



# Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

## INSIDE

### New Grant for Restoration of Mohammed Ali House Highlights U.S. Cultural Support

**Agreement Helps Preserve Historical House in Addis Ababa**

Wednesday, September 5, 2007 (Addis Ababa, U.S. Embassy) – U.S. Ambassador Donald Yamamoto joined Her Imperial Highness Princess Mariam Senna Asfaw Wassen, Founder and CEO of Addis Wubet, on Wednesday, September 5, to sign a grant for the restoration of Mohammed Ali House, a pilot project for the Piazza



*Ambassador Yamamoto shakes hands with Princess Mariam Senna Asfaw Wassen after signing the agreement.*

District Revitalization Project of Addis Wubet in the heart of Addis Ababa. The Mohammed Ali House is listed on the World Monuments Watch List. The grant, in the amount of \$25,000, was provided through the Ambassador’s Fund for

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### U.S. Helps Ethiopia Prepare For and Respond to Future Flooding

**Addis Ababa (U.S. Embassy) –** The United States Government, through the U.S. Agency for International Development’s (USAID) Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), has donated 16 rubber Zodiac boats, motors, and accessory equipment including 160 life-vests, along with 1,100 rolls of plastic sheeting and 2,500 wool blankets for the Government of Ethiopia to better anticipate and respond to flooding in areas of the country where flooding is recurrent. The total value of this support is US \$825,354.



*Marc Rubin, Acting UNICEF Representative to Ethiopia, Simon Mechale, DPPA Director General, and USAID Mission Director Glenn Anders, joined hands in an act of solidarity to better prepare for and respond to future flooding. (Photo Kimberly Flowers, U.S. Embassy A.A)*

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## New Grant for Restoration of Mohammed Ali House Highlights U.S. . . .

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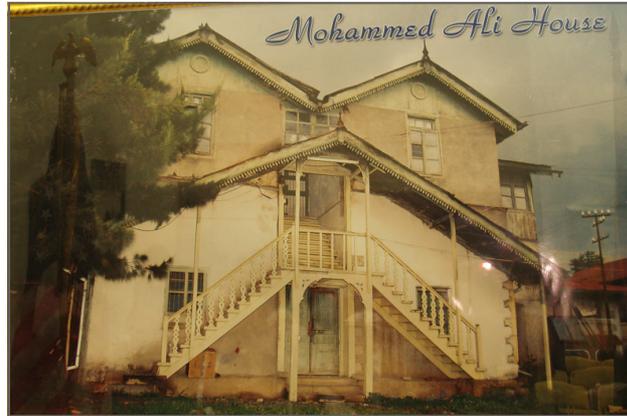
Cultural Preservation, an annual competitive program of the U.S. Department of State.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Ambassador Yamamoto noted that Ethiopia's successful participation in the 2007 Ambassador's Fund competition was a sign not only of deep U.S.-Ethiopian cultural ties but also of the American people's recognition of the richness and depth of Ethiopia's cultural heritage. He pointed out that the site preserved through this funding is itself a cultural symbol of Ethiopia.

The Ambassador added, "The Mohammed Ali House is an exemplary demonstration of Ethiopian-American friendship and cooperation. Its location in the heart of Addis Ababa will make it a key show-

case site for Ethiopia's Millennium Celebration."

Established in 2001, the Ambassa-



dor's Fund for Cultural Preservation is the only U.S. Government Program that provides direct small grant support to heritage preservation projects in developing countries. The U.S. Congress said of the

program, "In efforts to assist in preserving the heritage of other cultures, we show our respect for them." Previous grants to Ethiopia have supported conservation efforts at Hager Fikir Theater in Addis Ababa; Sheikh Nur Hussen Shrine in Oromia; Guzara Castle in North Gondar, and a needs-assessment study for the historic monument at Yeha in Tigray. This year, 94 countries participated in the Ambassador's Fund. Ethiopia's successful program was one of 57 projects chosen for funding out of a total of over 177 proposals. ♦

## U.S. Helps Ethiopia Prepare For and Respond to Future Flooding

(Continued from page 1)

According to national climate forecasts, heavy rains during the current rainy season in Ethiopia may have an even more devastating impact in flood prone areas in 2007 than they did in 2006, when an estimated 700 people died and approximately 600,000 individuals were displaced and stripped of their livelihoods.

The donation by the U.S. Government is contributing to efforts by the Government of Ethiopia's Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Agency (DPPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), donors and non-governmental organizations to more efficiently and quickly respond to future flooding through a

national 2007 flood preparation plan. The U.S.-funded boats will be dispatched to Amhara, Gambella, Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) and Somali Regions.

USAID/OFDA will cover the operational and maintenance costs for the boats so UNICEF, DPPA and their implementing partners can conduct rescue activities and deliver humanitarian relief supplies, such as tents, blankets, household relief kits and water containers to isolated communities cut off by rising flood waters. The overall effort is expected to potentially provide rescue activities and humanitarian assistance to an estimated 300,000 people.

USAID Mission Director Glenn Anders, joined Marc Rubin, Acting

UNICEF Representative, and Simon Mechale, DPPA Director General, to hand over the donated equipment yesterday. "This life-saving equipment will be invaluable in future emergencies, saving the lives of Ethiopians who live in areas prone to flooding every year," Anders said.

### About USAID/OFDA

USAID/OFDA's mandate to save lives, relieve human suffering and mitigate the economic impact of disasters allows the U.S. Government to respond to disasters and work with governments to build their capacity to respond to natural and man-made disasters. For more information please visit [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/humanitarian\\_assistance/disaster\\_assistance/](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/) ♦

## U.S. Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee Lays Wreath at "Mickey" Leland Memorial

U.S. Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, leading a Congressional delegation to Ethiopia, Algeria, Tunisia and Dubai, laid a wreath at the memorial for the late George Thomas "Mickey" Leland on Friday, August 31, 2007. The memorial is located on the grounds of the US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Congresswoman Jackson Lee represents the 18<sup>th</sup> Congressional district in Houston, Texas, formerly held by Mickey Leland. The wreath was laid on the 18<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Congressman Leland's death, which occurred on August 13, 1989 while he was on a humanitarian mission to Ethiopia. The wreath is a tribute to Congressman Leland's life and legacy on behalf of the 18<sup>th</sup> Congressional district of Texas and the American people. ♦



*(Jackson-Lee holding wreath with Ambassador Yamamoto): Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee from Houston, Texas, praised former Congressman Mickey Leland for his life and legacy during a wreath-laying ceremony held at the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa last week.*



*(wreath in front of memorial): The memorial to Mickey Leland stands at the center of the U.S. Embassy. Leland, an advocate on hunger and public health issues, died in a plane crash in 1989 in Gambella, Ethiopia, while on a humanitarian mission.*

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## Hager Fikir Theater Celebrates Completion of Restoration of the Theater

### *Project Partially Funded by U.S. Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation*

The Hager Fikir Theater celebrated the completion of its renovation project with a folkloric dance presentation at the theater on September 4, 2007. The project was funded under the U.S. Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation with matching contributions from the Addis Ababa City Administration. Ms. Menbere Tadesse, General Manager of Hager Fikir Theater; Ato Mesganaw Arga, Deputy Mayor of the Addis Ababa City Administration; and Patricia Johnson, Cultural



activities in building bridges between Ethiopians and Americans. The dance troupe and tradi-

house in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is a historical place not only to Ethiopians but also to all Africans, as the first theater house built by Africans for Africans south of the Sahara. Over 120 patrons of the arts and civic officials attended the celebration. The building had been in danger of structural collapse.



Affairs Officer of the U.S. Embassy presented remarks on the importance of the restoration of the theater, recognition of its role in the development of Ethiopian theater, music and dance, and the role of cul-

tional music group of Hager Fikir Theater presented six dances from the various regions of Ethiopia.

Built in 1934, the Hager Fikir Theater is the oldest indigenous play-

The Ambassador's Fund Project with matching support of Addis Ababa City Administration will allow the theater to be used by future generations of Ethiopian musicians and performing artists. Furthermore, it has helped citizens of Ethiopia realize the importance of preserving its cultural landscape. The Addis Ababa City Administration plans further ventures into preserving the historic buildings, and with it, an appreciation of the past, in the central historical district of Addis Ababa.♦

# Immigration Seen Adding 105 Million to U.S. Population by 2060

By Jeffrey Thomas  
USINFO Staff Writer

**Washington** – Since the founding of the United States, its population has been growing at a rate that some scientists say is unprecedented in human history. Some believe that this population explosion made the United States one of the most prosperous countries of the world, but others point to congestion, urban sprawl, traffic, pollution, loss of open spaces and the increase in greenhouse gas emissions as negative effects of rapid population growth.

A new report projects that current levels of immigration will add 105 million to the U.S. population by 2060, while having little effect on the rise in the median age in the U.S population.

The report, *100 Million More: Projecting the Impact of Immigration on the U.S. Population, 2007 to 2060*, was prepared by Steven Camarota, director of research at the Center for Immigration Studies, an independent research institute. Camarota based his projections on U.S. Census Bureau data and Census Bureau assumptions about future birth and death rates.

According to the report, about 1.6 million legal and illegal immigrants settle in the country and 350,000 people leave the United States each year, resulting in a net immigration of 1.25 million. If immigration continues at current levels, the nation's population will increase from 301 million today to 468 million in 2060 -- a 167 million (or 56 percent) increase. Future immigrants and their descendants will account for 105 million (or 63 percent) of the increase.

Net immigration into the United States has been increasing for five decades. If that trend continues, the report predicts the increase caused by immigration will be higher than the projected 105 million.

The report shows that even immigration has a very large impact on the size of the nation's population, it has only a small effect in slowing the aging of American society. Some proponents of immigration have argued large numbers of immigrants are necessary to forestall the aging of society and a consequent imbalance between workers and retirees.

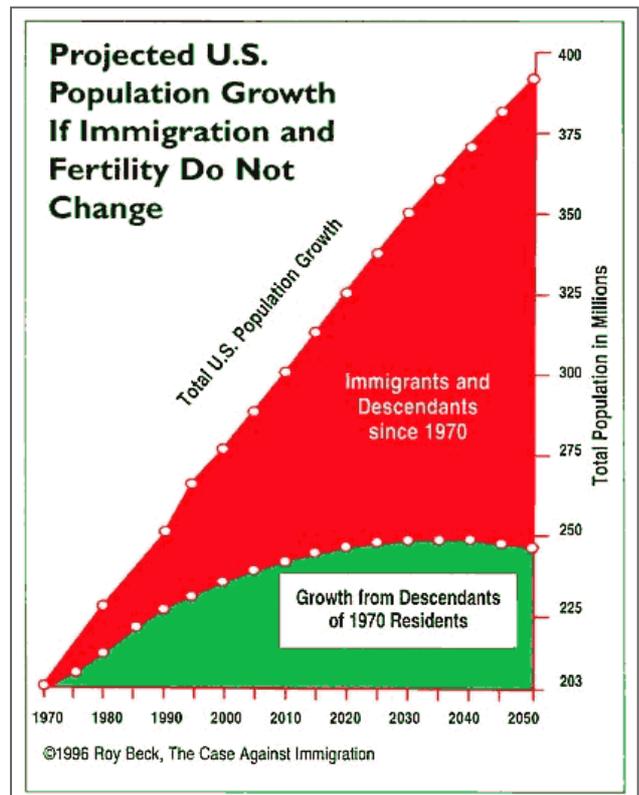
According to the report, most of the projected population increase will come from legal immigration. Illegal immigration will add 37.9 million to the U.S. population by 2060, given current trends, and legal immigration will add 67.4 million, Camarota found.

Camarota said that he believes the central question raised by his projections "is what costs and benefits come with having a much larger population and a more densely settled country."

"Some see a deteriorating quality of life with a larger population, including its impact on such things as pollution, congestion, loss of open spaces, and sprawl. Others may feel that a much larger population will create more opportunities for

businesses, workers and consumers."

The study is "thoroughly depressing" and "devastating" to Roy Beck, the executive director of Numbers USA, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, public policy organization that opposes current federal immigration policies. Beck is the author of *The Case Against Immigration*. "That extra 100 million makes a tremendous difference in the quality of life," he said. Beck sees mass immigration as a direct result of U.S. policy and calls it a "federally coercive conges-



Sources: US Census Bureau; demographer Leon Bouvier; Roy Beck, [Numbers USA](#)

tion program."

To Ben Wattenberg, however, the projections were good news. "Birth rates around the world are going down," he said, citing shrinking

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## USAID Works To Break Link Between Hunger and Conflict

*By David McKeeby*  
*USINFO Staff Writer*

**Washington** – The U.S. Food for Peace Program teams with the United Nations and humanitarian aid organizations to help break the link between hunger and armed conflict by building greater food security.

“If you look around the world to where most of emergency food aid needs are, a lot of it is related to conflict,” says Bill Hammink, director of the Food for Peace Program in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The program has fed more than 3 billion people in 150 countries since its creation in 1954 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

It transformed itself in the 1960s by working more closely with the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) and private voluntary organizations, which are better able to determine what food commodities are needed most critically in underdeveloped countries.

Hamminck told USINFO August 23 that USAID and its international assistance partners are seeing increasing numbers of chronically vulnerable communities that have been weakened by conflicts, natural disasters and other causes, making them unable to cope with sudden

shocks that can disrupt area food supplies and contribute to conflict.

Using tools such as the Famine Early Warning System Network – a database that tracks climate, economic and agricultural trends to project potential

food shortages – USAID works together with affected governments, WFP and private aid organizations to assess demand. With the U.S. Department of Agriculture, USAID also procures goods within the United States for shipping abroad or, if needed, purchases foods in the region and arranges for delivery.

On any given week, USAID ships more than 350,000 metric tons of

food commodities such as peas, beans, lentils, cornmeal, wheat and vegetable oil to more than 35 countries for distribution by WFP and private nongovernmental organizations to people in need.

Sub-Saharan Africa, no stranger to hunger and conflict, has received more than \$1 billion worth of emergency food assistance from the United States annually in recent years, he said.

Sudan’s Darfur region is a major beneficiary of Food for Peace, Hammink says. Working with WFP and private voluntary agencies on the ground, Food for Peace helps feed about 2.5 million internally displaced people in Darfur, and more than 220,000 refugees who have fled into neighboring Chad and the Central African Republic.

Other major Food for Peace programs can be found in current and former conflict zones in Somalia, northern Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Afghanistan.

To confront the vulnerabilities that can be caused by food insecurity, Food for Peace and partners have expanded their focus from simply saving lives to helping communities find new livelihoods, he said. Communities are encouraged to try new crops and farming techniques, new industries and other local economic development projects to strengthen communities and help them regain self sufficiency and become less vulnerable, according to Hammink.

“The focus on vulnerability to food insecurity encourages our emergency programs to encompass activities that address the underlying causes of emergencies and for development programs to incorporate

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*Workers unload bags of rice donated by the U.S. Agency for International Development in Khartoum, Sudan.*

“The U.S. is the Number 1 food aid donor in the world,” Hammink said. “It shows the giving, and benevolence, and caring of the American people.” The United States provides half of the world’s emergency food assistance.

Inspired by the success of aid programs such as the Marshall Plan, Food for Peace began as an initia-

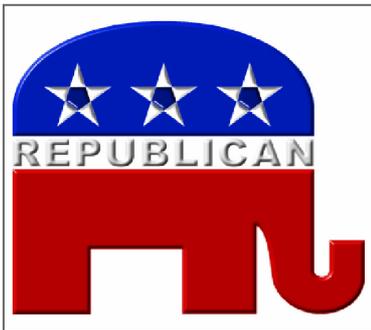
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## U.S. Political Parties Enjoy Rich History

*By Stuart Gorin*  
*USINFO Special Correspondent*

**Washington** -- When most people around the world think of elephants and donkeys, they simply picture jungle and farm animals. In the United States, however, these two beasts of burden bring to mind the country's two major political parties.

Since the middle of the 19th century, the elephant has been the symbol of the Republican Party, President Bush's party, which also is known as the GOP (Grand Old Party). The donkey symbolizes the Democratic Party, which currently is the majority party in the U.S. Congress.



These are the two parties that dominate U.S. politics. Dozens of smaller parties exist, but their primary influence now occurs when they divert key votes from one of the major parties' candidates during elections.

The Democrats date back to 1800 and the election of Thomas Jefferson as the United States' third president. The nation's first two presidents were members of the now-defunct Federalist Party. Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president, was the first Republican elected to the office.

At the founding of the United States, the Constitution gave no

role to political parties. When voting was restricted to an elite group of male property owners in the early days of the republic, there was little need to establish broad-based political organizations. But as the nation grew and more citizens gained the right to vote, the need arose to mobilize voters. Political parties filled that role, becoming a firmly established part of the political landscape.

The current Democratic Party originally was known as the Republicans, then took the name Democratic-Republicans and in the 1830s became the Democrats. Around the same time, opposition forces formed the Whig Party, which elected several presidents before disbanding. In the 1850s, core members of the Whigs joined others in opposition to the Democrats to form the current Republican Party.

Approximately two-thirds of Americans now consider themselves to be Republicans or Democrats, and thus can vote in state primary elections to nominate their party's candidates.

There is no requirement for any American to belong to a political party. Indeed, about one-third of citizens list themselves as Independents, free of any organized group. These citizens vote in general elections, but generally are not allowed to participate in the party-run state primaries, meaning they cannot vote to nominate a party's candidate or select the state's delegates to the party's national convention.

At the Democratic and Republican national conventions in summer 2008, delegates from each state will cast votes reflecting the results of their states' primary elections

and determine the two party's candidates.

The broad-based participation in the nomination process means party leaders have limited control over the selection of candidates. Candidates have to build their own campaign organizations to raise funds and solicit support.

But affiliation with one of the two major parties is a good place to start building that support. Since U.S. presidential elections are determined by the Electoral College -- with each state assigned a number of electoral votes based on its population and the popular vote winner in each state taking all of that state's electoral votes -- it is difficult for a smaller party to make



a significant showing in the face of the two major parties' national fundraising capabilities and grassroots support.

Historically, third parties have played an important role in influencing political trends. The American Independent Party in 1968 advocated toughness in fighting crime, and the Republican Party adopted that idea in its own platform (the principles a party supports) -- leading to a crime control act passed by Congress. The Socialist Party supported the creation of a fund to compensate the unemployed in the

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# Immigration Seen Adding 105 Million to U.S. Population . . .

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populations in Europe, Eurasia and East Asia. Wattenberg is the author of *Fewer: How the New Demography of Depopulation Will Shape Our Future*. "The only major growing power in the world is the [United States]. It is a depopulating world."

Beck and Wattenberg participated in a panel discussion on the new report at the National Press Club in Washington August 30.

The long-term nature of the population explosion in the United States is evident in the 75-fold increase from 1790, when the U.S. census counted just under 4 million, to today's 301 million. Such population growth is the secret of U.S. dynamism, Wattenberg says, noting the contributions immigrants have made to American society and their tendency to be even more patriotic than native born Americans.

The average age of a new immigrant is 29, said Wattenberg, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, a Washington policy research organization. "They're going to pay into Social Security [the U.S. federal retirement program] for 40 years before they retire."

"Our secret weapon in globalization is we know how to assimilate people," Wattenberg said.

Camarota, however, believes that his projections show that even with no immigration the U.S. population would increase significantly. Moreover, the effects of immigration are cumulative. "Immigrants admitted today become tomorrow's retirees."

Camarota sees the extended growth of immigration since the Immigration Act of 1965 as unprecedented in the U.S. history. All previous waves of immigration were followed by periods of low immigration, he said.

The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 abolished the national-origin immigration quotas and

opened the way for much larger numbers of immigrants from non-European countries, especially Latin America and Asia.

The full text ( <http://www.cis.org/articles/2007/back707.html> ) of the report is available on the Web site of the Center for Immigration Studies.

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

Table 1. U.S. Population Size Under Alternative Net Immigration Levels, 2007 to 2060 (millions)

Annual Immigration		2007		2010		2020		2030		2040		2050		2060	
New Imm.	Net Imm.	Total Pop.	Total Pop.	Imm. Effect											
0	0	300.9	306.4	-	323.4	-	337.0	-	347.3	-	355.3	-	362.7	-	
0.128	0.100	300.9	306.8	0.3	324.9	1.5	339.9	3.0	351.9	4.6	361.7	6.4	371.1	8.4	
0.256	0.200	300.9	307.1	0.6	326.5	3.1	342.9	6.0	356.5	9.2	368.2	12.9	379.6	16.8	
0.384	0.300	300.9	307.4	0.9	328.0	4.6	345.9	9.0	361.1	13.8	374.6	19.3	388.0	25.3	
0.512	0.400	300.9	307.7	1.2	329.5	6.2	348.9	11.9	365.7	18.4	381.0	25.7	396.4	33.7	
0.640	0.500	300.9	308.0	1.6	331.1	7.7	351.9	14.9	370.3	23.0	387.5	32.2	404.8	42.1	
0.768	0.600	300.9	308.3	1.9	332.6	9.2	354.9	17.9	374.9	27.6	393.9	38.6	413.3	50.5	
0.896	0.700	300.9	308.6	2.2	334.2	10.8	357.8	20.9	379.5	32.2	400.3	45.0	421.7	59.0	
1.024	0.800	300.9	308.9	2.5	335.7	12.3	360.8	23.9	384.1	36.8	406.7	51.5	430.1	67.4	
1.152	0.900	300.9	309.2	2.8	337.2	13.9	363.8	26.9	388.7	41.4	413.2	57.9	438.5	75.8	
1.280	1.000	300.9	309.5	3.1	338.8	15.4	366.8	29.8	393.4	46.0	419.6	64.3	446.9	84.2	
1.408	1.100	300.9	309.9	3.4	340.3	16.9	369.8	32.8	398.0	50.6	426.0	70.8	455.4	92.7	
1.536	1.200	300.9	310.2	3.7	341.9	18.5	372.8	35.8	402.6	55.3	432.5	77.2	463.8	101.1	
1.664	1.250*	300.9	310.3	3.9	342.6	19.3	374.3	37.3	404.9	57.6	435.7	80.4	468.0	105.3	
1.664	1.300	300.9	310.5	4.0	343.4	20.0	375.8	38.8	407.2	59.9	438.9	83.6	472.2	109.5	
1.792	1.400	300.9	310.8	4.3	344.9	21.6	378.7	41.8	411.8	64.5	445.3	90.1	480.6	117.9	
1.920	1.500	300.9	311.1	4.7	346.5	23.1	381.7	44.8	416.4	69.1	451.8	96.5	489.1	126.3	
2.048	1.600	300.9	311.4	5.0	348.0	24.6	384.7	47.8	421.0	73.7	458.2	102.9	497.5	134.8	
2.176	1.700	300.9	311.7	5.3	349.6	26.2	387.7	50.7	425.6	78.3	464.6	109.4	505.9	143.2	
2.304	1.800	300.9	312.0	5.6	351.1	27.7	390.7	53.7	430.2	82.9	471.1	115.8	514.3	151.6	
2.432	1.900	300.9	312.3	5.9	352.6	29.3	393.7	56.7	434.8	87.5	477.5	122.2	522.7	160.0	
2.560	2.000	300.9	312.6	6.2	354.2	30.8	396.6	59.7	439.4	92.1	483.9	128.7	531.2	168.5	
3.200	2.500	300.9	314.2	7.8	361.9	38.5	411.6	74.6	462.4	115.1	516.1	160.8	573.3	210.6	
3.840	3.000	300.9	315.7	9.3	369.6	46.2	426.5	89.5	485.4	138.1	548.3	193.0	615.4	252.7	
4.480	3.500	300.9	317.3	10.9	377.3	53.9	441.4	104.5	508.5	161.1	580.4	225.1	657.5	294.8	
5.120	4.000	300.9	318.9	12.4	385.0	61.6	456.3	119.4	531.5	184.2	612.6	257.3	699.6	336.9	
5.760	4.500	300.9	320.4	14.0	392.7	69.3	471.3	134.3	554.5	207.2	644.8	289.5	741.7	379.0	
6.400	5.000	300.9	322.0	15.5	400.4	77.0	486.2	149.2	577.5	230.2	676.9	321.6	783.9	421.1	

\*The current level of net immigration (legal and illegal) each year. All figures are for January of the year for which they given.

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## YouTube Redefines Terms of Presidential Debates

**By Lea Terhune**  
**USINFO Staff Writer**

**Washington** – Thanks to the Internet, the tide may be turning for young American voters who feel they have no say in politics. YouTube, the “broadcast yourself” cyberspace phenomenon that allows anyone with a digital camera to post videos on the Internet for free, offered an unprecedented political platform in July: Democratic candidates were grilled by ordinary Americans via video questions.

Politicians accustomed to controlling discussions saw people in T-shirts pose cheeky, incisive questions from all over the country -- and the world. One question came from an aid worker surrounded by children at a refugee camp in Darfur, Sudan.

The eight Democrats on the dais vying for their party's presidential nomination had to respond. Joe Biden, Hillary Clinton, Christopher Dodd, John Edwards, Mike Gravel, Dennis Kucinich, Barack Obama and Bill Richardson fielded questions on topics ranging from civil rights to health care. Several of the 39 questions were about the war in Iraq, and nearly a third touched on foreign policy, including “How do we get beyond empty promises in Darfur?” and “How will your policies reduce energy consumption?”

Co-sponsor CNN, which broadcast the July 23 event on television, chose the questions from about

1,500 submissions. University of Iowa elections expert Bruce Gronbeck found this “fascinating.”

“Television maintained its position as the dominant framer,” he told USINFO. “It threw the YouTube questions up on the screen and took a picture of them with a camera rather than direct feeding into the broadcast. So the dominant me-



*Democratic presidential hopefuls listen to a question from Reverend Reggie Longcrier of Hickory, North Carolina, as they participate in the debate sponsored by CNN, YouTube and Google at The Citadel military college in Charleston, South Carolina, July 23. (AP Images)*

dium tried to stay in control and they picked the questions.”

But are television and print the dominant media of the 21st century? It is debatable, as both strive to develop Internet components and advertisers see the Web as the worldwide ad space. Gronbeck says the Internet has had a major impact on the print and electronic media. “The Internet now is a source of stories, of political stories, and ... provides an amazing amount of material that then gets re-circulated on

radio, television and print.” The YouTube debate exemplifies that.

YouTube first emerged as an influence on voters in 2006, when the Republican senatorial candidate from Virginia, George Allen, verbally abused a young party worker of South Asian-American descent who was videotaping a speech for rival Democratic candidate Jim Webb.

The clip of Allen's remarks was posted on YouTube. Despite Allen's attempts to apologize, this once front-runner and possible presidential candidate lost to Webb by several thousand votes. Analysts see the widespread circulation of this so-called “macaca” video in the media, including YouTube, as partly responsible for his defeat.

This lesson was not lost on politicians. Serious presidential candidates, Republicans and Democrats alike, have joined YouTube in the past year to establish a presence

and post campaign videos there. Barack Obama announced on YouTube his intentions to explore a presidential bid a month before his official announcement.

Some candidates who receive little attention from the mainstream media are all over the Internet. Internet views of one such candidate, Republican Ron Paul, outstrip all others, according to TechPresident, which tracks candidates in online social media. Unauthorized political

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## After Facing Mobs 50 Years Ago, Nine Go Home to Honors

By Elizabeth Kelleher  
USINFO Staff Writer

**Little Rock, Arkansas** – As schools across America begin a new year, Little Rock's largest high school is planning a 50-year reunion expected to attract presidents and poets.

But all eyes will be on nine professionals in their mid-60s -- a real estate broker, an accountant, an investment adviser, a court probation officer, a psychologist, a journalist and a few teachers. They are the Little Rock Nine, the first blacks to attend all-white Central High School in 1957. Their enrollment sparked resistance and a constitutional crisis that would advance civil rights in America.

After the Little Rock Nine took their stand, school integration advanced in the South, slowly at first, but faster after the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. High school graduation rates among blacks went from 18 percent in 1957 to 81 percent in 2006, according to the Census Bureau. (The graduation rate for whites in 1957 was 43 percent; in 2006 it stands at 86 percent.)

Melba Pattillo Beals, Elizabeth Eckford, Ernest Green, Gloria Ray Karlmark, Carlotta Walls LaNier, Terrence Roberts, Jefferson Thomas, Minnijean Brown Trickey and Thelma Mothershed Wair are close. "We have become a tight-knit club," Green said, "forever sealed at 15-, 16 years old."

In terms of Southern race relations in 1957, Little Rock was progressive. The bus system and library were desegregated. When city schools moved to comply with a Supreme Court ruling that racial segregation is illegal, no one expected a struggle.

But on the first day blacks were to attend Central, Governor Orval Faubus, up for re-election and looking for votes from segregationists, sent state National Guard troops to surround the school, allegedly to "maintain the peace."

"I would have thought he meant my peace," Wair said. "He didn't have me in mind. I didn't know that until I got there." The guardsmen barred the blacks from entering school, leaving them to face a mob.

"White and black kids played together," LaNier said. "I did not expect hatred, mob mentality. Even when I saw it, I didn't think it was going to last long."

Beals came to school that first day with her mother, and they were chased away. Eckford and Roberts arrived alone. Each walked a gauntlet, Eckford after being stopped by raised bayonets of troops. The blacks were forced to stay home for 19 days, until a federal court ordered the governor to remove the guardsmen. But when the nine finally entered school September 23, police could not cope with a mob outside. The blacks attended a few classes that day, but then were smuggled out -- with blankets and clothes covering them, on the floors of two cars.

Media images from Little Rock, especially those depicting whites beating black journalists, made deep impressions around the world and compelled President Eisenhower to act. According to historian Taylor Branch, Eisenhower was "a segregationist at heart," but a man sworn to uphold the law. On September 24, he dispatched 1,200 members of the 101st Airborne Division, the "Screaming Eagles" of Fort Campbell, Kentucky, to Little Rock. The next day, they escorted

the Little Rock Nine to school and protected them in the hallways.

"The real significance isn't that the Little Rock case produced integration," said Branch.

"The real significance of Little Rock is that it showed that state politicians couldn't ultimately defy federal courts. If the president hadn't sent troops in, the Constitution would have become whatever each governor wanted it to be."

Again, in 1962, President John F. Kennedy sent troops to enforce a federal court order that the University of Mississippi must accept James Meredith, a black Air Force veteran. And, in 1963, federal marshals confronted Alabama Governor George Wallace as he blocked black students from registering at the University of Alabama. "The courts have no armies," Branch said. "They can only survive if the executive branch backs them."

On September 25, 1957, when the 101st drove the Little Rock Nine to school, Wair said, "the crowds parted like the Red Sea."

Yet after the troops left two months later, the blacks suffered increasing harassment from fellow students who sought to force the Little Rock Nine to quit. "But we all figured it out: Leaving was not an option," Green said.

The black students had volunteered to go to Central and were chosen from among other volunteers for their academic records and temperaments. "We all felt good," said Trickey. "We knew that Central High School had so many more courses, and dramatics and speech and tennis courts and a big, beautiful stadium."

*(Continued on page 19)*

## Afghanistan-Tajikistan Bridge Links Central, South Asia

**Washington** – They had not waited for the orchestra to play or for officials to cut the ribbon. They did not need much encouragement from their governments either. Business people in Afghanistan and Tajikistan had sensed new opportunity when they saw the 670-meter bridge rising over the Pyanj River between the two countries. New hotels on either side of the border, and a restaurant and a gas station on the Tajik side, had opened even before the \$38 million structure was finished.

The bridge, financed by the United States with a contribution from Norway, is expected to help alleviate poverty in both countries by stimulating small and medium-size businesses and farms. Bilateral trade, which amounted to \$25 million in 2006, is expected to double over the next five years, according to the U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. The two countries have agreed to create free economic zones on both sides of the bridge and ease customs and visa requirements, according to news reports.

The bridge also will have a “profound” impact on Tajikistan’s entire economy, as it will shorten by nearly half the distance Tajik goods have to travel to the nearest accessible seaport – in Pakistan rather than in Latvia, according to a 2005 World Bank study. It will make Tajik exports more cost-competitive in global markets and imports more accessible to Tajik consumers.

Afghanistan also will benefit greatly, according to Tajik, Afghan and U.S. officials.

At the bridge opening ceremony August 26, U.S. Commerce Secretary

Carlos Gutierrez said the bridge will become “the widest connection between Afghanistan and the rest of the world.” It will help that country broaden markets for its products and gain wider access to goods from Tajikistan, Russia and Kazakhstan. Afghanistan could see trade with regional countries increase by 25 times as a result of the new

regions and bring stability and prosperity.

Gutierrez described the bridge as a “physical and symbolic link between Central Asia and South Asia,” while Afghan President Hamid Karzai, who also attended the ceremony, called it a link that “unites Central Asia with Southern and Eastern Asia.”



*Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai, Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmonov and U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez lead a crowd across a new bridge between Tajikistan and Afghanistan. (U.S. Embassy in Kabul)*

bridge, according to the U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan William Wood.

With a capacity of up to 1,000 vehicles a day, the structure is expected also to become a critical part of a larger commercial route between two important Asian re-

On the Tajik side, the bridge will connect to routes leading north, west and east through roads that Japan plans to build or modernize; on the Afghan side, it will connect to Afghanistan’s nearly completed ring road and Pakistan’s port of Karachi through roads constructed

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## YouTube Redefines Terms of Presidential . . .

*(Continued from page 9)*

videos also are posted by candidates' supporters and detractors.

YouTube was created in a California garage in 2005 by three young computer technicians who wanted to make video-file transfer easier. It became an instant success and spurred the growth of an online community of video sharers. Every topic, sublime to ridiculous, can be found on YouTube. In 2006, Web giant Google bought YouTube in a \$1.65 billion stock-for-stock transaction. YouTube remains an independent subsidiary of Google.

"The YouTube team has built an exciting and powerful media platform that complements Google's mission to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful," Google Chief Executive Officer Eric Schmidt

said at the time.

Peter Leyden, a fellow at the progressive San Francisco-based New Politics Institute called the CNN-YouTube debate "a remarkable moment where new media finally takes its rightful place right alongside the old media."

Gronbeck says there are signs that political consciousness is developing in the tech-savvy younger generation, and there has been an increase in the size of the 18- to 24-year-old vote in recent elections.

Does YouTube play a role? "There were probably people who tuned in who hadn't tuned in to any other debate, and we know it was the largest portion of 18 to 20 year olds to ever watch a [presidential] debate," Gronbeck says.

Questions were asked not by journalists, but by individuals whose

diversity embodied the issues: black, white, disabled, dying of cancer -- "We can see their faces."

"You are living out what a campaign ought to be, which is the leaders reaching down to the led and engaging in a serious kind of way," Gronbeck adds. This personalized encounter ensured that debate and commentary continued among the Internet community long after the actual event ended.

In November, Republican presidential candidates will have their turn at facing the nation on YouTube.

The debate may be viewed on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/democraticdebate>.

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

## Afghanistan-Tajikistan Bridge Links Central, . . .

*(Continued from page 11)*

with Asian Development Bank financing.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Evan Feigenbaum told USINFO that opening new trade routes is important for land-locked Central Asian countries as they try to enhance their independence and expand their options for development.

Central Asian nations and Afghanistan have discussed cooperation on energy, telecommunications and

transportation projects. The World Bank is leading a multinational project to construct high-voltage power lines that will carry electricity from future Tajik and Kyrgyz power plants to Afghanistan and Pakistan. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are among countries with the highest hydroelectric potential in the world.

U.S., Tajik and Afghan officials hope the bridge also will help facilitate greater cooperation between Tajikistan and Afghanistan on security issues.

At the Pyanj river bridge, modern border posts and custom facilities, co-funded by the United States and the European Union, will include state of the art scanning equipment for vehicles and cargo. Border facilities are expected to become operational later in 2007.

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

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## Provincial Reconstruction Teams Are Improving Lives in Iraq

*By Jim Fisher-Thompson*  
*USINFO Staff Writer*

**Washington** -- Driving through Ramadi in Iraq's Anbar province recently, the team leader of the newly formed Provincial Reconstruction Team noticed that on a Friday when people usually were not out on the streets, there were shop owners painting their shops.

"That was great to see, especially on a Friday, because ... a couple of months ago you wouldn't have seen people out on the street," said Kristin Hagerstrom, team leader of the Ramadi Provincial Reconstruction Team, during a recent State Department briefing telecast from her headquarters.

Ramadi, the provincial capital, with a population of about 400,000, was written off as lost by many, she said. "Ramadi was declared by al-Qaida to be their capital of the caliphate in Iraq."

But all of that has changed and the city is showing new life, she said, despite initial problems with infrastructure. Improvised explosive devices and constant combat operations had destroyed roads, as well as sewer, water and electric systems.

Marine Major Lee Suttee, the civil affairs chief on the Ramadi Provincial Reconstruction Team with Hagerstrom, said in the joint briefing that since April, when the fighting seemed to stop, Ramadi has become a city on the mend, dominated by reconstruction.

The story is symbolic of what provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) are accomplishing. Thousands of Iraqis' lives are being improved through this program, begun in

2005. It aims to rebuild infrastructure while supporting local government, business and civil society.

In November 2005, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice helped launch the first PRT in Mosul, which she said was meant "to marry our economic, military and political people in teams to help these local and provincial governments get the job [of reconstruction and political stabilization] done."

Since then, more than \$20 billion in U.S. funding has gone to rebuilding Iraq's power grid and water and sewer systems while improving health care and education facilities.

Iraq's provinces currently are served by PRTs from Mosul in the north to Basra in the south. Coalition participation in the effort includes the British heading the PRT in Basra, the Italians in Dhi Qar and the Koreans in Erbil.

Ten of the teams are new "embedded" PRTs, which work closely with Army and Marine units to support the military surge in Anbar province and the greater Baghdad area.

Recent PRT achievements include establishing a business information center to promote private-sector-led growth, forming a project management office to coordinate reconstruction efforts worth \$400 million, and renovating the Doura Market Complex, thereby increasing the number of open shops from two to 235.

According to the White House, the new PRTs serve an important reconstruction and counterinsurgency purpose by bolstering moderate political leaders at the local level, promoting reconciliation by fostering

communication, encouraging economic development by targeting small businesses that create jobs in local communities, and building provincial capacity by unlocking Iraqi funds to help deliver essential services to communities.

"We're working at a very grassroots level on fundamentally helping the local government in its capacity to govern and deliver essential services -- water, sewer, power ... to the population," Hagerstrom said.

Suttee said that before the PRTs, there was "essentially no running water. The sewer system was dysfunctional and the streets [in Ramadi] were littered with [the] debris of war. Buildings were completely collapsed and there, quite frankly, didn't seem to be quite a light at the end of the tunnel."

Now, with security tightened by the addition of more U.S. forces in Anbar, Suttee said local Iraqis have helped sponsor three reconstruction conferences that included more than 200 local contractors, and rebuilding is taking place with the enthusiastic participation of local residents. "All of this is stabilizing," he said, because "it makes people want to believe that there's a future for Ramadi."

President Bush said recently of the new embedded PRTs: "We have more than doubled the number of civilian-led Provincial Reconstruction Teams this year, most of which are embedded with U.S. combat brigades. They are essential to the 'bottom up' political progress taking place in Anbar, Diyala and other provinces across Iraq."

Foreign service officers John Matel and Paul Wedderien, who are leav-

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## Freedom of Information Laws Burgeoning Worldwide

By Eric Green  
USINFO Staff Writer

**Washington** -- The global growth of democracy and a desire to combat corruption have led to an explosion over the last decade in the enactment of national laws allowing citizens to gain access to public records.

Two experts on the subject told USINFO that more than 70 countries have enacted freedom of information laws worldwide with such measures aimed at encouraging transparency in government. The U.S. Department of Justice reports that "International Right-to-Know Day" is celebrated worldwide each year on September 28 "to recognize and promote the worldwide proliferation of government openness." The date commemorates the 2002 establishment of Freedom of Information Advocates Network, created by information-freedom organizations from around the world.

The United States passed the federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) in 1966, becoming at the time one of the few countries in the world to provide a legal way in which any person or organization could ask for records held by federal government agencies. Similar laws have been enacted at the state level. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=December&x=20061214160102ajesrom0.1726038> ).)

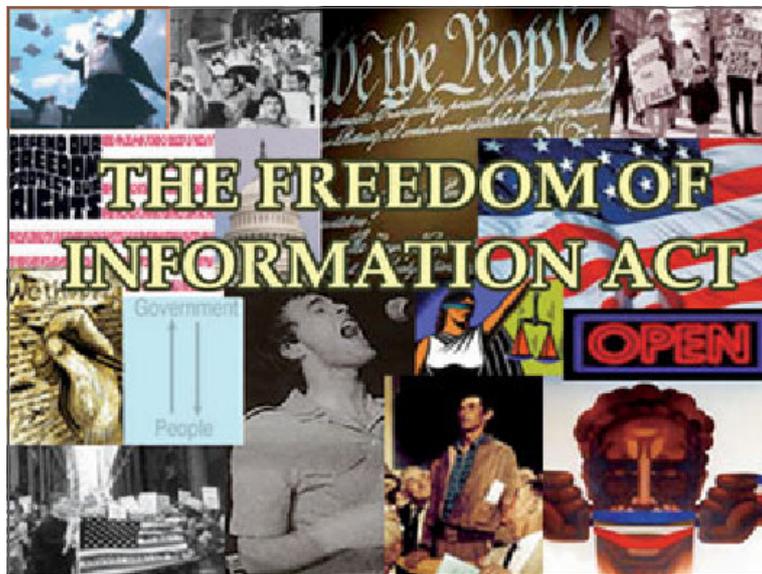
The U.S. law was passed when America's citizens and its news media demanded better public access to government records related to the Vietnam War. Sweden has the world's oldest such act, created some 200 years ago.

Meredith Fuchs, general counsel for George Washington University's National Security Archive, said the worldwide growth in freedom of information laws stems from coun-

tries "trying to demonstrate that they have a more transparent and accountable system" for their citizens. Such laws also put countries on "better footing" as they seek to join organizations such as the European Union or other types of "country groupings," she said.

Fuchs said she finds a number of flaws in the U.S. law, especially in a huge backup in the number of FOIA requests still to be processed. But she added that in certain aspects the U.S. law is the best such law worldwide because America has "an accepted culture of accountability" from U.S. agencies providing public records.

FOIA specialists in the various U.S. government agencies have gotten "better and better" in responding to the public's requests for information, said Fuchs. She added that because of the strong U.S. democratic tradition, American citizens are willing to fight for their right to information through FOIA, whereas in some former dictatorships citizens remain reluctant



*The U.S. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is a law ensuring public access to U.S. government records.*

to make requests for public information.

The U.S. Congress recently passed a reform bill that would create a type of FOIA "ombudsman" to mediate FOIA cases. The Open Government Act of 2007, which Fuchs said President Bush likely will sign, also would impose new requirements on federal agencies to increase the timeliness of their FOIA responses and establish new procedures for tracking FOIA requests so they do not become mired or lost in the federal bureaucracy.

Fuchs said the Inter-American Court of Human Rights decided in a groundbreaking case in 2006 involving Chile that the public had a "human right" to access information from its government, based on the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights. The court found in

to make requests for public information.

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## Provincial Reconstruction Teams Are Improving Lives . . .

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ing shortly for assignments with PRTs in Anbar province and Baghdad, talked recently about their missions.

"The idea is to spread out the footprint of U.S. aid," said Matel, who will help with agricultural projects, among others, in Anbar province. Matel said he will be involved in innovative programs to help Iraqis.

Wedderien said he would be working in a more urban environment in Baghdad on projects such as an ongoing partnership with Iraqi business people to establish an Iraqi Chamber of Commerce.

It is important to remember, Wedderien said, that "we [Americans] are there to help and assist the Iraqi people in their reconstruction efforts -- not tell them what to do. A great deal of Iraqi reconstruction money is being made available, and

I see our [American] role as advisers who can bring their development and management experience to bear on the projects."

For more information, see Iraq Update ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle\\_east\\_north\\_africa/iraq.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/iraq.html) ).

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## Freedom of Information Laws Burgeoning . . .

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### POST-COLD WAR WAVE OF FOIAS

Steven Aftergood, a senior research analyst at the Washington-based Federation of American Scientists, agreed with Fuchs that the world has seen a "real post-Cold War wave of freedom of information laws."

"Not all the laws are equally effective or entirely satisfactory, but they represent an acknowledgment that a public right to government information is a norm of democratic societies," said Aftergood, who heads his organization's Project on Government Secrecy.

Aftergood said that following the Cold War a "wave of democratization" occurred with countries worldwide seeking to develop democratic institutions where none had existed before, with one of those institutions being the adoption of a "freedom of information regime."

Another factor in FOIA growth, said Aftergood, is that "ease of access to information has never been greater and that in turn has spawned an expectation of even greater access" to information. This has resulted in "self-reinforcing trends both politically and technologically that has made freedom of information a standard part of democratic governance," he said.

Aftergood said he concurred that the United States has the world's most "successful" FOIA law with regard to "setting the standard for what such a law can achieve." The U.S. law includes nine categories of exemptions for withholding information that include national security, internal agency rules and law enforcement records.

One continuing challenge of FOIA, he said, is that demand continues to rise for public information while "resources have been level at best," and that causes "increasing backlogs and growing delays in response time."

Aftergood said the reform in reform bill that President Bush is expected to sign will make changes "that are not revolutionary but will improve the responsiveness of the FOIA system."

More information about the case in Chile ( <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78884.htm> ) is available in the Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2006, posted on the State Department's Web site.

Additional FOIA information is available on the Web sites of the Department of Justice ( <http://www.usdoj.gov/oip/> ) and the National Security Archive ( <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/foia.html> ).

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

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## Journalists Gain Allies in Battle Against “Insult” Laws

**By Eric Green**  
**USINFO Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- Journalists in trouble for allegedly “insulting” their heads of state are getting help from all corners of the world.

Many countries still use “insult laws,” even though international judicial bodies such as the European Court of Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights have ruled that these laws are in direct violation of the fundamental right to free speech and a free press.

Karin Karlekar, from the nonpartisan group Freedom House, told USINFO that a number of countries, especially in Latin America and Africa, are eliminating the laws. Violation of insult laws can lead to journalists being thrown into jail or slapped with exorbitant fines.

Karlekar’s organization reports that Indonesia’s Constitutional Court recently declared unconstitutional laws that banned insulting the country’s president and vice president. That decision preceded a July ruling by the Indonesian court overturning two provisions that criminalized defaming the government.

Karlekar, managing editor of her group’s annual survey of media freedom, said the wider ramification of insult laws is that they can lead to “self-censorship” by journalists, who fear “pushing the boundaries” in their reporting of government activities.

This situation is especially prevalent in Middle Eastern countries, she said, where existing insult laws rarely need to be enforced because they already have the “chilling effect” of intimidating journalists into practicing self-censorship in their reporting.

### U.S. PROTECTIONS AGAINST INSULT

A number of U.S. states and territories have laws on criminal defamation but they are rarely used, said Karlekar, who answered questions in a May 8 USINFO webchat on the conditions necessary for a free press. (See transcript ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=May&x=20070508125406xjsnommis2.854556e-02> ).

America’s generation of Founding Fathers once enacted a law against journalistic freedom called the Sedition Act of 1798. That law criminalized publication of what were considered insults against the country’s president and members of Congress. The act, which expired in 1801 without facing a test in court, was denounced by many respected statesmen of the time, including Thomas Jefferson.

Tony Mauro, who serves on the advisory board of the Virginia-based World Press Freedom Committee, wrote in an April 11 article that “some public officials today probably wish they still had that tool to silence critics. But thankfully, the principles of free speech and free-

dom of the press have prevailed” in America, said Mauro, who is the U.S. Supreme Court correspondent for the Legal Times weekly newspaper.

The U.S. State Department is working to protect journalists from trumped up charges under insult laws that prevent and punish media scrutiny of public records and official actions. The department’s Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor has established a “Human Rights Defenders Fund” to help those promoting independent media and journalists, and other related issues. The department also documents press freedom worldwide in its annual Country Reports on Human Rights. (See related article ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=July&x=200707181546541xeneerg0.3520471> ).

### WORLD PRESS GROUP REPORT

The World Press Freedom Committee published a 306-page report that studied how insult laws were applied, changed or eliminated in 70 countries in 2006. The report, released in April, said insult laws are “incompatible with the principles of democracy and free expression.”

Marilyn Greene, the report’s editor, told USINFO that the issue of insult laws is important “because as long as journalists are afraid to fully scrutinize the actions and policies of their nations’ public officials, for fear of arrest or other punishment, the publics in those countries are

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## Genesis World Music Ensemble Weaves Unique Tapestry of Styles

*By Timothy B. Receveur*  
**USINFO Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- Neither vast physical distances, nor language barriers, nor religious differences could prevent the Genesis World Music Ensemble from putting together a performance for a packed house at the Kennedy Center August 27.

With band members living in five different countries and several different time zones, the group of Muslim and Jewish musicians found it impractical to hold traditional practice sessions. Instead, the group relied on technology and creativity -- singing into phones, trading e-mail messages and sound files, and translating between languages -- to work together from April to August without ever meeting in person until two days before their concert.

"I can say that it has been quite challenging, but somehow we have all overcome the obstacles. It seems like people are interested in what we have to say, and that is a satisfying feeling," Iranian-born composer, producer and guitarist Shahin Shahida told USINFO August 31.

In addition to Shahida, the group includes American Jewish tenor Alberto Mizrahi, affectionately known as the "Jewish Pavarotti"; renowned Moroccan oud virtuoso Haj Youness, who also serves as dean of the Casablanca Conservatory of Music; Grammy Award-winning keyboard and harmonica player Howard Levy, an American; a keyboard player, a percussionist and saxophonist from Morocco; an

Ethiopian bassist and a harmonium player from Afghanistan.

Wendy Sternberg, the founder and executive director of Genesis at the Crossroads, which created the Genesis World Music Ensemble, described one of the group's unique practice sessions.



*The Genesis World Music Ensemble plays at the Kennedy Center in Washington on August 27. (Photo courtesy of Megan Bearder)*

"Haj Youness, Moroccan-Muslim, halfway around the world sings the score into the phone -- albeit distorted by thousands of miles and the mere fact that he is an oud virtuoso, not a vocalist ... he belts it out from the bottom of his soul," she told USINFO August 28.

"With a transient upturn of a smile and a fleeting wink, Alberto Mizrahi, Greek-born American Jewish tenor reminds Haj in English, simultaneously translated into Arabic that he should leave the singing to him and stick to the oud. Erupting into laughter, the key is instantly transposed and a gleeful oyyee of delight is uttered by Abdelkader Rhanime, the saxophonist," she continued. Currently in its eighth year of opera-

tion, the Chicago-based nonprofit Genesis at the Crossroads uses the arts to bridge cultures in conflict around the world -- including promoting and organizing events featuring Jewish, Arab and Persian artists.

"Our mission is to foster appreciation, awareness and the celebration of diversity while exploring the amazing cultures of these nations," Sternberg said.

Each member of the Genesis World Music Ensemble brought unique influences and backgrounds to the music to create new sounds.

"Perhaps the most prominent contrast is the fusion of jazz blended with the voice of Humayun from Afghanistan," said Shahida.

According to Sternberg, there are two themes that bring the group together -- the love of music and its potential for innovation and the use of individual talents to create a "stunning tapestry that honors their heritage and preserves their uniqueness."

During their performance at the Kennedy Center, the group played a flawless blend of musical styles from around the globe -- incorporating such disparate sounds as traditional Jewish music, American jazz, Arabic maqam, African rhythms and Afghan vocals in the Qwali tradition.

"Our entire musical program was skillfully designed to take our audience on a world tour with an ease that transcends otherwise imposing

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## Journalists Gain Allies in Battle Against “Insult” . . .

(Continued from page 16)

without access to the news and information they need to make intelligent decisions and choices about their own government.”

Javier Sierra, the World Press Freedom Committee’s projects director, said some of the worst countries in relation to insult laws include Iran, Turkey, Belarus, Zimbabwe and Morocco. He told USINFO that Venezuela does not use its insult laws, but the country has “a new set of very severe criminal defamation laws which they use very often.” (See related article ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=April&x=20070420185705snamfuak6.939334e-02> ).)

Sierra said the insult laws originated in the Roman Empire “to shield the emperor from public criticism.” The laws now act, he said, as a “Damocles sword dangling over the collective heads of the news media,” forcing journalists “to fulfill their duties to keep the public informed at the risk of being impris-

oned and their publications shut down.”

International judicial bodies, Sierra said, support the concept that public officials “should expect more, and not less, scrutiny and criticism from the rest of society.”

Sierra’s group, in cooperation with eight other media advocacy organizations, administers a “Fund Against Censorship” that provides assistance grants to news media and journalists facing criminal prosecution. Grants go primarily to hire lawyers in criminal libel, defamation and other cases that are deemed “politically motivated and intended to silence independent news media.”

### TRAINING IN MEDIA LAW

The University of Oxford in England offers training on media law and policy. The university’s Program in Comparative Media Law and Policy is sponsoring in September a “Media Law Moot Court Competition” to encourage interest in international standards of protection of media freedom.

More information ( <http://pcmlp.socleg.ox.ac.uk/> ) about the training is available on the university’s Web site.

The full text ( <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/> ) of the 2006 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices and more information ( <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/77837.htm> ) on the Human Rights Defenders Fund are available on the Department’s Web site.

The full text ( [http://www.wpfc.org/lt's\\_A\\_Crime.pdf](http://www.wpfc.org/lt's_A_Crime.pdf) ) of the World Press Freedom Committee’s report is available on the organization’s Web site.

For more information on U.S. policy, see Freedom of the Press ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/dhr/democracy/rule\\_of\\_law/press\\_freedom.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/dhr/democracy/rule_of_law/press_freedom.html) ).

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## Genesis World Music Ensemble Weaves Unique Tapestry . . .

(Continued from page 17)

and often inaccessible or misunderstood genres,” she said.

Sternberg said she was extremely proud when she looked out on a packed house at the Kennedy Center and “saw a sea of humanity willing to relinquish their positions on divisive subjects to be moved and inspired by music.”

In addition to the performance in Washington, the group performed in Chicago’s Lincoln Park on August

25 and August 26 and has plans to reunite later this fall for a tour through Casablanca, Morocco.

The entire video ( [http://www.kennedy-center.org/calendar/kc\\_video\\_dyn.cfm?encoded=http%3A%2F%2Fplay%2Erbn%2Ecom%2F%3Furl%3Dkennedy%2Fkennedyg2%2Fg2demand%2F08272007%5F1800%5FMSN%2Erm%26amp%3Bproto%3Drtp&header\\_image=header\\_mil\\_video.gif](http://www.kennedy-center.org/calendar/kc_video_dyn.cfm?encoded=http%3A%2F%2Fplay%2Erbn%2Ecom%2F%3Furl%3Dkennedy%2Fkennedyg2%2Fg2demand%2F08272007%5F1800%5FMSN%2Erm%26amp%3Bproto%3Drtp&header_image=header_mil_video.gif) ) of the performance in Washington is available on the Kennedy Center Web site. More

information ( <http://www.gatc.org/> ) on Genesis at the Crossroads is available on the organization’s Web site.

For more stories on the influence of musicians and other artists in society, see The Arts ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/life\\_and\\_culture/the\\_arts.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/life_and_culture/the_arts.html) ).

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## Smithsonian Center Director To Discuss Hispanic Influence on U.S.



*Pilar O'Leary  
Director, Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives  
Photo Dario Acosta*

The contribution of Hispanic society and culture to the United States is as vast and varied as Hispanic heritage itself. Hispanic culture is influenced by the Spanish, French, Portuguese and English colonial powers, the African traditions brought by former slaves, and the American Indian societies throughout North and South America. The Smithsonian Latino Center was created to ensure that Hispanic contributions to art, science and the humanities are highlighted, understood

and advanced through the development and support of public programs, scholarly research, museum collections and educational opportunities.

On September 11 at 9 a.m. EDT (13:00 GMT), please join Pilar O'Leary, the director of the Smithsonian Latino Center, in a discussion about the center and the influences Hispanic society and culture have had upon the United States.

If you would like to participate in this webchat, please sign up on the USINFO Webchat registration page ( <http://webchat.state.gov/?tid=unsecure.register> ). Please tell us your preferred screen name; use of full names is not required.

If you have participated in one of our previous webchats, use the same e-mail. (You no longer need

to enter a password.) You may submit questions in advance.

We accept questions and comments in advance of, and at any time during, the program. You may also e-mail ( <mailto:usinfowebchat@state.gov> ) questions without registering.

The transcript of this webchat will be available on USINFO's Webchat Station ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/Products/Webchats.html> ), where information about upcoming webchats is also available.

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## After Facing Mobs 50 Years Ago, Nine Go Home to . . .

*(Continued from page 10)*

They wanted good educations, but they also sought equality. "What kind of life is there if I stand back?" Karlmark asked herself. "Could there be a God who makes one group of kids better than another?"

Eight of the nine finished the year. One was expelled for reacting to an assault. Green, the only senior, graduated from Central in May 1958. His family came to the ceremony; Martin Luther King Jr. also came.

Scores of events are planned in Little Rock for September. All of the

Little Rock Nine will speak the morning of September 25 on the steps of Central High School, remembering the day 50 years ago when they showed the courage to go to school under Army escort.

President Bush also is scheduled to speak that day, and former President Clinton will chair a dinner at which the Little Rock Nine will award scholarships to nine young students. A new center to educate visitors about the Little Rock Nine's role in the civil rights movement will be dedicated. Expected attendees include Ruby Bridges, who at age 6 was escorted by federal marshals to a New Orleans elementary

school where she was the only black child enrolled.

"We had a vision 50 years ago that America can do better in how it recognizes its human resources, in providing greater options, in removing barriers so people can achieve whatever their talents allow them to," Green said. "I still believe that vision is what this country has to have ... to be a leader in the world."

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**USAID Works To Break Link Between Hunger and . . .**

*(Continued from page 6)*

activities to assist vulnerable people by improving their capacity to prevent and cope with future emergencies," Hammink said.

Because food insecurity can contribute to war, emergency food assistance can become a critical first step in building peace, Hammink said.

Improved food security can help to decrease child mortality and keep children in school. In some cases, food rations can be used as payment to laborers, helping citizens to provide for their families and enabling the country to move forward toward reconstruction and development.

Once improved food security helps stabilize the situation, other aid programs can step in to help rebuild build agriculture, education, economic development and health services.

Through new initiatives to improve how U.S. government agencies work together to deliver foreign aid, Food for Peace also is committed to integrating its efforts with those of other aid programs that can help remove land mines, rebuild infrastructure, provide education and health care, and assist former combatants with their transition into peacetime, he said.

For more stories on U.S. assistance, see Humanitarian Assistance and Refugees ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/global\\_issues/refugees.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/global_issues/refugees.html) ).

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**U.S. Political Parties Enjoy Rich History**

*(Continued from page 7)*

1920s. This prompted the Democrats to establish unemployment insurance and the Social Security Act of 1935. In the late 1800s, the Prohibition Party, formed primarily to push for a ban on the sale, manufacture and transport of alcoholic beverages, also promoted women's right to vote. Subsequent support by both Republicans and Democrats led to the 18th Amendment to the Constitution in 1919 banning alcoholic beverages and the 19th Amendment in 1920, giving women the right to vote. The 18th Amendment was repealed in 1933 by the 21st Amendment to the Constitution.

The two major parties' influence extends beyond the presidency,

dominating as well the Congress, the state governorships and state legislatures. Even at the local level, while some cities and counties hold nonpartisan elections, Democratic and Republican forces control the political machinery.

Today, the Democratic Party is considered the more liberal of the two, and party leaders believe government has an obligation to provide social and economic support programs for those who need them. The more conservative Republican Party advocates smaller government and counts on the growth of private enterprise to make citizens less dependent.

Some Americans are uncomfortable with the power exercised by political parties and believe they do

more to confuse issues than clarify them. These voters may retaliate by splitting their ballots -- voting for candidates of different parties in the same election.

The two parties are in a constant battle for swing voters -- those who are inclined to switch parties from one election to the next. But in the end, the elephant and the donkey will continue to dominate U.S. politics for the foreseeable future.

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