



Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

INSIDE

Bush Says Iraq Action Has Not Worsened Terror Threat

President Bush rejected the notion that the 2003 U.S. and coalition military action in Iraq has worsened the threat from terrorism. He also warned that a premature withdrawal from Iraq would embolden extremists.

and, in the president's words, have "created a heated debate ... and a lot of misimpressions about the document's conclusions." (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenlish&y=2006&m=September&x=20060926182525adynned0.6570703>).

The president said the NIE concludes that extremists are exploiting four factors in an effort to attract supporters.

"First, long-standing grievances such as corruption, injustice, and a fear of Western domination; second, the jihad in Iraq; third, the slow



President George W. Bush

Speaking September 30 in his weekly radio address to the American public, Bush made his comments in reference to portions of the classified National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) that recently were leaked to the press

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U.S. Grants Assist Community Development and Promote Democracy

Ambassador's Self Help Program, Democracy Fund Empower Projects Across Ethiopia

For 70% of the children living in the rural Mella-Qawusa district of Gama Gofa Zone, the possibility of walking four hours to and from school was about as likely as regular rainfall in this drought-prone region. The children often do not have the stamina to make the difficult journey, and even if



Berite Hawas (left), one of the beneficiaries from last year's fund, shares her success story at the signing ceremony.

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U.S. PEPFAR To Host Free New Partner Informational Conference

Workshop introduces organizations to new grant program in the fight against global HIV/AIDS

Addis Ababa (U.S. Embassy) -- On Monday, October 16, 2006 the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR/ Emergency Plan) will hold an Informational Conference at the Sheraton Addis in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The conference will offer information about this new funding opportunity for in-country and indigenous organizations interested in applying for funding from the USG's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. The New Partners Initiative (NPI) seeks to enlist more organizations in providing HIV/AIDS prevention and care services.

The NPI seeks to match the Emergency Plan's resources and efforts with the expertise and compassion of organizations already making a difference in the global fight against AIDS in Ethiopia.

The conference is free, open to the public and will provide an overview of the Emergency Plan and information on how organizations can apply for PEPFAR grants to be distributed under the NPI over the next several years. Eligible entities are nongovernmental organizations, working in Ethiopia, with little or no experience working with the U.S. Government (defined as no more than \$5 million in U.S. Government funding during the preced-

ing five years, excluding disaster or emergency assistance or funding as a subcontractor).

The Addis Ababa one-day Informational Conference will be an opportunity to receive an overview of PEPFAR and efforts undertaken within Ethiopia by the U.S. Government and their implementing partners. The conference is open to 2 representatives from any NPI eligible organization. The workshop

wish to attend the workshop, please send an e-mail confirmation including the name of the organization and a point of contact to PEPFAREthiopia@state.gov.

The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief is a \$15 billion, five-year initiative to turn the tide against global HIV/AIDS – the largest global health initiative directed at a single disease that any nation has ever undertaken. The United States is now committing more to the global HIV/AIDS response than all other donor nations combined. For more information about PEPFAR please visit <http://www.pepfar.gov> ♦



will focus on topics such as: initial needs assessment; proposal writing; pre-award audits; personnel recruitment; competition processes; and monitoring and evaluation planning.

For the latest announcements on the New Partners Initiative Outreach Workshops, please visit the NPI website at <http://www.pepfarnpi.gov>. For those who

Rice Calls for Government of Sudan to Accept U.N. Peacekeepers

By Martha Paluch
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- "The government of Sudan must immediately and unconditionally accept a U.N. peacekeeping force into Darfur," U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said September 27.

"The time for stalling has passed," Rice told the Africa Society of the National Summit on Africa in Washington. The address, delivered at the headquarters of the Academy for Educational Development, followed the August 31 decision by the U.N. Security Council to "re-hat" (convert) an African Union peacekeeping force in the Darfur region of Sudan into a U.N. peacekeeping force.

Security Council Resolution 1706, which contained that decision, also called for an increase in the U.N. peacekeeping force, to include 20,000 new troops and police. Rice noting the main opposition to this decision has come from the Sudanese government, stressed the urgency of the recent action. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=August&x=20060831155129atiayduj0.6694605>).

"Since the Sudanese government will not save the lives of its own people, then the United Nations must act," Rice said.

The secretary of state described the situation in Darfur as not only a "humanitarian crisis," but also a "political problem rooted in the historic challenge of governing Sudan."

From the beginning of this conflict, she said, the most urgent international priority has been to ease the suffering of the people of Darfur. The United States, she reminded her listeners, has led the interna-



Dr. Condoleezza Rice
U.S. Secretary of State

tional humanitarian response there by providing more than 60 percent of the food distributed by the U.N. World Food Programme and by dedicating more than \$1.3 billion in assistance in each of the last two years to Darfur and the people of southern Sudan. However, she warned, to create lasting peace for Darfur, the fundamental political problems must be addressed in addition to the humanitarian conditions.

"We will continue to bend every fiber of our being to ease the suffering of people in Darfur, but our

goal ... must be even more ambitious," Rice declared. She went on to cite President Bush's recent appointment of Andrew Natsios, a former administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), as his special presidential envoy for Sudan. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=September&x=20060919163043atiayduj0.6807978>).

Rice cited three additional steps that must be taken to help the people of Darfur:

Acceptance by the Sudanese government of a U.N. peacekeeping force,

An immediate cease-fire, and

An eventual transition from a humanitarian effort to a reconstruction effort in Darfur.

An intervention of U.N. peacekeepers, she said, leaves the Sudanese government with a clear and consequential decision: cooperation or confrontation. According to Rice, if the Sudanese government chooses to cooperate, "it will find a dedicated partner in the United States" that is willing to work toward a common goal of a unified, peaceful and democratic Sudan. The U.N. deployment, she said, would secure the area, stabilize the country, benefit the Sudanese people and thereby serve the interests of the Sudanese government.

However, "if the Sudanese government chooses confrontation," Rice said, "then the regime in Khartoum

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Reliable Air Travel a Vital Part of African Development

By Bruce Greenberg
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Air transportation is an essential element of sub-Saharan Africa's infrastructure, U.S. aviation official Susan McDermott said September 28. "The competitive edge" in international trade will go to those nations that have safe and efficient air transportation, she said.

McDermott, who is the U.S. deputy assistant secretary of transportation for aviation and international affairs, addressed the Corporate Council on Africa's first infrastructure conference, held just outside Washington on September 27–29. Her audience included visiting African politicians, government and business representatives and the media.

Stressing the importance of air travel in a region of the world that has sharp contrasts in geography and climate, McDermott said no other means of transportation can so effectively bridge Africa's great distances.

Air transportation brings people and groups of nations together, ties regional markets with international ones, and conquers distance and time, she said. "Medium, small and developing markets are now part of the world network of buyers and sellers," she said, "and this worldwide economic network called 'globalization' is powered by transportation."

The conference also addressed related issues contributing to the strengthening of Africa's national

and regional infrastructures, such as good road, rail, bridge and water transportation systems; tele-



Ambassador John J. Danilovich
Chief Executive Officer of the Millennium
Challenge Corporation (MCC)

communications; dependable electrical power; and good public sanitation systems.

Speakers discussed the significant impact of telecommunications, particularly mobile communications, on Africa's populations and on the continent's economic growth. Currently, 200 million people in Africa are connected by mobile telephones, with more than 82 percent of all Africans using mobile phones -- the highest percentage of any continent.

Participants stressed the effect of wireless and broadband Internet networks in Africa, and their effect

on the future growth of telecommunications on the continent.

Michelle O'Neill, the U.S. deputy under secretary of commerce for international trade, said her agency is working with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to provide investment protections, government procurement help and technical assistance to African governments interested in enhancing their telecom infrastructures.

Ambassador John J. Danilovich, chief executive officer of the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the U.S. government agency that aids qualifying developing countries that demonstrate good governance and economic freedom, said in the keynote address that he opened the conference that he recognizes the "transformative impact of infrastructure in Africa."

"For many African nations," he said, "issues such as poverty reduction and economic growth include the lack of infrastructure. These countries ... are recognizing that addressing infrastructure impediments is the most effective way to stimulate poverty reduction and economic growth."

"Whether it is constructing or improving ports, bridges, roads, water, sanitation and irrigation systems, MCC-eligible countries are turning to us to fund infrastructure projects, and of the nine compacts

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pace of reform in Muslim nations; and fourth, pervasive anti-Americanism," he said.

He warned against "buying into the enemy's propaganda that the terrorists attack us because we are provoking them," and said the United States and Americans are targeted by terrorists because "they hate everything America stands for, and because they know we stand in the way of their ambitions to take over the Middle East."

The president said the United States "keeps its commitments to those who long for liberty and want to live in peace," and would not withdraw its forces from Iraq until their mission is accomplished.

"We will stand with the nearly 12 million Iraqis who voted for their freedom, and we will help them fight and defeat the terrorists there, so we do not have to face them here at home," he said.

A withdrawal also would embolden extremists, he said. "It would help them find new recruits to carry out even more destructive attacks on our Nation, and it would give the terrorists a new sanctuary in the heart of the Middle East, with huge oil riches to fund their ambitions."

The president also said that the only way for the United States to protect its citizens is to go on the offensive against terrorists around the world.

"When terrorists spend their days working to avoid capture, they are

less able to plot, plan, and execute new attacks on our people," he said.

An audio link (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/09/20060930.a>.ram) to the president's remarks is available on the White House Web site.

Following is the transcript:

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
Saturday, September 30, 2006

RADIO ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT TO THE NATION

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. Today I want to talk to you about a matter of national security that has been in the news -- the National Intelligence Estimate on terrorism. The NIE is a classified document that analyzes the threat we face from terrorists and extremists. Parts of this classified document were recently leaked to the press. That has created a heated debate in our Nation's capital, and a lot of misimpressions about the document's conclusions. I believe the American people should read the document themselves and come to their own conclusions, so I declassified its key judgments.

The National Intelligence Estimate confirms that we are up against a determined and capable enemy. The NIE lists four underlying factors that are fueling the extremist movement: first, long-standing grievances such as corruption, injustice, and a fear of Western domination; second, the jihad in Iraq; third, the slow pace of reform

in Muslim nations; and fourth, pervasive anti-Americanism. It concludes that terrorists are exploiting all these factors to further their movement.

Some in Washington have selectively quoted from this document to make the case that by fighting the terrorists in Iraq, we are making our people less secure here at home. This argument buys into the enemy's propaganda that the terrorists attack us because we are provoking them. Here is what Prime Minister Tony Blair said this week about that argument: "This terrorism isn't our fault. We didn't cause it. It's not the consequence of foreign policy." Prime Minister Blair is right. We do not create terrorism by fighting terrorism. The terrorists are at war against us because they hate everything America stands for, and because they know we stand in the way of their ambitions to take over the Middle East. We are fighting to stop them from taking over Iraq and turning that country into a safe haven that would be even more valuable than the one they lost in Afghanistan.

Iraq is not the reason the terrorists are at war against us. Our troops were not in Iraq when terrorists first attacked the World Trade Center in 1993, or when terrorists blew up our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, or when they bombed the USS Cole, or when they killed nearly 3,000 people on September the 11th, 2001. Five years after the 9/11 attacks, some people in Washington still do not understand the nature of the enemy. The only way to protect our citizens at home is to go on the

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distance weren't a factor, fetching water for their family and herding livestock are the first priorities.

But thanks to the U.S. Embassy, more than 2,000 children in one of Ethiopia's most remote and food-insecure areas will soon have a school in their village, making it possible for most if not all of the children to learn. The Mella-Qawusa school construction project is one of 11 unveiled by U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Ambassador Vicki Huddleston at a September 29 ceremony to mark the 2006 grants to community organizations across Ethiopia through the Ambassador's Special Self Help Program and Democracy and Human Rights Fund.

These two programs give U.S. Ambassadors in Africa the opportunity to fund community-based initiatives that might not otherwise meet the criteria of traditional development assistance. Among the projects made possible by this year's grants are initiatives to provide potable water for a school and surrounding community in Alemgena Town, Oromiya Region, to construct a workshop for a weaving cooperative in Axum Town, Tigray Region, to produce a radio program that raises awareness of issues facing disabled persons to be broadcast nationwide, and to establish a telephone "hotline" through which women in Addis Ababa can obtain legal assistance against abuse and discrimination.

Together, the projects represent funding of \$155,000 (over 1.3

million birr). Grantees are selected from hundreds of proposals received by the Embassy and are required to meet rigorous standards. Projects funded under the Self-Help program must improve economic and social conditions at the community or village level, be community-initiated, show evidence of local support, and be self-sustaining. Projects supported through the Democracy and Human Rights Fund projects are required to strengthen democratic institutions, promote political pluralism or advance human rights. Initiatives funded under either program must be completed in one year's time, and support high-impact, quick-implementation activities benefiting a large number of people. Because of media outreach strategies employed by several grantees, this year's projects will reach more than 10 million Ethiopians in the country's 11 administrative regions.

The Ambassador's Special Self-Help Program and Democracy and Human Rights Fund have been active in Africa since the early 1960's. The success of the programs is demonstrated by the direct effects they have on the lives of those benefiting from the project. For example, following the implementation of a Somali Region

project to combat Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), circumcisers are pledging to give up their profession, religious leaders are telling worshippers that FGM is not required by their faith, parents are abandoning the practice, boys are agreeing to marry uncircumcised girls, and girls are refusing to be violated.

Speaking at the signing ceremony,



Ambassador Vicki Huddleston (left) signing with one of the grantees, Wzo. Abeba Shumetie.

Ambassador Huddleston said that "in these politically complicated times, the Ambassador's Special Self-Help Program and the Democracy and Human Rights Fund are two "bright spots" in the relationship between our two countries. They are one of the ways through which United States touches the lives of everyday people in Ethiopia." ♦

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offense against the enemy across the world. When terrorists spend their days working to avoid capture, they are less able to plot, plan, and execute new attacks on our people. So we will remain on the offense until the terrorists are defeated and this fight is won.

In my recent speeches, I've said we are in the early hours of a long struggle for civilization, and that our safety depends on the outcome of the battle in Iraq. The National Intelligence Estimate declares "perceived jihadist success there would inspire more fighters to continue the struggle else-

where." It also says that "Should jihadists leaving Iraq perceive themselves, and be perceived, to have failed, we judge fewer fighters will be inspired to carry on the fight."

Withdrawing from Iraq before the enemy is defeated would embolden the terrorists. It would help them find new recruits to carry out even more destructive attacks on our Nation, and it would give the terrorists a new sanctuary in the heart of the Middle East, with huge oil riches to fund their ambitions. America must not allow this to happen. We are a Nation that keeps its commitments to those who long for liberty and want to

live in peace. We will stand with the nearly 12 million Iraqis who voted for their freedom, and we will help them fight and defeat the terrorists there, so we do not have to face them here at home.

Thank you for listening.

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Rice Calls for Government of Sudan to Accept U.N. . . .

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will be held responsible, and it alone will bear the consequences."

Rice called for an immediate ceasefire between the government and the rebels who are nonsignatories to the Darfur Peace Agreement, a pact signed in May between the Sudanese government and the Sudan Liberation Movement. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/af/Archive/2006/May/08-770945.html>)).

Although Rice said that there will be no renegotiation of the agreement, which outlines the principles of peace and creates a political framework, she said the concerns of the rebels who want peace will be taken into account. She warned, however, "If the rebels refuse, then they will face serious

consequences, including targeted U.N. sanctions."

Rice termed the final step, the rebuilding of Darfur, a "monumental undertaking." She said there would need to be a "transition from a humanitarian effort to a reconstruction effort in order to best help the people of Darfur return to their homes and rebuild their lives." Considering that most victims have little or nothing to which to return, a total transformation of Darfur is needed, she added.

The rebuilding of Darfur is contingent on the arrival of U.N. peacekeepers, she said. At that point, she said, "Sudan will lead its own development effort. We will support them."

"It is not our intention to impinge on Sudan's sovereignty," Rice

added. "We will stand firm in our conviction that sovereignty must be rooted not merely in control, but in responsibility."

The decision of the Sudanese government should reflect the role Sudan wishes to play in the world, Rice said. "If the Sudanese government wishes to become a respected member of the international community, then it must act like one and behave responsibly," she said.

For more information, see, Darfur Humanitarian Emergency (<http://usinfo.state.gov/af/africa/darfur.html>).

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

Bush Releases Intelligence Report Findings on Terrorism, Iraq

By David Shelby
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington – President Bush on September 26 authorized U.S. Director of National Intelligence John Negroponte to declassify selected portions of a report on trends in global terrorism to illustrate the report's findings are far more complex and nuanced than the characterizations reported by the media.

The National Intelligence Estimate report, issued in April, studies the effect of U.S.-led counterterrorism efforts and dynamics within the Muslim world that affect those efforts. The classified report grabbed international headlines after one of its findings, linking the Iraq war with increased jihadist recruiting capabilities, was leaked to the press. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=September&x=20060926182525adynned0.6570703>).

The report represents the consensus assessment of the United States' 16 intelligence agencies. Its declassified key judgments touch on the growth and nature of the global jihadist movement, the strategies of the movement, the relationship between the Iraq war and the movement, governance failures in the Muslim world that breed discontent, the nature of anti-American sentiment, and the movement's potential vulnerabilities.

In a series of interviews September 25 and September 26, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice defended the administration's counterterrorism policies, maintaining that the rise in jihadist activity was to be expected as the United States took a more aggressive stance in the War on Terror.

"Yes, you're confronting them and they will recruit and they will do everything that they can to bring new people to the cause. And it may well be that in the short term, more people will come to the cause; not because of Iraq, but because of the broadening of the War on Terror and the kind of very aggressive way in which we're fighting it," she told the editorial board of the New York Times. "But the question I would have is, then what's the alternative? Do you not do things that you think will help you in the War on Terror because it may recruit a few more people to a jihad that has already plenty of people to begin with?"

She said al-Qaida is prepared to use any pretext to wage its war against the West and was at no loss for rationales to justify its jihad prior to the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

"You need to know that of course, al-Qaida makes no distinction between the war in Afghanistan and the war in Iraq in their recruiting. They have even tried to latch on to what may be attitudes about Sudan. So there are plenty of ex-

cuses and plenty of arguments as to why people ought to go and fight these so-called Western forces. They didn't need Iraq to do that," she said. "They attacked us on September 11th before anybody had even thought of overthrowing Saddam Hussein."

She added that some of al-Qaida's attacks do not even seem to have a rational pretext. "[T]hey've attacked in places where the countries aren't involved anywhere. They've attacked without regard to what your policies happen to be," she said.

Rice said that the international community should not shy away from its current counterterrorism strategies because of al-Qaida's aggressive recruiting tactics.

"Wherever you challenge them, they are going to try to recruit on that basis, they are going to try to stir up passions of people who have differences or perhaps people who have no alternative future or perhaps people who can be led down this road by fiery mullahs," she told the New York Post. "But that doesn't mean that you don't pursue a strategy that in the long term is going to allow you to counter this ideology of hatred by producing different political structures and different political outcomes in the Middle East. And that's what Iraq offers."

Rice said the jihadists have focused their efforts on Iraq because

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Rice Urges Egypt To Lead Middle East Democratization

By David Shelby
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington – If the Middle East is to make progress toward achieving democracy, Egypt will have to be a leader along that path, according to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.



Dr. Condoleezza Rice with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak

Speaking to reporters in Cairo on October 3 after meetings with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Foreign Minister Ahmed About El Gheit, Rice said the United States was disappointed with Egypt's latest parliamentary elections, but she called last year's presidential elections a "breakthrough."

Egypt's November 2005 parliamentary elections were marred by reports of widespread voter intimidation and fraud. The presidential election of September 2005, however, was the first competitive presidential elections in the country's history.

"I think Egypt has taken a step that will not actually be undone in

having had those competitive elections," Rice said. "The process of democracy has its ups and its downs, and any state going through it will. But the United States will continue to speak about the importance of democracy, about the importance of a great nation like Egypt leading this move

to democracy in the region. We do so in a spirit of friendship and respect."

The secretary said the United States has no desire to interfere in Egypt's internal affairs. But she added "the United States as a friend of Egypt and as a party with a

great stake in the future of the Middle East believes very strongly that it is important to stand with those who are looking to greater freedom for their people, who are looking to what [President Bush] has called the non-negotiable demands of human dignity, which means the right to choose those who will govern you, the right to worship as you please, the right to educate your girls and your boys, the right to be free from the arbitrary power of the state. These are universal human values, not American values."

Rice outlined her hopes for a future Middle East as a place with peace between old adversaries, a democratic state of Palestine living alongside a democratic state of Is-

rael, and a region whose people enjoy democratic freedoms and liberties.

Noting that the United States until very recently deprived African Americans of basic civil rights, Rice said that no nation can claim to be a perfect model of democratic development. "And so we understand that it's hard, but it is right that people have these rights and you have to continue to struggle toward it, and you have to continue to move toward it, and you can't be afraid of it because it is really the only way that human beings reach their full potential," she said.

Rice also welcomed Egypt's expression of interest in developing a civil nuclear power program as long as the program is based on external sourcing of nuclear fuel. She said this condition is necessary to protect against the proliferation risk.

"States that are in good standing in the NPT, the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, should have access to civil nuclear power. Civil nuclear power is critical to diversifying energy resources, and we want to pursue help with states that are in good standing and wish to do that," she said. "We would be pleased to discuss this with Egypt as Egypt develops its plans."

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

U.S. Hails Preliminary Vote for New U.N. Secretary-General

By Judy Aita
Washington File United Nations
Correspondent

United Nations -- The United States is "very pleased with the outcome" of a U.N. Security Council vote that puts South Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ban Ki-moon in position to be formally elected as the eighth secretary-general, U.S. Ambassador John Bolton said October 2.

Bolton spoke with journalists about the impending selection after the Security Council held a "straw poll" that gave Ban 14 votes, with no permanent member casting a veto, and a commanding lead over the four other candidates still in the race.

"We have a lot of respect for Foreign Minister Ban," Bolton said. "We know him well from his service in Washington and here in New York and think very highly of him professionally and personally."

The U.S. ambassador said that, after the vote, he urged the council to "move as soon as possible to a formal vote." The Security Council is expected to set October 9 for the formal vote. The U.N. General Assembly must approve the Security Council's selection.

Ban has been the chief negotiator in talks over North Korea's nuclear weapons programs and is a former South Korean envoy to the United Nations. (See *The U.S. and the Korean Peninsula* (http://usinfo.state.gov/eap/east_asia_pacific/north_korea.html)).

Although no new candidates have come forward in the past month, Bolton said that the formal vote is

being put off for a few days to see if any current candidates decide to withdraw or other candidates come forward. He said he would be surprised if anyone announced his or candidacy at this point.

Soon after the vote, Shashi Tharoor of India, currently under secretary-general for information and the second-highest vote recipient, withdrew.



South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-Moon meets the media at the Foreign Ministry in Seoul Tuesday, October 3. (AP Photo)

The United States has been pressing since the beginning of 2006 to have an orderly selection process that allows time for the council to set qualifications, meet with candidates and elect a secretary-general early enough to allow for a transition period before the new secretary-general assumes office on January 1, 2007.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations

Kristin Silverberg said in a recent interview that the selection of a successor to Kofi Annan was a main topic of conversation among the heads of state and senior officials attending the opening of the 61st General Assembly. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=September&x=20060927185808eaifas0.4986536>)).

"Most countries are keenly interested in making sure that there's a good secretary-general who is capable of leading this complicated organization. It is such an important time in the U.N.'s history," Silverberg said.

The United States has stressed the importance of electing a secretary-general "who's committed to sound management of the organization, someone who will hold it to high ethical standards and who believes in fiscal discipline and sound management practices, as well as our interest in finding someone who will be a committed partner in the democracy effort," she said.

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).

(The Washington File 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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they understand the importance of the struggle there.

"They do know that when Iraq becomes stable, a country that will fight terrorism, a country that is democratic, a country that is a pillar of democracy in a Middle East that needs change, they know that that's a tremendous blow, maybe a deathblow to their ideology. And so of course they're going to fight hard," she told radio talk show host Sean Hannity.

At the White House, press secretary Tony Snow said September 27 that U.S. and coalition efforts in the War on Terror have resulted in a "dispersed terror threat," which is "less threatening" than when al-Qaida was able to operate with impunity, including operational training basis in Afghanistan under the Taliban regime.

"They had the ability not only to have their people all together, but they had logistics, they could communicate with impunity around the globe, and they ... didn't think anybody was going to intercept what they were doing. They had an operational capability then that they do not have now," Snow said.

By contrast, through the War on Terror, "We interrupted their communications, we interrupted their finances, we interrupted their operational capabilities," and it is now more difficult for al-Qaida to operate.

Snow also said counterterrorism activities in Iraq have encouraged Iraqis "who in the past may have been afraid of standing up to ter-

rorists" to provide actionable intelligence at the rate of thousands of leads "each and every month" which have "led to significant operations."

Transcripts of Rice interviews with the following entities are available at the State Department Web site:

The New York Times Editorial Board (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/73105.htm>),

The New York Post Editorial Board (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/73107.htm>), and

The Sean Hannity Show (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/73181.htm>).

A transcript (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/>

[releases/2006/09/20060927-2.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/09/20060927-2.html)) of Snow's briefing can be found at the White House Web site.

The full text (http://www.dni.gov/press_releases/Declassified_NIE_Key_Judgments.pdf) of the declassified key judgments is available on the Director of National Intelligence Web site.

For additional information, see Response to Terrorism (http://usinfo.state.gov/is/international_security/terrorism.html).

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



President George W. Bush discusses the Global War on Terror during an address to the Reserve Officers Association Friday, Sept. 29, 2006. "This is the call of a generation, to stand against the extremists and support moderate leaders across the broader Middle East, to help us all secure a future of peace," said the President.

White House photo by Eric Draper

U.S. Intensifying Efforts To Combat Human Trafficking

By Jane Morse
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The U.S. Department of Justice is intensifying its fight against human trafficking by providing additional funding to build partnerships between law enforcement agencies and victims' rights organizations in the United States.

U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales announced on October 3 almost \$8 million in additional funding to create 10 new anti-trafficking task forces.

Gonzales explained the objectives of the task forces in a keynote address at the 2006 National Conference on Human Trafficking, taking place in New Orleans, October 3-5. Conference participants include law enforcement professionals, victims' advocates, nonprofit groups, academics and government employees.

The additional funding, Gonzales said, will help cement partnerships between law enforcement agencies and victims'-services organizations and facilitate the task forces' work of identifying and assisting victims of human trafficking as well as apprehending and prosecuting the perpetrators.

For example, one of the grants will go to the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement to work with the state sheriffs' association in fighting trafficking along the Interstate Highway 10 corridor in Louisiana. That corridor, Gonzales said, has become a magnet for human traffickers taking advantage of the labor needs in hurricane-damaged areas of the state.

"The task force," he said, "will use regional response teams to identify and rescue victims in targeted areas and put a stop to the exploitation and abuse of laborers."

"In these task forces," he explained, "service providers and law enforcement rescue victims and

number of trafficking victims in the United States or worldwide.

"We do know," Gonzales said, "that programs funded by the Justice Department have served more than 1,500 victims in the past three years."



President George W. Bush signed the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, Jan. 10, 2006. [File Photo](#)

help restore their human dignity." Gonzales said that partnerships, information-sharing and cooperation "cannot be underestimated when it comes to fighting a crime like human trafficking -- an act that is sinister to the point of feeling overwhelming at times."

According to the attorney general, an estimated 17,500 people -- mostly women and children -- are forced into prostitution, sweatshops and domestic servitude every year in the United States alone.

But he acknowledged that it is difficult to estimate accurately the

Progress in fighting the criminals, however, is somewhat more easily measured, Gonzales said. For example, since 2001 the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division and U.S. Attorneys' offices have prosecuted more than 300 human trafficking defendants, secured more than 200 convictions and guilty pleas, and opened nearly 650 new investigations, he said.

The U.S. Department of Justice's "Innocence Lost Initiative," spearheaded by its Criminal Division, has resulted in 543 arrests and 94 convictions, in both the federal and state courts, of pimps who

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More Global Effort Needed To Fight Sex Crimes Against Children

By Mary Specht
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Laws on child pornography vary widely among countries -- in dozens of nations, it is not illegal -- and managers of pornographic Web sites can dodge investigators by hosting their pages on overseas servers, according to U.S. law enforcement officials.

Tracking child pornography peddlers around the globe requires better international cooperation, agreed U.S. investigators and leaders of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) at a September 27 hearing before the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, also known as the Helsinki Commission.

"There is a staggering lack of capacity around the world to investigate and prosecute these types of crimes," said Ernie Allen, president of the National and International Centers for Missing and Exploited Children, two NGOs that advise lawmakers on policies to fight child pornography and trafficking.

Probes of child pornography Web sites "almost always span multiple jurisdictions and usually extend beyond the borders of the United States," said James E. Finch, assistant director of the Cyber Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

"They park their Web sites at different servers around the world, so when one server is discovered they move to another," he said. These sites cost only \$30 to \$100 to set up.

The roadblocks to many types of international investigations -- lack

of resources to deal with language barriers and cumbersome bureaucracy -- are especially damaging to child pornography investigations, where speed is crucial, Finch said.



Ernie Allen
President of the National and International Centers for Missing and Exploited Children

To help solve the problem, the FBI has assembled an international task force, with officials from Europol, the European Union's law enforcement organization, and 18 countries serving six-month rotations in the United States to assist American investigators.

Differences among countries in the way their laws treat child pornography and trafficking also pose problems for investigators. Representative Christopher Smith, Republican from New Jersey and co-chair of the Helsinki Commission, said he has seen resistance in Europe to adopting legislation similar to Megan's Law in the United States because of concerns for privacy.

Megan's Law allows the government to make information about convicted sex offenders public, in-

cluding their home addresses. The law was named after Megan Kanka, a 7-year-old raped and murdered in 1994 by a sex offender who lived across the street from her home in New Jersey.

A report by the International Center for Missing and Exploited Children released in 2006 finds that 95 countries have no legislation at all that specifically addresses child pornography.

The center also evaluated which countries have national legislation that: provides a definition of child pornography; criminalizes computer-facilitated offenses; criminalizes possession of child pornography, regardless of the intent to distribute; and requires Internet service providers (ISPs) to report suspected child pornography to authorities.

Only five countries meet all five criteria: Australia, Belgium, France, South Africa and the United States. The center found that only 22 countries meet all but the last criterion, pertaining to ISP reporting.

An effort to fight child exploitation must include not only the appropriate legal infrastructure in every country, but also the help of multinational corporations such as Internet and software giants Microsoft, Google and Yahoo, Allen said.

He has met with these and other technology companies to discuss enlisting their help in fighting Internet-based child sex crimes. They have been generally receptive, Allen said, and relationships with these companies show potential.

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U.N. Groups Push To End Child Hunger Around the World

By Elizabeth Kelleher
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington – An initiative to end hunger among the world's children was unveiled by representatives of UNICEF and the U.N. World Food Programme to a panel of U.S. senators.

The "Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative," scheduled for official launch in March 2007, will attempt to mirror the coalition approach taken earlier to eradicate polio in the world. The campaign plans to target malnourished children under 5 years old with food distribution programs, nutrition supplements, clean water, de-worming, educational campaigns and hand-washing instruction.

Representatives of the U.N. groups were joined by others from the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Centers for Disease Control (part of the U.S. health department) and a nongovernmental organization called World Vision in testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee September 26.

One of the millennium development goals set by the United Nations in 2000 is to halve the proportion of people in extreme hunger by 2015. There are 852 million chronically hungry people in the world today, and roughly half of them are children, according to a spokeswoman for the World Food Programme. There have been improvements in poverty rates since 2000, she said, "but hunger has gone in the other direction."

Witnesses said the number and scale of recent disasters have made it hard to concentrate on longer-term solutions to child hunger.

Ann Veneman, executive director of UNICEF, outlined the scope of the problem, saying that one-fourth of the world's children under 5 years old are underweight and that malnutrition causes the deaths of more than 5 million children a year. She said that, even though there are many children eating enough to fend off hunger,



Rome— On 12 June, more than 200,000 people made history in the global fight to end child hunger, by joining together to Walk the World in 269 cities, 91 countries, and all 24 time zones.
File Photo-

some do not get the nutrients they need. She said iodine deficiency lowers a child's intelligence quotient by up to 13 points, for instance, and that vitamin A deficiencies make children more vulnerable to disease.

Beyond trying to satisfy hunger, the initiative will focus on "food fortification" to meet nutritional needs. Micronutrients can be added to commonly used sauces or food items – such as fish sauce

in Vietnam – to make sure children get vitamins and minerals, according to the witnesses. Julie Gerberding, director for the Centers for Disease Control, said the coming initiative would call on the private sector to do innovative research in food fortification.

James Morris, director of the U.N. World Food Programme, said the world's 400 million hungry children live in 100 million households and that three-fourths of them are in 10 countries. That geographic concentration, he said, means eliminating hunger is doable.

It would cost \$80 per year, per household, to feed these vulnerable children – a total of \$8 billion a year – Morris said.

The hearing was meant to attract corporate donors and service organizations to join the campaign as much as to convince senators. Senator Richard Lugar, the committee chairman, is a long-standing proponent of food aid to developing countries.

Morris said he hopes service organizations, such as Rotary International, which have worked for decades to eliminate polio, might now focus on eliminating child hunger.

He cited companies already committed to school-meal programs in developing countries: the Netherlands delivery company TNT and the U.S. financial services company Citigroup Inc.

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U.S. Joins Council of Europe Convention on Computer-Based Crime

Washington -- The United States is now a party to the Council of Europe (COE) Convention on Cybercrime, the only multilateral treaty that specifically addresses the problem of computer-related crime and electronic evidence gathering, the White House announced September 29.

President Bush signed the instrument of ratification on September 22 and it was deposited at the COE headquarters in Strasbourg, France, on September 29. The convention will enter into force for the United States on January 1, 2007.

The convention requires parties to criminalize certain conduct that is committed against computer systems such as unauthorized intrusions (hacking) and the spreading of viruses or worms. Parties also must criminalize the use of computers to engage in traditional crimes such as forgery, fraud, the production and distribution of child pornography and intellectual property rights abuses.

Another goal of the cybercrime convention is ensuring that parties have the ability to investigate computer-related crime effectively and to collect electronic evidence regarding other criminal offenses, such as terrorism, organized crime and violent crimes.

The U.S. Senate approved the ratification of the COE Convention on Cybercrime in August. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=August>).

(<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=August&x=20060807133221bcreklaw0.5304834>).

State Department spokesman Sean McCormack, in announcing that the United States is now a party to the convention, said it offers "a global approach to the global problem of computer crime. The United States urges all states to consider joining the Convention."

During a an online discussion in April, Daniel Larkin of the Federal Bureau of Investigation described the work of the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3), where people from all over the world can file complaints about Internet crime. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=April&x=20060417095800lcnirellep0.7423212>).

The U.S. Helsinki Commission has called for broader international cooperation in fighting the sexual exploitation of children over the Internet. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=September&x=20060928155708lmthcep0.723635e-02>).

For more information about U.S. efforts to fight cybercrime in cooperation with foreign law enforce-

ment authorities, see the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Web site on its Cyber Crime Center (<http://www.ice.gov/about/investigations/services/cyberbranch.htm>), and the FBI



Hackers in Singapore look for sensitive information on the Internet (AP File Photo)

Web sites on cybercrime and intellectual property (<http://www.usdoj.gov/criminal/cybercrime/>) and its program to fight online child pornography (<http://www.fbi.gov/innocent.htm>).

A fact sheet (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/73354.htm>) on the Convention on Cybercrime is available on the State Department Web site. The full text (<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/185.htm>) of the convention is available on the Council of Europe Web site.

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

Judges Must Be Undeterred by Criticism, Justice's Gonzales Says

By Alexandra Abboud and Michelle Austein
Washington File Staff Writers

Washington -- "It is essential that judges be courageous enough to do the right thing, motivated solely by a respect for the law, undeterred by criticism or the possible outcome of the next election," said Attorney General Alberto Gonzales September 29.

Gonzales was one of many speakers featured in a two-day conference on fair and independent courts hosted by Georgetown University Law Center in Washington September 28 and September 29.

Prior to becoming U.S. attorney general, Gonzales served as justice of the Texas Supreme Court from 1999 to 2001. Gonzales said he learned on that court that the character of the judge who sits on the bench is fundamentally important and the process by which a judge renders a decision is crucial.

The judicial system in the United States comprises both state and federal courts. (See related article (http://usinfo.state.gov/dhr/democracy/u.s._legal_system/many_courts.html)).

Judges in the U.S. federal courts, including the Supreme Court, are appointed by the president with the advice and consent of the Senate, and hold those appointments for life. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/legalotln/judges.htm>)).

STATE COURTS

State courts in the United States face many unique challenges in maintaining their independence,

according to several speakers. State courts handle 95 percent of all legal disputes in the United States.

Each state selects its judges differently. In 39 states, some form of an election is held to select or retain judges. In all but three states, state judges do not have lifetime appointments.

In some states, judges participate in a partisan election, where they are nominated by a political party and run with a party identification next to their names on the ballot. Other elections are nonpartisan contests in which judges run without party affiliation. In some states, the governor or other officials appoint the judge. A combination of these methods also is used in some states, depending on the type of judge.

The merit of electing judges in partisan elections is a topic of debate among legal scholars. According to Gonzales, the process whereby state judges run for partisan election, and must raise funds to campaign and win such elections, might create the appearance of conflict of interest.

Gonzales said that although the number of judges who are influenced by campaign contributions might be very small, "popular beliefs about the influence of campaign funds on judges' decisions tend to have a corrosive effect on public confidence in a state's judicial system." As a result, "if Americans come to believe that judges are simply politicians, or their decisions can be purchased for a price, state judicial systems will be undermined," he said.

Judicial elections are different from other elections, according to Ruth McGregor, the chief justice of the Arizona Supreme Court. Judges cannot make promises in exchange for votes, she said, although special interest groups will try to assess how judges will rule on key issues before lending their support.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE

Gonzales also spoke about judicial independence and the need, he said, for judges not to make decisions based on avoiding criticism or seeking approval from other judges, the public, press, academia and elected leaders.

Because the independence of the judiciary outlined in the U.S. Constitution leaves judges relatively unaccountable for their decisions, Gonzales said they must understand their constitutional role and, if the text of the Constitution demands it, make unpopular decisions.

The notions of judicial independence date back to the United States' beginnings, said Kathleen Sullivan, professor and director of the Stanford Constitutional Law Center in California. While still under British rule, American colonists complained about how the king controlled judges, she said.

Allowing public criticism of the judiciary is a vital part of a free society, according to many of the panelists, and can sink into the court's consciousness and affect how judges decide a case, said Sullivan. Sullivan cited the landmark segregation cases of *Plessy v. Ferguson* and *Brown v. Board of Education* as examples, saying that changes

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More Global Effort Needed To Fight Sex Crimes . . .

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"I haven't hit any brick walls, and my colleagues haven't either," he said. "This is a despicable issue and no one wants to be on the wrong side of it."

The Helsinki Commission is an independent agency of the U.S. government mandated to monitor and encourage compliance by participating states with the Helsinki Final Act and other commitments of the 56 countries that constitute the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The Helsinki Final Act, which was signed by 35 countries at the Helsinki Summit in 1975, codifies Western concepts of human rights. (See re-

lated article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2005&m=July&x=200507291531131CJsamohT0.9075434>). More information (<http://www.csce.gov/index.cfm?Fuseaction=Home.Home&CFID=23472654&CFTOKEN=82105390>) can be found at the Helsinki Commission Web site.

The full text (http://www.icmec.org/en_X1/pdf/ModelLegislationFINAL.pdf) (PDF, 35 pages) of the report on child sexual exploitation laws around the world is available in English, French, Arabic, Spanish and Russian on the Web site of the Inter-

national Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Additional information (<http://www.fbi.gov/innocent.htm>) on the FBI's program to fight online child pornography is available on the bureau's Web site. The Immigration and Customs Enforcement also offers information on its Cyber Crime Center (<http://www.ice.gov/about/investigations/services/cyberbranch.htm>) Web page.

(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. Groups Push To End Child Hunger Around . . .

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A spokeswoman for the Centers for Disease Control said the agency looks forward to participating in the campaign by bringing its scientific expertise to bear.

ANTI-HUNGER NETWORK ENVISIONED

Lugar, a Republican from Indiana, said that in the past 12 months there also has been "extraordinary outreach of private foundations" in agriculture research to end hunger.

But he said confusion might result from the fact that, under the planned initiative, businesses would combine their efforts with

organizations such as charities, nongovernmental organizations, the United Nations and national government agencies.

"Who is in charge?" Lugar asked.

In response, witnesses outlined a network of organizations with a shared vision. The point of the initiative is to "rally all various parties around common goals," said Veneman.

"Many of the ideas raised ... to suggest better coordination in the battle against child hunger are good," said James Kunder, acting deputy administrator of U.S. Agency for International Development.

The World Food Programme's board is expected to approve the Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative in November, and the UNICEF board in January. The groups have met with 20 nongovernmental organizations in the past month and will continue to meet with such groups and to make proposals to potential donor countries in order to sign on several partners before the official launch next spring.

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

Congress Passes Legislation on Questioning, Trying Detainees

By Michelle Austein
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington – The U.S. Congress has agreed on legislation governing how the United States treats and tries detainees in the War on Terror. The legislation would authorize the president to establish military commissions to try unlawful enemy combatants engaged in hostilities against the United States.

President Bush is expected to sign into law the Military Commissions Act of 2006 (S. 3930), passed by the Senate on September 28 by a 65 to 34 vote. The House of Representatives passed companion legislation (HR 6054) 253 to 168 on September 27.

The legislation is "very vital" and would give the United States "the tools necessary to protect the American people," Bush said September 28. It would provide the United States with the capacity to interrogate high-value detainees, he said.

The act addresses the Supreme Court's ruling regarding the application of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions and would clarify the standards for U.S. personnel who detain and question unlawful enemy combatants, according to a statement by the president issued September 27. The act also would create a comprehensive statutory structure for military commissions to prosecute terrorists, Bush said.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled June 29 in a case brought by suspected terrorist and Guantanamo

detainee Salim Ahmed Hamdan that Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions applies to the U.S. war with the al-Qaida organization. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=June&x=20060630121139hmnietua0.1040918>).

The legislation defines what would be considered violations under Common Article 3, a provision that the Bush administration had said needed to be clarified. Violations include torture, cruel or inhuman treatment, performing biological experiments, murder, mutilation or intentionally causing bodily injury. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=September&x=20060914165153esnamfua0.7021753>).

The legislation also would bar military commissions from considering testimony obtained since December 30, 2005, through interrogation techniques that involve cruel or inhumane treatment. December 30, 2005, is the date President Bush signed the 2006 supplement Defense appropriations bill that included a section, also known as the McCain amendment, setting standards for humane treatment of detainees. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/dhr/Archive/2005/Dec/23-627086.html>).

One controversial provision of the Military Commission Act would prevent detainees from challenging their imprisonment in U.S. federal

courts, a right known as habeas corpus.

To become law, a bill must be passed by both the House of Representatives and the Senate, usually after lengthy scrutiny of the proposal by congressional subcommittees and committees. If the Senate and House of Representatives pass different versions of the same bill, a conference committee composed of members of both chambers meets to work out a compromise version of the bill. This compromise version must be approved by both chambers before it is sent to the president for signature or veto. Because in this case the bills are identical, there will be no conference committee meeting; however, the House of Representatives formally must approve the Senate bill.

The full text of the Senate bill is available on the Library of Congress (<http://thomas.loc.gov/>) Web site.

For more information, see Detainee Issues (http://usinfo.state.gov/dhr/human_rights/detainees.html).

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

U.S. Researchers Discovering What Makes Flu Viruses Lethal

By Cheryl Pellerin
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The first comprehensive analysis of an animal's immune response to the 1918 influenza virus gives new insights into the killer flu, scientists funded by the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) reported online September 27 in the journal *Nature*.

In addition, researchers funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service (ARS) have found that a relatively benign strain of a common virus became more virulent after passing through older animal hosts.

The ARS study was published in the September 12 print edition of the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

"Understanding as much as possible about the virus that caused the devastating 1918-1919 influenza pandemic," NIH Director Dr. Elias Zerhouni said, "is an urgent imperative as we pursue efforts to prepare for -- and possibly thwart -- the next flu pandemic."

KILLER FLU

Michael Katze and John Kash of the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle found that the 1918 virus triggers a hyperactive immune response that might contribute to the virus's lethality. (See related article

(<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2005&m=October&x=20051007114206lcnirellep0.2886316&t=xarchives/xarchitem.html>).



Dr. Elias Zerhouni in front of NIH Headquarters in Bethesda

The results suggest that the combination of all eight of the 1918 flu virus genes interacting together accounts for the virus's exceptional virulence.

The work with the fully reconstructed 1918 virus was conducted by coauthor Terrence Tumpey in a laboratory enhanced to

biosafety level 3 at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Georgia.

CDC has established four levels of precautions for biological agents: biosafety level 1 for work involving well-characterized agents not

known to cause disease consistently in healthy adults; level 2 for work with agents of moderate potential hazard to people and the environment; level 3 for work with agents that might cause serious or potentially lethal disease; and level 4 for work with dangerous and exotic agents that pose a high individual risk of aerosol-transmitted laboratory infections and life-threatening disease.

"The research provides clues as to why the flu of 1918 was so deadly," said NIAID Director Dr. Anthony Fauci, "and may also help us better understand the disease process that occurs when people are infected by emerging avian influenza viruses, such as the H5N1 strain."

Unlike typical seasonal flu, which strikes hardest at the very young, the elderly and those with compromised immune systems, the 1918 flu disproportionately killed young people in the prime of life.

Modern analyses of 1918 flu victim autopsy samples show extreme and extensive damage to

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U.S. Researchers Win 2006 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine

By Cheryl Pellerin
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Two U.S. scientists received the 2006 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine October 2 for their discovery of RNA interference (RNAi), a mechanism for "silencing" genes and controlling the flow of genetic information. That mechanism could lead to new disease treatments.

Andrew Fire, 47, of the Stanford University School of Medicine in California, and Craig Mello, 45, of the University of Massachusetts Medical School, were notified of the award by the Nobel Assembly at the Karolinska Institute.

The two researchers, both long-time grantees of the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), will share a nearly \$1.37 million prize.

"The most immediate benefit [of the discovery] is going to be doing experiments that teach us things," Fire told Adam Smith, editor in chief of the Nobel Prize Organization Web site, during an October 2 telephone interview.

"There's a wonderful study that Rene Bernard's group [at the Netherlands Cancer Institute] in Holland did," Fire said, "where they used RNA interference to characterize a given tumor type, and once they figured it out they said, 'You could treat this with aspirin.' And then they put aspirin on it. That wasn't using RNAi as a drug, it was using it to learn more about the [system]."

Eventually, he added, through early work now in progress, scien-

tists will learn the risks and benefits of using RNAi as therapy.

Plans are already under way to use RNAi silencing as a treatment for virus infections, heart disease, cancer, endocrine disorders and other conditions.

GENE SILENCING

Proteins are involved in all the processes of life -- as enzymes digesting food, receptors receiving signals in the brain and antibodies defending the body against bacteria.

A genome -- a collection of all the genes that make up each life form -- works by sending instructions for building proteins from the DNA in each cell nucleus (center) to protein-making machinery in the surrounding cytoplasm.

Messenger RNA (mRNA) carries these protein-building instructions from the nucleus to the cytoplasm. In 1998, Fire and Mello published their discovery of a mechanism called RNA interference that could degrade mRNA from a specific gene.

The mechanism is activated when RNA molecules occur as double-stranded pairs in the cell.

Double-stranded RNA activates biochemical machinery that de-

grades mRNA molecules that carry a genetic code identical to that of the double-stranded RNA. When such mRNA molecules disappear, the corresponding gene is silenced and no protein of the encoded type is made.

RNAi occurs in plants, animals and



Craig C. Mello, right, and Andrew Z. Fire at an awards ceremony in Germany in March.

(Photo AP)

people. It is important for regulating gene expression, helping defend against viral infections and keeping jumping genes -- which can change places on a chromosome and cause damage if they end up in the wrong place -- under control.

The human genome consists of

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U.S. Researchers Discovering What Makes Flu Viruses . . .

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lung tissues, leading to the hypothesis that the 1918 flu virus infection provoked an uncontrolled inflammatory response leading to rapid lung failure and death.

VALUABLE FOR H5N1

To test this idea, Tumpey infected mice with one of four types of flu virus -- human seasonal flu virus from a strain that circulated in Texas in 1991, lab-made viruses containing either two or five of eight viral genes from the 1918 virus, or a reconstructed virus containing all eight 1918 flu virus genes.

An analysis by Katze, Kash and colleagues showed that the immune response to the reconstructed 1918 virus containing all eight flu genes was much greater than to any of the other viruses with all eight genes, Katze said. In particular, genes involved in promoting inflammation were activated strongly and immediately following infection by the reconstructed 1918 virus.

"We clearly see a dramatic and uncontrolled immune response in the mouse lungs as early as one day following infection with the reconstructed 1918 virus," he says.

A fuller picture of the host immune response to the 1918 flu virus also could be valuable to scientists working to develop therapies against such viruses as the H5N1 avian influenza, the researchers said. (See related article ([\[usinfo.state.gov/gi/Archive/2005/Oct/19-133344.html\]\(http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/Archive/2005/Oct/19-133344.html\)\).](http://</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Besides targeting the flu virus itself, Katze added, researchers might develop new or improved agents aimed at moderating or halting the human immune system's overactive response to these viruses.

AGING HOSTS AND VIRULENCE

Older adults are more susceptible to viral diseases because their immune systems are less robust than they once were.

A study led by Simin Nikbin Meydani, associate director of the Jean Mayer USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University in Boston, suggests a new way of thinking about why older hosts are more susceptible to viruses.

In an animal study, none of a group of younger adult mice infected with a mild strain of a common virus died, but 14 percent of older infected mice did. The scientists then isolated and studied the mild virus from the infected older mice.

The mild viral strain did not affect young adult mice in previous tests, but the scientists found that after it had cycled through an older mouse host, it killed 43 percent of other younger mice later infected and 71 percent of other older mice later infected.

Because the results indicated that the older host environment had al-

lowed the virus to change to a more virulent strain, the scientists performed a DNA sequence analysis on the mild virus after isolating it from the older mice.

They found that a DNA segment related to virulence had mutated, enabling it to match that of a more virulent, disease-causing strain.

The scientists do not know how the viral strain mutated to mimic its virulent cousin in the older mouse hosts, but concluded that because of the world's increasingly older population, the potential impact of age-associated viral evolution on public health warrants further investigation.

More information about influenza (<http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/news/focuson/flu>) is available on the NIH Web site. U.S. government information about avian and pandemic flu (<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/>) also is available online.

For more information on U.S. and international efforts to combat avian influenza, see Bird Flu (http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/bird_flu.html).

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

Health Ministers Briefed on Best Investments for Reducing Disease

By Cheryl Pellerin
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Health ministers from the Americas at the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) Directing Council were briefed September 26 on the Disease Control Priorities Project (DCPP), which outlines the best health investments for reducing the burden of disease in developing countries.

The summit of Western Hemisphere health ministers was held September 25-29 in Washington.

The DCPP is an alliance of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/National Institutes of Health Fogarty International Center, the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Population Reference Bureau, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The alliance seeks to assess disease control priorities and produce evidence-based analysis and resource materials to inform health policymaking in developing countries.

"In far too many countries, unnecessary poor health conditions persist," said former PAHO Director Dr. George Alleyne, a DCPP editor, and evidence shows that several cost-effective interventions can improve health conditions.

The project's recommendations on the best health investments for developing countries are interventions suggested by scientists and experts to deal with issues like tobacco use, cardiovascular disease, maternal and newborn mortality,

and reducing infectious diseases such as tuberculosis (TB), malaria and HIV/AIDS.

"Early detection is one of the best defenses against emerging diseases," said Health and Human Services Secretary Michael Leavitt, the U.S. delegation leader, at the summit September 25, "and you have my commitment to work together to improve health, with compassion and hope."

HEALTH INVESTMENTS

The project and its new publication by the World Bank, *Priorities in Health*, Alleyne said, help countries "choose the best health investments, or 'health buys,' that are highly cost-effective in many settings."

"Health care is one of the most effective means of fighting poverty," said Dr. Julio Frenk, Mexico's minister of health and a briefing presenter.

The DCPP briefing included Frenk, who outlined the progress achieved in Mexico using information from the project, and Philip Musgrove, a health economist at the World Bank and an editor of the publications.

Alleyne said the best health investments include vaccinating children against major childhood killers, including measles, polio, tetanus, whooping cough and diphtheria; monitoring children's health to prevent or treat childhood pneumonia, diarrhea and malaria; and taxing tobacco products to increase consumers' costs by at least one-third, curb smoking and reduce the prevalence of cardiovascular dis-

ease, cancer and respiratory disease.

Other good investments include a coordinated attack against HIV, giving children and pregnant women essential nutrients, providing insecticide-treated bed nets in malaria-endemic areas, and enforcing traffic regulations.

Developing countries also could treat TB patients with short-course chemotherapy, teach mothers to keep newborns warm and clean, and promote the use of aspirin and other inexpensive drugs to prevent heart attack and stroke.

DISEASE CONTROL PRIORITIES

Such investments are discussed in three publications: *Disease Control Priorities in Developing Countries*, 2nd edition (DCP2); *Priorities in Health*; and *Global Burden of Disease and Risk Factors*.

The DCPP publications present the latest scientific research on a broad array of diseases and health conditions and recommendations for strengthening developing-country health systems.

DCPP authors include scientists, epidemiologists, health economists, academicians and public health practitioners from more than 100 countries.

In 1993, the World Bank published the first edition of *Disease Control Priorities in Developing Countries* (DCP1) with contributions from WHO, world scholars, practitioners and public health specialists.

As a companion document to the

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U.S. Researchers Win 2006 Nobel Prize in Physiology . . .

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about 30,000 genes, but only a fraction are used in each cell. The machinery that copies DNA to mRNA controls which genes are expressed in a process called transcription.

SENSE AND ANTISENSE

Fire and Mello were investigating how gene expression is regulated in the worm *Caenorhabditis elegans*.

Injecting mRNA molecules coded to produce a muscle protein led to no changes in the worms' behavior. The genetic code in mRNA is described as being the "sense" sequence, and injecting "antisense" RNA, which can pair with the mRNA, also had no effect.

But when Fire and Mello injected sense and antisense RNA together, the worms displayed peculiar, twitching movements -- the same movements seen in worms that completely lacked a functioning gene for the muscle protein.

When sense and antisense RNA molecules meet, they bind to each other and form double-stranded RNA. Could such a double-stranded RNA molecule silence the gene carrying the same code as this particular RNA?

Fire and Mello tested the hypothesis by injecting double-stranded RNA molecules containing the genetic codes for several other worm proteins.

In every experiment, injecting double-stranded RNA carrying a genetic code led to silencing of the

gene containing that code. The protein coded for by that gene was no longer formed.

A NEW RESEARCH FIELD

After a series of experiments, Fire and Mello deduced the following:

-- Double-stranded RNA could silence genes.

-- This RNA interference was specific for the gene whose code matched that of the injected RNA molecule.

-- RNA interference could spread between cells and even be inherited.

It was enough to inject tiny amounts of double-stranded RNA to achieve an effect, and Fire and Mello therefore proposed that RNAi was a catalytic process.

Fire and Mello published their findings in the journal *Nature* in 1998.

Their discovery clarified many confusing and contradictory experimental observations and revealed a natural mechanism for controlling the flow of genetic information. This heralded the start of a new research field.

FIRE, MELLO AND NIH

At NIH, the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) began supporting the work of Fire in 1987 and Mello in 1999. Over the years, NIGMS has provided nearly \$8.5 million to support the two scientists.

The NIH National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

also provided more than \$3 million to support Mello's research.

Their accomplishment demonstrates the importance of supporting new investigators and sustaining support of investigator-initiated ideas, according to an NIH statement.

"Today's Nobelists used experiments with nematode worms to find a mechanism that can silence genes in humans," said NIH Director Elias Zerhouni, M.D.

"Many diseases develop when genes don't work properly," he added, "so RNA interference offers a tremendous potential to create a new generation of drugs targeted to these and other conditions."

"RNAi is both a powerful tool for studying gene function and a promising approach to treating a host of human diseases," said NIGMS Director Jeremy Berg, "from macular degeneration and cancer to flu and other infections."

More information about the Nobel Prize (<http://nobelprize.org/index.html>) is available at the organization's Web site.

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Judges Must Be Undeterred by Criticism, Justice's . . .

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to the law applied in these cases might not have happened without public criticism.

However, there should be some constraints on public criticisms, Sullivan said, because unlike politicians on the campaign trail, "judges can't fight back" to answer or address criticism.

There are mechanisms to ensure proper judicial behavior, the panelists said. For example, a federal judge can be impeached. However,

only seven federal judges in U.S. history have been removed from office.

"The concept of judicial independence has never meant, and should never mean, that judges or their decisions should be immune from public scrutiny," said Gonzales. "We live in a society of free speech and lively debate, and criticism has long been a part of judicial history."

The full text (http://justice.gov/ag/speeches/2006/ag_speech_060929.html) of Gon-

zales' prepared remarks is available on the Justice Department Web site.

For more about the role of the judiciary in the United States, see Outline of the U.S. Legal System (<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/legalotln/>) and Rule of Law (http://usinfo.state.gov/dhr/democracy/rule_of_law.html).

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Health Ministers Briefed on Best Investments for . . .

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World Bank's 1993 World Development Report, Investing in Health, DCP1 examined 25 priority conditions in low- and middle-income developing countries and assessed their public health significance and the cost-effectiveness of preventive and patient management interventions.

Both publications have become reference works used by policymakers, international development agencies, academic institutions, health program managers and donors.

In 2002, DCP2 asked 600 public health and policy experts to update DCP1, expanding research and writing about the burden of disease and cost-effective interventions for a broader range of dis-

eases and conditions affecting developing countries.

In April, DCP2 released DCP2, which includes updated information about the global burden of diseases caused by tobacco, alcohol, psychiatric disorders and injury, which account for an increasing proportion of deaths. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/Archive/2006/May/04-561086.html>).

The companion volume, Priorities in Health, synthesizes DCP2 main messages into a plain-language reference guide for policymakers. Priorities in Health is available in seven languages.

The DCP2 shows that only 12 percent of global health spending occurs in low- and middle-income countries, which account for 92

percent of the global burden of disease.

The full text (<http://www.dcp2.org/pubs/DCP2>) of DCP2 and more information (<http://www.dcp2.org/main/Home.html>) about the publication are available at the DCP2 Web site. Additional information (<http://www.paho.org/>) about PAHO is available on the organization's Web site.

For more information on U.S. efforts to combat disease worldwide, see Health (http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/health.html).

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Reliable Air Travel a Vital Part of . . .

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signed to date with MCC, four are with the African countries of Benin, Cape Verde, Madagascar and Ghana."

He added that MCC is hoping to make final one additional African compact in the current year. Of the 22 nations now eligible, 12 are in sub-Saharan Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mozambique, Mali, Morocco, Namibia, Senegal and Tanzania.

Danilovich said that although infrastructure projects often are underfunded on the continent, MCC is committing more than half of its total \$3 billion in aid to sub-Saharan Africa.

"Our approach toward infrastructure development confirms my first

point," he said. "We recognize its transformative impact in Africa."

The Washington-based Corporate Council on Africa, established in 1993, is a nonpartisan organization dedicated to strengthening commercial relationships between the United States and Africa.

For more information on the MCC, see Millennium Challenge Account (http://usinfo.state.gov/ei/economic_issues/mca.html).

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U.S. Intensifying Efforts To Combat Human . . .

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prey on children, Gonzales said. There are 16 "Innocence Lost Initiative" task forces around the country and more will be established, the attorney general said.

The Justice Department also has developed a model state law that has been endorsed by the U.S. Senate and sent to state governors and legislative leaders. In 2004, Gonzales said, only four states had laws against trafficking. Today, more than two dozen have enacted tough anti-trafficking laws that reflect the principles of the department's model criminal statute.

Gonzales condemned human trafficking as "a violation of the human body, mind and spirit."

"The victims of human trafficking are often lured to this country with the promise that they will enjoy the great gifts of liberty," Gonzales said. "This is an insult to our country, and it is personally disappointing because my own family came here from Mexico to find a better life. The thirst for freedom and opportunity is part of the human spirit and is very strong in this world -- to offer it as a lure for purposes of a crime is unconscionable."

For more information on U.S. policy, see Human Trafficking ([\[usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/human_trafficking.html\]\(http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/human_trafficking.html\)\).](http://</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Information (<http://www.humantraffickingconference.com/index.htm>) on the 2006 National Conference on Human Trafficking is available on the U.S. Department of Justice's Web site.

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