



Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

INSIDE

Obama "Humbled" by Award of 2009 Nobel Peace Prize

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr. Staff Writer

Washington — The Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize to President Obama "for his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples."

At a White House briefing, Obama told reporters that "I am both surprised and



President Obama says he accepts the 2009 Nobel Peace prize as a call to action.

deeply humbled by the decision of the Nobel committee. I do not view it as a recognition of my own accomplishments, but rather as an affirmation of American leadership on behalf of aspirations held by people in all nations."

Obama, speaking at a small podium on the (Continued on page 2)

LOCAL NEWS

World Hospice and Palliative Care Day Celebrated (P 4)

AFRICAN ISSUES

Ethiopia Commodity Exchange Returns Value to Farmers (P 5)

Officials Say Somali Piracy Is Declining (P 6)

Guinea Violence a "Vile Violation" of Human Rights, Clinton Says (P 7)

AMERICAN NEWS

Obama Is Among 21 Americans Awarded Nobel Peace Prize (P 8)

U.S. Officials Announce New Food and Agriculture Research Agency (P 9)

On and Off the Court, Balkan Athletes Learn Conflict Resolution (P 10)

Iranian-American Actress Shohreh Aghdashloo Wins 2009 Emmy (P 11)

PEACE AND SECURITY

United States, Russia Making Progress on Arms Reduction Treaty (P 13)

DEVELOPMENT

Urban Search and Rescue Techniques Cut Time, Save Lives

Economic Crisis is Factor in HIV/AIDS Funding (P 16)

FIGHTING AGAINST CORRUPTION

Dagnet Draws Tighter in Global Fight Against Corruption (P 18)

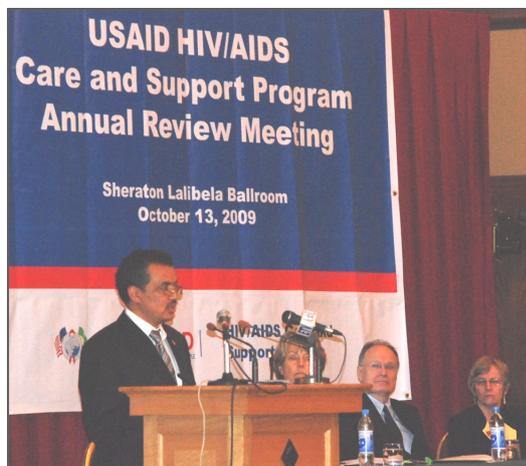
Implementation Plan Needed for U.N. Anti-Corruption Convention (P 19)

USAID Unveils Impressive Results in HIV Care and Treatment

On Tuesday, October 13, 2009 the HIV/AIDS Care and Support Program, funded through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), held its second annual review meeting.

In its first two years of operation, the USAID HIV/AIDS Care and Support Program has supported 500 health centers in Addis Ababa and the four regions of Amhara, Oromiya, SNNPR, and Tigray. This support has provided antiretroviral therapy (ART) to more than 45,000 people.

(Continued on page 3)



Dr. Tewodros Adhanom, Ethiopian Health Minister speaks at the conference.

Obama “Humbled” by Award of 2009 Nobel Peace Prize . . .

(Continued from page 1)

steps of the White House’s West Wing on October 9, said he did not feel he deserved the peace prize compared with the many transformative figures who have been awarded it. Three previous American presidents have been awarded the peace prize while in office.

“I also know that this prize reflects the kind of world that those men and women and all Americans want to build, a world that gives life to the promise of our founding documents,” he added.

The award was announced by Norwegian Nobel Committee Chairman Thorbjørn Jagland, a former Norwegian prime minister, at a press conference in Oslo October 9. Obama said he will accept the prize at the formal award ceremonies in Oslo in December.

Obama is the fourth American president to be awarded the prize, after Theodore Roosevelt in 1906, Woodrow Wilson in 1919 and Jimmy Carter in 2002. A total of 21 Americans have been awarded the peace prize, either individually or jointly with others.

“Only very rarely has a person to the same extent as Obama captured the world’s attention and given its people hope for a better future,” the award citation said. “His diplomacy is founded in the concept that those who are to lead the world must do so on the basis of values and attitudes that are shared by the majority of the world’s population.”

“For 108 years, the Norwegian Nobel Committee has sought to stimulate precisely that international policy and those attitudes for which

Obama is now the world’s leading spokesman.”

The committee cited Obama for his vision and work for a world without nuclear weapons. Obama vowed that the United States will take concrete steps toward a world free of nuclear weapons in an April 5 speech in Hradcanske Square outside the medieval Prague Castle in the Czech Republic. “We will reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy and urge others to do the same,” Obama said.

CALL TO ACTION

Obama said he “will accept this award as a call to action, a call for all nations to confront the common challenges of the 21st century.” He said this award is not about his efforts alone, but also about a means to give momentum to a set of causes.

While acknowledging that some of the work he has begun will take years beyond his presidency to accomplish, he said these challenges can be met.

“This award must be shared with everyone who strives for justice and dignity; for the young woman who marches silently in the streets on behalf of her right to be heard, even in the face of beatings and bullets; for the leader imprisoned in her own home because she refuses to abandon her commitment to democracy; for the soldier who sacrificed through tour after tour of duty, on behalf of someone half a world away; and for all those men and women across the world who sacrifice their safety and their freedom, and sometime their lives, for the cause of peace,” Obama said.

The Nobel committee said 205 names were submitted for the peace prize this year, including 33 organizations. The White House was caught completely unaware until the announcement was made in Oslo. Most Americans awakened to the news as they began preparing for the work day.

The Nobel prizes were established in 1895, and the first awards were made six years later in 1901. The prize was established by Swedish industrialist Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, in his 1895 will. The 2009 prize in physics was announced October 5, in chemistry October 7, in literature October 8, and in peace October 9. The prize for economic science will be announced October 12.

The peace prize received the largest share of Nobel’s wealth. As he described in his will, one part was dedicated to “the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses.”

White House aides said that Obama has decided to give the \$1.4 million monetary award that accompanies the peace prize to charity.

What foreign affairs decisions should President Obama consider? Comment on America.gov’s blog Obama Today (<http://blogs.america.gov/obama/>).

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

USAID Unveils Impressive Results in HIV Care and Treatment . . .

(Continued from page 1)

Nearly 1.5 million people were counseled and tested for HIV in year two alone. The program has enrolled more than 100,000 HIV-positive Ethiopians in chronic care and trained over 7,000 health care providers and 6,000 community members in HIV care and support services. With these results, the program has surpassed many of its targets.

With funding under the United States' President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the USAID HIV/AIDS Care and Support Program relies on a family-focused approach and strong partnership with the Government of Ethiopia and national and international organizations. USAID's HIV/AIDS Care and Support Program is implementing Africa's largest na-



Dr. Carmela Abate, PEPFAR Country Coordinator speaking at the conference. (L-R) Dr. Tewodros Adhanom, Health Minister, Nancy Estes, Deputy USAID Mission Director, Bud Crandall, HCSP Chief of Party, and Haile Wubneh, HCSP, Deputy Chief of Party.

tional expansion of HIV/AIDS services at health center and community levels. The program aims to strengthen health systems and rapidly scale up comprehensive HIV/AIDS services through a continuum of care that links hospitals to health

centers to their served communities.

"PEPFAR Ethiopia and its partners will continue to work to increase access to comprehensive, quality HIV care support services for those in need through integration and functional referral systems," Dr.

Dr. Carmela Abate, the PEPFAR Ethiopia Coordinator, said. Ethiopia is one of the largest recipients of PEPFAR money. To date Ethiopia has received U.S. \$1.1 billion to support a comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care programs.. More than one million people in Ethiopia, nearly two percent of the total population, are currently living with HIV, and 130,000 new infections are anticipated in 2009. ♦



Participants at the conference.

World Hospice and Palliative Care Day Celebrated

On October 10, 2009 World Hospice and Palliative Care Day was celebrated at the Black Lion Hospital under the annual theme "Discovering Your Voice." This event marks a unified day of action to celebrate and support hospice and palliative care around the world. The event brought together health policy makers, palliative and hospice care providers, people living with life-limiting illnesses and their families, as well as various government and non-governmental agencies. This day aims at sharing the stakeholders' vision to increase the availability of hospice and palliative care throughout Ethiopia by creating opportunities to speak out, as well as to raise awareness and understanding of the needs – medical, social, psychological, spiritual – of people living with a life-limiting illness and their families.

Through funding by U.S. Government's President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and technical assistance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC-Ethiopia), Washington University's International Training & Education Center on HIV (I-TECH), took the lead alongside Johns Hopkins University's Technical Support for the Ethiopian HIV/AIDS Initiative (JHU-TSEHAI), the Ethiopian Ministry of Health and Federal HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (FHAPCO) to introduce palliative care into the HIV/AIDS continuum of care at the national level.

Effective HIV care and treatment programs require palliative care as part of the service package. The emergence of Highly Active Antiretroviral (anti-HIV) Therapy (HAART)



A candle lighting and unifying song for those suffering in illness were part of the ceremony.

has shifted the course of HIV/AIDS to a chronic manageable disease, enabling people with HIV/AIDS to live longer. This shift has also changed palliative care from hospice to a model that offers a wider range of care, treatments and preventive services provision throughout the course of illness.

In 2006, PEPFAR/CDC, through I-TECH Ethiopia and JHU-TSEHAI, introduced the palliative care approach at the national level. I-TECH led the development of National Pain Management Guidelines and a Palliative Care training curriculum alongside various activities revolving around HIV prevention with positives. I-TCH and JHU-TSEHAI have also been conducting trainings for service providers on palliative care, nutrition and end of life care, as well as providing preventive packages for HIV-infected clients and their families. Moreover, JHU-TSEHAI also works with spiritual leaders to address the spiritual components of end of life care and support, and supports the roll-out of pain management services for ter-

minally ill patients including the establishment of a model pain training center at Black Lion Hospital in Addis Ababa.

Palliative Care improves quality of life for HIV-positive clients through health maintenance, adherence to medication, prevention of opportunistic infections, and slowing disease progression, thereby reducing the incidence of illness and death. Moreover, palliative care helps patients lead an active and productive lifestyle.

PEPFAR will continue to expand the palliative care program, including implementing therapeutic feeding, and enrolling severely malnourished people living with HIV – including HIV-positive pregnant women and vulnerable children. The PEPFAR Ethiopia Semi Annual report documents that, by the end of the first quarter of 2009, a total of 297,289 individuals have received HIV-related palliative care, including for TB/HIV. ♦

Ethiopia Commodity Exchange Returns Value to Farmers

By Charles W. Corey
Staff Writer

Washington — Can commodity markets succeed in Africa? The success of the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange (ECX) answers that question with a resounding “yes.”

Eleni Gabre-Madhin, the founder and CEO of the ECX, told the Seventh Biennial U.S.-Africa Business Summit that the commodity exchange trades more than \$300 million in coffee annually, along with four other key commodities; improves

agriculture, trade and food security; and returns value to Ethiopian farmers.

Appearing October 1 on the first agricultural plenary panel in the summit’s history, Gabre-Madhin said restoring this value chain is the core mission of the commodity exchange, which is a domestic marketing system aimed at bringing value back to the producer. And she sees ECX as a working model that can be applied to other African markets.

To illustrate her point, she told a short story: “On my last trip to Washington, I was looking at a label of ... a specialty coffee blend in the supermarket, and it was described on the label as a coffee with exotic citrus and floral notes,” something she said most small farmers in Ethiopia know nothing about.

“Our market in our country does not sell that coffee in any way denoted as having citrus notes, and



Ethiopian coffee farmer Mohammed Fita picks coffee on his farm in Choche, near Jimma, 375 kilometers southwest of Addis Ababa.

yet those citrus notes were not acquired anywhere in the chain except at the origin of the chain in the very soil of our country and in the very trees and plants that produce that coffee. So our challenge as a marketing system and as a commodity exchange in Ethiopia is how to capture that value from the end of the chain, from the consumers ... and how to bring that back to the beginning of that chain” so farmers can get a share of it.

The vision of the ECX, she said, “is to revolutionize Ethiopian agriculture and transform the economy through a dynamic, efficient and transparent marketing system that serves all and essentially turns commodity into assets.”

If a commodity such as coffee can be “securitized” by being graded and turned into an asset in a transparent manner, then that commodity becomes an asset, and every warehouse where that commodity

is deposited is a bank.

Gabre-Madhin said the business side of the ECX is about farmers, traders and exporters, “but it is fundamentally about taking something that is highly heterogeneous and unstandardized and turning it into an asset that is fungible and liquid and can be turned into a financing mechanism for farmers to finance their agriculture and grow their businesses. At the end of the day, farmers are businessmen and -women,” she said.

How does this affect the Ethiopian economy? According to Gabre-Madhin, ECX improves the



Eleni Gabre-Madhin, CEO of the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange.

country’s export competitiveness, and it enhances local agriculture because the supply is reliable, quality is certain and delivery is guaranteed. Ultimately, she said, it brings

(Continued on page 14)

Officials Say Somali Piracy Is Declining

By David Axe
Aboard the USS Donald Cook

In 2008, Somali pirates captured more than 100 large commercial vessels in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, provoking a massive international response. Today, some 40 warships patrol Somali waters. The patrols and other measures have helped decrease successful hijacking more than 90 percent. Monsoon winds also contributed to the reduction, but U.S. maritime officials warn hijackings may increase now that the regional monsoon season has ended.

The U.S. Navy destroyer USS Donald Cook departs the port of Djibouti in East Africa, bound for a patrol zone somewhere in the Gulf of Aden.

In 2008, Somali pirates prowling the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean hijacked more than 100 large vessels.

In the last 18 months, warships from more than 12 nations have converged on Somali waters to combat the pirates. These and other measures have finally had an effect, says the British officer leading the NATO counter-piracy fleet.

"It's significantly down compared to last year," says Commodore Steve Chick.

He says between July and September last year, pirates captured 17 ships. In the same period this year, they captured only one. Commodore Chick says several factors account for piracy's decline.

"Merchant vessels using these shipping lanes are starting to take much better self-protection measures — fire hoses to fend off skiffs coming alongside, barbed wire on the railings and ladders and other access secured — and that's acting as an initial good counter to the pirates," Chick said. "At the same time the naval units here from various nations and organizations are working much closer together and much better with each other, almost seamless boundaries in terms of operations."

The Virginia-based Donald Cook, assigned to NATO, is halfway through a six-month counter-piracy patrol on the Gulf of Aden.

For Donald Cook's 250 sailors, defeating piracy means long, hot days on unforgiving seas, far from home.

Donald Cook's boarding teams bear the biggest burden.

"It's basically the nautical equivalent of having boots on the ground. You've got to have guys up there that can conduct those inspections and provide intelligence back to the ship of what they see from ten feet [several meters], as opposed to a thousand yards [about a kilometer] away," he said.

To keep pirates at bay, the boarding teams intercept and investigate any suspicious boats.

"We can do as little as come up and say hi how are you, we can do health and comfort searches, we can even searches for illegal things like weapons and drugs and even people," Lieutenant Junior Grade

Christopher Bowie, USS Donald Cook, said.

With hijackings down more than 90 percent compared to last year, some officials worry that nations will lose their will to continue dangerous, expensive counter-piracy operations, thus allowing the sea bandits to regroup.

"Undoubtedly pirates will change their modus operandi," Chick noted. "They may move further south away. They may move away from the shipping lane."

But for now, the international counter-piracy operation is going strong, despite the harsh conditions.

And Somali pirates are mostly staying at home, to seafarers' great relief.

For more on the fight against piracy, see *Combating Piracy* (<http://www.america.gov/piracy.html>).

This report was provided by VOA News (<http://www.voanews.com/>).

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

Guinea Violence a “Vile Violation” of Human Rights, Clinton Says

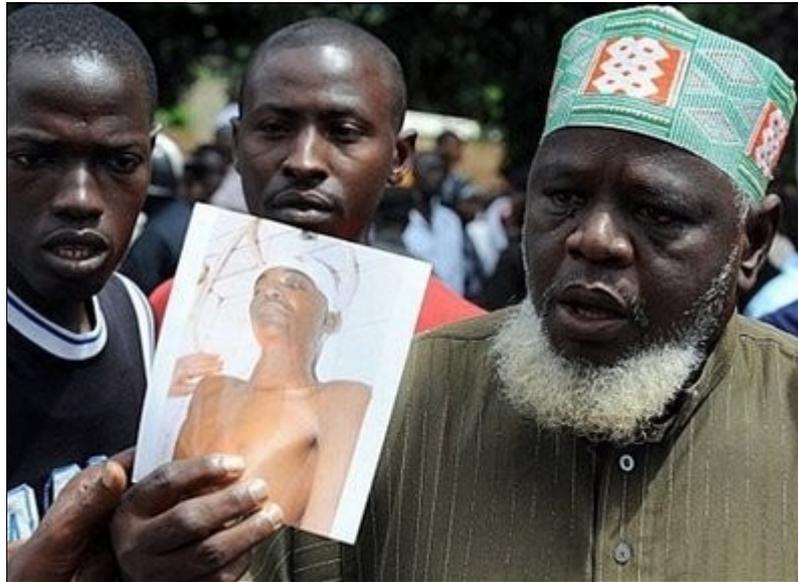
By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said an international investigation is needed into the killings and rapes by Guinean security forces against peaceful protesters and bystanders at a stadium in Guinea’s capital, Conakry, saying “there should be no impunity” for the perpetrators.

“We were appalled and outraged by the recent violence in Guinea. The indiscriminate killing and raping that took place under government control by government troops was a vile violation of the rights of the people of that country,” Clinton said October 6 in remarks with Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi.

The State Department said September 30 that Guinea’s Presidential Guard had killed at least 157 people and injured more than 1,200 in the September 28 incident. The United Nations Security Council also condemned the violence September 30 and called for “a prompt return to the rule of law, democracy and constitutional order through elections as scheduled in 2010.”

Clinton said members of the ruling military junta in Guinea “owe a profound apology” to those who had gathered in the stadium to protest the December 23, 2008, coup d’état and the suspension of the country’s constitution. “They owe not only that apology in words, but in a recognition that they cannot remain in power, that they must



A Guinean man shows a picture of his son killed during the 28 September demonstration as he stands in front of the Conakry great mosque. (AFP/ Seyllou)

turn back to the people the right to choose their own leaders,” she said.

The secretary, who is an outspoken advocate for women’s rights, chaired the United Nations Security Council’s September 30 passage of Resolution 1888, a measure outlining actions the United Nations and member states can take to prevent conflict-related sexual violence.

“It will not surprise you to hear that I was particularly appalled by the violence against women. In broad daylight in a stadium, it was a criminality of the greatest degree,” she told reporters October 6.

“Those who committed such acts should not be given any reason to expect that they will escape justice. There should be no impunity, and there should be an effort to bring those who were the leaders and perpetrators of the murders and rapes to justice very shortly,” she said. The Obama administration has conveyed its outrage to Guinea’s

military rulers “in the strongest possible terms” and told them “we intend to pursue appropriate actions against the current administration in that country,” the secretary said.

State Department spokesman Ian Kelly said October 6 that the U.S. condemnation of the massacre and rapes was conveyed to Guinea’s rulers in conversations between

Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson and Guinea’s foreign minister, Alexandre Cece Loua, and between Deputy Assistant Secretary of State William Fitzgerald and junta leader Moussa Dadis Camara.

“They called on Captain Camara to restore order, ensure better command and control over the security forces, and permit an international investigation into these events,” Kelly said.

The spokesman said, “It is precisely because of these horrific events of September 28 that Secretary Clinton went to the Security Council last week and called for urgent action to protect women and girls,” whom he described as “war’s most violated and vulnerable victims.”

What foreign affairs decisions should President Obama consider? Comment on America.gov’s blog Obama Today (<http://blogs.america.gov/obama/>). ♦

Obama Is Among 21 Americans Awarded Nobel Peace Prize

By Melissa Quijada
Staff Writer

Washington — President Obama stands as one of many American Nobel Peace Prize winners. He becomes the fourth U.S. president to win the award. Twenty-one Americans in all have been awarded the prize by the Norwegian Nobel Committee for outstanding achievements in advancing international harmony and global well-being.

The first American awarded the prize was also the first president to receive it. Theodore Roosevelt in 1906 was honored for his mediation efforts to end the Russo-Japanese War.

President Woodrow Wilson was awarded the peace prize in 1919 in recognition of his Fourteen Points peace program and creation of the Covenant of the League of Nations, an international organization he intended to foster global reconciliation. Congress never approved U.S. membership in the league, but Wilson's efforts helped set the goal for an international organization of nations dedicated to peaceful relations, which eventually became the United Nations after World War II.

Throughout former President Jimmy Carter's lifetime he has demonstrated active involvement in international conflict resolution and global philanthropy, especially through his organization the Carter Center, based in Atlanta. The Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded former President Carter the 2002 peace prize.

Former Vice President Al Gore, mastermind behind the Oscar Award-winning documentary An

Inconvenient Truth, was a co-winner with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 2007 for informing the world about the dangers of climate change.

As a senator and former secretary of state, Elihu Root was awarded the peace prize in 1912 for his leading role in advocating and brokering international negotiations. Charles Dawes received the prize (along with a British foreign minister) during his vice presidency for his work on the Dawes plan, an attempt to collect war reparations from Germany after World War I.

The Nobel committee, recognizing Frank Kellogg's creation of the anti-war Kellogg-Briand Pact, awarded Kellogg a peace prize in 1929. Feminist Jane Addams' work for pacifism and international peace, and Nicholas Murray Butler's development of the Kellogg-Briand Pact, earned them both a peace prize in 1931.

During Cordell Hull's tenure as secretary of state, the Nobel committee acknowledged his participation in the creation of the United Nations. At the age of 79, Emily Green Balch was awarded the 1946 peace prize for her work promoting several League of Nations projects dealing with issues regarding disarmament and drug control. That same year, the committee also gave the award to John Mott, president of the World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations (YMCAs).

Former Harvard professor Ralph Bunche earned the prize in recognition of his United Nations involvement as an active mediator in the Middle East. After World War II, former Army General George Mar-

shall, who also served as secretary of state, won the peace prize for his leadership of the Marshall Plan for reconstruction of post-war Europe.

The only person to win two undivided Nobel prizes, Linus Pauling, first won a Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1954, then won the peace prize in 1962 for his research into the negative biological effects of nuclear energy and his campaign against nuclear testing.

The Nobel committee granted civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. a peace prize in 1964. Norman Borlaug won the prize in 1970 for his contribution to the "green revolution," which increased food production and saved hundreds of millions from starvation.

Three years later, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger shared his Nobel Peace Prize with Vietnamese politician Le Duc Tho, who refused the award. The Nobel committee recognized their involvement in the Paris Peace Accords that aimed to end the fighting in Vietnam.

Holocaust survivor and author Elie Wiesel was awarded the peace prize in 1986 for his work on behalf of oppressed people. And a founding coordinator of the International Campaign to Ban Land Mines, Jody Williams, shared the prize in 1997 with the organization she helped establish.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

U.S. Officials Announce New Food and Agriculture Research Agency

By Kathryn McConnell
Staff Writer

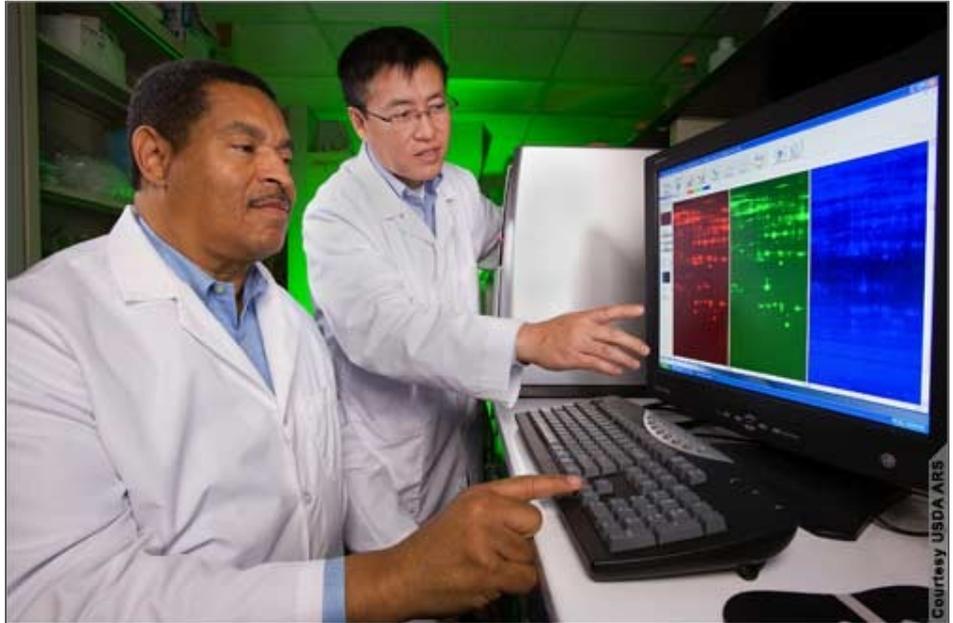
Washington — A new government agency plans to bring together government and private scientists to improve research in food and agriculture.

The establishment of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture was announced October 8 by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and White House Science Advisor John Holdren.

The institute will build on recent scientific discoveries like advances in sequencing plant and animal genomes, biotechnology, nanotechnology and large-scale computer simulations, Vilsack said at a press briefing in Washington.

“These discoveries and tools come not a moment too soon,” Vilsack said. He said the United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization predicts that food production will need to double by 2050 to meet demand. “And this has to happen in an environment where our production system already is under threat,” by global warming and water shortages in some regions.

Climate change “already is disrupting farming and grazing patterns” in the United States and globally, he



Robert Brown, left, and Meng Luo review results of an experiment to identify maize kernel proteins associated with a toxin resistance.

said.

The institute also will concentrate on improving food safety by identifying and eliminating causes of microbial contamination, and by developing safe food-processing technologies. It will work to improve the amount and quality of plant-based feedstocks used to produce biofuels, and to develop new bio-based industrial products.

The institute also will focus on improving the nutrition of food.

Heading the institute, part of the Agriculture Department, is noted plant scientist Roger Beachy.

Congress authorized the creation of the institute in 2008. The institute will involve U.S. and international scientists.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

On and Off the Court, Balkan Athletes Learn Conflict Resolution

By Michelle Austein Brooks
Staff Writer

Novi Sad, Serbia — Although their countries used to be part of one nation, teenagers from Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Slovenia and Kosovo do not typically interact much with one another. But they have many shared interests — including an enthusiasm for sports like basketball.

Mihajlo Delic, director of the non-governmental organization I Came to Play, has traveled the world playing basketball and believes sports can bring people of different backgrounds together. For the past two summers, Delic has brought teenagers from across the former Yugoslavia to a 10-day basketball camp in Serbia. Students, selected for both their athletic ability and good grades, are coached not only in the sport but in conflict resolution and teamwork.

The camp is free for the players, the first such program in the region. The first summer, 38 boys participated in the camp. In summer 2009, 100 boys and girls, including orphans and players with special needs, came to the camp.

“We try to provide this opportunity to the kids who need it most,” Delic said. In the region, youth sports are often organized through private clubs that require monthly dues. Delic’s organization seeks to promote youth sports as “a right, not a privilege,” he said.

The goal is to promote fair play and tolerance, Delic said. Most of the participants come from small towns and have never traveled far or interacted much with people of different

ethnicities. At the camp, they play and learn together, and share sleeping quarters with players of different ethnicities.

Although the players come from neighboring countries that have similar cultures and languages and share the same enthusiasm for sports and music, they know little about one another, Delic said. Their similarities need “to be celebrated and emphasized and not pushed aside.” Sports, Delic said, is “one of the most important ways we can connect our countries.”

Every day, the students have basketball training and practices. But they also have lectures and workshops on conflict resolution, team work, social responsibility and healthy lifestyles. Instructors include local community and nongovernmental organization leaders and activists, as well as professional basketball players.

Learning from well-known basketball players is “invaluable,” Delic said, remembering as a young player how much he admired the professionals. “We use these people and opportunities to emphasize our messages to the kids,” he said.

Last summer, Vlade Divac and Zarko Paspalj, two of the most well-known Serbian basketball players to play in the National Basketball Association (NBA), visited the camp. They played with the students and signed autographs. They also talked about their personal experiences and how sports taught them about life and the importance of cooperation. Delic said the professional players take their role very seriously. “They don’t use this opportunity just to market themselves. ... They actually visit the project

and participate in it wholeheartedly.”

Delic said the camp carefully selects the professional players, as I Came to Play emphasizes sports as a peaceful uniting tool. Delic said that at times, the values promoted in sports are “not the ones we want to associate as part of a healthy environment.” Whether it is players behaving poorly or fans causing violence, perpetrators should be marginalized, not hailed, Delic said.

Local communities have taken notice of Delic’s work, and youth clubs and cities seek ways to be involved. Last summer, the mayor of Novi Sad played basketball with the students. Each year, the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade has participated in a game with the players. The embassy also provided a \$24,000 grant to the camp as part of the Democracy Commission Small Grants Program (<http://belgrade.usembassy.gov/embassy/pa/dcsqp.html>).

Delic has many success stories to share from the camp. For example, for years, ethnic Serbs had refused to play on the youth national team in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Delic said. After meeting their peers from other ethnic groups at the camp, two ethnic Serbs decided to play for the national team.

One of the most rewarding parts of the program, Delic said, is that the players stay in touch and visit one another, forming a network. “It enriches their lives,” he said.

More information about I Came To Play (<http://www.icametoplay.org/>) is available on the organization’s Web site. ♦

Iranian-American Actress Shohreh Aghdashloo Wins 2009 Emmy

By Azam K. Gorgin
Special Correspondent

Washington — Tehran-born actress Shohreh Aghdashloo became the first Iranian American to win an Emmy Award from the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, receiving the honor September 20, 2009, for her supporting role in the original HBO miniseries *House of Saddam*.

It was only six years earlier that she hit another historic cultural mark by becoming the first Iranian-American and Middle Eastern woman to be nominated for an Academy Award for her work in the movie *House of Sand and Fog*.

Aghdashloo began acting in the Theater Workshop in her native Iran in the early 1970s. She performed in numerous plays and also gained acclaim for her film work in *Gozaresh* (*The Report*). In 1978, her performance in *Sooteh Delan* (*Broken Hearts*) established her as one of the youngest leading actresses in Iran.

She fled Iran in 1979 during the Islamic Revolution and traveled to England, where she earned a college degree in international relations. She continued to act, and in 1987 decided to pursue her career in the United States, appearing in her first American film in 1989.

Since that time she has appeared in numerous films, plays and television programs. Her most recent role was in the 2008 Iranian-American film *The Stoning of Soraya M.*, based on Freidoune Sahebjam's book about



Actress Shohreh Aghdashloo proudly holds up her Emmy statue.

the real-life 1980 stoning of an Iranian woman accused of adultery under Shariah law.

In a telephone interview, Aghdashloo reflects on her recent Emmy Award, her career and her future aspirations.

Q: How important is the Emmy Award?

A: It is pretty important. It is a precious award that I received from my peers. I did not expect it at all and as I walked toward the podium, I wondered if I had really heard my name right. It was just incredible.

Q: Can you tell us of your emotion about being the first Iranian actress nominated for an Academy Award and winning an Emmy?

A: I am so proud and happy. Let's say happiness personified. Not just for myself. Let's say that this little Middle Eastern girl from Iran came

to America, which is truly the land of opportunity, and made her wish come true. You can imagine how proud I am not just for what is happening to me, but also to many Iranian women who hold key positions in every field.

Q: Do you prefer acting in movies, television or theater?

A: I act for the sake of acting, not for the medium, although technically every one is entirely a different form of art. I love acting, so it really doesn't make a difference whether it is for cinema, TV or the stage. Personally, because I started as a stage actress, I love to go on the stage. I feel at home. Cinema will take every actor's career

further and gives them a larger and international platform. I love TV work. I keep telling my actor friends, "If you want to win people's hearts you should be engaged in a TV series, and you'll see how people recognize and acknowledge you." People feel close to you because you've been in their home and entertained them.

Q: In Iran, you began your career in the Theater Workshop, which was mostly an experimental theater. Did it have an impact in the development of your acting career?

A: Yes, indeed. Thirty-five years ago, I acted in plays by Bertolt Brecht, Samuel Beckett and Luigi Pirandello. Sometimes we even improvised a group of them together, like in a play titled *Tonight Is the Moonlight*, directed by Ashur Bani-pal, especially for the Persepolis Arts Festival, which was praised

(Continued on page 12)

Iranian-American Actress Shohreh Aghdashloo Wins 2009 Emmy . . .

(Continued from page 11)

and people loved it. I remember *Play and Players*, a prominent theater magazine in England which is still published, wrote a brilliant piece of critique on this play.

We had to study the Bible as well, with Ashur Banipal's teaching of Bible stories, which was very much related to Ingmar Bergman, the Swedish director, whom we were studying as well. All that brought me to England, and the knowledge and the techniques which I had learned in Iran enabled me to work on international stages, rather than just Middle Eastern or Iranian stages.

Q: Which one of your roles do you like the best?

A: I like my character Nadi in *The House of Sand and Fog*. The subject matter was so close to heart and to home. I have known women like that all my life in Iran. I think of her [Nadi] as my aunt or my grandmother.

Q: At the Emmy Awards, you were seen wearing the green bracelet, which is the sign of solidarity with the green movement in Iran. Do you consider yourself a political activist?

A: Since I left Iran in 1979, I have never stopped fighting for human rights. This [is] just a follow-up with what's been happening for the past 30 years. The green bracelet was, in fact, the symbol of solidarity

with what is happening in Iran. Especially to the young people who shook the world with their civil disobedience and spontaneous uprising. I, like thousands around the world, watched those horrible photos. I just tried to shed light on it for the media to pay attention.

Q: As the most famous Iranian actress, do you think celebrities and other Iranian immigrants can enhance civil liberties and democratic ideas?

A: What happened a few months ago was just a beginning of an end. This movement which now has gone underground will reemerge. It will not stop till they control their own destiny — something they've been deprived of, having lived with a religious and military government for the past 30 years. Without getting directly involved, as it would not only have a huge backlash, but also [Iranian officials] would blame the Western countries for this spontaneity. Thus, it is best to echo the opposition's voice, to shed light on injustice, torture and the rape which is taking place in Iran. American media has been lenient and paying a lot of attention to current events in Iran.

Q: You have spoken out about the Baha'is who are incarcerated in Iran.

A: I do care about the Baha'is' cause, and as a born Muslim I am ashamed of what has been happening to them. In '83 a group of 62

Baha'is was arrested for a simple gathering. They were asked to deny their faith in writing. To avoid jail, 50 of them signed a letter stating they are Muslims; the rest were sentenced to death. In 1983, President Reagan urged the world leaders to join him in asking the Ayatollah [Khomeini] not to kill these innocent people. The Ayatollah's response was "Since when has Reagan been interested in human welfare? How come he said nothing about Iraqis' crimes against Iranians?" So, words are not enough. We need action. Also, words of interference would crash the movement.

Q: Are you trying to screen your last movie, *Stoning Soraya*, for a possible Academy Awards nomination?

A: We started with the Toronto Film Festival and managed to become the second-runner-up, and the film was shown next to *Slumdog Millionaire*. It has received good reviews. The audience has been overwhelmed and reacted with disbelief that this is still taking place and not just in biblical times.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

United States, Russia Making Progress on Arms Reduction Treaty

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States and Russia are making progress in replacing a current treaty for reducing nuclear arsenals with one that goes further in physically reducing arsenals and also lessening perceived tensions over nuclear weapons, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton says.

President Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev agreed at a meeting in April to reduce nuclear arsenals well below the levels called for in the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or START I.

“Our goal remains to complete the work on START by December 5 when the current agreement expires,” Clinton said at a press conference October 13 in Moscow with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

“The global initiative on nuclear terrorism to create a joint effort to secure vulnerable nuclear materials and set new standards is another important step that we are pursuing together,” she added. Clinton said she is looking forward to Russia’s leadership in the Global Nuclear Security Summit next April.

Lavrov said the technical negotiating teams working on the successor agreement to START I have shown “considerable progress.”

As owners of more than 95 percent of the world’s nuclear weapons, President Obama has said, the world’s two leading nuclear powers must lead by example. Obama and Medvedev signed a joint understanding to reduce nuclear warheads and the means to deliver

them by up to a third from current levels. A legally binding treaty will be completed later this year.

The mutual agreement to reduce nuclear arsenals is part of a broader goal of reducing nuclear tensions across the globe and preventing rogue states and extremists from obtaining some of the world’s most dangerous weapons. Obama and Medvedev said they wanted to take concrete steps toward the long-term goal of disarmament while sending a powerful message to countries such as North Korea and Iran, whose controversial nuclear development programs are subject to U.N. Security Council sanctions and expanded scrutiny.

The new framework calls for reducing the means to deliver nuclear weapons to between 500 and 1,100 vehicles, which include long-range strategic bombers, intercontinental ballistic missiles and nuclear-powered submarines.

IRAN’S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

Clinton acknowledged that Iran’s nuclear weapons development program remains a serious concern. “We’re working closely with Russia through the P5 + 1 process” to resolve numerous issues, she said.

Six nations — Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States, known as the P5 + 1 — have been negotiating with Iran over its nuclear program, but talks stalled about a year ago when they insisted that Iran would have to suspend uranium enrichment. The group includes the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council and Germany. This group grew out of earlier efforts by Britain, France and Germany to con-

vince Iranian officials to suspend uranium enrichment in return for a package of incentives.

The six powers offered Iran a package of trade and diplomatic incentives three years ago to forgo its uranium enrichment efforts, and added to the incentives last year, but Iranian authorities continued to reject suspension of uranium enrichment as a precondition to talks. Uranium enrichment is one necessary component of weapons development to build a nuclear bomb.

The next step in the process occurs October 18 when Iranian officials are to meet with representatives from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to discuss a plan in which Iran will ship the majority of its stockpile of lightly enriched uranium to be enriched in Russia to a higher grade. The finished uranium would be shipped back to Iran, where it would be used to fuel a research reactor. Iran has said it was seeking enriched uranium for a civilian nuclear-powered electricity program.

“At the current stage,” Lavrov said, “all forces should be thrown at supporting the negotiating process.”

Clinton agreed, saying: “We believe it is important to pursue the diplomatic track and to do everything we can to make it successful. We believe that Iran is entitled to peaceful nuclear energy, but that it is not entitled to nuclear weapons. Russia agrees with us on that.”

If the Iranians transfer the low-enriched uranium to Russia for further processing, it would be a significant confidence-building measure.

(Continued on page 14)

Ethiopia Commodity Exchange Returns Value to Farmers . . .

(Continued from page 5)

better food to market, increases farm income and enhances food security for all.

ECX is a commodity business — a big business — and not a charitable organization. While there is much talk in Africa about stock markets, commodity trade is much bigger. “In Ethiopia, the five commodities that we are trading this year have a market value ... of \$1.7 billion,” she said.

Allied industries such as transport, logistics, packaging, financing, banking, insurance and telecom also benefit from this commodity trade, she explained, so such trade is a “catalyst for growth in a number of other sectors in the economy if we can get the commodity market right.”

Reviewing the first 16 months of trading at ECX, Gabre-Madhin said, “We started trading in April 2008 and, to date, we have 450 private members of the exchange. We have been trading in five commodities: maize, wheat, beans, sesame and coffee.”

A national payment system has been set up in partnership with seven commercial banks, handling some 150,000 tons of commodities in 14 warehouses around the country. Thousands of trades have been executed, up to \$5 million a day, she told her audience of business executives, entrepreneurs and government officials.

Pricing and trading data are displayed in real time on 19 electronic display sites around the country and on the Web site for international coverage.

“The key in all of this is that we have not had a single day of trading-system interruption due to a system failure, we have not had a single transaction default, we have not had a single payment default, and we have not had a single delivery default. So, effectively, we have a system that works and demonstrates that a state-of-the-art trading system can be set up in a developing country.”

Some 12 percent of small farmers in Ethiopia — about 850,000 farmers — have become involved in the exchange, which has had a “very dramatic impact” in the first year of operation. “We have seen our Web site internationally getting hits from 77 a day in the early months ... up to 1,000 hits a day” now, and have established data feeds to Bloomberg. ECX, she added, is the second most heavily accessed Africa exchange site on Reuters behind the South African exchange.

The ECX is changing attitudes and hopes across Ethiopia, according to Gabre-Madhin, who said Ethiopian small farmers with little education are now taking computer classes so they will be ready to start trading their crops electronically when that option becomes available.

In the future, she said, ECX will launch more commodities, more services, more warehouses and more rural price-display boards, and seek more members. She noted that ECX will soon offer futures trading and specialty-coffee trading platforms and broadcast prices instantly using SMS (Short Message Service) and interactive voice response.

The three-day business summit,

organized by the Corporate Council on Africa, drew at least four African heads of state and 1,500 investors and businesspeople, who attended more than 50 specialized sessions focusing on U.S.-Africa business relations. The previous summit was held in 2007 in Cape Town, South Africa.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

United States, Russia Making Progress on Arms . . .

(Continued from page 13)

MISSILE DEFENSE

Clinton also said she and Lavrov held a long discussion on where the two nations stand regarding a European-based limited anti-ballistic missile system.

“We are very interested in working with Russia to develop cooperation, including a joint threat assessment and intensified efforts to establish a joint data exchange center, as our presidents agreed to in July, as a means of making missile defense a common enterprise against what we believe are increasingly common threats,” Clinton said.

Clinton and Lavrov also addressed issues related to North Korea’s nuclear weapons program, Afghanistan, NATO expansion, Georgia and Russia, and human rights.

Clinton met briefly with Medvedev outside Moscow at his Barvikha residence. ♦

Urban Search and Rescue Techniques Cut Time, Save Lives

By Phillip Kurata
Staff Writer

Washington — When a 1985 earthquake leveled much of Mexico City, 130 enthusiastic but unskilled rescue workers died trying to save people buried in rubble. Ten years later, at the site of the Oklahoma City bombing, one rescue worker died in the rescue effort.

Why the disparity? The answer lies in modern urban search and rescue techniques. It is noteworthy that the one rescue worker who did die in Oklahoma City did not have modern training. Before the development of modern techniques, rescue work consisted largely of improvised fire-fighting techniques, according to Harold Schapelhouman, chief of the Menlo Park, California, Fire Protection District.

“What was immediately evident as a result of the Mexico City earthquake was that disaster response plans were badly outdated,” he said. “No training was being done, and emergency equipment either did not exist or was terribly outdated. We realized the same thing that happened in Mexico City could happen to us, and out of that grew the new and emerging arena of urban search and rescue.”

The U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency established the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System in 1989 as a framework for structuring local emergency-services personnel into

integrated disaster response task forces. Today, 28 teams are on call nationwide to respond within hours to natural and man-made disasters in urban areas. The units are attached to fire departments, but as Bob Zoldos of the Fairfax County, Virginia, Fire and Rescue Department



Urban search and rescue workers and their dog search for victims of Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

explains, search and rescue operations are different from fire-fighting.

“When we’re talking urban search and rescue, we’re really talking about different uniforms and different gear from the get-go [beginning],” Zoldos said. “Urban search and rescue is a whole different ball game.”

Urban search and rescue is a “multihazard” discipline, applied to a variety of emergencies or disasters, including earthquakes, hurricanes, typhoons, storms and tornadoes, floods, dam failures, technological accidents, terrorist activities, and hazardous materials releases. The teams are made up of firefighters, engineers, medical profession-

als, search dogs and dog handlers, and emergency managers with special training in urban search and rescue environments.

An urban search and rescue task force works in four areas of specialization: 1) search, to find victims

trapped after a disaster; 2) rescue, which includes safely digging victims out of tons of collapsed concrete and metal; 3) technical assistance, which is done by structural specialists who make rescues safe for the rescuers; and 4) medical assistance, which consists of giving care to victims during and after a rescue.

Many such specialists are professional firefighters, but others come from different lines of work; they may be doctors, structural engineers, heavy-machinery operators or dog handlers. Some have completely unrelated careers but volunteer for training in search and rescue techniques in their spare time. The dog handler for the Fairfax search and rescue team, Jennifer Massey, is an information-technology specialist at the Federal Reserve Board in Washington.

“These are incredibly committed and courageous people who often spend their own vacations training. ... Some have been reprimanded by their employers for leaving their normal jobs to go on search and rescue missions,” Schapelhouman

(Continued on page 17)

Economic Crisis is Factor in HIV/AIDS Funding

By Joe De Capua
VOA News

The top U.S. official on HIV/AIDS says the Obama administration is committed to fighting the disease. However, Ambassador Eric Goosby says the economic crisis will be a factor in all funding decisions over the next few years.

As the new U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, Dr. Goosby oversees PEPFAR, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Created under President Bush, it began as a five-year, \$15 billion program. In 2008, Congress reauthorized PEPFAR, approving up to \$48 billion over the next five years. Besides PEPFAR, the amount would support the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.

But that was when the economy appeared healthy. Ambassador Goosby says expanding PEPFAR and other AIDS-related programs now must be carefully weighed.

"I think the problem has been the economic downturn brought us into, I think, a reality that continues to reverberate with budgetary discussion within the administration ... and how it impacts the deficit. And those conversations have predominated in the thinking as we move into 2010, 2011 in budget discussions," he says.

The Obama administration's \$6.6 billion pledge to fighting AIDS, TB and malaria in the new fiscal year is below past allocations, but about

\$165 million higher than the current fiscal year. But Goosby says U.S. resolve is unchanged.

"The president and Secretary (of State) Clinton have been very clear about their commitment to PEPFAR.



The Light House Foundation, a South African group devoted to fighting HIV/AIDS, holds a rally in the village of Letlhabile.

Indeed, my interest and willingness to leave everything I was engaged with and happy with to do this work was based on my belief in that commitment," he says.

Dr. Goosby had been head of the nonprofit Pangaea Global AIDS Foundation and professor of clinical medicine at the University of California. He took part in national treatment programs in Rwanda, South Africa, China and Ukraine.

He says PEPFAR won't expand as fast as it did in the beginning.

"The trajectory for PEPFAR expansion in the first five years is not going to be reflected for the immediate future. But it does not reflect a change in commitment or emphasis," he says.

IS IT POSSIBLE?

In 2005, at the G8 summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, leaders set a goal of near universal access to AIDS treatment for all those who need it by 2010.

Goosby says achieving that goal is difficult for a number of reasons, including the fact that thousands of people are newly infected every day.

"We continue to see new seroconversions happening. And we continue to see them happening in groups that are generally considered high risk and often unwilling to reveal ... for fear of being stigmatized or discriminated against," he says.

Those high-risk groups include intravenous drug users and men having sex with men.

Then there's the issue of treatment. If everyone infected with HIV is put on anti-retrovirals even if their immune system has not crashed, it will take a lot more money and a lot more drugs. Currently, the people who are most sick are put on ARVs first. This is generally determined by the number of CD4 immune cells in the blood.

He says such decisions may need to be made on the country level.

"I don't think that the ability to move everybody into care who needs to be in care is going to be driven by setting a new trigger for ... a CD4 count. It really is still being driven ... by accessing patients who are in need of treatment. And

(Continued on page 17)

Economic Crisis is Factor in HIV/AIDS Funding . . .

(Continued from page 16)

unfortunately we are continuing to access these patients at a very late stage of disease," he says.

A CHALLENGE TO G8 LEADERS

The International AIDS Society has released a new statement urging world leaders not to mistake recent progress against HIV/AIDS for "mission accomplished." The IAS is calling for "sustained political leadership and financing by the G8 and other donors to maintain recent momentum."

"I think that is a reasonable challenge for the International AIDS So-

ciety to call upon world leaders to continue to acknowledge ... there indeed is a collective responsibility ... by resource-rich countries ... around how resource-rich countries relate to resource-poor countries in helping to support their response to what is an overwhelming epidemic," he says.

The U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator says PEPFAR will continue to build on past successes. He says when the program started, only about 50,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa were on anti-retrovirals. He says, thanks to PEPFAR, that number is well over 2 million. More than 1 million others, he says, are being treated through the Global Fund and

other programs.

He says treatment programs have helped "stabilize people emotionally, psychologically and economically."

For more on the fight against HIV/AIDS, see Beating AIDS (<http://www.america.gov/aids.html>).

This report was provided by VOA News (<http://www.voanews.com/>).

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

Urban Search and Rescue Techniques Cut Time, Save Lives . . .

(Continued from page 15)

said.

The Fairfax team is one of two in the United States that has been designated for international disaster-relief work. The other is in Los Angeles County, in California. Inside a warehouse outside Washington, the Fairfax team has readied a 27,000-kilogram cache of equipment for deployment within hours. A partial list of the items includes concrete and steel cutting tools, breaking devices, portable generators, air compressors, power saws, drills, air bags, flood lights, ropes, medical supplies, victim-location devices, search cameras and portable computers.

Zoldos, who has been on about 10 urban search and rescue missions, including helping after the bombing

of the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi and earthquakes in Turkey and Taiwan, said the most challenging part "is getting there in a timely fashion and then getting my rescuers to the site as efficiently as possible." He said lives are lost as minutes tick by.

Zoldos and Schapelhouman said the key to success is training.

"Otherwise, it is just a stash of equipment and material in the hands of clumsy people," Schapelhouman said.

"The training that we do ... keeps the rescuers right on the cutting edge where they need to be as effective rescuers and to keep themselves safe," Zoldos said. "If we injure a rescuer, it can really hurt the team because we have to divert our attention to that rescuer."

Rex Strickland, a Fairfax search and

rescue team member, has helped train teams in South Africa, Iceland, Jordan, Britain and other places. He recently met with representatives from the United Arab Emirates, which is looking to develop a specialized search and rescue capability.

"Right now, all their search and rescue is done by volunteers, people coming in off the street," he said. The training Strickland does around the world "saves time and saves lives," he said. He knows that those he trains will find the same satisfaction that he has found. "For me, there is no greater joy than making a live rescue."

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

Dragnet Draws Tighter in Global Fight Against Corruption

By Chris Connell
Special Correspondent

Washington — The United States was once the only country with a law making it a crime to bribe a foreign official.

Now many countries have such laws, investigators and prosecutors from different countries cooperate closely, and two international conventions make their work easier.

For decades after Congress and then-President Jimmy Carter made it a crime to bribe foreign officials and politicians to secure business, the United States was alone in this anti-corruption fight. Some executives complained that the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of 1977 — enacted in the wake of a global scandal over bribes that Lockheed Aircraft Corporation paid to sell fighter jets — forced them to compete in overseas markets with one arm tied behind their backs.

Instead of repealing the law, Congress directed the executive branch to get other nations on board so bribery would no longer be regarded as a cost of doing business. Those efforts bore fruit in 1997, when the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) adopted a tough Anti-Bribery Convention. It went into force in 1999.

It took several years for countries to ratify the convention and bring their criminal statutes into line, but today 38 nations have done so, including eight non-OECD countries (Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Estonia, Israel, Slovenia and South Africa). With those added to the entire roster of OECD nations, parties to the convention represent not

only most of the major entities in the world's economy, but the homes of many multinational corporations.

"We were completely alone for 20 years. We were the only country with a statute that criminalized conduct that was regular business practice in a lot of other jurisdictions," recalled Mark Mendelsohn, who oversees U.S. Department of Justice efforts to fight international corruption. Now he calls the effort to criminalize business bribes "a global initiative."

The even broader United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) went into force in 2005 and has been ratified by 138 nations, but monitoring compliance is still a work in progress. Five Group of 20 (G20) countries (Germany, India, Italy, Japan and Saudi Arabia) have yet to ratify that convention.

Crime or no crime, unscrupulous business executives still use bribes to secure contracts, crooked leaders loot public coffers, and dishonest politicians and "public" servants line their pockets. Such problems are not confined to poor countries; even some of the wealthiest have difficulty mustering the political will to enforce laws and secure sufficient resources for watchdogs and prosecutors.



In 2006, a U.S. federal court convicted Pavlo Lazarenko, Ukraine's former prime minister, for money laundering and other crimes.

But those on the front lines say the dragnet is being pulled tighter in the battle against kleptocracy. Success stories include these:

Pavlo Lazarenko, a former Ukrainian prime minister, was sent to prison for nine years and fined \$10 million by a U.S. judge in San Francisco in 2006 for money laundering, wire fraud and transporting stolen goods. Authorities are still trying to recover more than \$100 million he is sus-

pected of stealing during two turbulent years (1996–97) at the top.

Earlier this year, a court in Las Vegas sentenced two former managers of Bank of China to more than 20 years in prison for financial fraud, racketeering and other crimes. The two and an accomplice stole close to \$500 million from the state-owned bank and fled to the United States.

It took 18 years, but the Philippines in 2004 got back \$624 million that dictator Ferdinand Marcos had stashed in Swiss banks.

U.S. authorities in Miami froze \$110 million in bank accounts traced to a notorious public corruption case in Italy. The laundered money was part of a windfall reaped by heirs of industrialist Angelo Rovelli, who bribed Italian judges to rule in his favor in a business dispute.

The Siemens AG case, in which the
(Continued on page 20)

Implementation Plan Needed for U.N. Anti-Corruption Convention

By Andrzej Zwanecki
Staff Writer

Washington — Failure by signatories of an international anti-corruption convention to agree soon on an effective implementation-review mechanism will damage the credibility of the pact, according to U.S. officials, businesses and non-governmental groups.

Countries that have ratified the U.N. Convention against Corruption have been working on such a mechanism since the document entered into force in 2005. Similar review processes for other anti-corruption conventions have been key factors in helping countries share good practices, identify gaps in enforcement and define their needs for technical assistance.

The 2003 convention, which has become the world standard for anti-corruption efforts, calls on nations to undertake measures aimed at preventing, criminalizing, investigating and prosecuting corruption worldwide. The convention also seeks to improve international cooperation on recovering assets stolen by corrupt officials.

"We've come a long way since the first conference of state parties in 2006," said John Brandolino, alternate head of the U.S. delegation to the Third Conference of State Parties to the Convention Against Corruption, which will be held November 9–13 in Doha, Qatar.

Brandolino said peer review has been accepted as the principal characteristic of the review process. But other essential features have yet to be agreed on. A vast majority of signatories and parties support country visits by experts from other



German and U.S. authorities imposed penalties on the engineering giant Siemens AG for its use of bribery in international contracts.

nations as a basis for the review mechanism, availability of a broad range of information sources (including from both the private sector and civil society) during the review process and the publication of country reports, according to Brandolino.

But "a small group of countries which are against those features is keeping us from moving forward," he said.

In a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the chief executives of 24 large international companies, such as General Electric Company, Royal Dutch Shell Group, and Tata Motors, with headquarters in developed and emerging-market countries, say that "further delay would damage the credibility of the convention and its ability to build momentum in overcoming corruption."

They also write that the economic crisis will lead to "an erosion of

ethical [business] standards that will be hard to reverse" unless an effective review mechanism is in place soon.

A statement signed by more than 100 nongovernmental groups (NGOs) warns the convention will be a "dead letter" without "rigorous" country progress reports.

PASSING THE TORCH

The U.N. conference will be preceded by the November 7–8 Sixth Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity, which has "mobilized the international community over the years to prevent and combat corruption around the world," according to David Luna, director for anti-crime programs at the U.S. State Department.

The forum, which brings together government officials and experts

(Continued on page 20)

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Telling America's story

Dragnet Draws Tighter in Global Fight Against Corruption. . .

(Continued from page 18)

engineering giant agreed to pay German and U.S. authorities \$1.6 billion for bribing public officials around the world to win huge contracts, was the product of a jointly choreographed probe begun after the aggressive Munich Public Prosecutor staged predawn raids in 2006 on the homes of dozens of Siemens executives.

Barbara Stockinger, spokeswoman for the Munich prosecutor, said that after requesting mutual legal assistance, German authorities worked closely with their U.S. counterparts (including prosecutors from the U.S. Department of Justice, FBI agents and Securities and Exchange Commission investigators) to build their cases and wrap them up simultaneously in December 2008. The teamwork proved "exceptionally productive," Stockinger said.

"It was a real partnership. It wasn't just responding to formal requests," Mendelsohn said. "It was a landmark in international cooperation."

Mendelsohn's office now enjoys similarly close partnerships with several other countries' prosecutors. And that's the way it should be, he said. "The Justice Department cannot police the entire world. We need the German authorities, British, French, Japanese and everybody else to do their part."

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Implementation Plan Needed for U.N. Anti-Corruption Convention . . .

(Continued from page 19)

from around the world, was launched in Washington in 1999. Subsequently held in all major regions, it gave impetus to the negotiation of the U.N. convention. The forum also has helped strengthen global partnerships committed to shared responsibility for development and prosperity around the world, Luna said.

Rob Leventhal, State Department director for anti-corruption initiatives, said that, with the convention ratified by 140 nations, the forum is ready to pass the torch to the Conference of State Parties to that convention and other meetings. The focus is shifting to the implementation of the convention, he said.

The forum will include six work-

shops on topics ranging from deterrence to creating a culture of integrity. But issues related to public-private partnerships and the effect of the global financial crisis, such as government procurement standards and due diligence in the financial sector, will provide a backdrop to all discussions, Leventhal said.

The U.S. delegation, headed by Attorney General Eric Holder, will come to Doha with a record of successful investigations and prosecutions of corporate bribery as well as cooperative international efforts on the recovery of corruption proceeds. Holder will carry a message of responsible governance, which includes prosecuting high-level corruption, denying safe havens to corrupt officials, and enhancing transparency. He also will emphasize the importance of

international partnerships in fighting corruption and transnational bribery, a message that President Obama has made a priority of his foreign policy, the two officials said.

The text of the letter of business executives (http://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/Anti-Corruption/UNCAC_Letter.pdf) (PDF, 146KB) is available on the Web site of the U.N. Global Compact, and the text of the NGOs' statement (http://www.uncaccoalition.org/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=27&Itemid=36&lang=en) on the Web site of the U.N. Convention against Corruption Coalition. See also the official Web site of the Sixth Global Forum (<http://www.gf6.pp.gov.qa/>). ♦