



Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

INSIDE

Ethiopia "at Crossroads," Warns U.S. Official

Ethiopia is "currently at a crossroads" -- it can continue to move forward or it can lapse into the sort of government that is best encountered in the history books, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Donald Yamamoto told the U.S. Congress March 28.



Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Donald Yamamoto

In testimony before the House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations, Yamamoto said, "It is incumbent upon Prime Minister Meles, his government

and the various elements of the multifaceted opposition to demonstrate to

the world, but, more importantly, to Ethiopians, the sincerity of their professed commitment to democracy through their actions as well as their words."

Yamamoto was called to Capitol Hill to brief the subcommittee on Ethiopia just hours before departing for that country. The deputy assistant secretary called Ethiopia's May 15, 2005, election "historic" and said it "considerably enhanced the democratic

(Continued on page 3)

Chargé d'Affaires Visits South Omo Zone, SNNPR

As part of her regular working and familiarization trips to different parts of Ethiopia, the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires, Ambassador Vicki J. Huddleston, visited the South Omo Zone of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR) from March 18 to 22. The purpose of the Ambassador's trip was to learn about how local communities interact with the protected areas in the zone and



Ambassador Huddleston makes a gift of educational materials to the TEACH Center in Hailoha

(Continued on page 2)

African issues

Making the Best of Hard Times (P 7)

Sirleaf Credits Bush for Ridding Liberia of Charles Taylor (P 8)

Bush To Welcome Nigerian President Obasanjo to White House (P 9)

Actor with Nigerian Roots Has Key Role in Top-Grossing U.S. Movie (P 10)

American News

Bush Urges Civil, Dignified Debate on Immigration Reform (P 11)

Bush Appoints Joshua Bolten as New Chief of Staff (P 12)

International issues

Rice Says Advancing Liberty, Democracy Long-Term Answer to Terror (P 13)

State's Hughes Urges People of Faith To Combat Terrorism (P 14)

Religious Freedom at Core of Democratic Development, Rice Says (P15)

Progress, Challenges Highlighted on World Tuberculosis Day 2006 (P 17)

Media and Development

American Journalist Conducts "Lively" Media Workshops in Africa (P 19)

Blogs Transforming Politics, Business, Culture, Says Journalist (P 20)

Visiting African Female Journalists Get Boost from Laura Bush (P 21)

women's Issues

Half of Secretary Rice's Key Aides Are Women (P 22)

U.S. Women Increasingly Successful in Legal Careers (P 23)

Middle East Women Discuss Importance of Empowerment (P 24)

Ambassador Vicki Huddleston Visits South Omo Zone, SNNPR . . .

(Continued from page 1)

with each other, and how conflicts over natural resources like wildlife, grazing lands, water can be addressed.

Ambassador Huddleston was accompanied by the Department of State's Regional Environment Office for East Africa based at the embassy in Addis Ababa and a representative from USAID. The party flew to Jinka on March 18, where they met with Zonal Administrator, Ato Kaydaky Gezahagne, the Mayor of Jinka, Assegid Adera, and town elders, to discuss development needs in the area and activities being undertaken by communities and the local administration. The group next visited the South Omo Research Center for a briefing on the area's rich ethnographic diversity .

The following day, the party traveled overland through Mago National Park and the Tama Wildlife Reserve, then crossed the Omo River into Omo National Park.

During the journey, the group stopped in the Mursi community of Hailoha (or Haile Woha) to visit an alternative teaching center administered under the TEACH (Transforming Education for Adults and Children in the Hinterlands) Program supported by USAID and implemented by PACT. PACT is a U.S. based private voluntary organization that has been carrying out development projects in Ethiopia for over ten years. Ambassador Huddleston made a donation of books and educational materials to the center. USAID supports another project, also implemented by PACT, called SELAM-C (Stability for Ethiopia's Lowland Marginalized Communities), which aims to resolve local conflicts in the vicinity of Mago National Park.



**Ambassador Huddleston with Mursi students
at the TEACH Center in Hailoha**

In Omo National Park, the Chargé was hosted by African Parks Ethiopia (PLC) and the Omo Park Warden, Ato Gemedo Osolo. In January of this year, African Parks took over management of Omo National Park under a 25-year contract with the SNNPR and the Federal Government. In Mago National Park, Ambassador Huddleston and the group reviewed the outputs of a grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, from its African Elephant Conservation Fund, to assist in protecting elephant populations in the park.

South Omo is an area of tremendous diversity of cultures and wildlife, where local communities have an essential role to play in managing and conserving this heritage, and where donors, NGOs, academia, and local government can come together to help achieve this goal. ♦

Ethiopia "at Crossroads," Warns U.S. Official . . .

(Continued from page 1)

consciousness of the people of Ethiopia."

He also told the lawmakers the 2005 election was "much improved over 2000, which had been a great improvement over the 1995 election."

The United States, he added, is "committed to ensuring that the 2010 elections build on the progress of the 2005 elections, in moving toward transparent elections, responsive government and greater power sharing."

That said, he said Ethiopia's post-2005 election problems highlight the need for capacity building and further reform. "Despite our belief that election results overall were generally credible, the United States was deeply concerned about the 31 seats that went to a re-vote on August 21," he told the lawmakers.

Yamamoto said the ruling party won all 31 seats in that re-vote, even among constituencies where the opposition had won a significant majority during the May 15 balloting.

Of even greater concern, he said, was the violence that erupted on June 8, 2005, and November 1, 2005, which led to the arrests of thousands of people after the elections and the detention of 128 Coalition for Unity and Democracy and civil society leaders.

Following is the text of Yamamoto's statement, as prepared for delivery:

(begin text)

Testimony by Deputy Assistant Secretary Donald Yamamoto
Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State

"Ethiopia's Troubled Internal Situation"

House International Relations Committee
Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations
Chairman Christopher H. Smith
March 28, 2006, 2:00 p.m.

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Smith, members of the subcommittee, I am honored to testify before you today on the internal political situation in Ethiopia. As Africa's second most populous nation, Ethiopia has an important part to play in enhancing the stability of East Africa.

The United States believes that democracy is the best form of government for stability -- in Africa and beyond. Free and transparent elections are the best vehicle for citizens to express their wishes and hold their governments accountable. Democracy should be anything but a zero sum game.

Over the last year, Ethiopians have been tempted by the twin promises of freedom and fairness. Expectations were high during last year's campaign season. This marked the first true multiparty election in Ethiopia's 3,000-year history. Results have been mixed, and hopes for progress have been chilled, as the government has clamped down on individuals' right to assemble and journalists' ability to report events. Meanwhile, several elected opposition officials re-

fused to take their seats in Parliament and have been arrested and charged with capital offenses.

In calling for last May's election, Prime Minister Meles moved his country forward. However, the intolerance that followed in the wake of the results and the opposition's response show that the country has more work to do in progressing toward true, mature democracy.

HOPE FOR DEMOCRACY

Speaking at the Freer Gallery before the G-8 summit last June, President Bush remarked that "the whole world will benefit from prosperity and stability on the African continent. And the peoples of Africa deserve the peace and freedom and opportunity that are the natural rights of all mankind."

The Administration firmly believes in the primacy of democracy. So do the American people and this Congress. Democratic governments will naturally reflect the local cultures and traditions of voters, but this form of government is the single best way to account not only for the needs and wishes of large groups of people, but also for those holding minority viewpoints.

Liberty improves lives, and fair elections and personal liberty protections are universal values. Our goal is to encourage all governments to be responsive to their people and respectful of human dignity. The United States raises these points in the spirit of partnership.

(Continued on page 4)

Ethiopia "at Crossroads," Warns U.S. Official . . .

(Continued from page 3)

There is every reason to believe that Ethiopians want responsive leadership, and the U.S. Government supports the efforts of students and activists to have their voices heard. As President Bush said in the same speech last June, "All who live in Africa can be certain, as you seize this moment of opportunity, America will be your partner and your friend."

A NEW CHAPTER

The May 15, 2005, elections were momentous and offered the people of Ethiopia the prospect of an important step toward democratic rule and responsive government. The pre-election assessment was impressive. Nearly 26 million people registered to vote, 48% of whom were women. In total, 85% of all eligible voters registered, marking a significant increase over the last election in 2000.

Elections for the lower house featured 1,847 candidates competing for 547 seats. Compared to 2000, this was an increase in participation greater than 80%. Election observers from the United States (U.S.) and European Union (EU) recognized the National Electoral Board for its excellent job registering voters and candidates, and preparing for the elections. Even the state-managed media coverage was considered fair, giving the opposition 56% of the airtime exposure, according to the EU report, while the ruling party received 44% of the coverage.

The opposition parties, much to their own surprise -- and the shock of the ruling party -- earned the keys to Addis Ababa's City Hall on election day. The ruling party ac-

knowledged its loss in the capital, as well as losses in most of Ethiopia's other urban centers. The opposition managed to capture 170 seats, mostly in urban areas. This was significantly more than the meager 12 seats it won in 2000. This success is tempered only by the fact that most Ethiopians reside in rural areas.

The United States hailed the outcome of the May election as an affirmation of Ethiopia's political development. For the first time in their long history, Ethiopians had a democratic choice.

ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL TENSION

The great hope inspired by this election soon gave way to political turmoil. On election day and during the post-election period, there were reports of intimidation and harassment and that in some areas, ballot boxes had been improperly secured. From June 2-8, the opposition raised questions about the results for 299 seats. There was a general transportation strike in Addis Ababa June 6-8, and violence led to the deaths of three-dozen and the arrest of over 3,000 people.

The United States condemned the violence and cautioned that hate messages directed against other ethnic groups could further fracture the delicate ethnic balance within Ethiopia. The U.S. Ambassador in Addis Ababa, Ambassador Aurelia Brazeal, worked with her colleagues from the British, Austrian, EU, and other embassies to broker an agreement on June 10 between the opposition and ruling parties to enhance political en-

gagement and resolve seats under dispute.

Since the departure of Ambassador Brazeal, our Charge, Ambassador Vicki Huddleston, and the U.S. Embassy staff have continued actively to reach out to opposition party leaders from the United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF), Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD), and Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement (OFDM). U.S. Embassy staff is working to bridge the political divide separating the opposition parties and the ruling Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). The State Department has also engaged the Ethiopian diaspora in the United States, and the chief opposition leaders, Hailu Shawel, who heads the CUD, and Petros Beyene, head of the UEDF, who have been in the United States.

On numerous occasions, the Assistant Secretary sent me to Addis Ababa to work with the Ethiopian Government and opposition groups in support of U.S. Embassy efforts to encourage a reconciliation of differences between the opposition and the ruling parties, and to discuss ways to improve the political process with the Ethiopian government. We encouraged the opposition parties to take their seats in the Ethiopian Parliament and use their positions as parliamentarians to press for continued political reform and a greater voice for the opposition.

The opposition's stance evolved after May 15, 2005. Their unexpected political gains inspired the confidence to insist on more political control of the process, and

(Continued on page 5)

Ethiopia "at Crossroads," Warns U.S. Official . . .

(Continued from page 4)

they pressed for a review of the 299 seats they lost to the EPRDF. The Administration has encouraged dialogue between the government and opposition parties to resolve the dispute. U.S. government officials have repeatedly stressed that responsible discussions would help enhance confidence and bring about a peaceful resolution. The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), which did a notable job in pre-election efforts, was overwhelmed by post-election tasks. The NEBE clearly requires significant assistance, as it works to build capacity and forge a constructive dialogue between the parties.

Under the existing NEBE process, the Complaints Review Boards (CRB) received 380 complaints of election irregularities and identified 178 cases for the Complaints Investigations Panels (CIP) to investigate. It was unclear why some cases were rejected. The European Union report on the elections asserted that over 90% of the CUD complaints were rejected as opposed to only 30% for the ruling party. It seems clear that the CRB/CIP process did not prove an adequate means for a fair resolution of all electoral disputes.

According to the Carter Center, which monitored the election process along with the European Union, in one-third of the investigations they observed, witnesses appeared frightened or intimidated, and there was credible evidence of intimidation and harassment including beatings and bribes. It is clear that the CRB/CIP is an ad hoc mechanism to review electoral complaints, rather than a reliable process for resolving the Parlia-

mentary seat dispute. The Carter Center recommended that in this instance, and until the NEBE gains the maturity to resolve political disagreements, the opposition refer these cases to the High Court for adjudication.

We commend the work of the Carter Center and note the important work that the European Union carried out under difficult conditions. On the overall assessment of the elections, we agree with the final report, which noted that the elections had credibility and that the majority of the constituency results based on the May 15 polling and tabulation are credible and reflect competitive conditions. Our own assessments support this view.

Despite our belief that elections results overall were generally credible, the United States was deeply concerned about the 31 seats that went to a re-vote on August 21. The ruling party won all 31 seats, even among constituencies where the opposition had won a significant majority during May 15 balloting. Election observers noted that voters were perplexed as to why there was a re-vote and noted a dearth of information and increased presence of security forces at polling stations. Of even greater concern was the violence that erupted on June 8 and November 1, 2005, that led to the arrests of thousands of people after the elections and the detention of 128 CUD and civil society leaders. We objected strongly to the violence and the detentions both publicly through several press statements and privately to the government and the opposition.

Of particular concern to the United States are the early-November arrests of much of the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) leadership, along with prominent members of civil society, journalists, editors, and publishers. After seven weeks in detention, the Ethiopian government charged 131 individuals with capital offenses of "outrages against the constitution and constitutional order," and, in several cases, "treason" and "attempted genocide." Charges were recently dropped against 18 of the defendants, including five American citizen staff members of Voice of America, who, with five others, were charged in absentia.

In addition to these leaders, Ethiopian authorities detained over 14,000 demonstrators, holding them for as much as nine weeks in detention camps far away from Addis Ababa. While public protests aimed at destabilizing the country are objectionable, there is no excuse for mass arrests and the use of lethal force against civilians who wish to express their opposition to their government.

GLIMMERS OF HOPE

The electoral process of May 15, 2005, was historic and considerably enhanced the democratic consciousness of the people of Ethiopia. It was a much-improved election over 2000, which had been a great improvement over the 1995 election. The United States is committed to ensuring that the 2010 elections build on the progress of the 2005 elections, in moving toward transparent elections, responsive government, and greater power sharing.

(Continued on page 6)

Ethiopia "at Crossroads," Warns U.S. Official . . .

(Continued from page 5)

That said, the post-2005 election problems point to the need for capacity building and further reform. The Ethiopian government and opposition agree on that score. We are working to help both sides forge a common commitment to work collaboratively toward a shared goal of developing a more democratic political process. We recognize the need for capacity building to strengthen the electoral commission, foster international exchanges that broaden exposure to other political systems, enhance the open and transparent political process -- particularly with regard to Parliamentary procedures that ensure equal participation for opposition members, offer clear and detailed guidance regarding the electoral process, and encourage greater political debate and participation by members of the Ethiopian public.

Over the last year, we have encouraged the opposition parties to continue their political dialogue with the government about the necessity of reform. The Ethiopian citizens who have been detained without charge are of vital concern, and the Administration calls on the Government of Ethiopia to ensure a fair, transparent, and speedy trial for those charged, release of those who have not been charged, and protection of the human rights, health, and safety of all detainees while they remain in detention.

With the engagement of the EU and the Ethiopian government, the opposition and ruling parties have agreed to review parliamentary procedures, the capacity of the NEBE, media law, and the rule of law. The Ethiopian government has

also agreed to reviews of domestic political institutions by outside experts from Germany, India, Great Britain, and Canada. The United States will review the media law, and we are working with the EU to encourage elected opposition officials to take their seats in Parliament, and many are. The United States has also engaged with the newly elected Addis Ababa City Counselors and NEBE to enable the opposition to take over City Hall.

We pressed the Ethiopian government to conduct an independent investigation of the violence and the arrests of thousands of civilians in 2005. The completed report from the commission appointed by Parliament is expected soon. We continue to urge the government to apply expeditiously and justly the procedures of the Ethiopian legal process to the cases of the remaining 111 detained CUD and civil society leaders. Resolution of the detention issue would fortify Ethiopia's developing democratic process.

The Administration is also working to ensure the return of the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute, and IFES, all of which were expelled before the May 15 election. These organizations can help with capacity building and political reform.

All of these actions have been undertaken in support of good governance and the primacy of democracy. We believe Ethiopia is heading in the right direction; in order to ensure positive momentum, the United States and the international community needs to work with Ethiopia to cultivate and nurture this process.

CONCLUSION

Ethiopia is currently at a crossroads; it can continue to move forward, or it can lapse into the sort of government that's best encountered in history books. It is incumbent upon Prime Minister Meles, his government, and the various elements of the multifaceted opposition to demonstrate to the world, but, more importantly, to Ethiopians, the sincerity of their professed commitment to democracy through their actions as well as their words. The United States has a role, as a partner and friend, to help Ethiopia's leaders to choose the right path to secure peace, stability, freedom, and democracy for the Ethiopian people.

Some interested groups, both within and beyond Ethiopian borders, seek to undermine what is best for the nation of Ethiopia, in favor of what they perceive to be the best for themselves. They cast stones at their adversaries, while engaging in the very acts they accuse their rivals of pursuing.

The challenge for the United States is to share with our Ethiopian partners -- the government, the opposition, civil society, and the broader public -- the lessons of America's own democratic experiment and impede the subversive effects of those who put their own objectives above those of the Ethiopian people. Through diplomatic persuasion, the United States has succeeded in bringing together the government and some opposition groups for dialogue to establish a more equitable political environment that includes respect for the rule of law. U.S. engagement has helped convince the vast

(Continued on page 7)

Making the Best of Hard Times

Muti Tolcha has learned many lessons from his difficult life, the most important being knowing how to make the best of difficult situations. When he was in prison, he learned to weave traditional white Ethiopian cloth called gabi. When he found out he was HIV positive, he went to the Hope Center, a USAID-funded organization that is working to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The Center helps individuals who have contracted HIV by providing emotional support networks, training sessions, and seed money for starting a business. It also works with local health service providers to assist HIV-positive individuals get the medical attention they need. Muti also received counseling and a \$115 donation to start a business.

Now, he spends his days weaving and selling beautiful gabi fabric. He has so much work that he even hired two assistants to help. The program has given him a future, and now he wants to give back by helping others avoid having to deal with the challenges he has faced. "My hope is to live long to educate my children," says Muti, "to teach people about the consequences of stigmatizing people with HIV, and to teach people to be tested for HIV." ♦



After being released from prison and testing positive for HIV, Muti Tolcha turned his life around when he received help from a USAID-sponsored project. He started his own business weaving traditional cloth and has hired two assistants to help with a growing workload.

Ethiopia "at Crossroads," Warns U.S. Official . . .

(Continued from page 6)

majority of opposition Members of Parliament-elect to take their seats, so that they can challenge the political system from within to improve lasting institutions and make tomorrow better. The United States has supported efforts through which opposition members elected to the Addis Ababa city council sought to assume control of the capital city, in accordance with their electoral mandate.

The United States government remains hopeful that Ethiopia can achieve the democratic and development ideals that its people espouse. I am hopeful that Ethiopia's leaders will allow this to happen, and Ethiopia's friends in the United States stand by ready to help.

(end text)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

Sirleaf Credits Bush for Ridding Liberia of Charles Taylor

By Jim Fisher-Thompson
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf says President Bush was instrumental in freeing Liberia of Charles Taylor, whom she described in a speech in Washington as an exiled "despot" who still exerts "influence" on the struggling nation.

After a runoff election in November 2005, Sirleaf became the first elected woman head of state in Africa.

On March 21, Sirleaf spoke at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) in Washington.

Sirleaf told the gathering of foreign policy specialists, "We made this visit essentially in response to President Bush's kind invitation, but to use that opportunity to thank him, to thank the U.S. government, to thank the American people for all that was done to support Liberia in its transition from war to peace.

"It took the courage of President Bush to actually put the pressure on that led to the process of change and took a despot into exile," she said.

During her visit to the United States, Sirleaf addressed a joint session of Congress and met with President Bush and other top U.S. officials. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=March&x=20060316192217sssille0.2755396&t=livefeeds/wf-latest.html>).

At the CFR session she answered questions on various topics, including security and development.

Asked about the security situation in Liberia, Sirleaf said: "There's still pockets of discon-



Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, seen here on 21 March, moved to calm nerves justifying the extradition request for Charles Taylor while the government assured Liberians that it was doing all in its power to ensure the security of the country. (AFP/File/Mandel Ngan)

tent, persons who have lost power as a result of the election. We stand a chance of some insurgency," in part, she added, because "we still have the Charles Taylor issue and the influence which he continues to have on the country and the implications of that."

However, she quickly added, "But we believe that we've got enough going for us in terms of our commitment to the people, being responsive to their needs ... that far greater numbers are on the side of peace and stability and that we can move the nation forward."

Asked about the current status of Taylor after her recent request to Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo to release him from exile for trial by the International Criminal Court in Sierra Leone, Sirleaf said, "The process stands right now in the hands of the primary African leadership: the host of Mr. Taylor, President Obasanjo of Nigeria; the chairman of the Economic Community of West African States, President [Mamadou] Tandja of Niger; the current chairman of the African Union, [President Denis] Sassou-Nguesso of Congo-Brazzaville."

She added, "Liberia believes that this matter ought to be brought to closure, that we want to get on with the business of fulfilling our development agenda and responding to the needs of our people."

Sirleaf was asked about the assistance plan called the Government Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMAP), which is controversial because of a provision mandated by international donors calling for outside management of funds expended in the program. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=February&x>

(Continued on page 9)

Bush To Welcome Nigerian President Obasanjo to White House

President Bush will welcome President Olusegun Obasanjo of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the White House March 29, White House press spokesman Scott McClellan announced March 24.

In the statement, McClellan called Nigeria "a strategic partner of the United States in Africa." The visit, he said, will provide an opportunity for President Bush to thank President Obasanjo for his leadership as chairman of the African Union during the deployment of African troops in response to the genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan.

The two leaders also will discuss a broad range of regional and international issues, including continuing cooperation in the various areas of Darfur, regional security, energy security, fighting corruption, strengthening democratic institutions and the need to bring to justice former Liberian President Charles Taylor, who is now exiled in Nigeria, according to McClellan.

For additional information on U.S. policies, see Darfur Humanitarian

Emergency (<http://usinfo.state.gov/af/africa/darfur.html>).



President Olusegun Obasanjo

Following is the text of McClellan's statement:

(begin text)

The White House
Office of the Press Secretary
March 24, 2006

President to Welcome Nigerian
President to the White House

President Bush will welcome President Olusegun Obasanjo of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the White House on March 29, 2006. Nigeria is a strategic partner of the United States in Africa and the visit provides an opportunity for the President to thank President Obasanjo for his leadership as Chairman of the African Union in the deployment of African troops in response to the genocide in Darfur, Sudan. The two leaders also will discuss a broad range of regional and international issues including continuing cooperation in the areas of Darfur, regional security, energy security, fighting corruption, strengthening democratic institutions, and the need to bring Charles Taylor to justice.

(end text)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

Sirleaf Credits Bush for Ridding Liberia of Charles Taylor . . .

(Continued from page 8)
= 200602081717561E-
JrehsiF0.5792505&t=xarchives/
xarchitem.html.)

Describing GEMAP as "a partnership arrangement," Sirleaf acknowledged: "It's a response to our own government, our transitional government's failure to manage our resources properly. It's a financial management mechanism,

an arrangement to which we are committed."

She added, however: "GEMAP is a temporary arrangement. I should tell you that there is confidence in our own ability to manage our affairs, and it will come."

"If we did a 10-year development program, we'd say we need a billion dollars. But we also want to

be pragmatic based upon our absorptive capacity, so that we take it progressively," Sirleaf said.

For more on U.S. policy, see Africa (<http://usinfo.state.gov/af/>).

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

Actor with Nigerian Roots Has Key Role in Top-Grossing U.S. Movie

By Helen I. Rouse
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- When the figures came in for top-grossing movie in the United States for the weekend of March 24-26, the leader was *Inside Man*, directed by African-American Spike Lee and featuring British actor Chiwetel Ejiofor, whose roots are in Nigeria.

The film, which opened March 24 in theaters across the United States, topped all other films in the country by grossing \$29 million on its first weekend. In the story, written by Russell Gewirtz, Oscar-winning actor Denzel Washington plays a no-nonsense New York City detective and Ejiofor plays his partner. The two must handle the tense situation after a gang of thieves takes over a bank and holds customers and bank workers hostage.

Employing a convincing American accent, Ejiofor is at Washington's side throughout the intricate dealings involved in resolving the situation. Speaking of their working relationship on the film, Washington told interviewer Kam Williams of the African-American Literature Book Club, "Chiwetel is really an elegant and good man, and a great actor."

Ejiofor debuted in film at 19 with a small role in Stephen Spielberg's 1997 *Amistad* and came to the attention of many Americans in 2003 in Stephen Frears' *Dirty Pretty Things*. In that film, he starred as a Nigerian doctor who experiences the unpalatable side of London life as an illegal immigrant working around the clock as a minicab driver and a receptionist in

a seedy hotel. The film played to smaller audiences than *Inside Man* but received much critical acclaim in the United States.



Nigerian Actor Chiwetel Ejiofor

Ejiofor was born in Forest Gate, east London, in 1974, to Nigerian parents -- his father a doctor, his mother a pharmacist. He has a great affinity with Nigeria and goes there regularly to visit his grandparents and extended family, according to press reports.

He started acting at 13, in school plays and in the National Youth Theatre. "It was a strong impulse," one article quotes the actor as saying. "I immediately recognized that it was something I needed to do. I'm not sure where it came from, but it was something I needed to be part of."

Ejiofor went to Dulwich College, London, and to the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, a leading British drama school. In 2000, he was voted the Outstanding Newcomer in the London Evening Standard awards for his performance in *Blue/Orange*, a play about a mental patient who claims to be the son of an exiled African dictator. In the following years, he received or was nominated for several other awards.

In 2003, the Washington Area Film Critics Association nominated him for Best Actor for *Dirty Pretty Things* and he won a British Independent Film Award for Best Performance by an Actor for that role.

Critic Amy Raphael described Ejiofor's work in the digital edition of *The Observer* (London) after he did *Dirty Pretty Things*: "It doesn't happen very often. Perhaps once every few years. Maybe less. Along comes a young British actor with talent to take your breath away.

"There are plenty of good actors but few truly great ones. Even fewer whose magic works on both stage and screen."

(*The Washington File* is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

Bush Urges Civil, Dignified Debate on Immigration Reform

As a nation built by immigrants, the United States regularly welcomes "new [U.S.] citizens from every corner of the globe" who renew the nation's vitality and enrich its character, says President Bush.

Appearing in Washington at a March 27 naturalization ceremony where people of different ages, backgrounds and countries of origin took the oath of U.S. citizenship, Bush praised the contributions of immigrants whose efforts have shaped U.S. society, including the Irish immigrant who helped design the White House and a Russian-born innovator who helped create the Internet search engine Google.

"Newcomers have a special way of appreciating the opportunities of America, and when they seize those opportunities, our whole nation benefits," said Bush.

Yet "America's welcoming society is more than a cultural tradition -- it is a fundamental promise of our democracy," he said. "Our Constitution does not limit citizenship by background or birth. Instead, our nation is bound together by a shared love of liberty and a conviction that all people are created with dignity and value."

Bush said he supports increasing the number of visas available for foreign-born workers in highly skilled fields like science, medicine and technology.

The United States needs immigration reform that addresses the question of undocumented migrants: people who enter the country illegally, but whose labor is vital to sustaining U.S. agriculture and other business sectors, the president said.

"Our nation is now in the midst of [a] debate on immigration policy,"



President Bush says the Pledge of Allegiance after the swearing-in ceremony of immigrants as U.S. citizens, during a Naturalization Ceremony at the Daughters of the American Revolution Administration Building in Washington March 27, 2006. (Larry Downing/Reuters)

Bush said. "Immigration is ... an emotional topic. And we need to maintain our perspective as we conduct this debate. At its core, immigration is a sign of a confident and secure nation."

Even though "America is a nation of immigrants," it is "also a nation of laws," the president said. Migrants who cross U.S. borders illegally are undermining the U.S. immigration system, he said, but the United States "should not have to choose between being a welcom-

ing society and being a lawful society."

U.S. immigration laws must be reformed because a deeply flawed immigration system serves no one, Bush said, adding, "Nobody benefits when illegal immigrants live in the shadows of society."

In 2005, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a reform bill that focused almost exclusively on the law-enforcement aspect of immigration an approach that many analysts have criticized as harsh and likely to stoke anti-immigrant sentiment without recognizing the heavy dependence on the labor market on undocumented workers.

The Senate is scheduled to consider immigration reform legislation the week of March 27.

THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL

Bush recently offered his own proposal for comprehensive immigration reform, which attempts to balance the needs of border control and law enforcement with the needs of the U.S. economy. The proposal includes three critical elements: securing the border, strengthening the immigration enforcement inside the United States and creating a temporary worker program. (See White House fact sheet and related article.)

A temporary guest-worker program would make the immigration system "more rational, orderly, and

(Continued on page 12)

Bush Appoints Joshua Bolten as New Chief of Staff

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Joshua B. Bolten will succeed departing Andrew Card as White House chief of staff, President Bush announced March 28.

Bush, who had accepted Card's resignation, praised him as an adviser who had provided "wise counsel" and who showed "absolute integrity and ... tireless commitment to public service.

"The next three years will demand much of those who serve our country. We have a global war to fight and win," the president said.

The White House chief of staff serves as a senior aide to the president and is the highest-ranking member of the Executive Office of the President, overseeing other White House staff members and managing the president's schedule.

Bush described his new chief of staff, Bolten, as "a creative policy thinker" and "an expert on the budget and our economy. He is a man of candor and humor and directness. No person is better prepared for this important position." ♦



President George W. Bush shakes the hand of Josh Bolten Tuesday, March 28, 2006, after introducing him as the new Chief of Staff, succeeding Secretary Andrew Card. White House photo by David Bohrer

Bush Urges Civil, Dignified Debate on Immigration Reform . . .

(Continued from page 11)

secure," said Bush, by providing a legal way to match willing foreign workers with willing American employers to fill the jobs that Americans are unwilling to do.

Under the president's proposal, the federal government would offer temporary worker status to undocumented men and women now employed in the United States and to those in foreign countries who have been offered employment in the United States. The proposal stipulates that guest workers would be obliged to return eventually to their countries of origin. (See related article.)

Such a program "would also improve security by creating tamper-proof identification cards that would help us keep track of every temporary worker who is here on a legal basis and help us identify those who are here illegally," Bush said.

The president urged legislators to "pass a comprehensive bill that secures the border, improves interior enforcement, and creates a temporary-worker program to strengthen our security and our economy."

Lawmakers should "move beyond ... the harsh attitudes of the past," Bush said. "The immigration debate should be conducted in

a civil and dignified way. No one should play on people's fears, or try to pit neighbors against each other."

As immigration reform takes its place on the legislative agenda, the president urged legislators to be mindful of the important role immigrants play in the U.S. economy.

"If we work together, I'm confident we can meet our duty to fix our immigration system and deliver a bill that protects our people, upholds our laws, and makes our people proud," he said. ♦

Rice Says Advancing Liberty, Democracy Long-Term Answer to Terror

Rice Says Advancing Liberty, Democracy Long-Term Answer to Terror

By David Anthony Denny
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington — Fostering liberty and democracy is key to defeating terrorism by changing the circumstances that create extremists, says Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Testifying March 28 before the Senate Appropriations subcommittee that deals with the State Department, the secretary called direct combat against terrorists a short-term solution, but not sufficient for achieving long-term security.

"We believe that the ideology of hatred which [terrorists] espouse can only be met by advancing liberty and democracy," Rice said. That is why, she said, the United States is supporting democracies in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as pressing authoritarian regimes for change through the Broader Middle East Initiative. (See BMENA (http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/forum_for_the_future.html).

"And change is coming," Rice said. "It comes with turbulence. It comes with difficulty. But change in the Middle East is coming."

IRAQ

Senator Mitch McConnell, the subcommittee chairman, asked Rice to list items illustrating the progress being made in Iraq.

The secretary responded that the most important news from Iraq is the on-going political process both to form a unity government and to decide how that government should govern. It is a difficult and contentious process, she said, but for the first time in Iraq's history, democracy is occurring, and all elements of Iraqi society are engaged and moving ahead.

The reconstruction that is taking place in Iraq also illustrates progress, although some of it is moving more slowly than the United States would like, Rice said.

She acknowledged that the city of Baghdad is not getting as much electrical power as it had before the 2003 war, but explained that overall electrical generating capacity for the whole country has been improved. And later in 2006, she said, power in Baghdad also will improve as more generating capacity comes on line.

"Schools and clinics and children going to school are really the result of the reconstruction funds that this Congress has appropriated to the Iraqi people," Rice added.

The capabilities of the Iraqi security forces also are improving, she said, noting that the Iraqis now have taken over responsibility for keeping the majority of their territory secure.

In answer to questions, Rice said there are indications that Iran is "supporting troublemakers -- militias and the like" in southern Iraq and that British forces there believe that Iranian technology is evident in the improvised bombs be-

ing used by insurgents. (See Iraq Update (http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/iraq.html).

The secretary also said she has asked the Russian foreign minister to look into the question of whether Russia provided military information about the coalition forces' strategy to Iraq officials before the war, as indicated in captured Iraqi documents.

"We take very seriously any implication that someone might have been passing information that endangered the operation at the outset of the war, and we will look for an answer back from the Russian government once, hopefully, they've had a chance to look into it," Rice said.

The transcript (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/63782.htm>) of the secretary's opening statement to the Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs is available on the State Department Web site.

For more information on U.S. policy and actions, see Iraq Update (http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/iraq.html).

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

State's Hughes Urges People of Faith To Combat Terrorism

By Michael Jay Friedman
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington — U.S. Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Karen Hughes called on world youth to launch an "interfaith grassroots campaign" to stigmatize, marginalize and ultimately end terrorism.

Such an effort could prove as successful as the 19th century abolitionist movement that led to outlawing slavery, she told representatives from 29 countries gathered at a Washington conference.

The March 22 International Conference on Faith and Service addressed the theme "Building Bridges Through Interreligious Dialogue and Youth Civic Engagement." It gathered religious and secular leaders for a series of individual speeches, panel discussions and question/answer interchanges with the audience.

The under secretary told the gathering that faith can be a powerful force for good, accomplished through millions of individual acts.

Violence and acts of terror are not a matter of religion and are not evidence of a clash of civilizations, she said.

In calling on youth to launch "from this room" the 21st century version of the abolitionist movement, Hughes said that the global anti-slavery effort drew strength from observant men and women acting on their religious convictions of human equality.

Conference participants explored means of collaborating to advance the common purposes shared by diverse religions. They agreed that dialogue and youth service can help reduce global conflict.

In a video greeting, King Abdullah II of Jordan told the conference that the "greatest challenge of our generation is those who seek to divide people of faith."

The Nobel laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa seconded this message. "Our destinies are bound up with one another," he told the assemblage. "We can find our true humanity only through one another."

The International Conference on Faith and Service conference was co-convened by the Congressional Education Foundation and the congressionally chartered National Conference on Citizenship, in partnership with Civic Enterprises, the Case Foundation, United Nations Foundation, MCJ Foundation, Universal Peace Federation, Points of Light Foundation and many of the nation's leading national youth service organizations.

The transcript (<http://www.state.gov/r/us/63579.htm>) of Hughes' remarks is available on the State Department Web site.

Additional information (<http://www.casefoundation.org/web/guest/spotlight/interfaith/resources>) on interfaith resources is available on the Case Foundation Web site.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

Progress, Challenges Highlighted on World Tuberculosis Day 2006 . . .

(Continued from page 18)

Nearly a dozen other vaccine candidates also are being evaluated in preclinical studies.

These promising drug and vaccine candidates have been developed in part through successful public-private partnerships among government-funded researchers, industry, philanthropies and others.

"There is reason to be optimistic that several more advances will result in new products for TB and TB/HIV care worldwide, Fauci said, "or will at a minimum teach us how to enhance development of improved strategies and methods for combating this disease."

More information (<http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/news/focuson/tb/default.htm>) about tuberculosis and

its vaccines and treatments are available at the NIAID website.

Additional information (<http://www.thelancet.com/>) on obtaining Lancet articles is available on the publication's Web site.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

Religious Freedom at Core of Democratic Development, Rice Says

By Melody Merin and Peggy B. Hu
Washington File Staff Writers

Washington -- Freedom of religion is at the core of democratic development and is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said in several talk show appearances March 26.

However, reconciling this principle with other values in society is not easy, particularly for new democracies, the secretary said.

Speaking on NBC's Meet the Press, Rice said the international community must recognize that Afghanistan "is a country that is coming out of 25 years of civil war, a country that's going to have to find its own way and a country that is going through one of the most difficult debates that any society goes through, and that is the proper role of religion in the politics of the state."

The case of Abdul Rahman, an Afghan man who had been sentenced to death for converting to Christianity, is an example of this philosophical struggle, according to Rice.

Rice said on Fox News Sunday that the United States seeks "a favorable resolution" to the case. Death is one of the punishments for apostasy under sharia, or Islamic law; the Afghan legal system is based on a mix of civil and sharia law. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/sa/Archive/2006/Mar/23-870657.html>).

According to wire service reports March 26, an Afghan court has dismissed the charges against Rah-



In this photograph provided by 'Meet the Press,' Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice speaks during a taping of 'Meet the Press' at the NBC studios, March 26. (AP Photo/Meet the Press, Alex Wong)

man, but Rice said she could not confirm the news.

Rice acknowledged that Article Three of the Afghan constitution states that "no law can be contrary to the beliefs and provisions of the sacred religion of Islam," or sharia law, but she stressed that the Afghan constitution "also says that people should have certain individual rights, including freedom of conscience on issues of this kind."

Rice said on Fox News Sunday that Afghanistan is "a young democracy that now does have a constitution that is in accordance with the modern age. But of course, they're going to have diffi-

culties and conflicts. There are going to be cases that are going to go one way or another."

"What we have to do is stand with the Afghans to continue to insist on the principle [of freedom of religion] and to help them work through some of these contradictions," she said.

For more information, see Rebuilding Afghanistan (http://usinfo.state.gov/sa/rebuilding_afghanistan.html).

RAQ

Turning to Iraq's developing democracy, Rice said Iraqi leaders are "sitting down to form a government of national unity" and "developing a program by which this national government will actually govern."

"They are developing rules and institutions that they will use to govern and they are looking at what jobs will be held by whom. So this is a complicated process that is likely to push them very much further forward once it is completed," she said.

In a separate interview on CBS's Face the Nation, National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley said President Bush "has made it very clear" that Iraqi leaders need to form a unity government as soon as possible.

"It is important that the Iraqi people see all the sectarian communities joining in a unity government," he said, but at the same time, "you've got to get it right, and we think they're making progress."

(Continued on page 16)

Religious Freedom at Core of Democratic Development, Rice Says . . .

(Continued from page 15)

Rice acknowledged on NBC's Meet the Press that violence continues to plague the country, but noted that "under the specter of this violence, you have Iraqis now, Sunni, Shia, Kurds and others, determined to form a government of national unity."

"That's extraordinary in Iraq's history where they've always settled their differences by violence, not by politics. And when they succeed in that, they are going to have the basis for a very different kind of Iraq," she said.

In response to a question, Rice addressed the issue of a report that suggests Russia may have passed intelligence information to Saddam Hussein's regime in advance of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

"[W]e take very seriously any suggestion that a foreign government may have passed information to the Iraqis prior to the American invasion that might have put our troops in danger," she said, adding that the United States would raise the matter with the Russian government after conducting a thorough review of relevant documents.

For more information, see Iraq Update (http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/iraq.html).

IRAN

Hadley said the United States is concerned by reports that Iranians are providing assistance to Iraqi insurgents.

"Clearly, there are contacts between Iran and elements in Iran and groups in Iraq that are promoting violence. We also have evidence of equipment that clearly was of Iranian origin showing up in improvised explosive devices that are killing Iraqis and killing the coalition," he said.

Rice said the United States is also troubled by Iran's nuclear activities.

"The Iranians are defying the world's will. And the international community needs to speak and speak with one voice," she said on Fox News Sunday. "We and the Russians and the Europeans and others have the same view that was expressed in the Board of Governors resolution on February 4th from the International Atomic Energy Agency, and that is that Iran needs to suspend its enrichment activities and return to negotiation."

The secretary said there are some "tactical issues" on how to communicate this message to Iran, but she said U.S. and Russian representatives would work "to try and resolve these differences be

cause we do need to speak and speak with one voice."

Rice stressed on NBC's Meet the Press that if the Iranians want to be part of the international community, "they have no choice but to give up ambitions that could lead to the technologies that would lead to a nuclear weapon."

"We really do have a chance to solve this diplomatically but ... we can't afford to waste time," she said.

For more information, see Arms Control and Non-Proliferation (http://usinfo.state.gov/is/international_security/arms_control.html).

Transcripts of Rice's remarks on Fox News Sunday (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/63701.htm>) NBC's Meet the Press (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/63703.htm>), and CNN Late Edition (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/63704.htm>) are available on the State Department Web site.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

Progress, Challenges Highlighted on World Tuberculosis Day 2006

By Cheryl Pellerin
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington — Tuberculosis (TB), the curable disease that kills 5,000 people every day worldwide, will be the focus of world attention March 24, World Tuberculosis Day, which highlights progress and challenges in the global fight against an ancient enemy.

In this war, many allies have come together to stop the global tuberculosis epidemic — nations, international organizations, scientists, philanthropists, public and private entities, nongovernmental organizations, academic institutions and others.

The challenges they face are sobering: TB is a worldwide pandemic; 2 billion people — equal to one-third of the world population — are infected with TB bacilli, the microbes that cause TB.

CHALLENGES AND PROGRESS

Twenty-nine percent of all TB cases are in Africa, and half of all new cases are in six Asian countries — Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan and the Philippines.

TB is a leading killer among HIV-infected people with weakened immune systems; 250,000 TB deaths, most of them in Africa, are HIV-associated.

Virtually all TB deaths are in the developing world, where the victims are mainly young adults in their most productive years.

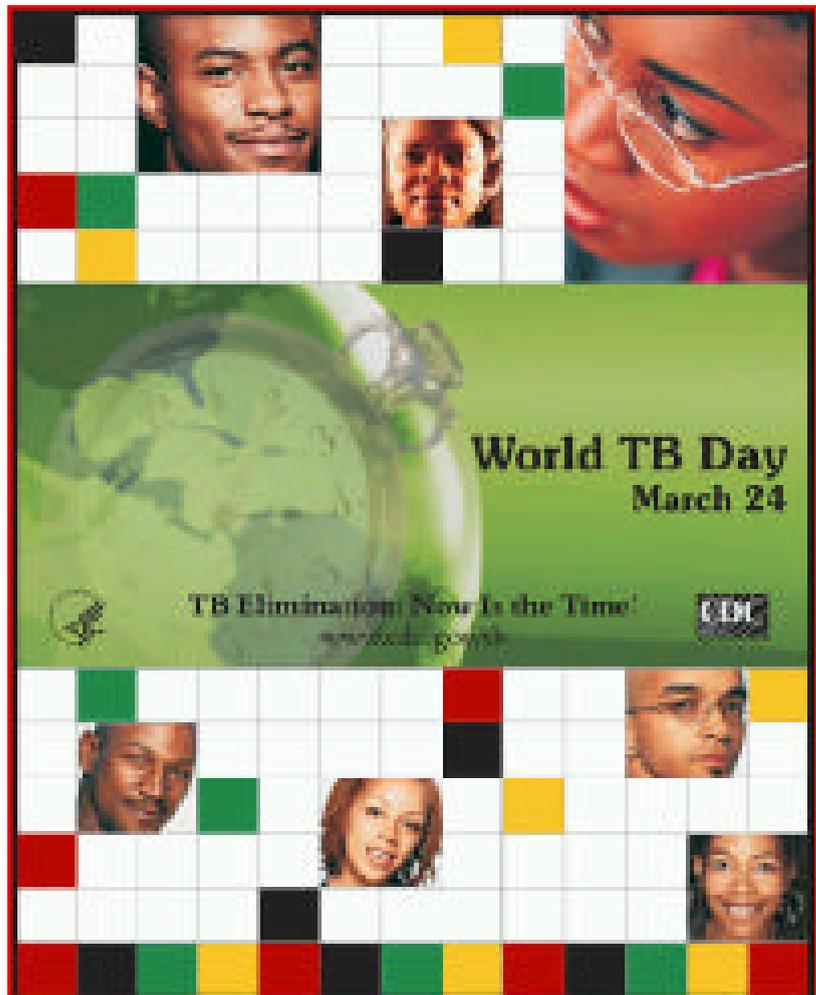
But there is also progress to report. In 1993, because of patient difficulty in keeping up with long-

duration TB therapies, the World Health Organization (WHO) introduced a program called DOTS, which stands for directly observed treatment, short-course.

According to Melvin Spigelman and Stephen Gillespie in a March 17 article in the journal *Lancet*,

treatment course. Multidrug-resistant TB is a form of TB that does not respond to standard drug treatment.

DOTS components include political commitment with increased and sustained funding, TB detection through quality-assured bacte-



"Tuberculosis Drug Development Pipeline: Progress and Hope," one of five crucial DOTS components is the direct observation by trained personnel of patients taking their medications.

Resistance to TB drugs (multidrug-resistant TB) arises in those who do not complete the

riology, standardized treatment with supervision and patient support, an effective drug supply and management system and a monitoring and evaluation system for the program.

Since 1995, some 183 countries have adopted DOTS — although

(Continued on page 18)

Progress, Challenges Highlighted on World Tuberculosis Day 2006 . . .

(Continued from page 17)

nearly one-fifth of the world population still has no access to DOTS services, WHO says — and more than 22 million TB patients have been treated under the DOTS program.

More funding and support is needed for this and other prevention and treatment strategies, and in January, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, the WHO Stop TB Partnership announced a new strategy to fight the disease. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/Archive/2006/Jan/31-932773.html>).

STOPPING TUBERCULOSIS

The Global Plan to Stop TB 2006-2015 is a \$56-billion, coordinated global strategy to stop the spread of TB by implementing effective TB care around the world.

The strategy also addresses the challenges of how to continue scaling up TB control activities while also dealing with the spread of TB-HIV co-infection and multidrug-resistant TB.

TB-HIV, especially in Africa, and multidrug-resistant TB, particularly in eastern Europe, seriously are hampering global control efforts to reduce the 1.7 million deaths that TB causes each year.

DOTS is at the strategy's core.

"DOTS remains central to TB control. Without it we would have no TB control," said Dr. Mario Raviglione, director of WHO's Stop TB Department, in a March 17 statement.

"The Stop TB Strategy aims to ensure access to care for all TB patients," he added, "to reach the 2015 Millennium Development Goal for TB and to reduce the burden of TB worldwide."

The Stop TB Strategy, published in the 17 March issue of *Lancet*, was developed during a consultation process involving international health partners over two years.

Its components seek to expand and enhance DOTS; address TB-HIV, multidrug-resistant TB and other challenges; strengthen health systems; engage all providers of care; empower TB patients and communities; and enable and promote research.

The Stop TB Strategy underpins the Global Plan to Stop TB 2006-2015. If fully implemented, the Global Plan will treat 50 million people for TB, halve TB prevalence and death rates and save 14 million lives.

For the plan to succeed, a 10-year, \$31 billion funding gap must be bridged. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has pledged \$900 million by 2015.

VACCINES AND TREATMENTS

The vaccine used today to prevent TB, the bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) vaccine, was introduced in 1921 by Frenchmen Albert Calmette and Camille Guerin.

It is the most widely administered vaccine in the world and reduces mortality from TB by about 90 percent in vaccinated children, according to T. Mark Doherty and Graham Rook in a March 17 *Lancet* article, "Progress and Hin-

drances in Tuberculosis Vaccine Development."

But the "vaccine has little effect on pulmonary tuberculosis," they authors write, "which is most common in young adults in regions where TB is endemic."

In the United States, scientists at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health in Maryland, are working to find alternative vaccines and treatment.

"For the first time in the history of TB research," said NIAID Director Anthony Fauci and colleagues in a March 21 statement, "a significant number of TB countermeasure candidates are available for clinical testing."

For example, he added, in June 2005, a promising new TB drug called PA-824 entered clinical trials. Preclinical studies suggest the drug is effective against proliferating and slow-growing forms of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, the micro-organism that causes TB.

Current treatments for active TB require multiple drugs for long periods, but PA-824 might decrease the required duration of treatment. More than 10 other drug candidates are undergoing preclinical evaluation.

Several promising TB candidate vaccines also have been developed. Two vaccines, rBCG30 and Mtb72f, are being tested in clinical trials in the United States and a third vaccine has been shown to be safe and immunogenic in tests conducted in Europe.

(Continued on page 14)

American Journalist Conducts "Lively" Media Workshops in Africa

By Jim Fisher-Thompson
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- American magazine reporter Eduardo Cue believes promoting democracy and good governance is an exercise best done through the exchange of ideas and experiences, a practice he recently put to the test in the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville), the Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa) and Madagascar.

Cue, a French-speaking writer for U.S. News and World Report, galvanized fellow journalists in Brazzaville and Kinshasa, where he ran media workshops January 30-February 1 as part of the U.S. State Department's international speakers program.

According to a document provided by U.S. officials, Cue began his Brazzaville visit with a working lunch hosted by the embassy, where he engaged local reporters and senior TV and radio representatives "in a lively debate on the role of the press in an emerging democracy, ethics and responsible journalism."

Although some journalists tried to make a case for government censorship of the media, Cue made a reasonable and spirited defense of the public's right to know that had a majority of the Congolese present agreeing, according to observers.

The next day Cue proved even more popular during a conversation with 56 Congolese journalists on the role of the press in bringing greater transparency to government. The session had to be extended for more than two hours "due to the intense level of give-

and-take during the question-and-answer period," according to the U.S. Embassy.

In Brazzaville, as well as



Journalist Eduardo Cue

Kinshasa, where he also conducted a workshop, U.S. officials said Cue found time to conduct impromptu presentations to senior Congolese editors.

Altogether, Cue's "careful recitations of the misdeeds of a corrupt press" and dishonest governments "captured the interest of his audiences," the embassy reported, and "clearly conveyed the message that a free and responsible press has both an obligation and a key role to help build a sustainable democratic system."

REACHING OUT TO A NEW GENERATION OF JOURNALISTS

In Madagascar, Cue ran media workshops March 3-11 with more than 225 journalists, students and

media owners participating.

His visit was timely, the U.S. Embassy in Antananarivo, Madagascar, reported, because "a new generation of journalists, looking to emulate the United States by breaking with embedded poor or corrupt practices, wants to move Madagascar toward participation in a global economy as a credible democracy."

The highlight of Cue's trip to Madagascar was a three-day "train-the-trainers" workshop for 17 leaders of media associations, which he conducted in French. The exercise focused on basic journalism practices such as writing style and thematic reporting and included critiques of the participants' previously filed reports.

The embassy said Cue's direct approach resulted in "frank, constructive exchanges about ethics and corruption in the Malagasy media" that had a discernable impact on his audiences. "The participants unanimously agreed," it said, "that they gained new perspectives for their future reporting ... [became] determined to focus on the public's needs and interests ... and to pursue balanced, objective reporting to ensure their credibility as journalists in their role as the 'fourth power.'"

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

Blogs Transforming Politics, Business, Culture, Says Journalist

By Sara Feuerstein
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- "Nothing I have witnessed is as potentially transformative of media and politics as the emergence of blogging — or rather, the emergence of the 'voice of the people through blogging,'" says journalist David Kline, who recently participated in a State Department-hosted webchat.

Kline, a journalist, blogger, and author of the book *blog! how the newest media revolution is changing politics, business, and culture*, discussed the function of blogs in the political arena, how blogs fit in with mainstream news media, and the blogosphere's evolution during a March 20-24 webchat.

Derived from the term "Web log," blogs frequently are updated online journals where authors publish opinions and comments, and users can respond and interact with each other. Blogs exist for nearly every topic imaginable, from cooking to TV series, soccer to science. "I suppose you could say that whenever people are passionate about something — be it computers, sports or politics — that's where you'll find bloggers," said Kline.

BLOGS IN POLITICS

"My own theory is that political bloggers will make it more possible for previously unheard voices to be heard and attract an audience — and for streams of political opinion outside the traditional two-party [Republican and Democrat] rhetoric to gain a following," said Kline. Anyone with an Internet

connection can maintain a blog, and the voices of ordinary people with something valuable to say are now being heard and having an impact, he added.

In addition to serving as vehicles for opinions and stirring rhetoric, "blogs are amazing 'collective organizers' ... [that] can rally grassroots political activists, raise funds, mobilize people for common action" he said. Kline noted that U.S.-based blogs such as the liberal-leaning DailyKos and conservative-leaning Powerline have demonstrated tremendous skill at mobilizing like-minded people.

Although blogs wield the power to mobilize voters and activists, Kline believes Web logs have not yet been effective at reaching across the political divide. Political blogs, he said, tend to "preach to the choir," spurring enthusiastic debate among those committed to firm ideological positions, but they remain unable to spark new, genuine dialog.

"I'd say that the influence of political blogs is still largely at the margins of power. Big money, big political party machines, still dominate. But as I noted before, they no longer have a total monopoly of power and influence. Political bloggers have upset the apple cart from time to time," said Kline.

BLOGS IN MEDIA

Blogs also have begun to "upset the apple cart" of media coverage and distribution, Kline said. Many have lost faith in the media's fairness and dedication to the public interest and are turning to blogs as

sources of information, analysis and truth. "The fact remains that no longer is public policy, news and information, and national and international discourse the exclusive domain of 'professional editors, reporters, policymakers, and politicians,'" Kline said.

Conventional media such as newspapers, television news programs and weekly news magazines often quote the blogs that consistently offer credible facts and insightful commentary. Blogs now exert some influence over which stories national and world media choose to cover.

Even though blogs are gaining momentum, Kline said, blogging will complement and reshape mainstream media but never replace it. "In most cases, blogs cannot replace seasoned reporting by, for example, national security reporters with high-level contacts," nor would they ever "acquire the trust and credibility" of major media, he said.

BLOGGING IN THE FUTURE

How are blogs evolving? According to Kline, 30 million blogs have been created. He believes that bloggers will sort themselves into three main categories: "Some bloggers will gain credibility equal to that enjoyed by mainstream journalists, and they will have to adhere to roughly similar codes of ethics. Others will be content to write passionately about their hobbies or interests, and will be viewed by their dedicated readers not as journalists, but as 'experts' in their chosen field. And then fi-

(Continued on page 25)

Visiting African Female Journalists Get Boost from Laura Bush

By Jim Fisher-Thompson
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- A group of visiting women journalists from Africa say Washington's impressive monuments and institutions paled in comparison to a meeting they had recently with first lady Laura Bush, who spoke passionately about the scourge of HIV/AIDS.

Alice Emasu, a features writer for the New Vision newspaper in Uganda, told the Washington File that she was "extremely impressed" at her first contact with Mrs. Bush at a March 13 White House lunch the first lady hosted for a group of South African women struggling with the problem of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS.

"I found her [Bush] to be a very great woman. Every time she opened her lips to say a word, I flashed back home and thought of some of the powerful women of Uganda, like President [Yoweri] Museveni's wife, Janet. ... Not enough is being done to tap their potential."

Emasu, along with five other African women journalists, participated in a State Department-sponsored media tour of America March 11-25. After a round of high-level meetings in Washington with officials, politicians and media figures, the group traveled to Atlanta, where it visited the headquarters of CNN, as well as prominent African-American women's organizations.

Elizabeth Albrecht, editor of the supplement "BY," a part of Die Burger newspaper in South Africa, also commented on the White House lunch, saying, "I could see

that Mrs. Bush was very committed to helping African women cope with AIDS, and they related to her in a very sincere manner. It was not [political] posturing at all."

Unfortunately, in South Africa, Albrecht said, "increasingly now, we have what some have called 'AIDS fatigue.' The press is tired of writing about it. The people are tired of reading about it. These women who went to the White House have had very little media coverage in my country. I heard about them from the American consulate in South Africa.

"Actually, as I listened to them speak to Laura Bush in the White House, I became very emotional," Albrecht said. "I thought, 'I've never in my own country heard an HIV-positive woman talk like that, and there are millions of them.' In a way, it breaks my heart that we need the first lady of the United States to bring women like that to the forefront."

To be fair, Albrecht said that in South Africa the constitution that inaugurated majority rule in 1994 mandates that 30 percent of the national parliament must be women, and there is currently a 33 percent representation. "There are also several important Cabinet positions held by women," the journalist added, such as a new deputy president and the ministers of foreign affairs, health, and minerals and energy.

"So, we have plenty of women in office," Albrecht said. "The problem is that there is a public perception that many of these women are really not such good and strong leaders."

Elizabeth Hoff, president of the Press Union of Liberia, also was impressed with Laura Bush's sincerity. "She struck me as somebody who is very passionate about issues like women's health and Africa, very committed to the president's [Bush's] AIDS prevention program.

"Just the fact that she brought women from South Africa living with the disease to come to America and tell their stories of how they are coping and the hope they have for the future is a testimony to her concern," said the Liberian.

Anabela Adrianopoulos, who hosts a popular TV and radio talk show focusing on issues important to women in Mozambique, said the openness and honesty with which the first lady handled a tough issue like HIV/AIDS is an example of the type of media approach she is hoping to duplicate in her homeland.

CNN selected Adrianopoulos to be the host of the CNN Multi-Choice African Journalist 2006 Awards in Maputo in July.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦



Elizabeth Hoff, President of PUL is one of the journalist who met first lady Laura Bush.

Half of Secretary Rice's Key Aides Are Women

By David Anthony Denny
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Most of the world knows that Condoleezza Rice is U.S. secretary of state, and many also realize that she is not the first woman to head the State Department -- that honor fell to Madeleine Albright in 1997.

But some might find it surprising that Rice, who came to the State Department after serving as the first female national security advisor during President Bush's first term in office, has four women among her top eight aides.

The State Department, like much of the American work force, once included few women. The United States' first female ambassador was not appointed until 1933. Not until 1953 was a female Foreign Service officer appointed, and until 1971 those officers were prohibited from marrying.

But things have changed in the State Department's halls of power and influence. Joining Rice at the State Department are:

Karen Hughes, under secretary for public diplomacy and public affairs, who is charged with engaging, informing and influencing key international audiences in a manner consistent with both the agency's outreach to Americans and its traditional diplomatic practice. Hughes was a top aide to then-Governor Bush in Texas during the 1990s



Karen Hughes



Henrietta Fore

and also served as counselor to the president during Bush's first term.

Josette Shiner, the under secretary for economic, business, and agricultural affairs, serves as Rice's senior economic policy adviser and has the lead on issues ranging from multilateral trade, agriculture and aviation to bilateral economic relations. Shiner came to State after serving as deputy U.S. trade representative for East Asia, South Asia and Africa, and as a journalist and top executive at a leading Wall Street technology firm.



Josette Shiner

Henrietta Fore, the under secretary of state for management, is responsible for "the people, resources, facilities, technology and security" of the agency, and serves as Rice's top adviser on management issues. Fore came to State from the Treasury Department, where she had been director of the United States Mint -- the world's largest maker of coins and coin products. Previously, she was an assistant administrator at the Agency for International Development during the administration of President George

H.W. Bush, the current President Bush's father.

Paula Dobriansky, the under secretary for democracy and global affairs, coordinates U.S. foreign relations on a variety of global issues, including democracy, human rights and labor; environment, oceans and science; narcotics control and law enforcement; population, refugees and migration; and women's issues. Previously, Dobriansky headed the Washington office of the Council on Foreign Relations, and before that she was a senior adviser to a multinational law firm and served at the U.S. Information Agency, the National Security Council and State Department.



Paula Dobriansky

These women, along with Deputy Secretary Robert Zoellick, Under Secretary for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns, Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Policy Robert Joseph, and Counselor Philip Zelikow, form the secretary's "first team."

The State Department, which in 1996 was found guilty of discriminating against its Foreign Service women, now is benefiting tremendously from the contributions of women, all the way up to the top.

Additional information (<http://www.state.gov/misc/19232.htm>) about senior State Department officials is available on the department's Web site. ♦

U.S. Women Increasingly Successful in Legal Careers

By Alexandra Abboud
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- In the United States, equality before the law only now is beginning to be matched by equality in the law, as U.S. women in ever-larger numbers are entering and succeeding in legal careers.

Even legendary attorney Clarence Darrow, considered a progressive in the early 20th century, was skeptical of women's chances to succeed in the law. He once told a group of women lawyers: "You can't be shining lights at the bar because you are too kind. You can never be corporation lawyers because you are not cold-blooded. You have not a high degree of intellect. You can never expect to get the fees men get."

Darrow would be surprised to learn that according to a study done by the American Bar Association in 2001, some 44 women held general counsel or chief counsel positions at Fortune 500 companies, 71 percent of women lawyers are in private practice, a majority of students entering law schools are female, about 18 percent of U.S. federal district and appellate judges are women and two women have sat on the Supreme Court of the United States.

One pioneer of women in the law is Sandra Day O'Connor, the first female justice appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court. O'Connor retired from the court on January 30, after 24 years of service, and widely is recognized as a strong factor in the dramatic increase of women in the legal profession.

O'Connor, along with Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, spoke at a National Women's History Month Celebration on March 8.

O'CONNOR'S CAREER MIRRORED U.S. WOMEN'S STRUGGLE FOR EQUAL RIGHTS

"During her near quarter-century of service to the Court and to the nation, Justice O'Connor helped



Sandra Day O'Connor, the first female justice appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court

build a community of women attracted to the law and to public service," said Gonzales. "Her greatest legacy lies not in the opinions of the Supreme Court, but in the spirits of hope burning brightly in the hearts of generations of American women."

O'Connor's road to the Supreme Court reflects the obstacles many female lawyers faced in the United States. She graduated from Stanford Law School in California third in her class, but job offers from

top law firms were not forthcoming. One firm offered her a job as a legal secretary.

"When I got out of law school, in the dark ages, in 1952, from Stanford Law School, I couldn't even get an interview for a job in a private firm to practice law," she said.

O'Connor soon found work in the public sector, where she said opportunity for employment for women lawyers was greater than in the private sector. She worked as a county lawyer in San Mateo, California, and then practiced law on her own. In 1969, she was elected to the Arizona state Legislature, where she became the first female majority leader of the Arizona state Senate.

O'Connor was nominated to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1981 by President Ronald Reagan, after serving seven years as a state judge in Arizona.

"I have seen a revolution in the legal profession that has resulted in women representing about 40 percent of practicing lawyers in the country today, and slightly over 50 percent of all law school graduates currently," said O'Connor.

This increase is due in large part to Supreme Court rulings that debunked the idea that "God designed the sexes to occupy different spheres of action, and it belonged to man to make, apply and execute the laws," O'Connor said.

O'Connor cites *Reed v. Reed* as the first Supreme Court case to find discrimination against women

(Continued on page 25)

Middle East Women Discuss Importance of Empowerment

By Kathryn McConnell
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- A Saudi woman founds a club to help empower young women in Saudi Arabia. A Palestinian woman advises women entrepreneurs in Palestine. A third woman, from Morocco, cites recent legal reforms in her country that have helped women gain a greater voice in economic and democratic development.

The three women presented their assessments of the progress and remaining challenges for women's empowerment in the Middle East March 22 at the International Research and Exchanges Board in Washington.

IREX is a U.S.-based nonprofit organization specializing in programs that help individuals and institutions gain the capacity to contribute to their societies.

The women were in the United States to participate in the Business Internship Program for Young Middle Eastern Women program, which combines graduate-level academic training with internships at prestigious companies in the United States.

The four-year-old program is part of the broader U.S. Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI).

MEPI is the Bush administration's program to help citizens across the region to promote political openness, economic liberty, educational opportunity, and the empowerment of women. (See Middle East Partnership Initiative (http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/me_partnership_initiative.html).

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION

Alaa Naseif, from Saudi Arabia, said empowerment begins with education. Empowerment means not just having more opportunity; it involves "having a choice in selecting among various opportunities," she said.

However, Naseif, a former assistant professor of early education at the liberal arts Effat College in Jeddah, said education is still not equally available to women in parts of the Middle East and that educational materials still are geared toward men.

Women need more much more training in business and information technologies because, she said, "we need to be prepared if more opportunities are presented to us," and being prepared means being educated to make good choices.

Dana Jamjoum, a Palestinian, said obstacles to creating and maintaining a business at home include fear and limits on transportation and movement that stifle daily activities.

The Palestinian Territories also need more investment, grants and technical assistance from other countries to help people create small businesses so they can advance economically, according to Jamjoum.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, Morocco has worked to mainstream gender awareness and opportunity into its political and economic sectors, said Widad Elhanafi, parliamentary program coordinator for the National Democ-

ratic Institute in her country. NDI is a Washington-based nonprofit organization.

Elhanafi pointed to a 2002 change in the national electoral rules that allows women to run for elected office; 35 women won parliamentary seats in the following election.

She also cited changes in divorce law. "A women can now initiate a divorce, is entitled to retain custody of her children after a divorce and may move away from her former husband," she said.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EXPERIENCE

While in the United States, Naseif is seeking to gain management and business skills. She is working as an intern at an international school in Washington.

Jamjoum said she hopes to gain skills she can use to help more Palestinian companies improve their competitiveness and enter the global marketplace. She is working with an economic consulting firm in the Washington area.

Through her internship, Elhanafi wants to continue to develop her professional skills, particularly in the area of public relations. She is interning at a Washington-based company involved in advocacy and strategic planning for government relations.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS
SECTION
AMERICAN EMBASSY**

P.O.Box 1014
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia

Phone: 251-1-174007
251-1-174000
Fax: 251-1-242454
Email: pasaddis@state.gov



Blogs Transforming Politics, Business, Culture, . . .

(Continued from page 20)

nally, of course, a great many bloggers will just spew a lot of hot air, and few will trust them or care what they say."

Kline also hopes that blogs will bring people together and help them better to understand each other. "There is still a lot of 'talking at' rather than 'communication with' each other," said Kline, who hopes that as blogging matures, it will foster "greater empathy and listening."

Kline said he has high hopes for blogging's future role in politics, media and the world. "This is not just pie-in-the-sky rhetoric," he said. "I truly believe, as I say in my book, that blogging is helping to finally create the kind of world we were always taught was best — a world in which EVERYONE at last has a voice and a chance to have that

voice heard...And that, to my mind, is real democracy."

The transcript (<http://usinfo.state.gov/eur/Archive/2006/Mar/27-734425.html>) of this webchat and information about upcoming webchats are available on USINFO's Webchat Station (<http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/Products/Webchats.html>). Kline's biography is available on his blog, www.blogrevolt.com (<http://www.blogrevolt.com/>).

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

U.S. Women Increasingly Successful in Legal Careers . . .

(Continued from page 23)

unconstitutional. In the 1971 case, the court ruled unconstitutional an Idaho law that automatically gave men a preference in appointments as administrators of estates.

This ruling "signaled a very dramatic change in the Court's approach to gender-based discrimination," O'Connor said. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the Supreme Court continued to invalidate laws that discriminated based on gender.

In her March 8 remarks, O'Connor recognized the strides women have made in the legal profession, but said much work still is to be done.

"Women today are not only well represented in law firms, but they're gradually attaining more positions of political and legal power as well," she said. "But until the percentages of women in Congress and on the bench and in other slots comes closer to 50 percent, I don't think we've totally succeeded."

There is one woman serving on the U.S. Supreme Court today; Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was nominated by President Bill Clinton in 1993.

When asked if women judges decide cases differently from men, O'Connor said that she and Ginsburg answer that question the same way: "a wise old woman and a wise old man are going to reach

the same conclusion."

For more information, see National Women's History Month (http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/history_geography_and_population/population_and_diversity/women_in_the_us/national_womens_history_month.html) and The Supreme Court of the United States: Highest Court in the Land (<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itdhr/0405/ijde/ijde0405.htm>).

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦