avian and Pandemic Influenza

John E. Lange

Avian influenza is on the march. When the highly pathogenic H5N1 strain of the disease showed up in Hong Kong in 1997, it ravaged poultry and killed six people. Following drastic culling measures, the H5N1 virus virtually disappeared for a few years, only to reappear in Southeast Asia in 2003. Since then it has spread in poultry populations through much of Asia, and subsequently to Europe and Africa. It may someday come to the Americas. The rapid expansion is striking. As of June 2004, the virus had appeared in six East Asian countries. By January of 2006, 14 countries had reported outbreaks. By November 2006, 55 countries had been affected. The geography of this aggressive spread is also sobering: The first African avian cases appeared in Nigeria and Niger in February 2006. That same month, Italy, Greece, Germany, Austria, France, Iran, and Egypt reported cases. March 2006 added Poland, Afghanistan, Burma, Denmark, Pakistan, and Jordan. The United Kingdom, Cote D'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Sudan followed in April—and the list goes on. For example, Nigeria reported its first human H5N1 case in February 2007, becoming the second country in sub-Saharan Africa to report the virus in humans.

Equally disturbing, we began to see areas in which the disease appeared to have become endemic. Indonesia saw a rapid spread of the virus in poultry, and in September 2006 became the country with the highest number of human fatalities (totaling 63 as of February 2007). Indeed, it is safe to say that Indonesia has become "ground zero" in the fight to contain avian flu. In Africa, although there have been few reported human fatalities, the disease has spread rapidly to several countries, devastating poultry flocks.

International media attention on the threat of avian influenza has waxed and waned in the past few years, ranging from news of outbreaks among poultry to relatively infrequent reports of human fatalities and occasional warnings about the horrific consequences of a severe human pandemic if the H5N1 virus were to mutate and bring about sustained, efficient human transmission that spread across the globe. This episodic media treatment of the disease does not mirror the urgency with which the U.S. government—and governments, international organizations, and the private sector around the world—view the topic. For us, and for them, it is a complex effort involving thousands of specialists worldwide, all of whom are working in concert to confront and contain the spread of avian influenza and to prepare for a possible human pandemic.

In this context, it is important to consider the worst-case scenarios for possible global costs of a human pandemic. SARS clearly showed the costs of, in that case, a modestly dangerous infectious disease that resulted in approximately 700 deaths worldwide. The economic impact because of the decline in travel, tourism, and delayed investment that accompanied the SARS outbreak is estimated at as high as $30 billion. A recent World Bank report estimates the worldwide human death toll from a virulent H5N1 pandemic at 71 million (low-end) to as high as 180-260 million. The World Bank

report also cited a 2006 academic study of possible global economic consequences that concluded a severe human pandemic could result in losses to the global economy of $1.526 trillion ($1.131 trillion of that in "high-income countries").

The world is confronting an uncertain, and possibly imminent, threat. And the U.S. government, in coordination with other governments and international organizations, is rapidly responding.

In September 2005, at the U.N. General Assembly, President George W. Bush announced the establishment of the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza. In doing so, the President focused the attention of the world community on the need for timely and sustained high-level political leadership and concrete, cooperative action. Specifically, the International Partnership aims to combat the threat of avian influenza and to improve global readiness for human pandemic influenza by elevating the issue on national agendas; coordinating efforts among donor and affected nations; mobilizing and leveraging resources; increasing transparency and the quality of surveillance; and building local capacity to identify, contain, and respond. The International Partnership is an initiative built on core principles [HYPERLINK "http://www.hhs.gov/pandemicflu/plan/appendixh.html" http://www.hhs.gov/pandemicflu/plan/appendixh.html] that call for enhanced preparedness, surveillance, transparency in the form of rapid reporting and the sharing of data and samples, and cooperation among partners and several key international organizations, including the U.N. System Influenza Coordinator, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the World Organization for Animal Health (known by its initials in French, OIE).\

The International Partnership met in Washington in October 2005 and in Vienna in June 2006, and it will convene again in New Delhi in the last quarter of 2007. In addition, international pledging conferences for avian and pandemic influenza took place in Beijing, China, in January 2006 and in Bamako, Mali, in December 2006. Mali, the African Union and the European Union co-chaired the Bamako meeting, which received support from the U.S. government and others.

In November 2005, the White House Homeland Security Council released the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza based on three pillars: preparedness and communication; surveillance and detection; and response and containment. In May 2006, the Homeland Security Council released the strategy's Implementation Plan designating Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice as responsible for coordination of the international response. The Secretary asked Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs Paula J. Dobriansky to oversee international coordination efforts for the Department of State. She established the Avian Influenza Action Group to coordinate efforts across the federal agencies and day-to-day aspects of the U.S. government's international response.

To support international response and preparedness for avian and pandemic influenza, the United States has committed $434 million—the largest single contribution made by any nation to the $2.3 billion that has been pledged by the international community.

Just as the International Partnership elevated the international engagement against avian and pandemic influenza to the highest levels of governments, we and others in the international community have been active in addressing the threat on the technical level. Here is a partial list of what we have accomplished:

- The U.S. government is supporting avian influenza preparedness efforts in at least 72 countries, in collaboration with the WHO, FAO, and OIE.
- U.S. government agencies, including the Departments of Agriculture (USDA), Health and Human Services (HHS), Interior, and Defense, as well as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), have deployed scientists, veterinarians, public-health experts, physicians, and emergency-response team to affected and high-risk countries to assist in the development and implementation of emergency preparedness plans.
- Over 175 nations now have national plans for combating avian and pandemic influenza—up from about 40 in November 2005.
- International stockpiles of antiviral medications and other vital commodities have been established. USAID has deployed over 200,000 personal protective equipment (PPE) kits to 71 countries for use by responders in the field, including surveillance workers and outbreak-response teams.
- U.S. training for medical personnel is taking place in many countries, including Thailand, Egypt, Kenya, Guatemala, Bangladesh, and Cambodia. Training for 97 veterinary and diagnostic personnel has been carried out for 60 countries, including China, Mexico, Turkey,

Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam. The United States is upgrading laboratory facilities in many countries.

- In addition to the upcoming global conference in New Delhi, there are a host of smaller, regional meetings and exercises being conducted each month designed to buttress this international cooperation and sharing of expertise.

This list provides just a partial overview of our efforts to avert or mitigate what could become the 21st century's first global human-health catastrophe. Avian influenza is different from other notorious afflictions that have been totally or partially eradicated from the face of the earth (such as polio or smallpox), insofar as no fully effective human vaccine can be developed, produced, and administered until the exact pandemic strain is identified and isolated. Nevertheless, we have made great strides in mobilizing international personnel and resources in a new direction—that of containing the spread of avian influenza and preparing for a possible human pandemic.

For further information, please refer to HYPERLINK *"http://pandemicflu.gov" http://pandemicflu.gov, "http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/bird_flu.html" http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/bird_flu.html, and http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2005/53865.htm.*

U.S. Department of State

Ambassador Lange (left) and USDA Acting Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Dr. Charles Lambert examine chickens at a private poultry farm near Danang, Vietnam. Ambassador Lange and Dr. Lambert were in Danang as co-leaders of the U.S. delegation to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Ministerial Meeting on Avian and Influenza Pandemics in May 2006.

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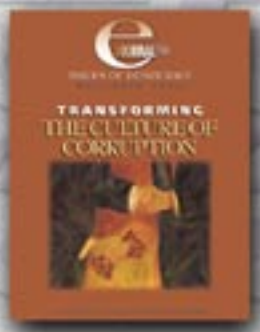

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