



Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

INSIDE

Ambassador Yamamoto Launches First Ethiopian-American Blood Drive with the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS)

Addis Ababa (U.S. Embassy) -- On Wednesday, August 29, 2007, Ambassador Donald Yamamoto, United States Ambassador to Ethiopia, and Ato Bekele Tiruwork, representative of the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS), launched the first ever Millennium Ethiopian-American Blood Drive. The blood drive, held at the American Embassy, collected fifty two units (pints) of blood, which is two pints more than the daily national average from volunteers. Ambassador Yamamoto was one of the first donors.



Ambassador Yamamoto donating blood to a Red Cross staff.

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U.S. Ambassador Yamamoto Visits Harar



Ambassador presents a grant to Ato Yemage Idris, head of the Bureau of Culture, for preservation of the collection of Abdullahi Sherif in the Teferi Mekonnen house.

U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia, Donald Yamamoto, visited the historic city of Harar on August 28, 2007. After landing at Dire Dawa airport, the Ambassador drove down to Harar and first met with the Harari President Murad Abdulhadi. The delegation included Mr. Glenn Anders, USAID Ethiopia Mission Director, Michael Gonzales, Acting Deputy Chief of

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Ambassador Yamamoto Launches First Ethiopian-American . . .

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The Embassy looks forward to making this an annual event, and continuing its relationship with the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS). "Inadequate blood supplies cost many lives globally, and the employees of the embassy did an outstanding job of responding to Ethiopia's need," said Melissa Jefferson, Medical Attache from the Embassy's Health Unit.

According to the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS), volunteer donations comprise only 25-30% of total donations, with the remaining donations coming from relatives of blood recipients. Less than fifty percent of the required amount of blood is collected by volunteers and family members combined.

The Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) has a large center in Addis Ababa, and 11 satellite donor sites

around Ethiopia. It also has a mobile unit that goes into communities with a full team of nurses and phlebotomists and all necessary equipment to collect blood from large groups such as schools, NGO's and Embassies. Groups may schedule a mobile team to come to your organization. Contact the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) at 011-515-0535 or 1558 for more information.♦



U.S. Embassy staff enthusiastically took part in the blood drive

U.S. Ambassador Yamamoto Visits . . .

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Mission (A/DCM), as well as Col. Bradley Anderson, Defense Attache Officer, Mrs. Patricia W. Johnson, Cultural Affairs Officer, Ato Girma Abebe, Political Specialist, and Ato Yoseph Shiferaw, Cultural Affairs

Specialist. The discussions with Ato Murad Abdulhadi generally covered the Millennium celebrations in Harar, food aid delivery to the Somali Region and the situation in the Ogaden, as well as a variety of issues about the historic city of Harar.

The Ambassador next met with the Head of the Bureau of Investment and Trade, Ato Elias Abdulmalik, at Harar Lodge on Hakim Gara overlooking the city. Ato Elias briefed the Ambassador about tourism and investment efforts being undertaken in the city of Harar by the city and the Diaspora. He then proceeded to give a tour of two American Diaspora projects.

The President of Harar then hosted a lunch reception at Dinni Paradise. After lunch, the Ambassador presented Ato Yemage Idris, Head of

the Bureau of Culture and Tourism, House/Abdullah Sharif Museum. The agreement was signed by Mrs. Patricia Johnson. The group visited the museum and the Rimbaud House in the walled city of Harar.

ited the center and had a briefing from the Medical Director, Dr. Fitih. The one-day visit ended with a tour of the CJTF-HOA facilities in Dire Dawa.♦



Ambassador Yamamoto (center) with officials of Harari State and U.S. Embassy Staff in front of Rimbaud House in Harar

The last visit on schedule was the Yemage Medical Center operated by an Ethio-American Diaspora, Sebri Omer, from Atlanta, Georgia. The Ambassador and the delegation vis-

US Ambassador Announces Emergency Relief for Somali Region

Addis Ababa (U.S. Embassy) – United States Ambassador Donald Yamamoto announced that the U.S. is providing US \$18.7 million (169 million birr) in humanitarian assistance for needs in Ethiopia’s Somali Region. The United States is working with the Government of Ethiopia, international and NGO partners, on responding to the concerns over the humanitarian conditions in the Ogaden. The United States welcomes the decision by the Government of Ethiopia to permit a United Nations monitoring mission to assess conditions in Somali Region.

The United States Agency for International Development’s (USAID) Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) has committed

nearly US \$3.7 million (33.4 million birr) in emergency relief for health, nutrition, and livelihood programs to support Ethiopians in Somali Region. In addition, USAID recently provided over US \$15 million (135.4 million birr) of emergency food assistance to the UN World Food Program (WFP) in response to the food insecurity in Somali Region, as well as to malnutrition reports and recent flood displacements in other regions.

Despite good rains in Ethiopia’s Somali Region in late 2006, the cumulative impact of a decade of drought, intermittent civil conflict, high rates of malnutrition, steadily increasing food prices, flooding, and Rift Valley fever has increased the

vulnerability of pastoralists to famine and destitution. In addition, recent conflict and security concerns have restricted commercial trade, delayed food distributions, and limited movement of pastoralists and their livestock.

The United States has provided over US \$200 million (1.8 billion birr) to support humanitarian programs throughout Ethiopia this year, including the delivery of food aid, strengthening disaster preparedness, and implementing emergency nutrition, health, and water programs.♦

Ambassador Wolff on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa

United States Mission to the United Nations
Office of Press and Public Diplomacy
New York, NY 10017

USUN PRESS RELEASE
August 28, 2007

Statement by Ambassador Alejandro D. Wolff, Deputy U.S. Permanent Representative, at the Open Debate on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, to the Security Council, August 28, 2007

The United States would like to thank the Republic of Congo for raising this important issue. We agree with the Secretary-General and with you, Mr. President, that

the UN, and more particularly this Council, can and must enhance its capacity to prevent conflict, particularly in Africa.

For the UN to be more effective in preventing conflict in Africa, the Security Council must work more cooperatively and more efficiently with regional and subregional organizations. In this regard, the U.S. joins other members of this Council in welcoming the provisions of the UN Security Council-African Union Peace and Security Council joint communique of June 2007 that calls for a stronger relationship between the two bodies.

Mr. President, according to the World Bank 16 of the world’s 20

poorest countries have suffered a major war in the past 15 years. On average, countries coming out of war face a 44% chance of relapsing in the first five years of peace.



Ambassador Alejandro D. Wolff

The United States supports conflict prevention and conflict resolution in Africa through a variety of bilateral and multilateral programs:

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Term Limits Help Prevent Dictatorships

By Eric Green
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington – Even as Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez seeks to change Venezuelan law that, in effect, could make him that country’s “president for life,” a similar scenario for a U.S. president is regarded as highly unlikely.

The 22nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibits an American president from serving more than two full four-year terms in office. In contrast to what is occurring in Venezuela, sporadic attempts to repeal the American law have been unsuccessful.

Supporters of a repeal face formidable obstacles, Kathryn Dunn Tenpas, a senior fellow in governance studies at the Brookings Institution in Washington, told USINFO August 24. She said that even if the U.S. Congress voted for repeal, the American constitutional amendment process requires that three-fourths of the legislatures of the 50 U.S. states must give their assent as well.

Tenpas said she sees pros and cons to overturning the amendment. On the one hand, she said, a president facing re-election is more accountable because he or she cares about winning another term in office.

But the prospect of re-election “creates incentives that are not always in the best interest of good government,” Tenpas said. She cited the example of presidents doling out excessive grants to states or congressional districts that put

the chief executive in a better position to win votes from those constituencies.

Tenpas added that another U.S. law, one which requires U.S. presidents to have been born in America, also is unlikely to be overturned, despite arguments raised by backers of such foreign-born officials as California Governor Arnold

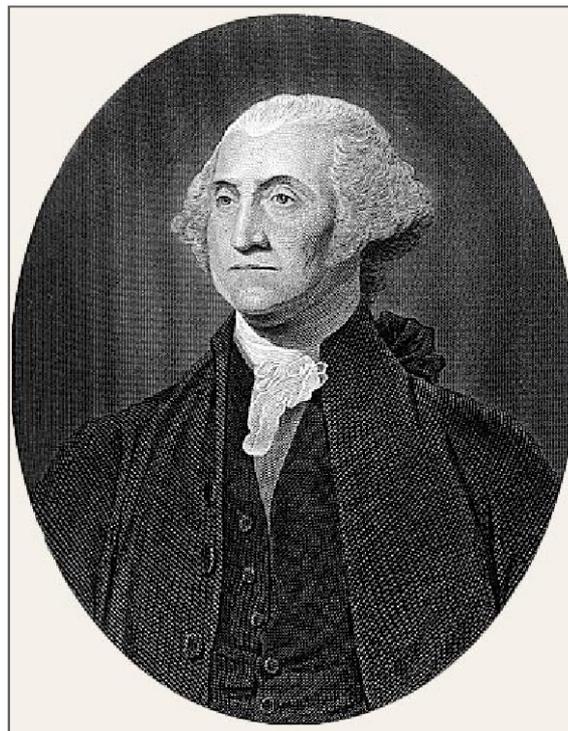
whether they are running for a third term, especially if they are popular with the American electorate, said Fortier.

But he added that attempts to overturn the amendment might be moot.

“I think very few presidents [in the United States] would either want, or be able, to serve three terms” or beyond, Fortier said. His problem with term limits, Fortier said, is that they make second-term presidents “lame ducks” with no political future. That fact damages their ability to move legislation through the U.S. Congress.

The only U.S. president to serve beyond two terms was Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt, first elected in 1932, who remained in office until his death in April 1945.

Roosevelt’s long tenure in the White House prompted the opposition Republican Party to pursue passage of the 22nd Amendment in 1947, with the law going into effect in 1951. The rationale for the amendment was that it would prevent future presidents from attempting to claim dictatorial powers.



*Portrait of George Washington
First President of the United States of America*

Schwarzenegger. His supporters say the Austrian native should be allowed to run for the White House.

John Fortier, a research fellow at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, supports repealing the presidential term-limit law. Sitting U.S. presidents would be more effective at gaining enactment of legislation in a second term if they did not have to reveal their plans on

America’s first president, George Washington, could have stayed in office “for as long as he wanted to,” Fortier said, since at the time the United States had no term-limits law and the highly popular Washington would have faced virtually no opposition. But after two terms, Washington returned in 1797 to his farm in Virginia.

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Sudden Change in U.S. Foreign Policy Unlikely After Elections

By Michelle Austein
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Historically, there have not been sudden changes in U.S. foreign policy following the country's elections, according to U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom Robert H. Tuttle.

"The president sets U.S. foreign policy and it is implemented by the secretary of state. So the direction of U.S. foreign policy will be the responsibility of President Bush until he leaves the White House in January 2009," the ambassador said.

Tuttle was discussing the potential effects of the U.S. 2006 midterm elections during a Washington File Webchat in November 2006.

At the same time, "all presidents, including President Bush, have [consulted] and will continue to consult with Congress regarding the direction of U.S. foreign policy," he said.

Even though key officials in policy-making positions might change, the overall foreign policy objectives remain the same, Tuttle said.

The 2006 election would not bring a sudden change to U.S. policy on Iraq, the ambassador said. "As President Bush said in his news conference ... our objectives in Iraq have not changed, but he and members of his administration are con-

stantly reviewing our tactical approaches to the situation in Iraq," Tuttle said. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=November&x=20061108154544esnam-fuak0.4397241>).)

The executive and legislative branches have to work together on



*U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom Robert H. Tuttle
"US Embassy London photo"*

both foreign and domestic issues, Tuttle said. To become law, all bills must be approved by both the House of Representatives and the Senate before they can be signed by the president.

Additionally, Tuttle said, each chamber has unique powers and

responsibilities. Only the House can initiate a bill spending government funds. The Senate has the power to approve high-level appointments made by the president, including those of Cabinet members, ambassadors and federal judges. The Senate also ratifies treaties negotiated by the president.

Divided government, a situation in which one political party controls at least one chamber of Congress while the president is a representative of the other party, is common and something with which Americans are comfortable, Tuttle said, adding that since 1950 there have been more years with divided government than years without it.

"The record shows that during those years of divided government some of our more productive pieces of legislation were passed by the Congress and signed by the president," Tuttle said.

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In Defeat, U.S. Political Candidates Graciously Concede

By Martha Paluch
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- After a close and bitterly fought election, Republican U.S. Senator George Allen of Virginia stood in front of his supporters in November 2006 and formally conceded his race for re-election to Jim Webb, his Democratic opponent, saying, "The owners of the government have spoken and I respect their decision."

The loss of that one seat to the opposition party was enough to shift political control of the Senate to the Democrats, allowing Webb and Allen's other political rivals to set the legislative agenda and chair the Senate committees in the 110th Congress.

Allen, in his concession speech, followed an honored tradition in U.S. politics by congratulating his successor and wishing him well.

"I wish Jim Webb well and pledge him my absolute cooperation in the transition," Allen said, promising that he would do all in his power to act "with respect for the wishes of the people of Virginia ... to bind factions together for a positive purpose."

Americans have learned to take for granted the idea that no matter how close or divisive their official election results may be, the losing candidates and political parties will peacefully hand power over to the winners.

They can look back to the election of 1800, a bitter contest between Federalist President John Adams and his Democratic-Republican challenger Thomas Jefferson, as the precedent behind their country's tradition of peacefully transferring

power from a ruling party to its bitter political rivals.

The one instance where this tradition was not honored occurred in 1860, when Southern states and representatives refused to accept President Abraham Lincoln's election and withdrew from the United States, setting off the country's five-year civil war.

Voters choose approximately one-third of the members of the U.S. Senate and all members of the



Sen. George Allen, R-Va., delivers a concession speech with his wife, Susan Alexandria, Va., Thursday, Nov. 9, 2006. (AP Images)

House of Representatives, as well as many state governors, every two years, even in "midterm" elections that fall in the middle of a president's four-year term. These elections are significant because they offer the opportunity for a change in the political control of Congress and sometimes serve as an unofficial referendum on presidential policies.

The 2006 U.S. midterm elections illustrated the inherent stability of the electoral process in the United States. The peaceful transfer of power is a hallmark of strong democracy, and American elections repeatedly have resulted in orderly transitions in the political control of the nation. The cooperation and compromise inherent in the American system of government ensure that the government's business will continue in a peaceful manner after the elections.

The close presidential election of 2000 between President Bush and Democrat Al Gore ultimately was decided by the U.S. Supreme Court on December 12, 2000. Election results from the state of Florida showed Bush's margin of victory over Gore so slim that mandatory vote recounts were necessary until the court voted 5-4 to end the recounts and allowed Florida to certify its results in favor of Bush.

The joint session of Congress that convened January 6, 2001, to officially certify the 2000 electoral results included Gore's participation as the sitting vice president and head of the U.S. Senate. Several representatives who objected to Florida's certified election results challenged the proceedings. However, since electoral objections needed to be co-sponsored by a senator, Gore ruled each of them out of order and his fulfillment of his constitutional duties enabled the peaceful and orderly transfer of power, even at the cost of the Democratic Party's control of the executive branch and Gore's own presidential aspirations.

Although the results of the election are disappointing to the losing candidates, most acknowledge, some-

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Local Politicians Helping Smaller U.S. Cities Grow, Prosper

By Kathryn McConnell
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- In communities large and small throughout the United States, local elected officials are planning for the future while responding to citizens' immediate needs. How well they do will help determine their chances of being re-elected.

In Wilmington, North Carolina, one of the most important issues for Laura Padgett, who is running for re-election as a City Council member in October, is support for developing enough park and recreational space to serve the area's increasing population.

In Iowa City, Iowa, a key issue for Dee Vanderhoef, seeking re-election to the City Council in November, is public safety -- specifically, the need to build a new firefighting station in one of the city's growing suburbs.

And in Rochester, Minnesota, Marcia Marcoux, a City Council member who will be up for re-election in 2008, says a major issue in her area is paying for the upkeep of local roads and bridges. Good roads are needed to accommodate the increasing flow of traffic between Rochester and the state's main metropolitan area of Minneapolis-St. Paul, 129 kilometers north. A fatal bridge collapse in Minneapolis in August has raised concerns about adequate public funding for infrastructure maintenance.

The three officials, who work in partnership with hired city staff and

state and federal government agencies, are examples of the vibrant, grassroots level of democracy in the United States.

Like their peers around the country, they want to ensure that taxpayer funds are being used effectively to provide for the health, safety and prosperity of all their citizens, regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender or income. They learn about voters' concerns in public city council meetings and during personal meetings.

Typical of many city council members in the United States, Padgett, Vanderhoef and Marcoux run in elections that are not influenced by national political parties. Their campaigns rely on informational brochures, media interviews and open citizen forums.

Many issues that concern voters in Wilmington, Iowa City and Rochester are the same, they said.

"Almost everything has to do with infrastructure," Padgett said. In Wilmington, a city of nearly 100,000 near the Atlantic shore, issues range from access to clean water and sewage services to the need to manage growth while preserving surrounding natural resources.

She said Wilmington's 2007 elections may be influenced by voter opinions about the possibility of building a new conference center. It would draw more business and tourism to the community but also increase demands for public services.

In Rochester, Marcoux said officials are putting plans in place to manage any potential disaster such as a flood, a tornado or even a pandemic. Response planning done after a 1978 flood proved successful when a flash flood struck in August, minimizing potentially costly property damage.

And in Iowa City, officials are working to address how to increase energy conservation in government-run facilities, according to Vanderhoef. The issue is influenced by the city's ecology-minded population. Iowa City already has adopted strict energy-efficiency standards for building construction.

Padgett first was elected in 1993 to the City Council of Wilmington, a city with burgeoning high technology and industrial manufacturing sectors and a population boom of retirees relocating to the area.

Vanderhoef first was elected in 1996. Iowa City, population 63,000, is home to a major university and a growing manufacturing sector that is bringing in new workers and their families. She said she is a strong supporter of "Kids Voting," a national effort to teach young people about the election process.

Marcoux has been on the Rochester City Council since 1998. Home to the world-renowned Mayo Clinic, Rochester, population 100,000, has several university branches and small industry. Historically the center of southeastern Minnesota's farm sector, it is becoming home to

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Term Limits Help Prevent Dictatorships

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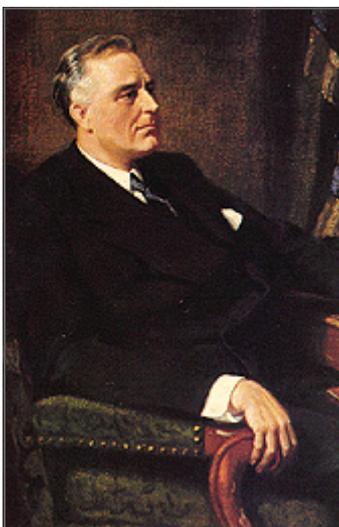
U.S. law also stipulates that no two-term U.S. president can be elected again for the White House even if the term is not consecutive. This means, for example, that a two-term president such as Bill Clinton who left office in January 2001 is ineligible to make another White House run, as is George W. Bush even if he waited four years after he leaves office in January 2009.

REPEAL MEASURES IN U.S. HOUSE

Representative Steny Hoyer, the majority leader of the U.S. House of Representatives, has pushed for measures to repeal the 22nd Amendment.

The Democratic congressman from Maryland, who has received backing on his measure from some Republicans, says that in a democracy "the public ought to have the opportunity to retain or reject" politicians.

Hoyer said in April 2005, when he introduced a congressional resolution on repeal, that overturning



*Franklin D. Roosevelt
The thirty-second President
of the United States
(1933-1945).*

presidential term limits would restore to the American people "an essential democratic privilege to elect who they choose in the future." Hoyer has introduced his

measure in several sessions of the House of Representatives but it received scant congressional backing.

In Venezuela, that country's parliament has given initial approval to Chávez's move to amend the 1999 constitution, which currently allows the head of state to serve only two successive six-year terms. Opponents say the change would lead to "dictatorship" and that Chávez is attempting to "stay in power for life."

For more information, see the full text (<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/constitution/amendment.htm>) of the 22nd Amendment to U.S. Constitution, and Democracy and Governance (<http://usinfo.state.gov/partners/partnership/democracy.html>).

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In Defeat, U.S. Political Candidates Graciously . . .

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times very eloquently, that respecting the wishes of the American people is the fundamental requirement for aspiring to public office.

"There was a strong headwind working against us," said Harold Ford, the unsuccessful Democratic contender in 2006 for one of Tennessee's Senate seats, "but in the end the choice belonged to the good people of Tennessee. They

ignored distractions and distortions, and instead focused on the different qualifications of two men and ... made up their mind."

In his concession speech after losing the 1992 presidential election to Bill Clinton, President George H.W. Bush said: "Here's the way we see it and the country should see it, that the people have spoken, and we respect the majesty of the democratic system. There is important work to be done, and America

must always come first. So we will get behind this new president, and wish him well."

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Ambassador Wolff on Conflict Prevention and Resolution . . .

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Announced at the G-8 meeting in 2004, the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) was created to address the disparity between the persistent demand for trained peacekeeping forces and their inadequate availability, especially for missions in Africa. In FY 05 GPOI trained and equipped 27,025 military personnel from 37 countries to participate in UN peacekeeping operations. That number is expected to increase to 75,000 by the end of the year. The United States is supporting four of the eleven GPOI Peace Operations Training Centers in Africa -- in Ghana, Kenya, Mali, and Nigeria.

The Transportation and Logistics Support Arrangement (TLSA) of GPOI contributed \$11.5 million in FY05, \$5 million of which went to construct portions of 34 base camps in Darfur. In 2007, the United States has obligated \$32 million to TLSA to support initiatives including: \$12 million in equipment to ECOWAS, \$6.8 million for the training and equipping of Ugandan troops supporting AMISOM, and \$6 million to support Nigerian deployment to AMIS.

GPOI's predecessor, the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program provided training and non-lethal equipment to over 52,000 peacekeeping operations from African partner militaries through July 2007. These partners are now contributing, or have contributed, to AMIS, UNMIS, UNAMSIL, MONUC, MINURCA, UNMEE, UNOCI, UNMIL, and AMISOM.

Understanding that economic development is a crucial component of conflict prevention and conflict resolution, the U.S. Congress passed the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) on May 18, 2000. The Act offers tangible incentives for African countries to continue their efforts to open their economies and build free markets. Thirty-eight of the 48 sub-Saharan nations are now eligible for AGOA. As a result, two-way trade between the United States and sub-Saharan African countries increased by 17 percent in 2006, reaching almost \$71.3 billion, with both U.S. exports to and U.S. imports from the region growing.

In 2004 President Bush created the Office of the Coordinator for Recon-

struction and Stabilization (CRS) to harness the full breadth of U.S. skills and resources to transform conflict. CRS was tasked with integrating all relevant U.S. resources and assets in conducting reconstruction and stabilization operations.

So we have important programs in place. What we need now is more effective coordination between our efforts, Security Council efforts, and the efforts of African Union and other regional and subregional organizations. With such enhanced coordination, we would all I think be better positioned to help prevent conflict before it starts and to assist nations emerging from conflicts so the violence of the past is not repeated.

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Local Politicians Helping Smaller U.S. Cities . . .

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more people who want to live close to a major metropolitan area but without a big city's higher living costs.

In a recent letter to the National League of Cities, a local government lobbying group, Marcoux said

successful local government calls for many partners working together.

"We will continue to depend upon ... collaboration between local, state and federal agencies, businesses and our citizens to ensure that we make the best decisions possible," she said.

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U.S. Officials Increasingly Reflect American Diversity

By Michael Jay Friedman
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- American political candidates are increasingly coming from diverse racial and ethnic origins and religious beliefs, upholding a tradition of political pluralism and participation that dates to the founding of the United States.



Hillary Clinton

The 2008 presidential contest is clearly marked by this diversity. The two leading Democrats vying for their party's nomination are a woman, Hillary Clinton, and an African American, Barack Obama.

From 1788, when Pennsylvanians elected three German Americans to the First Congress, to 2006, when the mayors of the nation's three largest cities -- New York, Los Angeles and Chicago -- boast of Jewish-, Mexican- and Irish-American heritage, and the mayor of the fifth-largest (Philadelphia) is an African American, Americans have elected as their representatives men and women of all races, ethnicities and creeds.

In the most recent U.S. elections in 2006, several African Americans were major party candidates for

some of the 33 contested U.S. Senate seats. They included Republican Lieutenant Governor Michael Steele in Maryland and Democrats Erik Fleming in Mississippi and U.S. Representative Harold Ford Jr. in Tennessee.

In the aftermath of the 2006 midterm contest, the 435-member House of Representatives has 42 African-American members. The election also resulted in the first African-American governor of the state of Massachusetts. Governor Deval Patrick is only the second elected black governor in U.S. history, after Virginia's L. Douglas Wilder, who served from 1990 to 1994.

Another first was the election of Keith Ellison from Minnesota as the first Muslim member of the House of Representatives. Ellison's victory makes him the highest-ranking Muslim elected official in the United States. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=January&x=20070104154843ndyblehs0.6852838>).)

The new 110th Congress includes 16 women senators, the highest number ever. The 2006 elections also raised the number of female members of the House of Representatives from 70 to 74. At the state level, there are eight women governors.

Some minority groups are entering the political arena in greater numbers. Although Hispanic Americans

are the nation's largest minority group, many have not yet reached the voting age of 18. Even so, two Hispanics were elected to the Senate in 2004, and 27 currently serve in the House of Representatives. Among the representatives are also four Asian Americans and one American Indian. There are also two Asian American senators.



Barack Obama

These figures reflect steady efforts by both major political parties to attract candidates that will appeal to an increasingly diverse population.

In September 2006, a national conference of Hispanics held in Los Angeles pledged to recruit 1 million new Hispanic voters. Louis DeSipio, a political scientist at the University of California at Irvine, praised the strategy. "Marches can get people's attention, but [they don't] necessarily get a higher percentage of the community involved in civic participation. That's what things like get-out-the-vote and voter registration drives do," he told the Los Angeles Times.

Both the Arab and Muslim communities in the United States (which

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Hip-Hop Expert To Discuss Music's Influence on English Language

The historical tendency for musicians and musical trends to introduce vocabulary and phrases into the mainstream English lexicon is currently being played out as mainstream American culture assimilates vocabulary from the hip-hop subculture. On August 30 at 10 a.m. EDT (1400 GMT), please join professor, author and musician Emmett G. Price III to discuss the evolution of the English language and the influence of musical culture and hip-hop on that evolution. Price's article "What's New? The Effect of Hip-Hop Culture on Everyday English" is featured in the eJournal USA Dynamic English.

Emmett G. Price III is an assistant professor of music and African-American studies at Northeastern University in Boston. He is also the author of *Hip Hop Culture* (ABC-CLIO, 2006) and the editor-in-chief of *The Journal of Popular Music Studies*. Price received a bachelor's degree in music from the University of California, Berkeley, and both a master's degree and doctorate in music (ethnomusicology) from the

University of Pittsburgh. An active musician, Price has performed extensively in the United States and the Caribbean in styles ranging from gospel to reggae to hip-hop and beyond.

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.



Emmett G. Price III
Assistant professor of music and African-American studies at Northeastern University in Boston

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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U.S. Officials Increasingly Reflect . . .

(Continued from page 11)

partially overlap) launched voter registration drives in 2006 and increased financial donations to political campaigns. Fully 84 percent of registered Muslims cast ballots in the 2004 election, a rate significantly higher than the national average.

Like most officeholders, ethnic political leaders typically begin their careers in neighborhood or local office. As the more successful move on to state or national office, they must appeal to and represent the interests of many diverse groups.

During his campaign in Massachusetts, for instance, Governor Deval

Patrick called for an "education renaissance" among African Americans and promised full-day kindergarten and early education for all the state's 3- and 4-year-olds.

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

Bush Congratulates Iraq's Leaders on Agreement

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
(Albuquerque, New Mexico)
August 27, 2007

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT ON IRAQ

Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico
11:33 A.M. MDT

THE PRESIDENT: I congratulate Iraq's leaders on the agreement reached yesterday in Baghdad. I've been briefed on the agreement, and this morning I spoke to Iraq's elected leaders. These leaders represent all the Iraqi communities. These leaders -- Prime Minister Maliki, President Talabani, Vice President Hashimi, Vice President Abd al-Mahdi, President Barzani -- recognize the true and meaningful reconciliation that needs to take place, and they recognize this is a process. Yesterday's agreement reflects their commitment to work together for the benefit of all Iraqis to further the process.

The agreement begins to establish new power-sharing agreements, commits to supporting bottom-up security and political initiatives, and advances agreement among Iraq's leadership on several key legislative benchmarks.

While yesterday's agreement is an important step, I reminded them, and they understand, much more needs to be done. The Iraqi parliament will convene again in early September, and it will need to act to codify this political progress.

It's in our interests that we help the Iraqi people succeed. Success in Iraq will be a major blow to the extremists and radicals who would like to attack America again. And

In this regard, I welcome and accept the expressed desire of the Iraqi leadership to develop a long-term relationship with the United States based on common interests. The United States is committed to developing this relationship and to strengthening diplomatic, economic and security ties with the Iraqi government and its people.

Thank you.



President George W. Bush, speaking to members of the media Monday, Aug. 27, 2007 on the tarmac of Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, praised Iraqi leaders for agreeing to establish new power-sharing agreements, their commitment to support political initiatives, and advances agreement among Iraq's leadership on several key legislative benchmarks. White House photo by Chris Greenberg

that's why the United States will continue to support Iraq's leaders and all the Iraqi people in their efforts to overcome the forces of terror that seek to overthrow a nascent democracy.

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Bush Radio Address on Security Gains in Iraq

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
(Crawford, Texas)
Saturday, August 25, 2007

RADIO ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT TO THE NATION

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning.

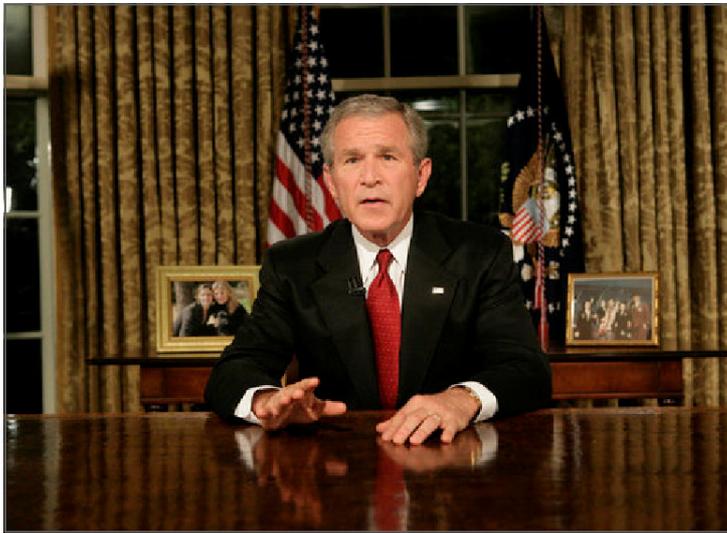
This week I traveled to Kansas City to address the annual convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. I spoke about the ideological struggle that our Nation faces in the 21st century, and the lessons we can draw from the advance of freedom in Asia in the 20th century. America's enduring presence and perseverance on that continent aided the rise of democracy, helped transform American enemies into American allies, and made our country safer.

Next week I will address the members of the American Legion at their annual convention in Reno. In that speech, I will focus on the Middle East and why the rise of a free and democratic Iraq is critical to the future of this vital region and to our Nation's security.

I will also provide an update on the developments we are seeing from our new strategy in Iraq. Every month since January, U.S. forces have killed or captured an average of more than 1,500 al Qaeda terrorists and other extremists. And in June our troops launched a surge of

operations that is helping bring former Sunni insurgents into the fight against al Qaeda, clear the terrorists out of population centers, and give families in liberated Iraqi cities a safer and more normal life.

As security improves, more Iraqis are stepping forward to defend their democracy. Young Iraqi men are signing up for the army. Iraqi police are now patrolling the streets. Coa-



President George W. Bush

lition and Iraqi forces have doubled the number of joint operations. As the Iraqi people feel more secure, they are also forming neighborhood watch groups. They're volunteering important information about the terrorists and extremists hiding in their midst. And the increase in tips helps account for the marked reduction in sectarian murders.

By driving out the terrorists from cities and neighborhoods, we're creating the conditions for reconciliation -- especially at the local level. In communities across Iraq,

citizens are seeing their local and provincial governments return to operation. Despite continuing violence, leaders in places like Anbar, Najaf, and Ninewah are now working through local provincial councils to approve funds to finance the rebuilding of homes and neighborhoods, to fight corruption, and to create new jobs.

Here at home, it can be easy to overlook the bravery shown by Iraqi troops and Iraqi civilians who are in the fight for freedom. But our troops on the ground see it every day. Last week, a team of American soldiers was meeting with an Iraqi citizens group near Baghdad. Suddenly, a suicide bomber came running around a corner and headed straight for our soldiers and the Iraqi civilians.

One Iraqi man saw what was happening and ran to intercept the bomber. As he pushed the terrorist away, the bomb detonated -- killing both men, but sparing four American soldiers and eight Iraqi civilians. Army Staff Sergeant Sean Kane is one of those who says he owes his life to this brave Iraqi. Sergeant Kane says, "He could have run behind us or away from us, but he made the decision to sacrifice himself to protect everyone." Sergeant Kane spoke to the Iraqi man's father, who said that even if his son had known the outcome beforehand, he "[would not] have acted differently."

(Continued on page 22)

Land Mine Survey Helps Iraqis Save Lives, Improve Livelihoods

By David McKeeby
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- "I've seen firsthand the life and livelihood impacts" caused by land mines on civilians in Iraq, says the director of a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that trains and supervises personnel who conduct land mine surveys.

Joseph Donahue, director of the Information Management and Mine Action Program (IMMAP), told of a family in Suleimaniya in which the father lost a hand and a daughter a leg to land mines while harvesting in an orchard.

"Some of these folks are rural, they're poor, they're desperate. They assume this risk because they want what everybody wants: to be able to take care of their families," Donahue said in an August 22 US-INFO interview.

In communities in southern Iraq, he said, many people have been killed or injured by land mines and unexploded munitions while attempting to salvage scrap metal from abandoned battlefields.

"It's economic desperation," he said. "It's the need to take care of one's family."

A recently completed Landmine Impact Survey in 13 of Iraq's 18 provinces shows how the United States is helping Iraqis heal ethnic and sectarian rifts while working to rid the country of land mines, artillery shells, unexploded bombs and other deadly remnants of conflicts past and present.

This project is but one of many conducted by the United States in humanitarian partnerships across the globe.

Since 1988, the United States has been among the leading advocates of humanitarian mine removal efforts. With the creation of the U.S. Humanitarian Mine Action Program in 1993, it has provided nearly \$800 million to 46 countries to fund mine detection and clearance, mine risk education to threatened populations and programs to help land mine explosion survivors and their families. Coupled with funding are close partnerships with numerous humanitarian mine action NGOs.

The Iraq project, conducted in cooperation with the Iraqi government and funded through a \$4 million grant from the State Department's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement, found that as many as one in five Iraqis faces a threat to life and livelihood from abandoned land mines and unexploded ordnance.

Survey teams were trained and supervised by the Washington-based IMMAP, with additional support from the European Commission and the U.N. Development Program and mine removal experts from RONCO Consulting Corporation and Mines Advisory Group, a British-based NGO.

Armed with information from this survey, Iraqi authorities can start planning mine removal, clearing more than 13.8 million square meters of productive land and destroying the nearly 140,000 pieces of unexploded ordnance and 13,000 land mines discovered by the survey.

Some Iraqi team members already have used their newfound skills to help in other post-conflict mine removal efforts in Armenia and the

Democratic Republic of Congo, said Donahue.

As security conditions permit, survey teams will expand their survey into the five remaining provinces of Baghdad, al-Anbar, Diyala, Ninawa and Salah ad-din.

Whether the mines are left over from the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s, the 1991 Gulf War and Saddam's ongoing campaigns of repression or the regime's defensive measures in 2003 -- or even if the



A worker removes the fuse from a minimal-metal anti-vehicle land mine. (Photo courtesy of RONCO Consulting Corporation)

threat is unexploded weapons from coalition forces -- removal of these hidden killers is essential to speeding the flow of humanitarian assistance. The mine removals also will allow families to return to work and communities to start on the long road to recovery.

The State Department has invested more than \$110 million in Iraq since 2003 to clear land mines and other explosive hazards, educate Iraqis about the risk of land mines and assist land mine explosion survivors. The funds also have been used to help Iraq create its first National Mine Action Authority and establish its first nongovernmental

(Continued on page 22)

Interfaith Dialogue Helps Promote Tolerance, Understanding

By Lauren Monsen
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- People from different religious backgrounds can achieve a better understanding of one another's beliefs and cultural traditions through interfaith dialogue, says U.S. State Department official Kareema Daoud.



Sofia Begg, center, and Oren Shani join others at a Presbyterian Church interfaith prayer service. (AP Images)

"Talking to other faiths makes us stronger in our convictions and helps us to understand our neighbors better," Daoud said during an August 4 USINFO Webchat. "It is a dialogue and not a compromise. I have a position, you have a position."

Daoud began the webchat, which was sponsored by the State Department, by introducing herself as an American Muslim who sees no contradiction between her religious af-

filiation and her full participation in U.S. society. "I, for one, believe it is possible to successfully integrate my Muslim identity with my American identity, and I am part of a majority [of U.S. Muslims] who believe so," she said.

A recent public opinion poll of Muslims in the United States indicates that most believe that the principles of Islam and the obligations of U.S. citizenship are entirely compatible, she added.

Daoud noted that there is no prohibition in the United States against wearing the hijab -- the head scarf favored by many, though not all, Muslim women. "I thank God that we have the freedom to practice our religion freely in the United States," said Daoud. "Some of my closest friends ... wear the hijab. No one has the right to tell you not to wear your hijab in the U.S.A.," because U.S. law protects the wearing of religious garb, "and the hijab is not an exception." (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=August&x=20070806141303ajesrom0.6975214>).

Muslims in the United States today are "doctors, engineers, teachers, government officials, journalists, lawyers, entrepreneurs," she observed. Some are U.S.-born, while others are immigrants. "Muslim women who were born and raised

here have an American mind-set and mentality: they believe that men and women should have equal privileges and rights," said Daoud. U.S.-born Muslim women are no different from non-Muslim women except that they usually pray five times a day, might wear a hijab and attend a mosque, she pointed out.

"Because religion is primarily a private matter, a Christian, a Jew, a Muslim, a Hindu, a Buddhist, etc., can all pray the way they deem fit and appropriate for their faith tradition, and all still be American," said Daoud. "An immigrant coming to this country, too, can practice their religion without restriction." The only difference between native-born citizens and immigrants "is the mind-set," she added. "If you feel American and behave [as an] American and accept Americans and American life, then you are American and you are accepted accordingly." (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=November&x=20061129163534GLnesnoM0.5619928>).

Interfaith activities often are launched by nongovernmental organizations, grassroots movements and civil-society groups, according to Daoud. "Governments can help in supporting these groups, but the work toward understanding and peaceful coexistence needs to be conceived, initiated, believed in, built and maintained from the ground up," she said. Interfaith

(Continued on page 17)

Interfaith Dialogue Helps Promote Tolerance, . . .

(Continued from page 16)

events in the United States include conferences, spiritual retreats, luncheons with guest speakers and dinners on college campuses and at private homes.

In response to a question about religious fanaticism, Daoud said she believes that "anyone who is a violent extremist operates outside of his/her faith community, [and] he/she does not define or represent that faith. I do not think these individuals, who by their very nature are isolationist, should be part of -- nor want to be part of -- interfaith dialogue. The good news is that they are the minority."

However, "interfaith dialogue amongst the rest of the religious population is worthwhile and beneficial," she said. "I might explain my purpose in life differently than you do, but if we both agree that doing good for mankind is a core component" of one's life, "then our intentions are the same; the roads [are] just different -- and that is something we can agree on."

She advised those attending an interfaith event to "keep an open mind and ear, be respectful and treat others as you would like to be treated."

Daoud quoted two passages from the Quran, the Muslim holy book, in support of diversity and tolerance. The Quran "states that God created us of different tribes and peoples, so that we may get to know one another," she said. "If God had wanted, He would have made us all

of one religion or one ethnicity, but He did not. There is beauty in diversity and in recognizing the good that all bring to this life. Not everyone chooses Islam as their path toward reaching God and/or a sense of fulfillment," and this "is what God had intended."

Also, the Quran says "there is no compulsion in religion," she said. "To me my faith, and to you yours." The 19th-century British philoso-



Kareema Daoud is pursuing a doctorate in Arabic and Islamic studies at Georgetown University. (Janine Sides/State Dept)

pher John Stuart Mill "once stated that the suppression of any voice is the deprivation of all society," said Daoud. "All in all, interfaith [dialogue] serves to enrich the individual, not undermine him or her."

A transcript (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/>

[display.html?p=washfile-eng-lish&y=2007&m=August&x=20070815133032xjsnommiS0.9725305](http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-eng-lish&y=2007&m=August&x=20070815133032xjsnommiS0.9725305)) of the webchat is available on the USINFO Webchat Station (<http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/Products/Webchats.html>), which also has information on previous and upcoming webchats.

For further information about interfaith activities in the United States, visit the Web sites of the Interfaith Youth Core (<http://www.ifyc.org/>), the Buxton Initiative (<http://www.buxtoninitiative.org/>), and the North American Interfaith Network (<http://www.nain.org/>).

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

U.S.-Brazil Continue Advancing Cooperation on Biofuels

**U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Western Hemisphere
Affairs
Washington, DC
August 22, 2007**

***Advancing Cooperation on Biofuels:
U.S.-Brazil Steering Group Meets
August 20 in Brasilia***

The U.S.-Brazil Biofuels Steering Group met on August 20 in Brasilia. This meeting, a further step in advancing cooperation on biofuels, was chaired by U.S. Under Secretary of State for Economic, Energy, and Agricultural Affairs Reuben Jeffery III and Brazilian Undersecretary-General for Political Affairs Everton Vargas. The partnership's aims are to catalyze biofuels use in the region and beyond; diversifying energy supplies, democratizing energy markets, bolstering economic prosperity, advancing sustainable development, and protecting the environment. The officials noted with great satisfaction the accomplishments made under the U.S.-Brazil Memorandum of Understanding to Advance Biofuels Cooperation signed on March 9, 2007, in Sao Paulo.

Bilaterally, Brazil and the U.S. continue to advance cooperation on biofuels research and development. Since Presidents Bush and Lula met on March 31, 2007, six high-level visits have occurred to bolster bilateral cooperation on biofuels research. The two countries welcomed the upcoming visit of a team of Brazilian scientists to the U.S. Department of Energy and U.S. Department of Agriculture Laboratories the week of September 10, 2007.

To further advance cooperation on biofuels research, officials agreed to explore professorial and graduate student exchanges between leading U.S. and Brazilian Universities.

In third countries, U.S. and Brazilian officials underscored the transfor-



*Under Secretary of State for
Economic, Energy, and Agricultural
Affairs Reuben Jeffery III*

mative role of biofuels in advancing energy security and promoting sustainable development. The United States and Brazil, in cooperation with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Organization of American States (OAS), and the UN Foundation (UNF), have begun feasibility studies in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and El Salvador, and have completed feasibility work in St. Kitts and Nevis. These studies will be used to assist governments and provide funding for public-private sector activities to develop local capacity for biofuels production. Officials from each of the ini-

tial four target countries are visiting the U.S. in August to attend a USDA-sponsored biofuels conference.

Globally, the United States and Brazil have agreed to a roadmap to achieve greater compatibility of biofuels standards and codes by the end of 2007. This work is being carried out initially by the industry and standards organizations of the U.S., Brazil, and European Union under the International Biofuels Forum (IBF). A report on this work will be presented at the next IBF meeting scheduled to take place in India this fall. IBF members include Brazil, the United States, the European Commission, China, India, and South Africa.

To further advance the public-private sector nature of the U.S.-Brazil Biofuels Partnership, the two countries agreed to create an advisory committee to the steering group that will comprise private sector and international organizations. The two countries reiterated the high priority both attach to continued rapid progress implementing the goals of the partnership, and agreed to meet later this year in the United States.

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

North American Leaders Prepare for Avian Flu Pandemic

By Cheryl Pellerin
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- As the human toll from avian influenza rises to 321 cases, with 194 deaths worldwide, leaders of the United States, Canada and Mexico have released a plan that outlines how the three countries will work together if the highly pathogenic virus makes its way to North America.

In a joint statement released during the August 20-21 North American Leaders' Summit in Montebello, Quebec, Canada, President Bush, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Mexican President Felipe Calderón announced the completion of the North American Plan for Avian and Pandemic Influenza.

"Neighbours help each other in times of distress," they said in a statement. "Our governments have worked together to address how we might better prevent, prepare for, and respond to disasters -- either natural or man-made -- by developing a common approach to all aspects of emergency management."

The plan is part of the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) of North America, a trilateral effort launched in March 2005 to increase security and enhance prosperity in Canada, Mexico and the United States through greater cooperation and information sharing.

At the March 2006 SPP summit in Cancun, Mexico, the nations' leaders committed to developing a comprehensive, coordinated and science-based North American approach to prepare for and manage avian and pandemic flu.

"The North American plan is an example of how we can work together to more efficiently and effectively protect our three countries against the threat of pandemic influenza," Paula Dobriansky, under secretary of state for democracy and global affairs, told USINFO August 21. "It would be much harder, if not impossible, to be similarly effective on our own."

Such diseases include emerging infections like a new human flu virus or severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), which caused a major epidemic between November 2002 and July 2003, with more than 8,000 known cases and 774 deaths.

Threats also could come from chemical spills, leaks and dumping or nuclear accidents.

The newest IHR revision, completed in 2005, updated the 1969 IHR, which addressed only four diseases -- cholera, plague, yellow fever and smallpox, a disease that has been eradicated.

The North American plan offers a framework for accomplishing the following goals:

Detecting, containing and controlling an avian flu outbreak and preventing transmission to people.

Preventing or slowing the entry of a novel strain of human flu to North America.

Minimizing illness and death.

Sustaining infrastructure and mitigating the impact to the economy and to society.

COORDINATED APPROACH

The plan describes the organizational emergency management frameworks in each country and how the countries will coordinate activities. It addresses animal and public health issues, including notification, surveillance, epidemiology,

(Continued on page 21)



President George W. Bush meets with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper during the North American Leaders' Summit Monday, Aug. 20, 2007, in Montebello, Canada. White House photo by Eric Draper

TRANSCENDING NATIONAL BORDERS

The 44-page document complements national emergency management plans and builds on core principles of the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza, the standards and guidelines of the World Organization for Animal Health and the World Health Organization, including the revised International Health Regulations (IHRs).

The IHRs are legally binding rules adopted by most countries to contain disease threats that could spread rapidly from country to country.

International Partners Tackle Greenhouse Gas Methane

By Cheryl Pellerin
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington – Methane is a greenhouse gas that is second only to carbon dioxide as an atmospheric contributor to climate change. It is also the main component of natural gas, and countries around the world are working together to put harmful methane emissions to work as a clean energy source.

The nations are working as part of the Methane to Markets Partnership, launched in 2004 by the United States and 13 other countries. Today, its 20 member nations -- with a pending membership for the European Commission -- and nearly 600 participating public and private organizations work together on nearly 100 projects and activities around the world.

An array of ongoing and potential projects will be shown at the Methane to Markets Exposition in Beijing, October 30-November 1. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and China's National Development and Reform Commission will co-host the expo with key Chinese ministries and corporations.

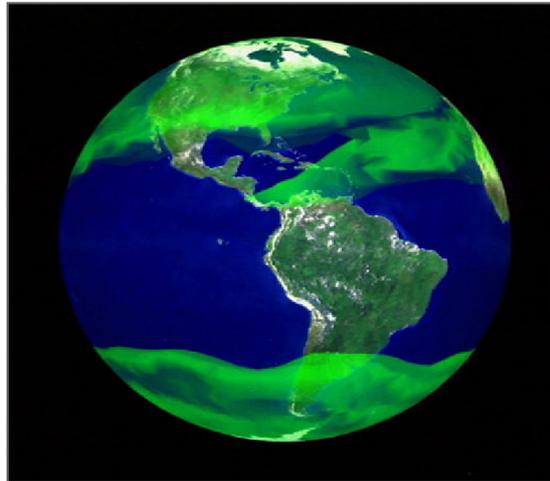
"The expo is a huge event for the partnership," said Paul Gunning, branch chief in the Climate Change Division at EPA, in an August 23 USINFO interview. "We've enjoyed a really successful collaboration with the government of China to put it all together."

Organizing sponsors include the Asian Development Bank; the Australian government; the United Kingdom's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; Environment

Canada; the International Energy Agency; and the U.N. Economic Commission for Europe.

RECOVERING METHANE

Over 200 years, methane concentrations in the atmosphere have more than doubled, largely because of human activity. Methane is 23 times better at trapping heat in the atmosphere than is carbon dioxide, so reducing methane emissions is a good short-term way to address global warming.



A view of Earth shows methane gas trapped in the atmosphere. Methane accounts for 16 percent of greenhouse gas emissions. (NASA)

Methane accounts for 16 percent of greenhouse gas emissions and about 60 percent of methane emissions come from anthropogenic (people-generated) sources. The rest come from natural sources like wetlands, gas hydrates (crystalline solids that store large amounts of gases like methane), permafrost and termite digestion.

About 25 percent of methane emissions and 43 percent of people-generated emissions come from four sources that Methane to Markets targets – agriculture (animal

waste management), coal mining, landfills and natural oil and gas systems.

Activities under the partnership address all four methane sources. On August 14, for example, India's largest oil producer -- the Oil and Natural Gas Corp. Ltd. (ONGC) in Dehradun -- signed an agreement to join seven other large oil and natural gas companies as a partner in EPA's Natural Gas STAR International Program.

The program, a Methane to Markets project, seeks to identify and implement projects that cost-effectively reduce methane emissions and deliver more gas to world markets.

"As an environmentally conscious company," ONGC Chairman R.S. Sharma said in a statement, "ONGC is committed to the cause of mitigating global warming. This present endeavor will be a good and fruitful step toward that end and will pave a way for a good relationship between ONGC with USEPA."

In the agriculture sector, for example, the Global Environment Facility and the World Bank provided a \$7 million, five-year grant to reduce environmental and health impacts from increasingly concentrated livestock production in China, Thailand and Vietnam. The grant supports a demonstration of cost-effective livestock waste management techniques at selected farms in the countries.

With the U.N. Economic Commission for Europe, EPA initiated a three-year project to address financial barriers to developing, promoting and selling coal mine methane

(Continued on page 21)

North American Leaders Prepare for Avian Flu . . .

(Continued from page 19)

laboratory practices, vaccines and anti-virals, personnel, stockpiles of vaccines and drugs, and public health measures.

It also addresses border and transportation issues, including containment measures for air travel, maritime travel and land border crossings.

A series of layered, collaborative measures among the three countries could slow the spread of a new flu strain, providing valuable

time to mobilize resources, coordinate responses and mitigate illness and death.

The plan extends beyond the health sector to include a coordinated approach to protecting critical infrastructure, including recognizing the importance of business continuity planning and interdependencies among sectors.

The full text (<http://www.state.gov/g/avianflu/91242.htm>) of the plan is available on the State Department Web site.

The full text (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/08/20070821-2.html>) of the leaders' joint statement is available on the White House Web site.

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).

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International Partners Tackle Greenhouse Gas . . .

(Continued from page 20)

recovery and use projects in Eastern Europe.

TO THE MARKETPLACE

At the expo in Beijing, Gunning said, the Methane to Markets steering committee will plan next steps for the partnership, hold a conference with international expert speakers for an exchange of technical and policy information, and exhibit methane recovery and use projects and technologies.

The expo will include an international methane capture marketplace -- the first international forum devoted to promoting project opportunities and technologies related to methane recovery and use.

It will offer opportunities for the private sector and others who

want to showcase their methane recovery or use technology, or their expertise in finance or project development, Gunning said.

EPA also has been working in each sector to help countries identify potential projects for development.

As an example, Gunning said, "in the landfill sector throughout the world -- Latin America, India, China -- we've been working with governments and private-sector entities to identify potential landfill sites we believe could be good projects. EPA has done assessments or feasibility analyses that are always needed to get somebody interested -- either a financier or project developer."

At the expo, at least 30 such projects will be on display, and EPA is working to make sure people associated with each project can travel

to Beijing to discuss their work with potential developers.

"We will be doing that as part of the expo," he added, "and hopefully see a flowering of projects that comes out of it."

More information about the Methane to Markets Partnership (<http://www.methanetomarkets.org/>) is available at the organization's Web site and EPA (<http://www.epa.gov/methanetomarkets>) Web site.

For more information on U.S. policies and programs, see Climate Change and Clean Energy (http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/climate_change.html).

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Land Mine Survey Helps Iraqis Save Lives, . . .

(Continued from page 14)

The story does not end there. Later that same night, the citizens group contacted the local director of the National Police and told him the location of the al Qaeda cell believed to be responsible for the attack. The National Police immediately conducted a raid that resulted in four arrests.

We are still in the early stages of our new operations. But the success of the past couple of months have shown that conditions on the ground can change -- and they are changing. We cannot expect the new strategy we are carrying out to bring success overnight. But by standing with the Iraqi people as they build their democracy, we will deliver a

devastating blow to al Qaeda, we will help provide new hope for millions of people throughout the Middle East, we will gain a friend and ally in the war on terror, and we will make the American people safer.

Thank you for listening.

An audio link (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/08/20070825.a.mp3>) to the address is available on the White House Web site.

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Land Mine Survey Helps Iraqis Save Lives, Improve . . .

(Continued from page 15)

mine removal group, the Iraqi Mine/UXO Clearance Organization (IMCO).

Leftover weapons serve as the raw material for the improvised bombs used to target Iraqi civilians and coalition military forces. In this regard, the Landmine Impact Survey is a valuable first step in building security by reducing civilian casualties.

Reflecting Iraq's ethnic and sectarian diversity, the teams included Sunni and Shia Arabs, as well as Kurds, Turkomans, Yazidi, several Iraqi Christian sects and Zoroastrians. Team members traveled from village to village, interviewing area residents -- regardless of the com-

munities' ethnic or religious makeup -- about concentrations of land mines in the area and the number and severity of injuries.

The teams found thousands of mines and munitions buried in fields and hidden by Saddam's forces on farms and in schools, mosques, health care clinics and other civilian facilities. They often were stored improperly, and if left alone could have detonated because of excessive heat or tampering, but were removed and disarmed by IMCO's bomb disposal experts.

The teams then used Global Positioning System equipment to digitally map hazard areas, which IMMAP compiled into a database for use by Iraqi authorities and their

international partners after certification by the U.N. Mine Action Service.

A photo essay (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/pix/b/91052.htm>) on the survey is available on the State Department Web site.

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

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