



Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

INSIDE

President Obama Nominates New Assistant Secretary for Africa

Washington — President Obama on March 20 announced his intent to nominate career diplomat and three-time U.S. ambassador in Africa Johnnie Carson as the next U.S. assistant secretary of state for African affairs.



Ambassador Johnnie Carson

If confirmed by the Senate, Carson will succeed Jendayi Frazer, who served in the post during the Bush administration.

Carson is currently the national intelligence officer for Africa on the Na-

tional Intelligence Council. He joined the council in September 2006 after a 37-year career in the foreign service. Prior to this appointment, Carson served as the senior vice president of the National Defense University in Washington from 2003 until 2006.

Carson's foreign service career includes ambassadorships to Kenya (1999–2003), Zimbabwe (1995–1997)

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Livelihood Baselines for Ethiopia Will Improve Programming

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) joined the Government of Ethiopia's Disaster Management and Food Security Sector (DMFSS) on Thursday, March 26 to launch the largest set of livelihood baselines in Africa. After three years of investing in a successful, nationwide system of livelihood mapping and analysis, the new data will help inform policy

decisions and improve effectiveness of early warning and response, risk reduction and development programs.

"These analysis tools are the most comprehensive set of baselines in Africa, providing context for newcomers and experts in development," Glenn Anders, USAID Mission Director said. "We must ensure that the analysis is used by donors, govern-

ment officials, and NGOs to better inform development and humanitarian responses." Ato Mitiku Kassa, State Minister for the DMFSS, and Ato Mathewos Hunde, Director of the Early Warning and Response Directorate, DMFSS, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, joined Anders at the official launching ceremony held at the Ghion Hotel.

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Ethiopia has a good record of detecting major crises, especially droughts stretching from 1977 to date, through its early warning system and the national disaster management system. Both of these systems, however, are relief-oriented. The systems are now under reform and a proactive disaster risk management approach that supports sustainable development is being developed. As part of this new direction, these new baselines will help assess needs, contribute to contingency planning, support PSNP programming, and identify policy issues.

The new livelihood baselines will help development leaders better understand the risk of food or livelihood insecurity of rural populations. Livelihoods refers to how a family makes ends meet from year to year and how they survive (or sometimes might fail to survive) through difficult times. In developing the baselines, key informant and focus group interviews were held with over 56,000 people throughout rural Ethiopia including woreda officials, community leaders and community members.

Livelihood baselines are already completed for seven out of the nine regions. Funding for the baselines was given by the American people through USAID with technical sup-

port provided by FEG Consulting, Save the Children UK in Somali and Afar, and FEWSNET in SNNPR under the management of the Livelihood Integration Unit (LIU) who has working in Tigray, Amhara, Harari, Dire Dawa City Administration, and Oromiya. The LIUs baseline work in Benishangul and Gambella will be completed by the end of April 2009. Livelihood profiles can be downloaded at www.dppc.gov.et/Livelihoods/livelihoodhome.htm ♦

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and Uganda (1991–1994). He also served as principal deputy assistant secretary for the State Department's Bureau of African Affairs from 1997 through 1999. Earlier in his career, he served in Portugal, Botswana, Mozambique and Nigeria as well as in the Africa section of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research.

Before joining the foreign service, Carson was a Peace Corps volunteer in Tanzania. He holds an undergraduate degree in history and political science from Drake University

and a master's degree in international relations from the University of London.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention presented Carson with its Champion of Prevention Award for his leadership in directing the U.S. government's HIV/AIDS prevention efforts in Kenya.

Senator Russ Feingold, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's Subcommittee on African Affairs, called Carson's nomination "a strong choice."

"Carson is an accomplished career

foreign service officer with an excellent track record on African issues spanning many decades and a range of positions," Feingold said. "Carson has a deep understanding of our diplomatic capacities and the importance of regular interagency collaboration. I look forward to considering his nomination and hearing how he and the administration plan to address the many challenges we face on the African continent."

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

United States Extends Friendly Hand to East Africa

By Jacquelyn S. Porth
Staff Writer

Washington — The U.S. Navy, the U.S. Coast Guard and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which have extended a helping hand to a number of West African countries in the past few years, are now reaching out to East Africa, too.

The broad program is known as the Africa Partnership Station (APS). It started in 2007 as an international security effort offering training and other forms of collaboration to improve maritime safety and security off the West African coast.

The United States launched APS to help African nations achieve stability and economic prosperity through civilian-military maritime mentoring as well as military-to-military training.

Seeing the benefits of the program, African officials on the other side of the continent asked for similar help. This paved the way for the first APS visit to Mozambique, Tanzania and Kenya this year by the USS Robert G. Bradley. The naval vessel carried a team of U.S., European, South American and African personnel that coached personnel in three host countries on ways to combat piracy; drug, weapons, and human trafficking; and fish poaching.

Illegal fishing is a significant problem in East Africa. The region loses an estimated \$310 million every year because it lacks the maritime infrastructure to combat the problem.

That is where this kind of good neighbor initiative can make a dif-



Members of the 9th Provisional Security Force sort books to be distributed to several schools in Djibouti on March 21, 2009. More than 15,000 books were received from USNS Big Horn (T-AO 198) at the port of Djibouti March 20, 2009.

ference. Its training focuses on information sharing that will give African maritime forces a complete image of what is happening in nearby waters through a shared communication network. Hands-on training is offered to help develop a professional maritime corps that will be ready to respond to a host of potential security challenges.

U.S. Navy Captain Nicholas Holman returned recently from several weeks leading the crew of the Bradley during training, humanitarian assistance and partnership-building ventures. He said the goal of the effort is to improve ocean monitoring activities so that they will be on par with airspace monitoring efforts.

Holman told the Defense Bloggers Roundtable March 11 that this is important because some of the regional navies and coast guards do not have the capability "to do much about anything that's going on in their waters."

Most of the training occurred on-board, but in some cases simulated boarding of ships was conducted using small boats in the host countries. Training included instruction in navigation and handling emergencies at sea.

During the Bradley's visit to Mozambique, instructors worked with indigenous forces on maritime search-and-seizure techniques. "This is a new adventure on the

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Obama Names Special Envoy for Sudan

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — Ending the suffering and the humanitarian crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan is a significant U.S. foreign policy goal, says President Obama. And to further that objective, Obama has named a new special envoy for Sudan.

The president selected retired Air Force Major General Scott Gration as U.S. special envoy for Sudan March 18. Gration, a foreign policy adviser to the president, has deep experience in the region. He speaks Swahili and grew up in Africa as the son of missionaries.

Gration traveled with Obama in 2006 when the president, then a U.S. senator, visited Africa, including stops to visit Darfur refugees in Chad, which borders Sudan.

"General Gration's personal and professional background, and his service to the country as both a military leader and a humanitarian, give him the insights and experience necessary for this assignment," Obama said in a White House announcement.

"Sudan is a priority for this administration, particularly at a time when it cries out for peace and for justice. The worsening humanitarian crisis there makes our task all the more urgent," the president said. The announcement by the White House comes as the Obama administration continues to formulate a new strategy for Sudan and the Darfur crisis.

U.S. Senators Russ Feingold, a Democrat from Wisconsin, and Johnny Isakson, a Republican from Georgia, who are ranking members of the

Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on African Affairs, praised the appointment of Gration.

"His knowledge of Africa and his experience there, coupled with his distinguished military career, make him well-equipped to help craft a

government's alleged targeting of civilians during its 2003–2008 campaign against rebel groups in Sudan's western Darfur region.

Bashir "is suspected of being criminally responsible," reads the ICC indictment, "for intentionally direct-



The Darfuri community in London held a memorial March 4 to remember the victims of the Darfur conflict.

strong, reinvigorated policy toward Sudan," they said in a joint statement.

The senators said the appointment comes at a crucial time as the Darfur crisis worsens.

INTERNATIONAL COURT CHARGES SUDANESE PRESIDENT

On March 4, the International Criminal Court in The Hague, Netherlands, indicted Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on two counts of war crimes and five counts of crimes against humanity for his

ing attacks against an important part of the civilian population of Darfur, Sudan, murdering, raping, torturing, and forcibly transferring large numbers of civilians and pillaging their property."

At least 300,000 people have been killed in the conflict and 2.7 million others have been driven from their homes, according to the United Nations.

After the indictment, Bashir ordered 13 nongovernmental humanitarian assistance groups, including Doc-

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East Coast [of Africa],” Holman said.

MARITIME SAFETY IS KEY TO SUCCESS

Wherever they went, training instructors hammered home the need for maritime safety. Two African sailors died at sea in 2008 in an accident involving excessive speed. Better ship handling and crew safety are themes that Navy captains emphasize whenever they have the ear of a student audience.

East African navies are also interested in acquiring more vessels. Holman said the State Department

is looking at ways to provide additional Archangel patrol boats.

He said Kenya is interested in resuming U.S. naval visits to its Indian Ocean port, Mombassa.

Community outreach is another important aspect of the APS initiative. When a ship docks at a port, crew members disembark and head to local orphanages, schools and hospitals where they repair and repaint. The Navy pitches in and buys the paint and sailors provide the labor.

This is how it worked when the sailors helped paint the Kidz Care orphanage in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Holman said his sailors enjoy these opportunities to interact and

leave behind a lasting touch.

Community outreach also entails the delivery of donated supplies through the Navy’s Project Handclasp. Collected toys and personal hygiene products were carried in the Bradley’s hold and distributed during shore visits.

For more information, see Africa: Partnering for Prosperity (<http://www.america.gov/world/africa.html>).

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

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tors without Borders, CARE, Oxfam Great Britain and Save the Children, expelled, saying they had spied against him and his regime for the international court. The nongovernmental organizations have used foreign assistance to provide food, shelter and protection from the fighting between rebel forces and government-backed forces for nearly 4.7 million people.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said March 17 that Bashir will be held responsible for any deaths that result from his order to expel nongovernmental organizations from the country.

“This is a horrendous situation that is going to cause untold misery and

suffering for the people of Darfur, particularly those in refugee camps,” Clinton said. “The real question is what kind of pressure can be brought to bear on President Bashir and the government in Khartoum to understand that they will be held responsible for every single death that occurs in those camps.”

Total U.S. humanitarian assistance to Darfur and eastern Chad since October 2007, the beginning of fiscal year 2008, is \$936.43 million, the State Department said March 18.

“We take this very seriously,” Clinton said. “We are looking for the most effective ways to convince and demonstrate to the government of Sudan that they have now assumed an even greater sense of

responsibility and infamy in the eyes of the world by turning their backs on these refugees, whom they created in the first place.”

INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCE

Obama said the United States fully supports the full, unobstructed deployment of the joint African Union–United Nations peacekeeping force and the negotiation of a political solution to end the fighting.

“The government of Sudan’s disastrous decision to expel humanitarian relief organizations leaves a void that will be filled by deprivation and despair and they will be held accountable for the lives lost,” Obama said. ♦

Former U.S. Agriculture Secretary Calls for Development Czar

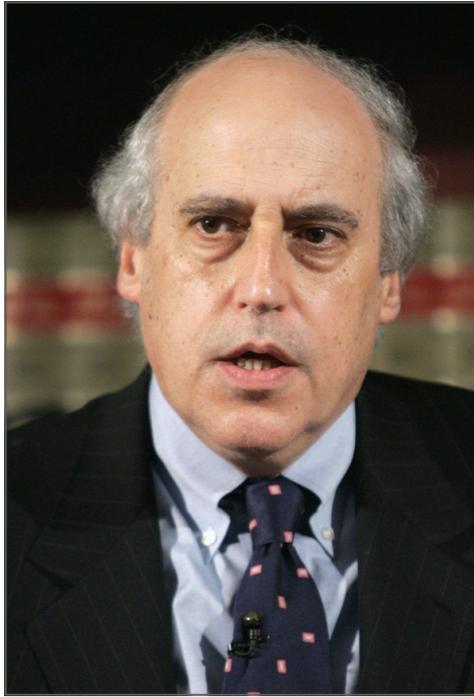
By Matt Herrick
Staff Writer

Washington — Former U.S. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman has called for appointment of a development czar to oversee U.S. foreign aid and challenged the Obama administration to spend more to alleviate hunger worldwide, especially in Africa.

Glickman, in testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee March 24, said the amount of funding needed to feed the malnourished in Africa is “a drop in the bucket” compared to government funds devoted to stanching the current economic crisis. He challenged the U.S. government — the world’s leader in food assistance — to allocate at least \$340 million in 2010 and more thereafter toward infrastructure, agricultural research and education in poor countries.

Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts, a Democrat and chairman of the committee, said that one in seven people goes hungry every day in the world, a fact that constitutes “one of the great moral challenges the world faces today.” Indiana Senator Richard Lugar, the ranking Republican on the panel, echoed Kerry’s support for an enhanced foreign assistance budget that tackles global agricultural development, which would improve crop yields.

Although the administration has not announced plans in any detail on agricultural development, Lugar read from a letter to him from Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. “Combating hunger is a top priority for this administration and



Dan Glickman, Former U.S. Agriculture Secretary

for me, personally,” Clinton said in her letter. “During my confirmation testimony, I called for a move away from reacting to food crises in an ad hoc fashion, toward making food security a priority in our development programs.”

Clinton’s letter also states her intention to seek additional funds in the fiscal year 2010 budget to achieve those goals. President Obama has stated he intends to pursue the United Nations’ goal to halve global poverty by 2015.

Lugar and Senator Bob Casey of Pennsylvania are co-authors of a bill, the Global Food Security Act, which aims to update the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 by allocating about \$10 billion over five years to promote food security and improve responses to food crises.

In their March 24 testimony, Glickman and his associates from the Chicago Initiative on Global Agricultural Development endorsed the Lugar-Casey bill and delivered an unflattering depiction of the U.S. government’s past commitment to agricultural development in Africa.

Official U.S. development assistance to African nations has declined by 85 percent in real dollars (dollars minus the effect of inflation) since 1988, according to data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Robert Paarlberg, a professor at Wellesley College and Harvard University, summed up his view of the U.S. government’s historic commitment this way: In regard to food aid, particularly in the response to the worldwide food price spikes of 2008, the government gets a grade of B+ (superior, plus). But, he said, “the larger and the longer-term challenge is to address persistent malnutrition that afflicts nearly 1 billion people in the developing world.” In this area, Paarlberg gives the United States a grade of F (failing).

The Reverend David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World, called into question the government’s entire model for administering development assistance. Echoing sentiments expressed in a report from Glickman’s Chicago group, Beckmann — an Episcopal priest — said, “We hope Congress will pull several aid agencies together in one accountable agency, focus it clearly on development and poverty reduction, and allow it to be responsive to local needs and priorities.”

“To coordinate this, we need some-
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United States Seeks Multilateral Diplomacy with World Community

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — The perception that the United States has not been engaging the world community and has been pursuing foreign affairs unilaterally is erroneous, and even more so with the Obama administration, a senior U.S. diplomat says.

“The most important U.S. foreign policy goals and objectives, we’re not going to achieve by working alone, or simply working bilaterally with our friends,” says acting Assistant Secretary of State

James Warlick. “The challenges are huge.”

In an interview with America.gov, Warlick, who heads the State Department’s Bureau of International Organization Affairs, said the United States has taken some criticism in the past that it has acted alone, but that perception is not supported by the facts, he said.

Whether it is the crisis in Sudan’s western region of Darfur, Iran’s and North Korea’s attempts to create nuclear weapons, or atrocities being committed by a national leader, the United States actively seeks out partners and multilateral approaches to these and many other issues confronting nations today.

“We have to have that multilateral dimension to our diplomacy,” Warlick said. A veteran senior foreign service officer, Warlick has served

in Europe, Southeast Asia and South Asia, as well as in assignments at the United Nations, NATO and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.



*Assistant Secretary of State
James Warlick*

“Take, for example, Sudan. If we’re going to be successful in preventing [casualties] and protecting civilian lives in Darfur, it’s going to be [through] working multilaterally,” he said.

“And it’s, in fact, the presence of U.N. and African Union peacekeepers as part of a

larger strategy that does protect civilian lives,” Warlick said.

One of the key U.S. priorities for the Darfur region is the rapid deployment of the full complement of U.N. and African Union peacekeepers, he said.

Another situation where multilateral efforts are being used is with Iran, which has been attempting to develop a nuclear weapons program. Working with the U.N. Security Council and the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United States has sought to convince the Iranian government to forgo a weapons development program through a series of political and economic incentives and assistance, he said.

Instrumental in that process has been what is known in diplomatic shorthand as “the P5 + 1 process,”

which includes the permanent five members of the U.N. Security Council — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — and Germany. Warlick said the work will be done multilaterally, not bilaterally.

“Several resolutions in the U.N. Security Council have been passed, as well as work in the IAEA,” he said.

Warlick said the use of a multinational force of peacekeepers and police in Haiti is another example of nations working together to alleviate a crisis and help reconstruction efforts.

“All of these are truly multinational efforts,” he said.

U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The United States is concerned with the direction of the U.N. Human Rights Council and many of the issues it is confronting, Warlick said.

“Some of the most egregious human rights violators around the world — whether it is North Korea, Sudan, Burma, or Zimbabwe or Cuba — have gotten off without any consideration in the Human Rights Council,” he said. “And that is cause for concern.”

At the same time, the United States recognizes it is necessary to have a multilateral dimension to its human rights efforts in the world. “We need to find a way of working with other countries to single out the egregious violators to draw attention to widespread problems, such as prisoners of conscience,” he said.

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Now Is the Time for Global Action on Economy, Obama Says

The following piece by President Obama was issued by Tribune Media Services March 23 and is in the public domain.

(begin byliner)

Barack Obama: A time for global action
By Barack Obama
Tribune Media Services

Monday, March 23, 2009

WASHINGTON: We are living through a time of global economic challenges that cannot be met by half measures or the isolated efforts of any nation. Now, the leaders of the Group of 20 have a responsibility to take bold, comprehensive and coordinated action that not only jump-starts recovery, but also launches a new era of economic engagement to prevent a crisis like this from ever happening again.

No one can deny the urgency of action. A crisis in credit and confidence has swept across borders, with consequences for every corner of the world. For the first time in a generation, the global economy is contracting and trade is shrinking.

Trillions of dollars have been lost, banks have stopped lending, and tens of millions will lose their jobs across the globe. The prosperity of every nation has been endangered, along with the stability of governments and the survival of people in the most vulnerable parts of the world.

Once and for all, we have learned that the success of the American economy is inextricably linked to the global economy. There is no line between action that restores growth within our borders and action that supports it beyond.



President Obama, flanked by Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner (left) and Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke

If people in other countries cannot spend, markets dry up — already we've seen the biggest drop in American exports in nearly four decades, which has led directly to American job losses. And if we continue to let financial institutions around the world act recklessly and irresponsibly, we will remain trapped in a cycle of bubble and bust. That is why the upcoming London Summit is directly relevant to our recovery at home.

My message is clear: The United States is ready to lead, and we call upon our partners to join us with a sense of urgency and common purpose. Much good work has been

done, but much more remains.

Our leadership is grounded in a simple premise: We will act boldly to lift the American economy out of crisis and reform our regulatory structure, and these actions will be strengthened by complementary action abroad. Through our example, the United States can promote a global recovery and build confidence around the world; and if the London Summit helps galvanize collective action, we can forge a secure recovery, and future crises can be averted.

Our efforts must begin with swift action to stimulate growth. Already, the United States

has passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act — the most dramatic effort to jump-start job creation and lay a foundation for growth in a generation.

Other members of the G-20 have pursued fiscal stimulus as well, and these efforts should be robust and sustained until demand is restored. As we go forward, we should embrace a collective commitment to encourage open trade and investment, while resisting the protectionism that would deepen this crisis.

Second, we must restore the credit that businesses and consumers depend upon. At home, we are work-

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Now Is the Time for Global Action on Economy, Obama Says . . .

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ing aggressively to stabilize our financial system. This includes an honest assessment of the balance sheets of our major banks, and will lead directly to lending that can help Americans purchase goods, stay in their homes and grow their businesses.

This must continue to be amplified by the actions of our G-20 partners. Together, we can embrace a common framework that insists upon transparency, accountability and a focus on restoring the flow of credit that is the lifeblood of a growing global economy. And the G-20, together with multilateral institutions, can provide trade finance to help lift up exports and create jobs.

Third, we have an economic, security and moral obligation to extend a hand to countries and people who face the greatest risk. If we turn our backs on them, the suffering caused by this crisis will be enlarged, and our own recovery will be delayed because markets for our goods will shrink further and more American jobs will be lost.

The G-20 should quickly deploy resources to stabilize emerging markets, substantially boost the emergency capacity of the International Monetary Fund and help regional development banks accelerate lending. Meanwhile, America will support new and meaningful investments in food security that can help the poorest weather the difficult

days that will come.

While these actions can help get us out of crisis, we cannot settle for a return to the status quo. We must put an end to the reckless speculation and spending beyond our means; to the bad credit, over-leveraged banks and absence of oversight that condemns us to bubbles that inevitably bust.

Only coordinated international action can prevent the irresponsible risk-taking that caused this crisis. That is why I am committed to seizing this opportunity to advance comprehensive reforms of our regulatory and supervisory framework.

All of our financial institutions — on Wall Street and around the globe — need strong oversight and common sense rules of the road. All markets should have standards for stability and a mechanism for disclosure. A strong framework of capital requirements should protect against future crises. We must crack down on offshore tax havens and money laundering.

Rigorous transparency and accountability must check abuse, and the days of out-of-control compensation must end. Instead of patchwork efforts that enable a race to the bottom, we must provide the clear incentives for good behavior that foster a race to the top.

I know that America bears our share of responsibility for the mess that we all face. But I also know

that we need not choose between a chaotic and unforgiving capitalism and an oppressive government-run economy. That is a false choice that will not serve our people or any people.

This G-20 meeting provides a forum for a new kind of global economic cooperation. Now is the time to work together to restore the sustained growth that can only come from open and stable markets that harness innovation, support entrepreneurship and advance opportunity.

The nations of the world have a stake in one another. The United States is ready to join a global effort on behalf of new jobs and sustainable growth. Together, we can learn the lessons of this crisis, and forge a prosperity that is enduring and secure for the 21st century.

Barack Obama is president of the United States. A Global Viewpoint article distributed by Tribune Media Services.

(end byliner)

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

Entrepreneur Shares Business Tips with African Women

By Charles W. Corey
Staff Writer

Washington — The ability to manage effectively, work hard and continue to hold a sincere passion for your business are the three most important traits for any entrepreneur, according to a business consultant.

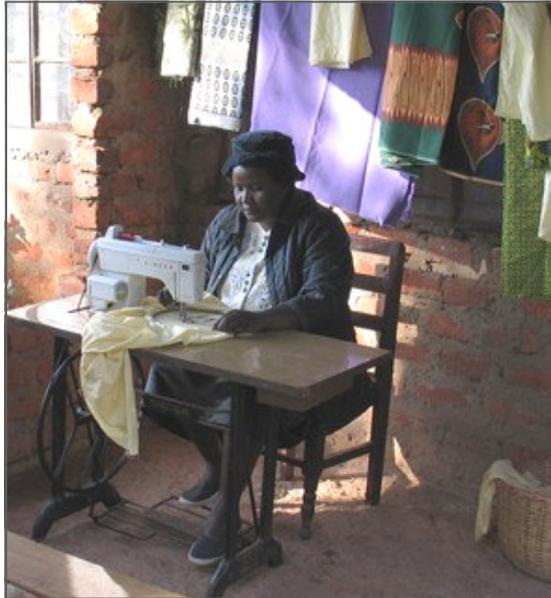
Rachel Allgood, entrepreneur and chief creative officer of Isocurve, a consulting firm she founded in 1996, made that point in a U.S. Department of State webchat with women entrepreneurs March 19. Many of the webchat participants were from Africa. Allgood was one of three women business owners who recently represented the United States at the 2009 International Women's Entrepreneurial Challenge in New Delhi.

"I think it is imperative to love what you do," Allgood told women entrepreneurs in Zambia and Uganda. "That is first and foremost for me. Money has never been a driving force. ... It is the excitement of working in new technologies and being a part of innovative branding programs that promote one's particular brand of products," she said.

It is also important, she said, "to be willing to mentor and nurture employees and allow them to take the spotlight whenever possible. That is what will allow you to step into new areas and allow the business to grow. If you try to control every detail, the business will stagnate. So, you have to be willing to make mistakes yourself and let others do the same. That is how we all learn."

Asked about starting a business,

Allgood said any entrepreneur first must ask a series of questions: "What do you want to do? And is there a market need for it? Do you have funding in place? Once you figure out the nuts and bolts of your business model, then you will find



*Women Entrepreneur in East Africa
(photo Pangea)*

your answer. You need to put pen to paper and write down all of your pros and cons, what you have in place and what you need to do. This is not a decision you make effectively without doing the basic homework first," she said.

Asked for some tips on how to run a business and keep it healthy, Allgood said business owners must ensure they have enough cash on hand to operate and be able to maintain an educated, well-trained staff. "A business is similar to the human body," she said. "When one component is out of balance, the rest tends to suffer."

She continued: "I think the reason many business fail is the inability to

be agile. Nothing is absolute. The world is constantly changing as is technology, as is business — the ability to move swiftly and adapt allows for survival."

Asked what prompted her to start her own business, Allgood said "Entrepreneurship takes a certain kind of optimism. Not fake but real. There are challenges every day, from lack of cash to an employee with personal problems. Each has to be tended to. At the end of the day, we have to find a purpose in what we do — that helps light the way."

Many women entrepreneurs face significant challenges when balancing home and business responsibilities, Allgood said. "Some women seem to do this very well. They have extremely supportive families, husbands, and co-workers. Others struggle and get caught in the cycle of

being overwhelmed and not truly succeeding at anything. This is a choice that each woman has to make for herself.

"Each person has to examine her internal and external resources and also her business choices — does the work require enormous amounts of travel, long hours, employees, or is it an idea that can be brought to fruition part-time from home?"

Asked what women entrepreneurs have contributed to the world, Allgood told her audience, "I think it is not just women entrepreneurs but women in all lines of work" who have made such contributions. "Women have had to work under

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As a result, the United States is participating in the Human Rights Council in observer status, he said.

"We believe that our engagement as an observer in the council will help, not solve, the problems of the council, but will help the council address the kinds of problems it should be concerned with," he said.

Warlick said the United States has not decided if it will stand for election to the council in May.

Justice must be served in Sudan, and now that Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir has been indicted and served with a warrant by the International Criminal Court, "we believe that he should be brought to

justice," Warlick said.

The tragedy in Sudan is compounded by Bashir's decision to expel 13 nongovernmental organizations that have been working in the Darfur region to bring food, fresh water, medical assistance and other aid to more than 4.7 million people.

The Obama administration is reviewing U.S. policy on membership in the court, he said.

SECURITY COUNCIL EXPANSION

Warlick said the United States wants the U.N. Security Council to reflect the realities of the 21st century and the 21st-century United Nations. "We believe that it has a fundamental role to play in the protection of international peace and security," he said.

In order to expand the Security Council to reflect current realities, it is also imperative the council continue to be effective in carrying out its mission, he said. Expansion for the sake of expansion may undermine the overall effectiveness of the council's decisionmaking capacity, he said.

What foreign affairs decisions should President Obama consider? Comment on America.gov's blog. (<http://blogs.america.gov/campaign/2009/01/21/day-2-what-should-obama%e2%80%99s-top-priorities-be/>)

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

Entrepreneur Shares Business Tips with African Women . . .

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the radar for centuries — funneling scientific ideas through their brothers and husbands. These women have paved the way for all of us.

"Women entrepreneurs," she continued, "have found a way to make money and affect community in unique ways — just look at Anita Roddick, the founder of The Body Shop International [seller of soaps and beauty products] and all the work she does to help disadvantaged communities. And Mary Kay Ash [the founder of Mary Kay Inc., a cosmetics company] who has helped millions of women find a

way to own their own businesses.

"We all, men and women, need to remember that our businesses are intrinsically connected to our communities and it is our responsibility to give back and help those who may just need a helping hand," she said.

Asked how women in business can function during an international economic crisis, Allgood said, "Crisis always brings opportunity. It is not just about working hard, but smart. What do people need that you can offer? ... Also crisis is a great time for innovation. People are more willing to listen when they are in need

of good solutions."

The transcript of Allgood's webchat (<http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2009/March/20090319172049xjsnommi s0.7011682.html&distid=ucs>) is available on America.gov.

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Treasury Announces \$500 Billion Program to Buy Up Bad Assets

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — In another step to turn the U.S. economy around, the U.S. Treasury is launching a program to buy up about \$500 billion in bad bank assets to further ease credit for consumers and businesses.

“There is no doubt the government is taking risks. You can’t solve a financial crisis without the government taking risks,” Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner said March 23.

President Obama said March 23 at the White House that the federal government has taken a series of steps to improve liquidity in secondary markets that had been completely frozen.

“And this morning, Secretary Geithner announced the latest element in this multipronged approach,” the president said, “and that is a mechanism that he, in close consultation with the Federal Reserve and the [Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation], has initiated in order to allow banks to take some of their bad assets off their books, sell them into a market, but do so in a way that doesn’t just obligate taxpayers to buy at whatever price they’re willing to sell these assets; instead, [it] involves a public-private partnership that allows market participants who have every interest in making a profit to accurately price these assets so that the taxpayers share in the upside as well as the downside.

“And we believe that this is one more element that is going to be absolutely critical in getting credit

flowing again.”

The U.S. government will use \$75 billion to \$100 billion from the gov-



U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner

ernment’s existing \$700 billion bailout program created in 2008 to buy up bad assets, many of which are the result of subprime rate mortgages that are in danger of default. The program could be expanded to \$1 trillion over time, the Treasury said in a fact sheet.

Much of the problem began in 2007 when U.S. housing prices began falling, generating heavy losses for investors and banks, the Treasury fact sheet said. The new Treasury program is being called the Public-Private Investment Program.

The program will be supported by loans from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, which insures the deposits at the nation’s banks. The FDIC will operate auctions of troubled mortgage loans and then provide financing to the winning

bidders.

A special loan facility operated by the U.S. Federal Reserve — the Term Asset-Backed Securities Loan Facility — will receive \$200 billion from the \$700 billion bailout plan to enable the Fed to support as much as \$1 trillion in loans to investors who want to buy securities backed by a variety of consumer loans.

Part of the strategy, Geithner said, is to get private market participants to bid against each other to set prices, known as price discovery, for which the bad assets will be bought.

According to the Treasury, the plan is designed to get maximum effect from the bailout funds, spread risks and profits with the private sector, and allow the private sector to establish the price of loans and securities bought under the program.

“This approach is superior to the alternatives of either hoping for banks to gradually work these assets off their books or of the government purchasing the assets directly,” the Treasury said in a fact sheet. “Simply hoping for banks to work legacy assets off over time risks prolonging a financial crisis.”

If the federal government acts alone and buys up all the bad assets, U.S. taxpayers will take on all the risks, including the risk that taxpayers will overpay if the government is setting the price, the Treasury said.

“What the government is going to try to do, partnering with private investors, is go into this market, jump-start it, and give banks a way to sell these things off,” Christina

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Innovation Critical in Battle Against Ancient Tuberculosis

By Cheryl Pellerin
Staff Writer

Washington - Tuberculosis (TB) is a 500,000-year-old contagious lung disease that kills someone around the world every 20 seconds. A diagnostic test was developed 125 years ago, its vaccine 80 years ago and drug treatments 40 years ago.

Worldwide, 9.3 million people suffer from the disease and 1.8 million people will die from it this year, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), placing TB just behind HIV/AIDS as a cause of global fatalities. Billions of dollars, through governments and foundations, are dedicated to stopping the airborne spread of TB, and the greatest need in the quest for treatments, diagnostics and vaccines is innovation.

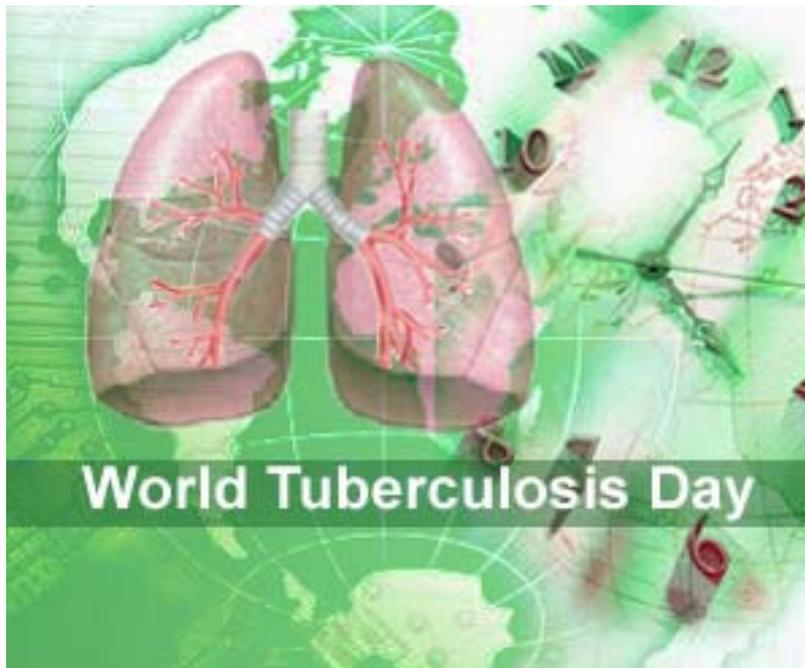
“World TB Day [March 24] reminds us that it’s an ancient disease” and the tools for combating it “have been used for a century or 50 years or 40 or 20, depending on which tools you’re talking about,” Diana Weil, coordinator for policy and strategy in WHO’s Stop TB Department, told America.gov. “We have chances now to innovate, but we also have chances to do better with what we’ve got.”

World TB Day marks the day in 1882 when Dr. Robert Koch detected the cause of tuberculosis, the TB bacillus, and took the first

step toward diagnosing and curing the disease.

\$14 CAN SAVE A LIFE

TB is treated with a six- to nine-month course of “first-line” (most effective) drugs that cost about \$14. If patients do not complete the drug course or are treated im-



properly, they can develop a multidrug-resistant (MDR) form of the disease.

Those with MDR TB must be treated with more expensive, less effective second-line drugs for 18 months to 24 months. If they do not complete this course or are treated with the wrong drugs, they can develop extensively drug resistant (XDR) TB, whose bacteria strains are resistant to first- and second-line drugs.

Fewer than 30 percent of XDR TB patients who are otherwise healthy and whose immune systems are not

compromised can be cured. More than half of those with XDR TB die within five years of diagnosis, and there could be 50,000 cases of XDR TB worldwide.

When infected people cough, they spray infectious particles that other people inhale, Dr. Peter Small, senior program officer for tuberculosis at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, said in a March 17 briefing at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

In many cases, the immune system keeps the TB bacteria under control after a person becomes infected — a condition known as “latent infection.” The bacteria can become active when something — advancing age or a medical condition such as HIV — reduces a person’s immunity.

“A third of the world is latently infected and lives in this tenuous balance between a pathogen and their immune system,” Small said. “This central role of the immune system in checking TB is most dramatic in sub-Saharan Africa, where the convergence of the HIV and TB epidemics has totally changed the disease.”

INNOVATION

Innovation in creating new diagnostics, drugs and vaccines is the main focus of the Gates Foundation TB program, Small said.

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Innovation Critical in Battle Against Ancient Tuberculosis . . .

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"A four-month treatment regime is in a phase three trial [the final test of a drug's effectiveness] by one of our grantees, the Global Alliance for TB Drug Development," he said, "and three new drug candidates have exciting phase two trial [the initial test of a drug's effectiveness] results." Small expects a drug regime to be available for drug-resistant cases by 2016–2017.

Six vaccines are in, or soon will begin, human clinical trials, Small said. Each has the potential to protect people from TB. He expects an improved TB vaccine to be available in or near 2016.

Through the Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics, Small said, molecular diagnostics are becoming available that will report in hours rather than months whether a person has drug-resistant TB. He expects rapid diagnostic tests to be available by 2012.

Political commitment to the TB fight is growing worldwide, he said, including in China, Brazil and India. The Stop TB Partnership is holding a partners forum March 23–25 in Brazil that is expected to attract more than 1,700 attendees.

In April, ministers from countries with the most cases of MDR- and XDR-TB will meet in China to address MDR-TB. Bill Gates will open the meeting, which is organized by WHO, the Ministry of Health of the People's Republic of China and the Gates Foundation.

FUNDING THE FIGHT

TB funding is increasing but gaps remain. The recently passed U.S. Omnibus Appropriations Act includes \$162 million for TB funding through the State Department's foreign operations account, a \$9.5 million increase from 2008 levels. The U.S. Agency for International Development increased its TB funding from \$22 million in 2000 to \$93 million in 2005.

In 2008, the National Institutes of Health spent about \$160 million on TB research, and the recent \$48 billion reauthorization for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) includes \$4 billion for TB treatment and prevention over the next five years.

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has helped mobilize global resources, Small said. About 14 percent of its funding went to TB. To date the organization has treated 4.6 million TB cases.

But the Stop TB Partnership says a funding gap of \$31 billion exists, including \$22 billion for program implementation and \$9 billion for treatment and diagnostic tools over the next decade.

GLOBAL STRATEGY

WHO's tools in the fight against TB are the Stop TB Strategy and the Global Plan to Stop TB, developed by the Stop TB Partnership, a coalition hosted by WHO of more than 900 agencies and governments around the world that are working

to fight the epidemic.

"Through the Stop TB strategy we're seeking to innovate in the way we work with all providers across the globe, including pharmacies, private doctors, informal medicine and traditional healers," WHO's Weil said. "We have models that show you can detect far more cases if you work with these providers."

WHO is also changing the way it works with communities, helping them learn to demand TB care and provide care locally so people do not have to travel to a far-off health center to receive treatment.

Components of the Stop TB strategy include:

- Expand and enhance high-quality DOTS, which stands for "directly observed treatment, short course."

- Address TB-HIV, MDR-TB and the needs of poor and vulnerable populations.

- Help strengthen health systems.

- Engage all care providers.

- Empower people with TB and communities through partnership.

- Enable and promote research.

More information about World TB Day (http://www.stoptb.org/events/world_tb_day/2009/) is available on a WHO Web site.

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

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See also

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Telling America's story

Treasury Announces \$500 Billion Program to Buy . . .

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Romer, head of the White House Council of Economic Advisers, said in an interview on the NBC television network's Today Show March 23. "Once they're off, I think the key thing is then banks feel much more comfortable about lending to ordinary Americans and American businesses."

STRESS TESTING

Financial stress testing of banks is becoming a widely used tool to assess potential vulnerabilities in a financial system. Nineteen of the biggest banks in the United States are undergoing intense tests by federal regulators to be completed by the end of April, according to the Federal Reserve, the country's central bank.

The testing is designed to determine

how much stress a commercial bank can sustain and how short of capital it would become over a two-year period if the recession should worsen. Banks being tested hold assets of more than \$100 billion. They comprise two-thirds of the bank holding company assets in the United States, the Fed said in a fact sheet.

The Obama administration is working to prepare its proposed overhaul of federal financial regulations by the April 2 meeting in London of the G20 group of advanced and large developing economies. European nations have sought to strengthen their financial regulations and have asked the same thing of the United States.

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Former U.S. Agriculture Secretary Calls for Development Czar . . .

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one in the White House who is in charge," said Glickman, referring to the idea of one official with focused responsibility on development issues — a development czar. His group testified that a development czar must have administrative and operational control over one superagency. The agency would combine and focus the development efforts of the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and other government entities working in development.

In terms of agricultural research and educational exchanges, Catherine Bertini, former head of the World Food Programme, said the

United States "has fallen back dramatically" in recent years on its commitments. Once, said Bertini, the United States gave hundreds of scholarships to foreign students wanting to study agriculture and science at U.S. universities, but today, only 42 are available. At its height, agricultural extension workers — specialists from U.S. universities, government and the private sector — trained 15,000 individuals from other countries in one year in modern agricultural methods. The number trained today is just 1,000.

Kerry questioned the witnesses on promoting the use of nitrogen fertilizers and biotech seeds during a perceived organic produce movement.

"This is virtually impossible — to get to the yields we are talking about without taking seriously seed and fertilizer," said Lugar, also a farmer, who called on leaders in the European Union to act as role models and drop their exclusion of genetically modified seeds. As evidence of the world's shifting use toward biotechnology, the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications, in its 2008 annual report, found that 13.3 million farmers in 25 countries planted 125 million hectares of biotech crops in 2008. Egypt, Burkina Faso and South Africa are the only African nations to cultivate biotech crops.

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