



Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

INSIDE

USAID promotes action on wildlife conservation in Ethiopia

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), African Parks (Ethiopia PLC), and the Italian Development Cooperation, in collaboration with the Ethiopian Wildlife Association (EWA), and the Wildlife Conservation Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, hosted a gathering of key leaders on Monday, December 4, 2006 to discuss ways to halt the illegal practice of capturing, holding, and selling wildlife in Ethiopia. The group also addressed the lack of adequate facilities, systems, and guidelines to properly care for wild animals already captured.



U.S. Ambassador Donald Yamamoto with Ato Ahmed Nasser, State Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (center), and Dr. Theodros Atlabachew, President of Tourism Professionals Association (right), at the meeting.

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Bush Says He Will Take Iraq Report Seriously in Deliberations



President Bush addresses the press during a meeting with the Iraq Study Group on Dec. 6, 2006. Pictured with the President are the group's co-chairmen former Representative Lee Hamilton, left, and former Secretary of State James Baker.

By David Shelby
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- President Bush welcomed the report of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group (ISG) December 6, saying his administration would take seriously the group's recommendations for revising U.S. policies in Iraq.

"It is a report that brings some really very interesting proposals, and we will take every proposal seriously and we will act in a timely fashion," he told reporters

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USAID promotes action on wildlife conservation in Ethiopia . . .



Ambassador Yamamoto speaking at the meeting

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H.E. Ato Ahmed Nasser, State Minister for Natural Resources of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Dr. Assefa Mebrate, of the Ethiopian Wildlife Authority and Ambassador Yamamoto officially opened the consultative meeting, held at the Ethiopian Agricultural Research Institute in Addis Ababa. The gathering included federal and regional government representatives, members of the diplomatic corps, professional societies and associations, international non governmental organizations, the private sector, academic and research institutions, and wildlife experts.

An increasing number of wild animals – both young and adult – have been taken illegally from the wild, placed in captivity, and inadequately cared for. Many wild animals currently being held in captivity in Ethiopia are suffering and in many cases, dying.

While EWA and the Ethiopian government have been working with partners on this initiative for several months, this is the first time that such a broad cross-section of leaders have come together to address how to manage the quickly expanding captive wild animal population in Ethiopia.

“Clearly, the illegal practice of removing cheetahs, lions, and other wild animals from the wild must be stopped,” Dr. Assefa Mebrate, EWA President, said. “With renewed commitment and resources from ourselves and our partners, together we can help preserve some of Ethiopia’s most precious natural resources – its animals.”

Wildlife experts from Namibia and South Africa were present to share their own experience in managing captive wild animals as part of the day-long event. EWA and its partners will use the experience of other countries to help shape Ethiopia’s policy, strategy, and legal mechanisms for captive wild animal management. ♦



Wildlife Stakeholders Meeting

Bush Says He Will Take Iraq Report Seriously in Deliberations . . .

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after meeting with the 10-member group at the White House. He said the report offers "an opportunity to come together and to work together on this important issue."

ISG co-chair Lee Hamilton welcomed Bush's initial reaction to the report. In a press conference later in the day, he said that if this attitude prevails, the administration, the Congress and the American people will be able to unite behind a common policy. Fellow ISG member Leon Panetta underscored the importance of unity on this issue. "I think the president understands that he simply is not going to be able to proceed with whatever policy changes he wants to implement if we're divided," he said.

The report characterizes the situation in Iraq as "grave and deteriorating" and lays out three major recommendations to address the problem. First, it says the United States should change the nature of its military mission from a combat operation to a support operation. The report recommends embedding U.S. advisers at every level of the Iraqi army and allowing the Iraqis to take the lead. With that, it says, the United States should be able to withdraw the bulk of its forces by early 2008.

Second, the report says the United States must encourage the Iraqi government to make significant progress toward milestones on national reconciliation, security and governance. It says, "The most important questions about Iraq's future are now the responsibility of the Iraqis" and adds that the United States should reduce its political, economic and military support for the Iraqi

government if it fails to achieve these goals.

Third, the group calls for diplomatic efforts to bring all the countries of the region and major world powers together to act as an international support group aimed at reinforcing security and national reconciliation within Iraq. According to the report, this would include diplomatic engagement with Syria and Iran, a policy the Bush administration has resisted until now. The report says it is a matter of appealing to every country's national interest. "No country in the region will benefit in the long term from a chaotic Iraq," it says.

Hamilton defended the group's recommendation of engaging with Iran. "Iran probably today is the national power that has the single greatest influence inside Iraq. ... We will be criticized, I'm sure, for talking with our adversaries, but I do not see how you solve these problems without talking to them," he said.

Fellow ISG co-chair James Baker said Iran might refuse to engage in discussions but added, "We ought to put it to them ... so that the world will see the rejectionist attitude that they are projecting by that action."

Congressional Democrats welcomed the report as a positive step toward a new strategy in Iraq. Incoming Senate Foreign Relations Chairman Joseph Biden said, "The most significant thing about the report is it has moved the debate in a fundamental way from not if, but when and how we move our forces in Iraq, and not if, but how we engage the region, knowing that the region has as much to lose as we do if there's a complete collapse in Iraq and total chaos."

Incoming Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin saw the report as a vindication of his call to reduce the number of U.S. forces in an effort to encourage the Iraqi government to resolve its political problems.

Biden regretted that the ISG did not recommend a devolution of authority in security matters to Iraq's provincial governments, a proposal he has advocated for several months. He argues that this measure, provided for in Iraq's Constitution, would take pressure off of a weak central government and improve the security situation.

Incoming Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said Bush has an "obligation" to the country to implement the ISG recommendations. "And we're going to be watching very closely after the first of the year, with oversight hearings ... what the Bush administration does. On behalf of the American people, I certainly hope that the president follows the recommendations of this study group," he said.

Not all members of Congress were equally enthusiastic about the report's recommendations. Outgoing House Majority Leader John Boehner said, "We will not accomplish victory by setting arbitrary deadlines or negotiating with hostile governments," referring to two of the group's key recommendations.

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See the Iraq Study Group Report: Executive Summary on Page 15

President Discusses World AIDS Day

President George W. Bush and Laura Bush host a meeting on World AIDS Day in the Roosevelt Room at the White House, Friday, Dec. 1, 2006. President Bush Marked World AIDS Day 2006 by renewing the U.S. commitment to addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The President discussed the global and domestic response to HIV/AIDS at a roundtable discussion with Mrs. Laura Bush, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Michael Leavitt, U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator Mark Dybul, and community leaders from the United States and Africa. This World AIDS Day, the U.S. Government is highlighting "The Promise of Partnerships."

As this World AIDS Day marks the 25th anniversary of the discovery of the HIV virus, President Bush said, "It is a day for the world to recognize the fact that there are 39 million people living with HIV/AIDS, and a day to remember the fact that 25 million people have died of AIDS."

(begin text)

THE PRESIDENT: Laura and I welcome our guests -- this is World AIDS Day. It's a day for the world to recognize the fact that there are 39 million people living with HIV/AIDS, and a day to remember the fact that 25 million people have died of AIDS. It's a day, as well, for the United States to remember that we have a duty to do something about this epidemic, this pandemic.

And today Laura and I met with the Secretary of HHS, as well as Mark Dybul, our U.S. coordinator for our AIDS effort, and people who are involved with helping to save lives, people from our country and people from around the world who have come to share with us the sto-

ries of compassion and courage.

This country is committed -- we're committed in helping solve this problem by dedicating a lot of resources to the battle against HIV/AIDS. The American taxpayers have funded over \$15 billion to help groups around this table save lives. Before the PEPFAR program -- that's the name of the program that we -- that's what we call the program that we dedicate money to, to

at home. And it's very important for the American people to understand we're spending over \$18 billion to help save lives here at home. And I call upon the Congress to reauthorize the Ryan White Act. The bill has passed the United States House of Representatives; the Senate has time to act before it goes on recess. It is an important piece of legislation that will enable us to continue our fight against HIV/AIDS domestically.



President George W. Bush at the roundtable discussion at the White House. White House photo by Eric Draper

help save lives -- before it became into being, there was about 50,000 people receiving lifesaving drugs. Today there are over 800,000 people receiving lifesaving drugs, and we thank those who are on the ground in the countries around the world who are using taxpayers' money to save lives. We believe that it's one thing to spend money, we also believe it's another thing to say that we expect there to be results. And the American people need to know we're getting good results with your money, and we'll continue to spend it wisely.

We also -- as we think about people affected with HIV/AIDS in countries around the world, we remember those who have got HIV/AIDS here

I can't thank you all enough for coming, and I thank you for being such decent, compassionate people. The pandemic of HIV/AIDS can be defeated, and the United States is willing to take the lead in that fight. But we can't do it alone, and so for our international partners, we appreciate what you do. For the faith-based community, we thank you for hearing the universal call to love a neighbor. And for the taxpayers, we appreciate your generosity in showing the world the good heart and compassion of the American people.

Thank you.

(end text) ♦

America Continues To Lead The World In Fighting HIV/AIDS

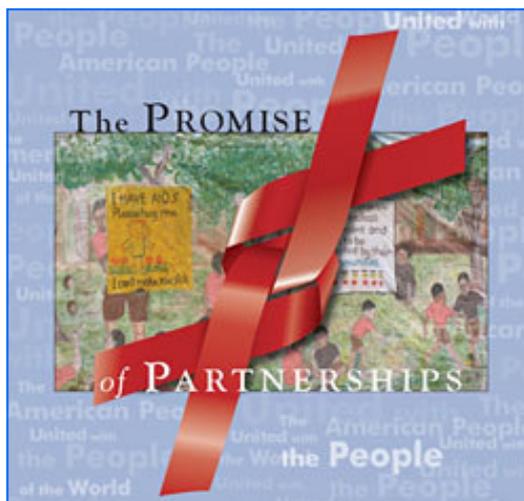
Fact Sheet: World AIDS Day
2006

INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS: America Continues To Lead The World In Fighting HIV/AIDS

The President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) Is Meeting The President's Commitment Of \$15 Billion Over Five Years To Support Treatment For 2 Million People, Prevention Of 7 Million New Infections, And Care For 10 Million People. PEPFAR is the largest international health initiative dedicated to a single disease. PEPFAR works worldwide, but targets 15 focus countries that are home to approximately half of the world's 39 million HIV-positive people: Botswana, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guyana, Haiti, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam, and Zambia.

As Of September 30, 2006, PEPFAR Was Supporting Life-Saving Antiretroviral Treatment For Approximately 822,000 People Living With HIV/AIDS. This is taking place through bilateral programs in PEPFAR's 15 focus countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean. Of the 822,000 individuals receiving treatment through PEPFAR, 61 percent are women and 9 percent are children age 14 and under.

PEPFAR Is Supporting The Leadership Of Local Communities. PEPFAR works with partners in host nations to support local capacity and to sustain prevention, treatment, and care efforts long after the initial five years of the Emergency Plan. Over 80 percent of PEPFAR partners are indigenous organizations.



PEPFAR Is Supporting Innovative Partnerships To Train Local Health Care Professionals. For example, a PEPFAR initiative launched in May 2006 places health care professionals from the Ethiopian Diaspora community in volunteer assignments in Ethiopia to train and work side-by-side with Ethiopian counterparts. This initiative will use a new database to identify qualified professionals from the Diaspora to help Ethiopia's HIV/AIDS campaign.

PEPFAR's New Partner Initiative (NPI) Will Award Its First Round Of Grants For HIV/AIDS Prevention And Care. President Bush launched the \$200 million New Partners Initiative on World AIDS Day 2005. The first round of three-year grants will award up to \$72 million in 23 grants to organizations in the United States and Africa. These organizations will work in 13 of PEPFAR's 15 focus countries.

The NPI Is Identifying And Supporting Organizations Providing Health Care In The Developing World, Including Faith-Based And Community Organizations, To Achieve Local Ownership And Long-Term Sustainability.

The United States Supports The Most Diverse Prevention Portfolio Of Any International Partner. In addition to the ABC (Abstain, Be faithful, and the correct and consistent use of Condoms) approach, the U.S. supports programs that focus on prevention of mother-to-child transmission, on blood safety and safe medical injections, on intravenous drug users, on HIV-discordant couples, on alcohol abuse, and on other key issues, including gender-specific programs.

The United States Leads The World In Its Support Of The Global Fund To Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis And Malaria. President Bush made the Fund's founding contribution, and the United States has pledged almost \$2 billion through 2008 – far more than any other nation.

DOMESTIC EFFORTS: The Administration Is Working To Help The 1 Million Americans Living With HIV/AIDS

The Administration Is Working To Address The Needs Of People Living With HIV/AIDS And To Prevent New HIV Infections Within The United States. Of the approximately 40,000 new transmissions occurring annually in the United States, about half are spread by individuals unaware they are infecting others. The number of AIDS cases is especially high in the African-American, Hispanic, and gay communities, as well as among intravenous drug users and prisoners.

The President Has Called For HIV Tests To Become A Routine Part Of Care So All Americans Know Their Status. The HHS Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have released guidelines to physi-

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Peace Corps Volunteers Working Globally To Combat HIV/AIDS

By Kathryn McConnell
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Every day in communities throughout the developing world, U.S. Peace Corps volunteers are teaching people how to fight the spread of HIV/AIDS and helping to organize services for those already affected by the disease.

The spread of HIV/AIDS is one of the most serious threats to development. By earning trust and developing relationships within their host communities, volunteers have been successful in encouraging people to talk openly about the disease, get tested and seek counseling.

Many of the more than 7,800 current Peace Corps volunteers are working in community HIV/AIDS education and prevention, according to the Peace Corps.

Worldwide, 20 percent of all Peace Corps volunteers are assigned to health and HIV/AIDS projects, and twice that percentage of Peace Corps volunteers are involved in HIV/AIDS activities, according to the agency. Their work is supported by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the Bush administration's five-year, \$15 billion multifaceted approach to combating HIV/AIDS.

In 2005, Peace Corps volunteers working in HIV/AIDS-related activities helped almost 900,000 people across the globe who were affected by HIV/AIDS or at risk of becoming affected by the disease, the agency said.

Volunteer activities include working in orphanages with HIV-positive children, implementing programs for

at-risk youth, collaborating with faith-based organizations on prevention messages, creating support groups for people who are HIV-positive, providing nutrition and hygiene education classes and helping to build community health centers.

Volunteers incorporate education about HIV/AIDS prevention and care into regular lesson plans, after-school programs and schoolwide activities.

They work with development banks, nongovernmental organizations and municipalities to support local development projects, such as

AIDS clinics. Others may help women's groups write proposals to fund programs that teach young mothers about the effect of AIDS on children.

They also are helping schools get connected to the Internet so students can get information about preventing and treating the disease.

In addition, volunteers use their skills to improve food security in communities crippled by HIV/AIDS. For instance, they introduce im-

proved farm methods and technologies in areas that have experienced depleted work forces because of illness.



Volunteer Scott Nguy

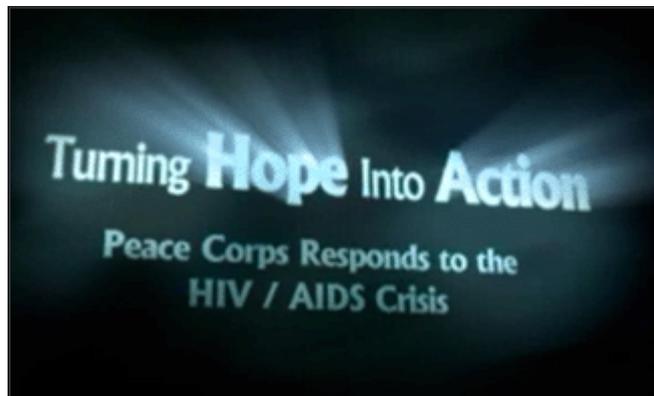
Examples of their efforts are highlighted in the Peace Corps film *Turning Hope Into Action*.

Volunteer Scott Nguy says in the film that before he came to Nkange, in Botswana, HIV/AIDS seldom was discussed. "It was pretty much denied by the residents here," he said. "Since I've been here for a few months, people are more comfortable approaching people at the clinic, talking about HIV/AIDS, more comfortable coming to do the test."

Shanna Lillis, a volunteer serving in the Dominican Republic, says, "Our group of peer educators designed poster boards with different slogans that we use in AIDS prevention, and so we marched through the town saying, 'I secure my life, I protect myself from AIDS and I maintain my promise to not turn my back on AIDS, not discriminate.'"

Another volunteer, Cucharras Martin, serving in Botswana, says that the Peace Corps develops peer-to-peer education programs that will remain intact after the volunteer returns to the United States.

The film *Turning Hope Into Action* (<http://www.peacecorp.gov/index.cfm?shell=learn.Whatvol.hivaidshopeintoaction>) and more information about the Peace Corps (<http://www.peacecorps.gov/> "title="http://www.peacecorps.gov/">http://www.peacecorps.gov/) are available on the agency's Web site. ♦



Hip-Hop Artist Ludacris Tells Teens To Learn Facts on AIDS

By Carolee Walker
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington – As American youth are learning their ABCs to succeed in school, rapper-actor Ludacris tells teens speaking any language on World AIDS Day that if they do not learn the ABCs of AIDS prevention, they might not live much beyond their school years.

Chris Bridges, or Ludacris as he is known as a hip-hop artist, is an ambassador for Youth AIDS initiative, which took its international HIV/AIDS awareness campaign to Washington December 1.

Youth AIDS programs around the world include voluntary counseling and testing services in Rwanda, food provision in Botswana and abstinence awareness campaigns in Zambia.

Although Bridges received a warm welcome from his fans, the rapper came to Washington to lead a serious discussion with area secondary-school and university students on halting the spread of HIV/AIDS among young people. Before his stop on the campus of the George Washington University on World AIDS Day, Bridges had taken his message to South Africa, other African nations and cities in the United States, including Los Angeles, Chicago and New York.

“Be the solution, not part of the problem,” Bridges said. “I’m only one human being, and I’m trying to lead by example,” the rapper said. “At the end of the day, it’s about saving lives.”

Since the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta issued its first warning about HIV/AIDS in 1981, more than 25 million people around

the world have died from the disease. Access to treatment and prevention programs has expanded, but an estimated 40 million people are living with HIV/AIDS worldwide, with more than 4 million new infections in 2006 and almost 3 million



Rapper-Actor Ludacris

deaths. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=November&x=20061122141112cmretrop0.9440271>).)

An estimated 530,000 children worldwide have been infected with HIV in 2006. There are more than 2 million children under the age of 15 living with the HIV infection, with the vast majority living in sub-Saharan Africa.

According to Kate Roberts, founder and director of Youth AIDS, 90 percent of those infected with HIV

may not know they are carrying the virus.

AIDS, or the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, is caused by HIV, the human immunodeficiency virus. According to the National Institutes of Health, HIV kills or damages the cells of the body’s immune system, making it nearly impossible for the body to fight infections and some cancers. Not every person infected with HIV will develop AIDS. People with AIDS may get life-threatening diseases that are caused by viruses or bacteria that usually do not make healthy people sick.

Although there are some promising or experimental treatments for the virus, there is no cure for AIDS.

The most common way to get infected with HIV is to have sexual relations with a person who has the virus. HIV is not transmitted casually, according to the HIV/AIDS fact sheet prepared by CDC, and no one has become infected from such ordinary social contact as kisses on the cheek, hugs and handshakes, according to the CDC.

Other ways the virus can be contracted are through intravenous drug use or through contaminated blood transfusions. Babies can get the infection from their mothers if the mothers have HIV during their pregnancy. When Bridges talks to teens about HIV/AIDS prevention, he endorses the ABCs encouraged by Youth AIDS: Abstinence or Be faithful or Consistent use of safe-sex methods.

Most important, Bridges said, is to talk about AIDS and to talk about it with friends. Especially since many HIV-infected people do not know they have the virus, he encourages

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America Continues To Lead The World In Fighting HIV/AIDS . . .

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icians recommending routine voluntary HIV testing as a part of regular medical care for all people between the ages of 13-64, and annual screening for those at high risk.

Since 2001, The Administration Has Devoted More Than \$74 Billion To Treatment And Care, Increasing Annual Treatment Funding By 37 Percent. In addition, the Administration has devoted more than \$15 billion to HIV/AIDS research to help develop new methods of treatment and prevention, increasing annual research funding by 20 percent.

The President's 2007 Budget Requested \$93 Million To Purchase And Distribute Rapid HIV Test Kits That Will Facilitate Testing Of More Than 3 Million Additional Americans. Of the approximately 1 million people infected with HIV, an estimated 250,000 are unaware they carry the virus. Rapid HIV test

kits will be directed at communities with the highest rates of newly discovered HIV cases, including prisoners and intravenous drug users.

The President Has Proposed Making \$70 Million Available For States To Bridge Coverage Gaps For AIDS Patients Awaiting Life-Saving Medications. These funds would help States support care for additional patients.

The President Has Proposed Making \$25 Million Available To Strengthen Awareness Of HIV/AIDS In High-Risk Communities. These funds would strengthen outreach to minority communities by local and faith-based organizations.

The President Has Called On Congress To Reauthorize The Ryan White Care Act. He is calling for reauthorization in accordance with three key principles: focusing Federal resources on life-extending care; better targeting resources to

address the greatest needs; and encouraging the participation of all providers, including faith-based and community organizations that can demonstrate results.

The President Is Dedicated To Ending Discrimination Against People Living With HIV/AIDS

The President Will Direct The Secretary Of State To Request And The Secretary Of Homeland Security To Initiate A Rulemaking That Would Propose A Categorical Waiver For HIV-Positive People Seeking To Enter The United States On Short-Term Visas. The President considers the participation of people living with HIV/AIDS a critical element in the global HIV/AIDS response. A 1993 law prohibits HIV-positive people from receiving visas to visit the United States without a waiver. A categorical waiver would enable HIV-positive people to enter the United States for short visits through a streamlined process. ♦

Hip-Hop Artist Ludacris Tells Teens To Learn Facts on AIDS . . .

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every person to take an AIDS test and to tell five or six friends to take one.

"A lot of people think that if you don't talk about it, maybe it goes away. But it's an extremely serious problem," said Bridges, who, as an actor, appeared in the Academy Award winning movie Crash, which explores the connections people make with each other and the effect they have on each other's everyday lives.

"I'm doing my part as a celebrity -- I know the voice that I have -- the power that I have," Bridges said.

Youth AIDS, an education and prevention initiative of Population Services International (PSI), a nongovernmental organization, uses media, pop culture, music, theater and sports to reach 600 million young people in more than 60 countries to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Information on World AIDS Day (<http://www.pepfar.gov/>) is available on the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief Web site.

Additional information for teens about AIDS awareness is available on the Youth AIDS (http://projects.psi.org/site/PageServer?pagename=home_homepageindex) and PSI (<http://www.psi.org/>) Web sites.

More information (<http://www.niaid.nih.gov/factsheets/hivinf.htm>) about the disease is available on the Web site of the National Institutes of Health.

(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.N. Security Council Authorizes Regional Force for Somalia

By Judy Aita
USINFO United Nations Correspondent

United Nations -- The Security Council voted unanimously December 6 to back a regional peacekeeping force for Somalia.

The United States initiated the resolution, which was co-sponsored by the Republic of the Congo, Ghana and Tanzania. It authorizes the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU) "to establish a protection and training mission in Somalia to be reviewed after an initial period of six months." (See related article.)

The United States "views the deployment of a regional force to Somalia as a key element in preventing conflict" and a "critical element to help resume credible dialogue" between the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFI) and the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC), U.S. Ambassador John Bolton said.

"It will also help to create the conditions for Ethiopian and Eritrean disengagement from Somalia," he said.

"The United States strongly believes that a sustainable solution in Somalia should be based on credible dialogue between the TFIs and the UIC, and we continue to work with our African and other partners toward that end," Bolton said in formal remarks to the Security Council.

"The continued military expansion by the UIC, however, has not helped to promote dialogue and, in fact, has created the need for deployment of a regional force to stabilize the situation inside Somalia," the ambassador said. (See related article.)

Speaking with journalists outside the Security Council, Bolton noted



Veiled Somali women holding AK 47's in Mogadishu, Somalia, Monday, Dec 4, 2006. (AP Photo/Mohamed Sheikh Nur)

that the resolution provided "an opportunity to have a regional peacekeeping force inserted into this area to try and prevent the situation from getting worse."

"The choice of doing nothing is really not a choice at all," he said. "The other option is that the instability we have seen in Somalia for over 15 years now would spread to the region as a whole."

The Security Council is often criticized for not acting in time. Supporting the regional peacekeeping force in Somalia is one way the council can try to prevent the situation from deteriorating, the ambassador added.

"We're siding with the people of Somalia, who definitely need relief from the conflict that has been going on for far too long," Bolton said.

The resolution "may not be a complete solution to the problem -- that is one reason we've encouraged the mediation of various parties and have all the Somali factions talk with one another. That's basic," the ambassador said.

The resolution emphasizes the need for "continued credible dialogue" between the Transitional Federal Institutions and the Union of Islamic Courts and urges the two sides to fulfill commitments they have made and resume peace talks "without delay."

The council also threatened to "consider taking measures" against those who block peace talks, attempt to overthrow the Transitional

Federal Institutions or threaten regional stability. No measures were mentioned, but such language usually refers to sanctions.

According to the resolution, the peacekeeping mission will maintain and monitor security in Baidoa, the headquarters of the U.N.-backed Transitional Federal Institutions, and protect members of the TFI and government and their key infrastructure. It will train the transitional authority's security forces and help facilitate the re-establishment of national security forces in Somalia.

Funding for the force will be voluntary. The size and composition of

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U.S. Condemns Zimbabwe Violence Against Women's March

Washington – The United States condemned police violence against a peaceful march by the women's rights organization WOZA – Women of Zimbabwe Arise – which resulted in injuries and the arrest of more than 70 individuals.

The Department of State on December 1 called the action a "brutal reaction to this peaceful effort of Zimbabwean citizens to exercise their rights," and called for the immediate release of those still under arrest.

The United States has continued to condemn the Zimbabwe government of Robert Mugabe for its human rights violations and gross economic mismanagement. In February 2005, for example, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Woods called Zimbabwe "a textbook case of bad and illegitimate governance."

This year, the United States government and American labor organizers denounced attacks against the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions. "The government's actions against



those wishing to protest on behalf of greater democracy, better wages and access to treatment for AIDS sufferers is another example of its denial of the basic rights of its citizens," State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said on September 15.

The full text (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/77247.htm>) of the statement on Zimbabwe's women's right

demonstrators can be found on the State Department Web site.

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

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

U.N. Security Council Authorizes Regional Force for Somalia . . .

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the force will be up to IGAD, which has planned for an 8,000-strong mission from its seven East African member nations.

The Security Council also supported IGAD's deployment plan, which excludes troops from states that border Somalia.

The Security Council also eased the arms embargo imposed on the

country in 1992 to allow "weapons and military equipment and technical training and assistance intended solely for the support of or use by" the IGAD force.

The IGAD mission also will monitor the progress made by the two sides in implementing agreements reached during talks and ensure free movement and safe passage of those involved in the talks.

For further information, see Africa.

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

President Bush Accepts Resignation of U.N. Envoy Bolton

By Stephen Kaufman and Judy Aita
USINFO Staff Writers

Washington -- President Bush has accepted "with deep regret" the resignation of U.S. Representative to the United Nations John Bolton.

In a statement released by the White House December 4, the president credited Bolton with leading negotiations in the U.N. Security Council that resulted in unanimous resolutions on North Korean military and nuclear activities, a resolution calling on Iran to suspend the enrichment and reprocessing of uranium, and a U.N. peacekeeping commitment to Sudan.

Bolton was appointed to the post in August 2005 during a period when the U.S. Senate, which normally would vote on the nomination, was in recess. Under the U.S. Constitution, a president may make temporary recess appointments without Senate confirmation.

The president re-nominated Bolton on November 9, but administration officials believed that his nomination did not have enough support in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to come to the full Senate for a confirmation vote.

Bush said some senators were practicing "stubborn obstructionism" by "obstruct[ing] his confirmation" despite Bolton having the support of the majority of the Senate. "Their tactics will disrupt our diplomatic work at a sensitive and important time," Bush said.

White House press secretary Tony Snow blamed Bolton's difficulties in the Senate on "partisanship and not performance," adding, "for whatever reason the confirmation process seems to be broken."

The press secretary called on both Republicans and Democrats in the Senate to cooperate on "a confirmation process that allows competent people who share the president's goals and policies to become confirmed for key positions."

SENATE LEADERS REACT TO BOLTON RESIGNATION

U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Richard Lugar (Republican from Indiana) echoed

was "blocked by Senate Democrats."

He said Bolton's nomination was not voted on because the Bush administration had "refused to provide the Senate with documents directly relevant to his nomination," rather than over opposition to his candidacy.

Biden said those documents included "National Security Agency intercepts Mr. Bolton asked to see in order to learn the identity of American citizens referenced in the



*President George W. Bush exchanges handshakes with U.N. Ambassador John Bolton during his visit Monday, Dec. 4, 2006, to the White House.
White House photo by Eric Draper*

the Bush administration's statements of regret over Bolton's resignation and thanked the ambassador "for the many ways he has served our country, over many years, with strong idealism and personal commitment."

However, Senator Joseph Biden (Democrat from Delaware), who will chair the Foreign Relations Committee in the 110th Congress convening in January, said the White House is making a "false claim" in saying that Bolton's nomination

intercepts." At the time of the intercepts, Bolton was serving as under secretary of state for arms control and international security.

Biden called on Bush to nominate a U.N. ambassador "who can garner strong bipartisan and international support" and "effectively represent" the United States "at a time of extraordinary international challenge," and he pledged promptly to schedule confirmation hearings when that occurs.

(Continued on page 12)

President Bush Accepts Resignation of U.N. Envoy Bolton . . .

(Continued from page 11)

The exact date of Bolton's departure has not been announced. Under U.S. law, he can continue to serve until the 110th Congress convenes in January 2007. Until Bolton's successor is confirmed, Alejandro Wolff, the deputy U.S. representative to the United Nations, is expected to serve as acting U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

BOLTON'S DEPARTURE WILL NOT CHANGE U.S. POLICIES OR GOALS AT U.N.

Paul Denig, spokesman for the State Department's Bureau of International Organization Affairs, said U.S. foreign policy often is marked by continuity despite changes in senior officials, even when there are changes in administrations.

"What people should look for is really more of a continuation of U.S. foreign policy and the U.S. working with and through international organizations, rather than any monumental change," Denig said.

Tactics and even some strategy in New York may change depending on the personality, but "in terms of the broad outline of the policy," the permanent representative and his or her deputies at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations will continue to push for the goals that the president and the secretary of state set, he said.

However, he added that with the number of key issues of concern to the United States currently at the United Nations, "this is not a good time to change ambassadors."

The Bush administration continues to seek a Security Council resolution imposing sanctions on Iran for

its continued pursuit of nuclear weapons and enrichment of uranium in violation of Resolution 1696, with the goal of persuading Iran to abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons capability. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=November&x=20061114170231MVyel-warC0.5502588>).)

There are also ongoing issues with North Korea and Sudan, and efforts to establish an international tribunal in Lebanon to prosecute the perpetrators of the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri.

"These are very delicate negotiations and obviously if you change ambassadors in the middle of a negotiation, there will be some impact," Denig said.

BOLTON RECEIVES PRAISE FROM SECRETARY-GENERAL ANNAN

At the United Nations, Bolton was successful building large coalitions around some difficult issues such as Security Council resolutions on the North Korean and Iranian nuclear programs, Lebanon and a peace-keeping force for Darfur. However on other issues in the General Assembly, such as the new Human Rights Council and U.N. reforms, the United States found itself in the minority.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan commended Bolton for doing "the job he was expected to do."

Bolton "came at a time when we had lots of tough issues," Annan told journalists. "As a representative of the U.S. government, he pressed ahead with the instructions

that he had been given and tried to work as effectively as he could with the other ambassadors."

Annan pointed out that no one individual ambassador is responsible for the difficulties on such complex and thorny issues as reforming the entire U.N. system.

"I have always maintained . . . it is important that the ambassadors work together, that the ambassadors understand that to get concessions, they have to make concessions and they need to work with each other or the organization to move ahead," the secretary-general said.

"I am also constantly encouraging member states to try and speak with one voice where it is possible, particularly in the Security Council," Annan said, "because a united voice is much more powerful than a divided one."

The full text (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/12/20061204.html>) of the president's statement on the resignation is available on the White House Web site. The statements from Lugar (<http://lugar.senate.gov/pressapp/record.cfm?id=266250>) and Biden (<http://biden.senate.gov/newsroom/details.cfm?id=266242&&>) are available on Senate Web sites. A transcript (<http://www.un.org/apps/sg/offthecuff.asp>) of Annan's remarks is available on the U.N. Web site.

For more information on U.S. policies, see The United States and the United Nations (http://usinfo.state.gov/is/international_security/UNGA_2005.html). ♦

U.S. Military Chaplains Support More than 100 Faiths

By Elizabeth Kelleher
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington – As the demographics of the U.S. military have changed in recent years, the military has become more intent on facilitating religious practices of all of its members.

Chief Master Sergeant Aphrodite Kafka, an Orthodox Christian, who has served in the Air Force for decades, has seen changes during her time in uniform. Thirty years ago, at basic training, Kafka's command-

cial dispensation from her faith's dietary requirements. Recently, kosher and halal field rations became available for Jews and Muslims.

Some believe those changes in the military reflect changes in the population as a whole. There are more Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs in the United States today, and younger officers grew up in a multicultural society. At the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, for instance, a new prayer hall for Muslims recently opened. (See related

attention to the troops' religious needs.

In fact, the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is interpreted as obliging the military to guarantee its members the freedom of religious practices. At the same time, the Department of Defense cannot favor or endorse any particular religion. U.S. active-duty soldiers have reported that they belong to a total of 109 religions – from Baptist to Buddhism to Baha'i.

The roughly 3,000 military chaplains on active-duty rolls and 2,000 in the reserves represent many denominations, and their numbers are not necessarily in proportion to the numbers of soldiers of a particular religion. For instance, there are more imams per Muslim and rabbis per Jew than there are Catholic priests per Catholic in the military.

That is partly because the Defense Department wants to ensure that there is a chaplain even for a small group of believers. "In life and death situations," says Diana Eck, a professor of religion at Harvard University in Massachusetts, "it is important [troops] have access to a variety of chaplains." This month, the first Buddhist chaplain will join the U.S. Navy.

Military chaplains are trained in interdenominational services and typically carry Jewish and Christian versions of the Bible; the New Testament; the Book of Mormon; the Quran; prayer rugs; and a portable altar, among other items. Army Chaplain (Major) Carlos C. Huerta even carries sage in his medicine bag, which he has given a Lakota Sioux Indian to burn -- a tribal ritual to cleanse a warrior before battle.

(Continued on page 23)



U.S. Army Chaplain Peter Johnson, 37, leads a Sunday prayer for soldiers in the desert. (AP Images)

ers told her to go to the Protestant service. "It was a shock," she recalls.

More recently, while stationed at Osan Air Force Base in Korea, Kafka was given a van to drive to Seoul to attend a weekly Orthodox service. When deployed in Iraq during the Advent, she found dairy-free and meat-free food in the dining hall; and before going on a mission, she consulted with an Orthodox Christian military chaplain to get a spe-

article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=November&x=20061121124320berehellek0.8676874>).)

Robert W. Tuttle, a law professor with expertise in military history at George Washington University, points to another factor -- that the United States abolished the general draft in 1973. To maintain good morale in an all-volunteer force, he said, the Pentagon must pay more

U.S., International Filmmakers Tell Contemporary Stories

By Sehreen Noor Ali
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington – Mukhtaran Mai's humble demeanor contrasts sharply with her accomplishments. Her gracious words of thanks to her American supporters at the American Film Institute (AFI) in a Washington suburb in late November understate this 33-year-old Pakistani woman's courageous search for justice after being gang-raped by her neighbors in a remote village in Pakistan in the summer of 2002.

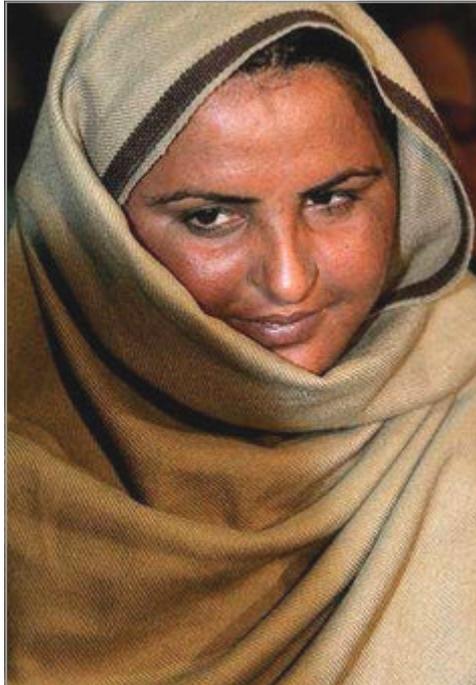
In a region where rape victims often choose suicide over a life of humiliation and silence, Mai chose to live and challenge the status quo. Her compelling story prompted filmmaker Muhammad Naqvi to direct and produce *Shame*, a documentary about a woman he considers a hero.

Such is the power of film to bring contemporary topics to the global forefront.

Naqvi's *Shame* was among four AFI Project: 20/20 films screened at the American Film Institute's Silver Theater in Silver Spring, Maryland, on November 20 and 21. AFI Project: 20/20 is part of the Global Cultural Initiative launched by first lady Laura Bush and Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Karen Hughes in September in collaboration with public and private cultural organizations.

AFI Project: 20/20, a partnership among the U.S. Department of State, the American Film Institute, the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Hu-

manities, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services, brought together 19 American and international filmmakers to AFI Fest film festival in Los Angeles to share their motion pictures with each



Mukhtaran Mai

other's audiences. After AFI Fest, the filmmakers traveled to cities across the United States and will be participating in international film festivals abroad to enhance cultural understanding.

The purpose of AFI Project: 20/20 is to express the shared values of different nations through film, said Julia Nelson of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State. As part of the program, the filmmakers participate in lectures, workshops and screenings at universities and cultural centers around the United States in such cities as Los Angeles; Tucson, Arizona; Salt Lake City; St. Louis; Seattle; and Silver Spring, Maryland. Some films, such as Naqvi's *Shame*, have not been

released officially; for others, the screenings are world premieres. This was true for J.B. Rutagarama of Rwanda, who premiered his autobiographical documentary *Back Home* in AFI Fest in Los Angeles and then screened it in San Francisco and Salt Lake City before coming to AFI Project: 20/20.

Back Home, the first film about the Rwandan genocide made by a survivor, traces the filmmaker's journey as the son of a Tutsi mother and Hutu father during the Rwandan genocide. American director Hilary Brougher, whose film *Stephanie Daley* tells the story of a 16-year-old girl, played by Hollywood actress Amber Tamblyn, who is accused of killing her infant baby after concealing her pregnancy, joined Rutagarama and Naqvi at the AFI Project: 20/20 screening to talk about their films with audience members.

In response to questions about how director Naqvi was able to get members of Mai's family on film, Naqvi said it was easier to interview Mai's family than expected. Her family members viewed this film as an opportunity to finally have their voices heard, the director said.

The fourth film screened at AFI Project: 20/20, *After*, was made by an American, David L. Cunningham, and tells the story of adventure-seekers who descend into underground Moscow in search of two legendary sites: Stalin's secret metro and tsar Ivan the Terrible's torture chamber.

Plans are under way for the American filmmakers to travel overseas to share their films with audiences in the home countries of the international filmmakers as part of the Global Cultural Initiative. ♦

Iraq Study Group Report: Executive Summary

Report of the Iraq Study Group
6 December 2006
Executive Summary

The situation in Iraq is grave and deteriorating. There is no path that can guarantee success, but the prospects can be improved.

In this report, we make a number of recommendations for actions to be taken in Iraq, the United States, and the region. Our most important recommendations call for new and enhanced diplomatic and political efforts in Iraq and the region, and a change in the primary mission of U.S. forces in Iraq that will enable the United States to begin to move its combat forces out of Iraq responsibly. We believe that these two recommendations are equally important and reinforce one another. If they are effectively implemented, and if the Iraqi government moves forward with national reconciliation, Iraqis will have an opportunity for a better future, terrorism will be dealt a blow, stability will be enhanced in an important part of the world, and America's credibility, interests, and values will be protected.

The challenges in Iraq are complex. Violence is increasing in scope and lethality. It is fed by a Sunni Arab insurgency, Shiite militias and death squads, al Qaeda, and widespread criminality. Sectarian conflict is the principal challenge to stability.

The Iraqi people have a democratically elected government, yet it is not adequately advancing national reconciliation, providing basic security, or delivering essential services. Pessimism is pervasive.

If the situation continues to deteriorate, the consequences could be severe. A slide toward chaos could

trigger the collapse of Iraq's government and a humanitarian catastrophe. Neighboring countries could intervene. Sunni-Shia clashes could spread. Al Qaeda could win a propaganda victory and expand its base of operations. The global standing of the United States could be diminished. Americans could become more polarized.

During the past nine months we have considered a full range of approaches for moving forward. All have flaws. Our recommended course has shortcomings, but we firmly believe that it includes the best strategies and tactics to positively influence the outcome in Iraq and the region.

External Approach

The policies and actions of Iraq's neighbors greatly affect its stability and prosperity. No country in the region will benefit in the long term from a chaotic Iraq. Yet Iraq's neighbors are not doing enough to help Iraq achieve stability. Some are undercutting stability.

The United States should immediately launch a new diplomatic offensive to build an international consensus for stability in Iraq and the region. This diplomatic effort should include every country that has an interest in avoiding a chaotic Iraq, including all of Iraq's neighbors. Iraq's neighbors and key states in and outside the region should form a support group to reinforce security and national reconciliation within Iraq, neither of which Iraq can achieve on its own. Given the ability of Iran and Syria to influence events within Iraq and their interest in avoiding chaos in Iraq, the United States should try to engage them constructively. In seeking to influence the behavior of

both countries, the United States has disincentives and incentives available. Iran should stem the flow of arms and training to Iraq, respect Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and use its influence over Iraqi Shia groups to encourage national reconciliation. The issue of Iran's nuclear programs should continue to be dealt with by the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany. Syria should control its border with Iraq to stem the flow of funding, insurgents, and terrorists in and out of Iraq.

The United States cannot achieve its goals in the Middle East unless it deals directly with the Arab-Israeli conflict and regional instability. There must be a renewed and sustained commitment by the United States to a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace on all fronts: Lebanon, Syria, and President Bush's June 2002 commitment to a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine. This commitment must include direct talks with, by, and between Israel, Lebanon, Palestinians (those who accept Israel's right to exist), and Syria.

As the United States develops its approach toward Iraq and the Middle East, the United States should provide additional political, economic, and military support for Afghanistan, including resources that might become available as combat forces are moved out of Iraq.

Internal Approach

The most important questions about Iraq's future are now the responsibility of Iraqis. The United States must adjust its role in Iraq to encourage the Iraqi people to take control of their own destiny.

(Continued on page 16)

Iraq Study Group Report: Executive Summary . . .

(Continued from page 15)

The Iraqi government should accelerate assuming responsibility for Iraqi security by increasing the number and quality of Iraqi Army brigades. While this process is under way, and to facilitate it, the United States should significantly increase the number of U.S. military personnel, including combat troops, imbedded in and supporting Iraqi Army units. As these actions proceed, U.S. combat forces could begin to move out of Iraq.

The primary mission of U.S. forces in Iraq should evolve to one of supporting the Iraqi army, which would take over primary responsibility for combat operations. By the first quarter of 2008, subject to unexpected developments in the security situation on the ground, all combat brigades not necessary for force protection could be out of Iraq. At that time, U.S. combat forces in Iraq could be deployed only in units embedded with Iraqi forces, in rapid-reaction and special operations teams, and in training, equipping, advising, force protection, and search and rescue. Intelligence and support efforts would continue. A vital mission of those rapid reaction and special operations forces would be to undertake strikes against al Qaeda in Iraq.

It is clear that the Iraqi government will need assistance from the United States for some time to come, especially in carrying out security responsibilities. Yet the United States must make it clear to the Iraqi government that the United States could carry out its plans, including planned redeployments, even if the Iraqi government did not implement their planned changes. The United States must not make an open-ended commit-

ment to keep large numbers of American troops deployed in Iraq.

As redeployment proceeds, military leaders should emphasize training and education of forces that have returned to the United States in order to restore the force to full combat capability. As equipment returns to the United States, Congress should appropriate sufficient funds to restore the equipment over the next five years.

The United States should work closely with Iraq's leaders to support the achievement of specific objectives -- or milestones -- on national reconciliation, security, and governance. Miracles cannot be expected, but the people of Iraq have the right to expect action and progress. The Iraqi government needs to show its own citizens -- and the citizens of the United States and other countries -- that it deserves continued support.

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, in consultation with the United States, has put forward a set of milestones critical for Iraq. His list is a good start, but it must be expanded to include milestones that can strengthen the government and benefit the Iraqi people. President Bush and his national security team should remain in close and frequent contact with the Iraqi leadership to convey a clear message: there must be prompt action by the Iraqi government to make substantial progress toward the achievement of these milestones.

If the Iraqi government demonstrates political will and makes substantial progress toward the achievement of milestones on national reconciliation, security, and governance, the United States should make clear its willingness to

continue training, assistance, and support for Iraq's security forces and to continue political, military, and economic support. If the Iraqi government does not make substantial progress toward the achievement of milestones on national reconciliation, security, and governance, the United States should reduce its political, military, or economic support for the Iraqi government.

Our report makes recommendations in several other areas. They include improvements to the Iraqi criminal justice system, the Iraqi oil sector, the U.S. reconstruction efforts in Iraq, the U.S. budget process, the training of U.S. government personnel, and U.S. intelligence capabilities.

Conclusion

It is the unanimous view of the Iraq Study Group that these recommendations offer a new way forward for the United States in Iraq and the region. They are comprehensive and need to be implemented in a coordinated fashion. They should not be separated or carried out in isolation. The dynamics of the region are as important to Iraq as events within Iraq.

The challenges are daunting. There will be difficult days ahead. But by pursuing this new way forward, Iraq, the region, and the United States of America can emerge stronger.

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

State's Burns Urges 56-Nation Group To Help End Frozen Conflicts

Washington -- A senior U.S. diplomat has urged the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to play a larger role in ending "frozen" regional conflicts, but also warned the 56-nation group that some members seek to undermine their shared commitment to democratic values.

"The path to reform of the OSCE lies through action on the real challenges of our time," R. Nicholas Burns, under secretary of state for political affairs, said December 4 in Brussels, Belgium. Addressing the organization's 14th annual ministerial council, Burns said the United States believes the OSCE has the ability to find lasting settlements to the so-called frozen conflicts in south-east Europe, where many ethnic minorities fought for independent enclaves during and after the breakup of the Soviet Union.

Burns visited Brussels as part of a three-nation trip. He traveled next to Paris for talks on the Iran nuclear issue, and was scheduled then to travel to India. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=December&x=20061204172940adyn-ned0.5992243>).)

The OSCE is the world's largest regional security organization, with 56 participating states from Europe, Central Asia and North America. It is active in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. The OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights observes elections and monitors human rights.

Since its Cold War-era founding, the OSCE has played a significant role

in helping to "rebuild communities based on a model of tolerance and respect for others," Burns said.

"Unfortunately, recent years have seen efforts to degrade these principles by some signatories," Burns warned. "The very commitments



Nicholas Burns, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

that are the bedrock of our shared values are increasingly brought into question."

Burns said there are "too many examples of backsliding by some OSCE states," particularly Belarus. Examples include using administrative rules to keep candidates off ballots; denying access to public media for opposition parties; restricting freedom of assembly and detaining human-rights defenders; harassing nongovernmental organizations; intimidating and attacking journalists; and using criminal court systems to silence critics and limit freedom of expression.

"We should emerge from this ministerial [council] rededicated to enlist-

ing OSCE to affect positive change," Burns said.

The United States over the past year has offered numerous ideas aimed at reinvigorating the OSCE's core missions, he said.

In Georgia, the OSCE should expand its activities in South Ossetia and press authorities in that breakaway region to take demilitarizing steps matching those taken by the government of Georgia. OSCE should increase the number of monitors with access to the entire region, including the Roki Tunnel, currently controlled by South Ossetian separatists and a Russian peacekeeping force. Burns invited Russia to "play a major role in the search for confidence and peaceful resolution of these frozen conflicts.

On Nagorno-Karabakh, Burns thanked Russia and France – co-chairs of the Minsk Group – for working with the leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia to develop "a reasoned approach which promises to lead to a negotiated settlement." Burns urged OSCE to call on leaders to implement a peaceful settlement based on those discussions and agreements. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/eur/Archive/2006/Mar/29-436407.html>).)

In Moldova, the United States has called for an immediate resumption of talks on the region of Transnistria. The OSCE should support Moldova's unilateral disarmament steps and demand similar reductions from the Transnistrian side, he said. The United States continues to call for a resumption of Russian military withdrawal. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/>

(Continued on page 23)

Journalist Urges More Enforcement of Laws Against Human Trafficking

By Jane Morse
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Victor Malarek, a well-known investigative journalist, spoke at the U.S. Department of State November 28 about his take on the global problem of trafficking in women, calling it "a disaster of epic proportions."

Malarek, author of the book *The Natashas: Inside the New Global Sex Trade*, was introduced by Ambassador John Miller, director of the State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and senior adviser to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on human trafficking.

Malarek called human trafficking "a disaster of epic proportions" that continues to flourish unabated because laws already on the books in most countries are not being enforced. He acknowledged that the sex trade "won't go away," but he said minimizing it should be a top priority of all nations.

He identified poverty as the Number 1 reason women are duped into prostitution, and he said it is the "patriarchal darkness" of men that creates the demand.

Malarek had especially harsh words for the "deceptive mantra" of those in favor of legalizing prostitution, saying that in countries where prostitution is legal, organized crime has grown more powerful and human trafficking has increased. He noted a report by the International Organization for Migration that says nearly 70 percent of prostitutes in the Netherlands have been trafficked into the country; in Germany the figure is as high as 87 percent.

In countries where women have access to "real jobs that don't require them to shed their clothes," Malarek said, local brothel owners rely on traffickers to keep their brothels stocked with prostitutes from other countries such as Russia, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine.

Nor does legalized prostitution control the spread of HIV/AIDS, according to Malarek. He noted that health checks are conducted on the prostitutes, not the buyers of their services. There is nothing, he said, to protect the women from the men who use them.

"Tolerance is a dangerous game," Malarek said. "The decriminalization crowd is a pack of wolves in sheep's clothing." The only way to tackle the problem, he said, is "to go after the men who demand the women."

Malarek had high praise for Sweden's dramatic decrease in prostitution within its borders, which he feels should be a model for the world.

Sweden passed legislation in 1999 that criminalizes the buying of sex, decriminalizes the selling of sex and provides comprehensive social service funds to help prostitutes who want to quit. According to Malarek, Sweden had a problem at first in enforcing the legislation, but successfully overcame it by educating prosecutors and police that prostitution is not "a victimless crime."

In his remarks at the State Department, Malarek emphasized that trafficking is "a huge human rights abuse" and that dignity for women should be a top priority.



Victor Malarek

According to State Department statistics, about 600,000 to 800,000 people -- mostly women and children -- are trafficked across national boundaries each year. This figure does not include the millions trafficked within their own countries.

In his book, Malarek notes that trafficking in persons is the third most profitable criminal activity after dealing in illegal weapons and drugs. "According to the international police organization Interpol," he writes, "a trafficked woman can bring in anywhere from \$75,000 to \$250,000 a year."

For more information on U.S. policy, see Human Trafficking (http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/human_trafficking.html).

More information (http://www.usdoj.gov/whatwedo/whatwedo_ctip.html) on human trafficking is available on the U.S. Department of Justice 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>) ♦

U.N. Report Cites Burma, Sudan for Using Child Soldiers

By Judy Aita
USINFO United Nations Correspondent

United Nations -- Burma and Sudan have been singled out by the United Nations for continuing to use child soldiers despite repeated international demands to stop. The two governments were featured in a report by Secretary-General Kofi Annan that cited 38 groups in 12 countries for using children in armed conflict.

The Security Council reviewed the situation during a daylong public debate November 28 and strongly condemned the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, the killing, rape, maiming and abduction of children, and the denial of humanitarian aid.

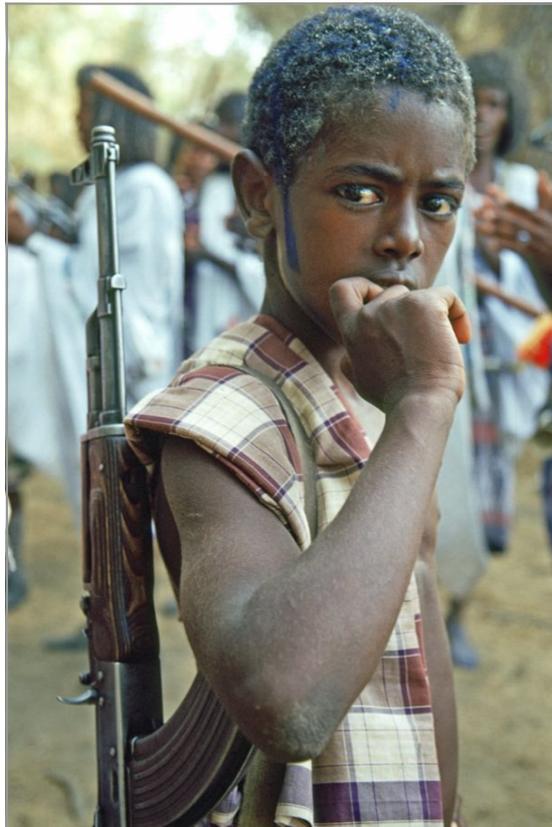
"It is important that the United Nations, the Security Council, and our governments keep the issue of children and armed conflict in our focus, particularly in light of the alarming estimate that some 300,000 children are today involved in more than 30 conflicts worldwide," said U.S. Ambassador Jackie Sanders.

Sanders, U.S. representative to the United Nation for special political affairs, said that plight of child soldiers is particularly dire in Burma, Sudan and the parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and northern Uganda in which the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) operates.

In Uganda, about 25,000 children have been abducted by the LRA, Sanders said. "Children abducted by the LRA are often forced to participate in acts of extreme violence, including beating or hacking to

death fellow child captives who have tried to escape. Girls as young as 12 are given to commanders as 'wives.'"

Burma is thought to have the largest number of child soldiers in the world. Human Rights Watch has documented the widespread forced



A Sudan child soldier

recruitment of boys as young as 11 by Burma's national army, Sanders said. The ambassador also said that Burmese forces systematically rape women and girls, particularly of the Shan, Karen, Karenni, and other ethnic minorities, as an instrument of war.

Although Burma's military regime admits to the recruitment, claims to have taken action against five officials, and has set up a committee to prevent the practice, evidence

continues to emerge that the recruitment of child soldiers has not ceased, Sanders said.

The Human Rights Education Institute of Burma, which is based in Thailand, said in a September 2006 report that little had changed on Burma's forced recruitment of child soldiers and the regime has done little to protect children from being recruited into the military. The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers has estimated that about 90,000 individuals -- 20 percent of the Burmese army and ethnic insurgency forces -- are under the age of 18.

The U.N. secretary-general said that despite the fact that the United Nations has not been allowed in Burma to verify the situation, the United Nations has received detailed and credible allegations that forced recruitment continues. UNICEF also has attempted to work with the government on developing a national plan of action to stop forced recruitment, but the government has not been forthcoming.

In Sudan, both the Sudan Armed Forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) have recruited children. In Darfur, government and paramilitary forces, Jingaweit militias, the faction of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) led by Minni Minawi, and the Chadian opposition forces have been recruiting and using children. "It is estimated that thousands of children are still associated with armed forces and groups in Darfur and were actively involved in the conflict between May and July 2006," Annan reported.

(Continued on page 20)

State Department To Lead Partnership for Sustainable Development

Washington – The U.S. Department of State has assumed chairmanship of an innovative public-private partnership for sustainable development known as SEED (Supporting Entrepreneurs for Environment and Development), according to a December 1 announcement.

SEED, which derives from of the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, seeks to build support for local entrepreneurial initiatives and partnerships

around the world that balance requirements for environmental protection with the need for sustainable economic growth. The United States joined SEED in 2004.

Jonathan Margolis, U.S. special representative for sustainable development, will serve a one-year term as chairman of the SEED board of directors.

Further information can be found on the SEED Web site ([http://](http://www.seedinit.org/)

www.seedinit.org/) and in the State Department fact sheet (<http://www.sdp.gov/sdp/initiative/c15388.htm>).

The text (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/77246.htm>) of the announcement can be found on the State Department Web site.

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

U.N. Report Cites Burma, Sudan for Using Child Soldiers . . .

(Continued from page 19)

In Darfur, the practice of ethnically targeted sexual violence against girls and women continues, particularly in areas of displaced populations. Some 40 percent of the victims have been under 18 years old, and many of the attacks are carried out by uniformed men, the United Nations reported.

SUDAN MUST HALT RECRUITMENT

Sanders specifically called on the Sudanese government, which is party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, to accept responsibility for the widespread recruitment and use of child soldiers and take immediate steps to halt these practices.

The nongovernmental organization Human Rights Watch wants the U.N. Security Council to take

stronger measures and punish users of child soldiers by imposing sanctions.

"These groups will keep using children until they're made to pay a heavy price for it," said Jo Becker of Human Rights Watch. "The Security Council should use its power to punish the groups that ruin the lives of vulnerable children and apply sanctions against them."

Despite intensifying efforts to stop the sexual exploitation and abuse of children by U.N. peacekeeping personnel, this exploitation has continued, according to the U.N. report. From January 2004 to August 2006, investigations involving 313 U.N. peacekeeping personnel resulted in 17 civilians being dismissed, and 17 police and 141 military personnel being sent home. Another 85 allegations are still under investigation.

Other violators listed in the report include: the Tamil Tigers of Sri

Lanka; the Maoists in Nepal; five groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; armed militia groups affiliated with the Presidential camp and Forces Armées des Forces Nouvelles (FAFN) in Cote d'Ivoire; Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter Terrorism (ARPCT) and Union of the Islamic Courts (ICU) in Somalia; and guerrilla groups in the Philippines and Colombia.

Sanders said that the United States supports the active monitoring of the governments and armed groups cited in the U.N. report; talking with governments and groups to develop plans to eliminate the use of child soldiers; and continuing efforts to halt the sexual exploitation and abuse of children.

Since 2001, the United States has contributed more than \$34 million to prevent the recruitment of child combatants and assist in their demobilization and reintegration into communities. ♦

Need for Energy Security Links U.S., African Nations, Bodman Says

By Peggy B. Hu
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- The United States and the nations of Africa are linked by the need to enhance their individual and collective energy security, U.S. Secretary of Energy Samuel Bodman says.

In a keynote address to the Corporate Council on Africa Oil and Gas Forum December 1 in Bethesda, Maryland, Bodman said energy consumption in the United States is estimated to increase by 24 percent by the year 2025, while the total energy consumption for Africa is projected to grow by more than 75 percent in the same time period.

"Africa's nations and regions have different energy requirements and are in different stages of energy infrastructure development," he said, "but they all face the challenge of dramatically expanding infrastructure to meet huge increases in energy demand to fuel economic development."

U.S. ENERGY POLICY

The United States is committed to a multilateral approach to energy security based on free trade and free markets, according to Bodman.

"Experience has shown that free markets are the finest way to deliver consistently favorable outcomes to producers and consumers," he said, adding that the United States wants to see more African countries engaged in programs under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and other trade-enabling mechanisms. (See African Growth and Opportunity Act (<http://usinfo.state.gov/af/africa/>

[trade_economic_development/agoa.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/af/africa/trade_economic_development/agoa.html)).)

AGOA provides duty-free access to a wide range of more than 6,400 items -- including textile products -- into the U.S. market for African nations willing to reform their economies along free-market lines. The landmark trade legislation -- the first of its kind with Africa -- was passed by Congress in 2000 and since has been amended and renewed.

"Free and fair markets are the best vehicles for developing and allocating resources, the best vehicles for generating wealth, the best vehicles for empowering the populations and nations they serve, and, in the case of energy, the best vehicles for a nation to foster a sustainable energy sector," he said.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

In seeking to expand reliable, affordable energy supplies, countries must also keep in mind environmental protection, Bodman said. (See Environment (http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/environment.html).)

"For the United States, that means the continued application of advanced technology and pollution-prevention techniques at every step of the process, from production to consumption," he said.

Bodman stressed that nations must cooperate to succeed.

"No nation can go it alone," he said. "Regional integration and energy interdependence are not options," but rather "fundamental [principles] to achieving energy security."

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS PROTECTION AND RULE OF LAW

Bodman called on his fellow energy ministers to "harness the power of the marketplace to develop natural resources, efficiently deliver them to customers and generate economic growth." He also urged them to take steps that will attract and maintain private investment and expertise in the field.

These steps include:

- commitment to intellectual property protections;
- support for private property rights;
- use of commercial arrangements rather than market-distorting preferential arrangements;
- recognition of the sanctity of contracts;
- market transparency; and
- dedication to regulatory certainty and the rule of law.

"When these concepts take root in society, when the rule of law and respect for contracts and property rights are the order of the day ... the private sector will respond with investment on the scale necessary to help fully develop the abundant resources found in so many African nations," he said.

The full text (<http://www.energy.gov/news/4498.htm>) of Bodman's remarks is available at the Department of Energy'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>) ♦

United States Intensifies Fight Against Counterfeit Drugs

By Nadine Siak
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- The United States government is expanding its efforts to combat the rising threat posed by dangerous counterfeit drugs entering global markets, say U.S. Department of Justice officials.

More than 10 percent of the drugs sold around the world today are counterfeit, according to the World Health Organization, and the problem is growing.

"We view it as serious business," Eugene Thiorlf told an audience in Taiwan via digital videoconference November 28. Thiorlf is director of the U.S. Department of Justice office that assists the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in prosecuting counterfeiters.

The removal of counterfeit drugs from the marketplace is "critical," he said.

"Maintaining the confidence of the American public or the public in Taiwan that the products that they are taking are, in fact, going to help them, and are safe and effective --it is something that must be maintained," Thiorlf said.

"The drug supply in the United States remains safe, but we believe [there are] increasingly sophisticated and challenging threats from those who want to take advantage of the American market," Thiorlf said. "Organizations and individuals who peddle these fake medicines put unsuspecting patients at risk -- not only in the United States, but around the world."

Counterfeit drugs often look like the authentic product, but might not contain any of the active

(therapeutic) ingredients, might contain too much of the active ingredients, might contain too little of the active ingredients, or might contain contaminants that are potentially dangerous to the consumer's health.



A collection of counterfeit pharmaceutical drugs seized by the NAFDAC in Nigeria

Although all counterfeit products are violations of someone's intellectual property rights (IPR), John Zacharia, an IPR attorney with the Department of Justice, told the conference participants that most counterfeit drug cases are prosecuted under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act rather than as trademark violations.

"Unlike, for example, counterfeit luxury items ... where the actual Gucci brand or Nike brand matters," Zacharia explained, "with counterfeit drugs, most of the time, the purchasers don't care if the [trade] mark is on it, they just want the drug. So the counterfeiters know this, and so they on purpose don't

usually use the mark."

If counterfeiters are caught, penalties are milder under the Cosmetic Act. The maximum criminal penalty under trademark law is 10 years in prison compared with three years under the cosmetic law.

In March, however, the U.S. Congress changed trademark law "to make it a little easier to show trafficking" in counterfeit drugs, he continued. This modification "broadens the scope of what we can prosecute," making the statute easier to apply, Zacharia said. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/ei/Archive/2006/Mar/09-615647.html>).)

Both officials mentioned that there are proposals before the U.S. Congress to modify the criminal statute on trademarks in order to make penalty for cases of counterfeit pharmaceutical trademarks more severe -- higher than the current 10 year maximum for trademark infringements in general.

In addition, a new FDA regulation that went into effect in November requires companies that sell drugs in the United States to show proof of where the drug was manufactured.

"It is called a 'pedigree,'" Thiorlf said. "It would be like showing that you have evidence that you have a drug that came from the manufacturer."

See also "Public Safety Jeopardized by Chinese Counterfeiters, Experts Say" (<http://usinfo.state.gov/eap/Archive/2005/May/20-45620.html>)." ♦

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State's Burns Urges 56-Nation Group . . .

(Continued from page 17)

xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=July&x=20060724165657xlrennef0.3891064).

The United States also has proposed strengthening the OSCE's Personal Representatives on Tolerance, and has called for an OSCE conference on anti-Semitism in 2007.

The United States and other OSCE members have pushed for OSCE involvement in fighting the sexual exploitation of children.

Russia and the United States have proposed that the OSCE embrace a concept for fighting terrorism through public-private partnership. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/is/Archive/2006/Apr/21-342779.html>).)

The OSCE mission in Kosovo should be given a clear mandate to continue to support the transforma-

tion of Kosovo, Burns said. He added that OSCE should contribute wherever possible in the implementation of a future-status settlement for Kosovo, expected to be proposed by the United Nations following Serbian elections in January 2007. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=September&x=200609211620061CJsamohT0.4919855>).)

The full text (http://osce.usmission.gov/archive/2006/12/Burns_Statement_14thMC_12-04-2006.pdf) of Burns' remarks is available on the U.S. Mission to the OSCE Web site.

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U.S. Military Chaplains Support More

(Continued from page 13)

"We provide services in our own religion, but as chaplains, we provide for everyone," said Air Force Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) Brett Oxman. In Iraq, an Army chaplain who is a Catholic priest invites Australian troops who are Catholic to attend his mass. In a similar expression of hospitality, an Eastern Orthodox church in Kandahar, Afghanistan, has invited U.S. military personnel to attend services there. Even with language barriers, there is comfort in familiar religious services.

Chaplains travel to as many domestic or overseas bases as they can, especially on religious holidays. Earlier this year, Jewish soldiers serving in Iraq were flown to Tikrit to celebrate Yom Kippur with a rabbi who was stationed there.

In Iraq, chaplains also take care of people who are translators or Iraqi civilians, Huerta said. Though he himself is a rabbi, he has memorized Arabic verses from the Quran. When a young Iraqi boy was dying of wounds caused by a bomb in Mosul in October 2005, Huerta held the boy's hand at the hospital and chanted whatever Arabic verses he knew. "The boy was six or seven years old; I didn't want him to die hearing medical terms in English," Huerta explained.

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