



# Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

## INSIDE

## U.S. Increases Funding for Economic Development, Health and Education in Ethiopia

**Addis Ababa (U.S. Embassy)** -- In recognition of Ethiopia's importance to the United States, the U.S. Government, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is providing new funding totaling \$57.6 million (501million Birr) to assist the Ethiopian people in three key areas: agricultural and private sector development, health care, and primary education.



**USAID-Ethiopia Mission Director Glenn Anders shakes hand with State Minister Mekonnen Manyazewal at the signing ceremony.**

This week, newly arrived USAID Mission Director Glenn Anders and State Minister of Finance and Economic Development Mekonnen Manyazewal signed Bilateral Grant

Agreements in support of ongoing U.S.-Ethiopian partnership programs under USAID. These programs operate in every region of Ethiopia to reduce vulnerability to disease, improve the quality of education for children,

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## Women Lawmakers in Ethiopia Upgrade Skills with U.S. Help

**By Jim Fisher-Thompson**  
**Washington File Staff**  
**Writer**

former U.S. Ambassador David Shinn told a recent gathering of scholars.

Studies Association held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, July 29.

**Washington** -- Part of the U.S. government's multi-million-dollar support for democratization in Ethiopia involves an innovative training program aimed at helping women lawmakers upgrade their legislative skills in Parliament,

Shinn, formerly U.S. envoy in Addis Ababa from 1996 to 1999 and now an adjunct professor at George Washington University's Elliot School of International Affairs in Washington, spoke at the Conference of the Oromo

"A new and by all accounts successful" U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)-financed project for training women in Ethiopia's 547-member House of Peoples' Representatives

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## United States To Establish Mission to African Union

**By Charles W. Corey**  
**Washington File Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- The United States will be the first non-African country to establish a separate diplomatic mission to the African Union (AU), and that reflects the U.S. government's commitment to the organization, said Cindy L. Courville, the U.S. ambassador-designate to the AU.



**Cindy L. Courville**  
**U.S. ambassador-designate to the AU**

In August 3 testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Courville quoted President Bush with regard to Africa: "'Africa holds growing geostrategic importance and is a high priority of this administration. It is a place of promise and opportunity, linked to the United States by history, culture, commerce and strategic significance. Our goal is an African continent that knows lib-

erty, peace, stability and increasing prosperity.'"

If confirmed, Courville said those core convictions will guide her actions. The U.S. Senate must approve her nomination to head the new U.S. mission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, headquarters of the AU.

To overcome the challenges on the continent, Courville said, the

United States believes Africa needs partnership, not paternalism; stronger democratic institutions; economic development through greater trade and investment; an atmosphere of peace and stability; and humanitarian assistance that promotes good health.

Courville called democracy, transparency and good governance the "fundamental" parts of a freer Africa.

Freedom is a privilege and a right that all people should have the opportunity to experience, she said, adding that democracy has advanced in more African countries in the last decade than in any other region of the world.

Courville praised the AU as a "force multiplier" for the consolidation of democracy in Africa. "It has pushed its members to increase women's participation and representation as parliamentarians and Cabinet ministers. A democratic, peaceful, stable and economically strong Africa is mutually beneficial to both Africa and the United States," she said.

Additionally, she said, the United States seeks to advance economic development across Africa through

greater trade and investment there. She credited the AU for building its economic policy framework on the principles outlined in the New Partnership for Africa's Development, or NEPAD. That program, she told the lawmakers, underscores that Africans must take responsibility for their own development and adopt the economic policies required to attract investment and create jobs.

Courville pledged that, if confirmed, she will work with the African Union in harmony with the U.S. African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) to increase Africa's trade competitiveness and its integration into the global economy, especially by helping the AU reduce intra-African trade barriers and strengthen subregional economic communities such as the East African Community (EAC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). Besides increased trade, peace and stability are also essential to a successful Africa, she said.

For that reason, she said, the United States must work with its African partners to build regional peacekeeping capacity, increase counterterrorism cooperation and enhance disaster mitigation and response capability. She reminded everyone that the United States has supported the AU's two major peacekeeping deployments in Burundi and Sudan.

Courville also called attention to the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program, which she called a "fundamental tool" for increasing the capacity of Africa's subregional organizations. The

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## U.S. Increases Funding for Economic Development, Health . . .

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and help end food insecurity, hunger, and poverty. The new USAID funds will be disbursed for jointly-designed programs that support the people of Ethiopia.

One grant adds \$15.6 million (136 million Birr) to existing and new programs promoting market-led economic growth, particularly in the food, livestock and agriculture sectors. These programs promote private sector agribusiness development and encourage commercial markets to play a fuller role in meeting Ethiopia's food needs and income generation needs.

A second grant adds \$32 million (278.4 million Birr) to a program aimed at improving Ethiopia's health services and preventing the spread of infectious diseases, including tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV/AIDS. These health programs will also expand child health through better immunization coverage and nutrition education and through strengthened family planning services.

A third grant provides an additional \$10 million (87 million Birr) for educational programs that increase opportunities for Ethiopian children to receive quality education. This program enhances teacher capac-

ity, increases the availability of school materials that focus on girls' education, strengthens parent involvement in school management, expands non-formal education for adults and children and helps to improve the planning and management of primary school systems at the federal, regional and district levels.♦

## United States To Establish Mission . . .

*(Continued from page 2)*

ACOTA program is increasing the number of countries in which training takes place and has provided training and equipment to more than 40,000 peacekeepers from African partner militaries, she said.

She also cited the Africa Center for Strategic Studies program as a critical tool for strengthening African regional capacity to address political-military issues at a strategic level, improve national security decision-making and strengthen civil-military relationships. (See related article

America's search is not only for a more secure Africa, but also for a healthier Africa, she said. She credited the AU for working to

eliminate the scourges of malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS on the continent.

The United States contributes nearly half of the resources provided by all donor governments to fight global HIV/AIDS, she said, citing the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), a five-year, \$15 billion initiative to turn the tide in combating HIV/AIDS pandemic in 15 focus countries, 12 of which are located in sub-Saharan Africa. (See President Bush's HIV/AIDS Initiatives ([http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global\\_issues/HIV\\_AIDS/hiv\\_aids\\_initiative.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/HIV_AIDS/hiv_aids_initiative.html) ).)

The United States also stands as the largest bilateral donor to the

Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, providing \$600 million between 2001 and 2003, she added.

Courville noted that in June 2005, President Bush launched the Malaria Initiative with the goal of reducing malaria-related deaths by 50 percent in targeted African countries. She pledged that, if confirmed, she will continue to work with the AU to help it achieve a healthier Africa.

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## Women Lawmakers in Ethiopia Upgrade Skills with . . .

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has proven so popular, Shinn told the conference audience, that it has expanded to include all members, both male and female.

The USAID program, he said, was run by the Women's Campaign International (WCI), a nongovernmental organization (NGO) founded in 1998 and affiliated with the Fels Institute of Government at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Its partnership with USAID to train the parliamentarians began in January 2005.

Shinn said that before national elections in May 2005, the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the International Republican Institute (IRI) and IFES (formerly the International Foundation for Election Systems) to leave Ethiopia, allegedly because they were not registered in the country. "But the WCI was not registered and allowed to remain," he said.

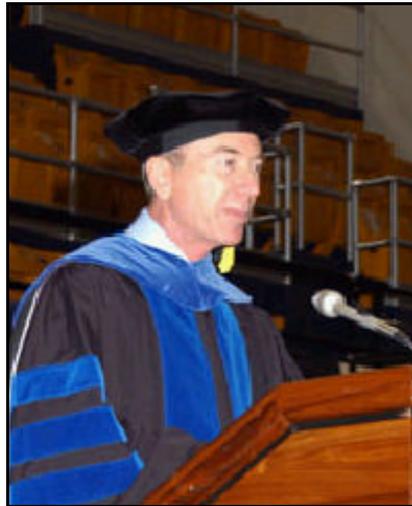
He said the reason might have been that the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) had put forward far more female candidates than the opposition and might have perceived that WCI's program "could disproportionately benefit EPRDF candidates."

It makes sense, Shinn said, because "the original purpose of the WCI program in Ethiopia was to increase the capacity of women to influence political decision-making."

To that end, he explained, prior to the 2005 elections WCI trained 31 female candidates who competed

for seats on regional state councils and 78 female candidates who ran for seats in Parliament.

Political parties also selected 50 female candidates to participate in an intensive two-day WCI training session that highlighted leadership skills, public speaking, campaign development, media strategies,



**David Shinn**  
**Former U.S. Ambassador**

fundraising and resource mobilization.

At the same time the NGO awarded a sub-grant to the Ethiopian Women's Media Association (EWMA) to launch a media campaign highlighting the importance of voting for female candidates, Shinn said. USAID also supported a similar media campaign by the EWMA.

As a result, the percentage of women elected to Parliament increased from 7.7 percent in 2000 to 21 percent in 2005. There are now 117 female members in the House of People's Representatives; 108 are EPRDF and nine from opposition parties, Shinn said.

WCI continues to offer workshops that focus on such areas as advocacy and negotiation, review of bills and gender equity principles. "Attendance continues to be high and includes both men and women," the former diplomat added. "Many members said these training sessions were the first time they had met each other and were pleased to have the opportunity to engage in dialogue with members of other parties."

In 2006, there were two training sessions, specifically for women, in negotiation, consensus building and communication.

The former ambassador said some observers believe that the WCI training sessions helped improve the quality of debate in Parliament, including that of opposition members. "Others suggest that the training has contributed to a willingness of the parliamentary leadership to make some positive changes that may encourage a stronger multiparty democracy in Ethiopia," he added.

Since 2001, USAID has spent close to \$37 million on democracy and governance programs in Ethiopia. Half of that sum has been devoted to improving the efficiency of accounting and budgeting at the federal, state and local levels.

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## Envoy for Mauritius, Seychelles Cites Island Economics Experience

**By Charles W. Corey**  
**Washington File Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- The U.S. ambassador-designate to Mauritius and Seychelles, Cesar Cabrera, told senators considering his nomination that he would bring to the job a special understanding of island economies and trade matters, as well as 35 years of business experience.

In August 3 testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Cabrera said, "As a native of Puerto Rico, I believe I am well suited to understand and address the bilateral issues in our relationships with the two island nations. ...

"Growing and processing sugar cane and the production of textiles and apparel have been central features of the economies of both Puerto Rico and Mauritius," he told the lawmakers.

"Puerto Rico, Mauritius and Seychelles all support vibrant and growing tourist industries and confront the challenges of natural disasters, whether it be hurricanes or tsunamis," he added.

Cabrera said his goal is to "turn my understanding of small islands into policies and programs that advance the interests and welfare of the United States and the people of Mauritius and the Seychelles."

Trade continues to be the primary focus of the U.S.-Mauritius bilateral relationship, he said. "Though its economic growth has slowed recently, Mauritius stands out among African nations for its strong economic performance over

the past four decades, its political stability, its commitment to democracy and its ethnic tolerance," he added.

Cabrera also praised Mauritius as a "reliable partner" for the United States under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and in the Doha Development Round trade negotiations. "Embassy Port Louis seeks to further strengthen our trade relations and assist with Mauritius's transition to a more open, globally competitive economy," he said.

Cabrera told the lawmakers he brings to the position more than 35 years of success as a businessman. "If confirmed," he pledged, "I will work with the government of Mauritius to strengthen our trade relationship by promoting the African Growth and Opportunity Act to the fullest, by identifying U.S. markets for Mauritian products and new partnerships with American suppliers, and by assisting with the restructuring of the economy to find new engines for growth."

Turning to the Seychelles, Cabrera called it a relatively wealthy country, but cautioned that it is not yet realizing its full economic potential.

"The 2006 presidential elections offer an opportunity for the introduction of badly needed reforms by President Michel, who has thus far been unable or unwilling to push through broad economic change," he said.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury, he added, is considering technical assistance for the Seychelles in the area of debt management, and he pledged to continue to en-

gage the government and private sector on the Seychelles' economic challenges.

In addition to their economic importance, Mauritius and the Seychelles both offer opportunities for the United States in furthering democracy in the region, he said.

As one of Africa's most stable democracies, Mauritius, he said, is a model and a regional leader in the promotion of democracy and human rights. The U.S. government was pleased to see Mauritius run for -- and win -- a seat on the newly established U.N. Human Rights Council, he said.

The Seychelles, which has not had a democratic transfer of power since independence in 1976, held presidential elections last week. "I am hopeful that the peaceful conduct of this election will herald a new opening in Seychelles' democratic tradition," Cabrera said.

James Alix Michel of the Seychelles People's Progressive Front was sworn in August 1 as president of the Republic of Seychelles one day after winning a tight race against Anglican priest and opposition leader Wavel Ramkalawan of the Seychelles National Party. (See related article ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-eng-lish&y=2006&m=August&x=200608021641231EJrehsiFO.4300653> ).)

U.S. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack told reporters August 3, "The United States commends the people and govern-

*(Continued on page 25)*

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## Seychelles Inaugurates President-Elect James Michel

**By Tanya Salseth-Feau**  
*Washington File Special Correspondent*

**Victoria, Seychelles**-- James Alix Michel of the Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF) was sworn in August 1 as president of the Republic of Seychelles at the Victoria State House, one day after winning a tight race against Anglican priest and opposition leader Wavel Ramkalawan of the Seychelles National Party (SNP).

Voters turned out in large numbers across the country to cast their ballots on July 30, the final day of voting in the three-day election. Overall participation in the electoral process was high, with 88 percent of registered voters turning up at the polls.

Although there was some tension caused by long lines at polling stations, U.S. and international observers agreed that there were no organized attempts to undermine the democratic process. "Overall, the process was well-organized and went very smoothly," said Charles Twining, U.S. chargé d'affaires and leader of a delegation of U.S. election observers. "The election was credible, peaceful and successful," he asserted.

U.S. observers were present at polling stations for all three days of the election. On July 30, the main day of voting, they visited every one of the country's 25 polling stations, including 22 stations on the main island of Mahé and three stations on the neighboring islands of Praslin and La Digue.

Since the Indian Ocean nation comprises some 115 small islands, a U.S. observer was also present

to observe voting on one of the outer islands, where individual votes were collected by boat, small plane and helicopter.

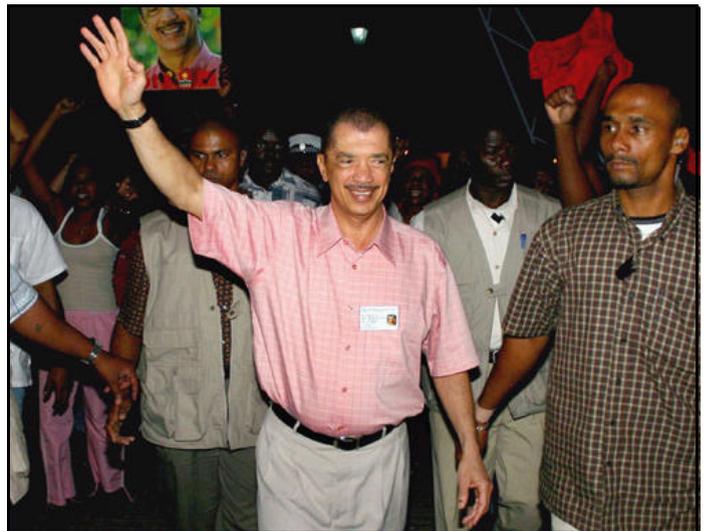
Seychelles Electoral Commissioner Hendrick Gappy announced the results of the election on a live, televised broadcast at around 1:30 a.m. on the morning of July 31. Of the 56,079 votes cast, Michel received 53.7 percent and Ramkalawan 45.7 percent. Independent candidate Philippe Boullé, who never was a serious contender for the election, received only 314 votes -- around 0.5 percent of the total votes cast.

Immediately after the announcement of the results, Michel, promising to be "a president for all Seychellois," asked the country to unite "in this unique opportunity to work together despite different opinions." He continued his call for national unity at his inaugural address on August 1 and promised economic improvements, including greater foreign and domestic investment and gradual economic liberalization.

"I was very pleased to see opposition candidates present at Michel's inauguration," Twining said. "It demonstrates a desire for unity, which will benefit everyone in Seychelles. We trust that all parts of

the political spectrum will work together to improve the country."

Michel's inauguration marks his first elected term of office, after inheriting the presidency in 2004 from the former president and SPPF party leader, France Albert



**Seychelles' President James Michel waves in the capital Victoria after winning the country's July 30 election.**  
(©AP/WWP)

René, who took control of the country in a bloodless coup in 1977.

*(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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## U.S. Senate Votes To Ratify Cybercrime Convention

**By Carolee Walker**  
**Washington File Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- The U.S. Senate voted on August 3 to ratify the Council of Europe (COE) Convention on Cybercrime, a multilateral treaty addressing the problems of computer-related crime and electronic evidence gathering.

"The Cybercrime Convention -- the first of its kind -- will be a key tool for the United States in fighting global, information-age crime," said U.S. Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales in a statement on August 4.

The treaty provides tools to fight terrorism, attacks on computer networks and the sexual exploitation of children over the Internet, Gonzales said, adding that it will strengthen U.S. cooperation with foreign countries in obtaining electronic evidence.

President Bush requested the Senate ratify the convention, which requires parties to criminalize conduct committed through, against or related to computer systems (See related article ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2003&m=November&x=20031117190405ren-nefl0.4209101&t=usinfo/wf-latest.html> ).)

Cybercrime, or Internet crime, is illegal activity arising from Web sites, chat rooms or e-mail. Cybercrime includes nondelivery of goods or services, computer hack-

ing or intrusions, intellectual property rights abuses, theft of business trade secrets, online extortion, money laundering, identity theft and a growing list of other Internet-facilitated crimes, according to Daniel Larkin, unit chief of the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) at the U.S. Federal Bu-



**Alberto R. Gonzales**  
**U.S. Attorney General**

reau of Investigation (FBI). (See related article ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itgic/0306/ijge/larkin.htm> ).)

In the United States, the IC3 is a reporting and referral system for Internet crime complaints from people in the United States and around the world.

Forty-six European countries belong to the Council of Europe, founded in 1949. The United States and Japan, Canada, Mexico and the Holy See (Vatican City),

are granted observer status on the council, which is different from the European Union.

"The convention is in full accord with all U.S. constitutional protections, such as free speech and other civil liberties, and will require no change to U.S. laws," Gonzales said. "I congratulate and thank the Senate for its advice and consent, and look forward to having the United States become a party to the convention at the earliest opportunity."

The full text ( [http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2006/August/06\\_ag\\_499.html](http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2006/August/06_ag_499.html) ) of Gonzales' statement is available on the U.S. Department of Justice Web site. The full text ( <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/185.htm> ) of the Convention on Cybercrime and information on the Council of Europe ( <http://www.coe.int/> ) are available on the organization's Web site.

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

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## New U.S. AIDS Ambassador Confirmed by Senate

**Washington** – The U.S. Senate voted late August 3 to confirm Dr. Mark Dybul as ambassador for the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator (GAC) in the U.S. Department of State.

A physician and a researcher, Dybul's job as head of GAC is to oversee the U.S. international response to the global HIV/AIDS crisis, and specifically to direct implementation of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

Dybul has been serving as the acting ambassador since earlier this year when he was appointed to succeed Randall Tobias, who became head of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

PEPFAR, a 5-year, \$15 billion campaign to quell the epidemic, is the most ambitious campaign ever launched to target a single disease, according GAC.

"Looking at just 15 of the more than 120 countries where we have worked in the first two years of the Emergency Plan, we have supported treatment for over 560,000 people – 61 percent of whom are women and 8 percent of whom are children," said Dybul when he appeared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in a confirmation hearing July 31.

Three million people have received care, almost 14 million have received counseling and testing, and millions more have received prevention education, according to Dybul's testimony.

PEPFAR administrators say their efforts to help local people build

HIV/AIDS programs and services are making steady success in combating the disease, but Dybul said PEPFAR is also influencing societies in ways that reach beyond the health care sector.



**Dr. Mark R. Dybul**  
**Ambassador for the Office of the U.S.**  
**Global AIDS Coordinator (GAC)**

"As an HIV clinic raises standards, other areas of the hospital want to implement similar requirements," Dybul said, "and as communities see accountability developing for HIV, they are starting to demand accountability for other health programs, garbage collection and even appropriate regulation of local businesses."

With those results, Dybul said, PEPFAR initiatives demonstrate the transformational diplomacy espoused by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. (See related article

( <http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/Archive/2006/Jan/18-780223.html> )

The goal of the PEPFAR program over its 5-year life is to treat 2 million people infected with HIV/AIDS, prevent 7 million new infections and provide care to 10 million HIV-positive persons, or children orphaned by the disease.

Dybul urged the Senate to fulfill the Bush administration's full request for funding the program in the year ahead in order to meet those goals.

Dybul's testimony ( <http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2006/DybulTestimony060731.pdf> ) is available on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Web site. His biography ( <http://www.state.gov/s/gac/about/38490.htm> ) can be found on the Department of State Web site.

See President Bush's HIV/AIDS Initiatives ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global\\_issues/HIV\\_AIDS/hiv\\_aids\\_initiative.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/HIV_AIDS/hiv_aids_initiative.html) ).

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## Cultural Preservation Grants Support Projects in 76 Countries

**By Louise Fenner**  
**Washington File Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- The United States is helping support the preservation of ancient and historic sites around the world, as well as museum collections and traditional forms of expression such as music, dance and language. In 2006, nearly \$3 million in grants are being awarded for projects in 76 countries.

The Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation has announced its awards for 2006, covering 87 projects ranging from the restoration of two mosques in Tanzania to the conservation of some 2,000 items of ancient jewelry reflecting the history of Kyrgyzstan. The projects cover every region of the world.

The U.S. Congress established the Ambassador's Fund in 2001, directing the State Department to set aside \$1 million to assist countries in preserving their cultural heritage. The funding level has increased each year and is now at \$3 million. Since its inception, the program has awarded 379 preservation grants in 108 countries.

"U.S. efforts in preserving the heritage of other cultures demonstrate America's appreciation and respect for those cultures," said Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Dina Habib Powell in a State Department announcement.

The fund selects preservation projects based on urgency, impact and quality of the proposal. As its name indicates, the proposals come from U.S. ambassadors throughout the world. This year ECA's Cultural Heritage Center,

which administers the program, received 164 proposals.

One of the grants awarded this year will help the Krygyz State Museum of History conserve its collection of jewelry dating from the Bronze Age to the present. The collection is deteriorating due to the lack of facilities for safe storage, and some items -- such as gold jewelry dating from the fourth and fifth centuries -- never have been displayed in Kyrgyzstan, according to the project proposal. The jewelry was found in archaeological excavations and comes from local materials -- thus it is invaluable in researching the historical development of the region, the proposal said.

Another grant will help preserve two mosques on the island of Pemba off the coast of Tanzania that date to the mid-17th or early 18th century and still are in use for worship. The mosques have unique features that combine Swahili and Shirazi (Persian) architecture but have fallen into disrepair.

The area is one of the poorest and most remote in Tanzania, and the mosques "are an extremely important aspect of the culture of these villagers," said the project proposal. "When asked which was a higher priority for the community -- access to fresh water or restoration of their historic mosque -- the village elders unanimously stated that restoring the mosques was more important."

Among the other cultural heritage projects approved for funding in 2006 are:

mosaics dating from the fifth century to the 10th century from for-

gotten cities of Northern Syria that originally decorated the floors and walls of churches, estates and bathhouses;

house structures dating from 1500 B.C. to A.D. 400 in the archaeological site at Chiripa, Bolivia;

Nag Bahal Hiti, a water supply system dating from the year 500 that is still a major source of water for residents of Patan and part of the Kathmandu Valley World Heritage Site in Nepal;

Buddhist Sutra manuscripts in China from the Ming and Qing dynasties;

ancient textiles and embroidery works, many decorated with precious stones and metals, at the Amiranashvili Art Museum in Tblisi, Georgia; and

Nabataean period frescos in the caves of Beidha, Jordan.

For more information, see the Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation ( <http://exchanges.state.gov/culprop/afcp/> ) page at the State Department Web site.

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

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## Congress Urged To Define "War Crimes" Under Geneva Conventions

**By Michelle Austein**  
**Washington File Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- Administration officials and armed forces personnel asked Congress to define clearly U.S. law with respect to terrorism. They made the request during a hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee August 2.

"We believe that the standards applicable to the crimes of terrorists, as well as those governing the treatment of detainees by United States personnel in the war on terror, should be certain and that those standards should be defined clearly by U.S. law, consistent with our international obligations," said Acting Assistant Attorney General Steven Bradbury.

"The United States has never before applied Common Article 3 in the context of an armed conflict with international terrorists," Bradbury said. "We are now faced with the task of determining the best way to do just that."

On June 29, the U.S. Supreme Court said military commissions to try Guantanamo detainees were unconstitutional because they violated Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-eng-lish&y=2006&m=June&x=20060630121139hmnietsua0.1040918> ).)

Many of those who testified stated the need for Congress to clarify Common Article 3's application.

The article prohibits "outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment," a statement that Bradbury and others who testified said is vague.

Later in the day, U.S. Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that Congress should set forth a "definite and clear list of offenses serious enough to be considered 'war crimes' punishable as violations of Common Article 3." Gonzales also expressed concern about detainees' ability to challenge their detention or trial.

Any legislation enacted by Congress "should make it clear that the detainees may not challenge their detention or trial before a final judgment of a military commission or a final order of a Combatant Status Review Tribunal," Gonzales said.

Defining the terms of Common Article 3 is important because a section of the U.S. War Crimes Act of 1996 makes any violation of the article a felony offense, Bradbury said.

One way to ensure that the laws are understandable is for Congress to create a definite and clear list of serious offenses that will be considered war crimes, and therefore punishable by the War Crimes Act, Bradbury said.

Congress' decisions will "have potentially very significant impacts on how this nation and its ability

to prosecute the war on terrorism will go," said General Richard Myers, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and "also on our troops who are on the front lines of this war."

Transcripts (<http://judiciary.senate.gov/hearing.cfm?id=757>) of the testimonies are available on the Senate Judiciary Committee Web site.

Gonzales' prepared statement (<http://armed-services.senate.gov/statemnt/2006/August/Gonzales08-02-06.pdf>) (PDF, 11 pages) is available on the Senate Armed Services Committee Web site.

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

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## U.S. Announces Security Transfer for Two Northern Iraqi Provinces

**By David McKeeby**  
**Washington File Staff Writer**

**Washington** – Iraq’s 4th Army Division officially assumed lead responsibility for security operations in two northern Iraqi provinces, the U.S. ambassador to Iraq and the commander of coalition forces announced August 8.

“These turnovers from coalition forces to Iraqi security forces reflect the increased operational capacity of the Iraqi security forces,” Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad and U.S. Army General George Casey said in a joint statement. “We pledge our continued support to them and the Iraqi government as they seek to provide peace and prosperity for all of Iraq’s peoples.”

The division will take control of an operational area encompassing most of Salah ad Din and At Ta Min provinces, north of Baghdad, including the cities of Tikrit, Kirkuk and Samarra, an area previously overseen by coalition troops from the U.S. Army’s 101st Airborne Division.

The officials noted that the transition represents the halfway point of the U.S. goal to put Iraqis in full control of planning, coordinating and conducting security operations nationwide.

The officials said, five of the Iraqi force’s 10 divisions, as well as 25 of its brigades and 85 battalions now lead security operations in their areas of responsibility. In addition, they said, 48 of the coalition’s 110 forward operating bases have been transferred to Iraqi control.

An August 8 release from the Multi-National Force – Iraq stated, “The handover of forward operating bases and security lead demonstrates the progress being made by the Iraqi security forces, reiterates successes, and highlights the progress of the legitimate Iraqi government as a positive move toward full national sovereignty and self-reliance.”

The handover, according to coalition officials, represents a “significant milestone toward garnering security self-reliance for the Iraqi citizens, the Iraqi security force, and the government of Iraq.”

The announcement follows the full transfer of security responsibilities in the southern Iraqi province of Muthanna on July 13. Khalilzad and Casey lauded the return of the two provinces as “another sign of progress toward a stable and secure Iraq.”

**FORCES DEMONSTRATE COMMITMENT TO DEFENDING IRAQI CITIZENS**

A region broadly reflective of Iraq’s diverse communities, the area where Iraqi forces will maintain security is also home to a significant amount of the country’s energy wealth. According to U.S. Army Major Greg Bishop, spokesman for the 101st Airborne Division’s Brigade Combat Team, soldiers of the 4th Iraqi Army Division have demonstrated that they are fully capable of assuming security responsibilities in a recent series of successful, coalition-supported operations in the area.

In response to requests from local leaders to rid Kirkuk’s outlying ar-

reas of terrorists with links to al-Qaida in Iraq, the division recently launched “Operation Gaugamela,” successfully using 3,000 Iraqi troops to detain 154 suspects and seize a large cache of weapons.

The 10 day, coalition-supported operation, centered in the At Ta Min province cities of Hawaija and Riyadh, sought out terrorists in 25 cities and villages in a region spanning over 900 square miles, according to the MNF-I release.

During the operation, said U.S. military advisers, Iraqi forces showed the results of their coalition training, including both enhanced logistics capabilities allowing them to operate independently in the field for extended periods of time, and the discipline and dedication befitting a modern military force.

“The Iraqi and coalition soldiers went into two of the most contentious cities in the ... province, searched hundreds of homes and buildings and detained more than 150 suspects with no violence whatsoever,” said Bishop in the August 8 press release. “That’s an incredible success and a true measure of the professionalism of everyone involved in the operations.”

*(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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## U.S. Orders Review of Trade Preferences to Benefit More Countries

**By Andrzej Zwanecki**  
**Washington File Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- The Bush administration has initiated a major review of trade benefits as it considers shifting preferential treatment from more advanced developing countries to a larger number of less-developed countries.

U.S. Trade Representative Susan Schwab, who announced the decision August 7, said the administration intends to determine whether certain countries have increased their competitiveness or developed beyond the threshold for participating in the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP).

Under the GSP, a trade scheme established in 1968 by a U.N. conference, developed countries grant reduced or zero tariff rates to selected imports from developing countries. The least developed countries receive trade benefits for more products and deeper tariff cuts.

The U.S. GSP program was established in 1976 and has been renewed eight times, most recently in 2002. It expires at the end of 2006, and Congress must renew it for benefits to continue.

The Bush administration's review is part of a broader examination ordered in 2005 in preparation for a possible renewal with a view of distributing benefits more equally.

"One of the concerns that Congress has raised is that GSP benefits go largely to a few countries, while many developing countries are not trading much under the

program," Schwab said in a news release.

She said the program should be continued and broadened even if benefits for some of the more-developed countries are limited or withdrawn.

"Our goal is for more countries to benefit from the program and use trade in support of their economic development," Schwab said.

In an August 8 Federal Register notice, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) asked for public comments on whether to limit, suspend or withdraw the eligibility of countries whose exports to the United States covered by the program exceeded \$100 million in 2005 and met one of the two additional criteria: that the country was classified as an upper-middle-income economy by the World Bank in 2005, or that its total exports equaled at least one quarter of 1 percent of all global exports in the same year.

The countries that meet those criteria are Argentina, Brazil, Croatia, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Philippines, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey and Venezuela, according to the notice.

The review also will examine whether to withdraw presidential waivers that give those 13 countries and six others unlimited duty-free access for certain products.

A coalition of business groups and developmental organizations has been pressing for the extension of the GSP. But some legislators

have complained that certain countries that benefit most from the U.S. program have not been helpful in the World Trade Organization (WTO) talks and therefore should not receive the GSP benefits in the future.

"Countries that don't want to give us access to their markets in the WTO negotiations, why should we continue to give them preferential treatment?" asked Senate Finance Committee Chairman Charles Grassley in July after the WTO negotiations collapsed. His committee would have jurisdiction over any legislation to extend the GSP program.

But Schwab did not link the review to the failure of the WTO negotiations and said instead that the program needs an overhaul because, despite accelerated development driven by globalization, the GSP has not been significantly revised in 20 years.

Altogether, the 133 countries covered by the program exported \$26.7 billion worth of goods to the U.S. market duty free in 2005 under the GSP, with India (\$4.2 billion), Brazil (\$3.6 billion), Thailand (\$3.6 billion) and Indonesia (\$1.6 billion) among its top beneficiaries, according to USTR.

*(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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## Iraq's "Difficult Transition" Depends on U.S. Support

**By Carrie Loewenthal**  
**Washington File Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- With the "turbulent" Iraqi transition from dictatorship to democracy, the United States' best course, according to Secretary of State Rice, is to continue to provide security and help with reconstruction in order to give Iraqis "a chance to achieve what they clearly are all trying to achieve."

Speaking to MSNBC August 4, Rice said despite violent sectarian differences Iraq is not sliding into civil war.

"It's not civil war when 12.5 million people go out and vote for a government that bridges all the sectarian groups. It's not civil war when the Iraqis are able to then, on the basis of that vote, form a unity government that is now trying to work both toward reconstruction and reconciliation," Rice said.

"We know that the dangers of sectarian violence spinning out of control, it's on everybody's mind, of course," Rice acknowledged. But she said she was sure the Iraqis do not want civil war, because despite the dangers they continue to turn up to serve in the security forces and show support for their national unity government.

Rice expressed her confidence in Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's program of national reconciliation, which, in her words, "really does invite people to lay down their arms and to become a part of the new Iraq."

The secretary noted that the change from Saddam Hussein's "politics through repression" to democracy in Iraq is a change of historic proportions, and therefore requires patience and time.

"I believe that in fact we are in the midst of this huge historic change, and when you're in the midst of it sometimes it's hard to see what's



**Dr. Condoleezza Rice**  
**U.S. Secretary of State**

at the end of the process," Rice said.

Such an unprecedented process of change is critical to the Middle East region and to the United States' future security, according to Rice. She stated that continued progress toward democracy demands perseverance.

"What [Iraqis] don't need is to have doubts that America is committed to them in this struggle in which they find themselves," Rice

said. "What we need to do is to support them in this process."

**SEEKING SUSTAINABLE END TO MIDEAST VIOLENCE**

In her MSNBC interview, Rice also discussed the United States' pursuit of a U.N. Security Council Resolution that would pave a road to a permanent cessation of the fighting in Israel and Lebanon.

This plan includes deployment of an international force within Lebanon, rebuilding of the Lebanese military, and helping the Lebanese government extend its authority over the entire country, including the territory controlled by Hezbollah.

"Because Hezbollah is kind of a state within a state, the authority of the Lebanese government to control all its territory, to control all its actors, not to let its territory be used in this way, is really the centerpiece of any future resolution of the crisis," Rice said.

Rice explained that the international force would support the Lebanese in disarming Hezbollah, but that ultimately disarmament would be a political process led by an empowered Lebanese government.

"The real key here, of course, is to create conditions in the south [of Lebanon] so that [Hezbollah] cannot operate freely in this militia way without the consent of the Lebanese government, without the consent of the Lebanese armed forces," said Rice.

Focusing on the need for a sustain-

*(Continued on page 25)*

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## Saudi Charity in Indonesia, Philippines Tied to Terrorist Funding

**By Susan Krause**  
*Washington File Staff Writer*

**Washington** -- The U.S. Department of the Treasury has designated the Philippine and Indonesian branch offices of the Saudi Arabia-based International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO) as entities that have assisted the fundraising efforts of al-Qaida and related terrorist groups, according to an August 3 press statement.

The department's Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence (TFI) also designated Abd Al Hamid Sulaiman Al-Mujil, executive director of the Eastern Province Branch of IIRO in Saudi Arabia, as a terrorist financier. Treasury officials said Al-Mujil used his position to help finance activities of the al-Qaida network in Southeast Asia.

IIRO, established as a charitable organization in 1978, is headquartered in the western Saudi city of Jeddah and has branch offices in more than 20 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. Although it is widely recognized for its humanitarian activities, it has a lengthy history of involvement in the financing of terrorist organizations. In 2002, IIRO was named as a defendant in a class action lawsuit filed by relatives of victims of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States.

"It is particularly shameful when groups that hold themselves out as charitable or religious organizations defraud their donors and divert funds in support of violent terrorist groups," said Stuart Levey, under secretary of the Treasury for terrorism and financial intelligence. "We have long been concerned

about these IIRO offices; we are now taking public action to sever this link in the al-Qaida network's funding chain."

The Treasury took action in accordance with Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, signed by President Bush on September 23, 2001.



**Stuart Levey**  
**Treasury's Under Secretary for**  
**Terrorism and Financial Intelligence**

E.O. 13224 authorizes the U.S. government to identify and block the assets of "individuals and entities that provide support, services, or assistance to, or otherwise associate with terrorists and terrorist organizations designated under the Order, as well as their subsidiaries, front organizations, agents, and associates."

Treasury spokeswoman Molly Millerwise said the department has designated over 40 charitable organizations and their branch offices under E.O. 13224 for supporting terrorist organizations.

### **DIRECT SUPPORT AND FUND-RAISING ASSISTANCE**

According to the Treasury's press statement, Al-Mujil donated funds directly to al-Qaida and has been a significant fundraiser for Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah, terrorist organizations in Southeast Asia that have been associated with al-Qaida.

Both Southeast Asian groups are designated under E.O. 13224 and are on the consolidated list of the United Nations Security Council's "1267 Committee." That committee, established in 1999 under U. N. Resolution 1267, oversees the implementation of Security Council sanctions on entities listed as belonging or related to the Taliban, al-Qaida, or Osama bin Laden.

Al-Mujil has authorized payment transfers to the Philippine and Indonesian branch offices of IIRO, Treasury officials said.

The officials said the IIRO's Philippine branch office is a funding source for the Abu Sayyaf group and has served as a liaison between Abu Sayyaf and other Islamist extremist groups.

The IIRO Philippine branch office was founded by Muhammad Jamal Khalifah, a senior member of al-Qaida and brother-in-law of Osama bin Laden. The U.S. Department of State has linked the current IIRO-Philippines director, Abd al-Hadi Daguait, to Khalifah.

The Indonesian branch office of IIRO directed funds to two Indonesia-based foundations affiliated with the Jemaah Islamiyah terrorist network. The Jemaah Islamiyah

*(Continued on page 15)*

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## Rice Reaches Out to Cuban People Via Radio and TV Marti

**Washington** -- U. S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice reiterated the United States' support for a free and democratic Cuba in an August 4 address broadcast to the people of Cuba via Radio and TV Marti.

"It has long been the hope of the United States that a free, independent, and democratic Cuba would be more than just a close neighbor – it would be a close friend," Rice said. "This is our goal, now more than ever, and throughout this time of change, all of you must know that you have no greater friend than the United States of America."

In her taped message to the Cuban people, Rice emphasized that although the United States stands ready to support Cuba's transition, it ultimately will be Cubans who define their future.

"Much is changing there, yet one thing remains constant: America's commitment to supporting a future of freedom for Cuba, a future that will be defined by you -- the Cuban people," she said. "The United States respects your aspirations as sovereign citizens. And we will stand with you to secure your rights -- to speak as you choose, to think as you please, to worship as you wish, and to choose your leaders, freely and fairly, in democratic elections."

In an August 3 statement, President Bush encouraged Cubans to continue to work for positive change, pledged substantial humanitarian assistance and called on the international community to support the democratic aspirations of the Cuban people.

Rice echoed these remarks in her August 4 address.

"We encourage the Cuban people to work at home for positive change, and we stand ready to provide you with humanitarian assistance, as you begin to chart a new course for your country," Rice said. "The United States is also encouraging all democratic nations to join together and call for the release of political prisoners, for the restoration of your fundamental freedoms, and for a transition that quickly leads to multiparty elections in Cuba."

Radio and TV Marti -- which aim to provide balanced news coverage -- are produced by the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, an element of the U. S. International Broadcasting Bureau.

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

## Saudi Charity in Indonesia, Philippines Tied to . . .

*(Continued from page 14)*

organization was implicated in the October 2002 bombings that killed more than 200 people in Bali, Indonesia.

Treasury officials said the IIRO Indonesia branch also assists Jemaah Islamiyah with recruitment, transportation and logistics, and is alleged to have provided financial support for training facilities used by groups associated with al-Qaida.

Millerwise said the designation process "can place illicit actors in a financial box" by restricting their

access to the U.S. and global financial systems.

"Designating individuals and entities as supporters of terrorism puts the world on notice of the deadly threat they pose to society, which can be a strong deterrent," she said.

A fact sheet (<http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/fs/2002/16181.htm>) on E.O. 13224 is available on the Department of State's Web site. The Treasury Department's press statement (<http://www.treas.gov/press/releases/hp45.htm>) and background information ([\[enforcement/key-issues/protecting/charities\\\_execorder\\\_13224-a.shtml\]\(http://www.treasury.gov/offices/enforcement/key-issues/protecting/charities\_execorder\_13224-a.shtml\)\) on charitable organizations designated under E.O. 13224 can be found on Treasury's Web site.](http://www.treasury.gov/offices/</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

For additional information, see Terrorist Financing ([http://usinfo.state.gov/ei/economic\\_issues/terrorist\\_financing.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/ei/economic_issues/terrorist_financing.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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## U.S., Humanitarian Groups Condemn Death of Iranian Activist

**By Lea Terhune**  
**Washington File UN Correspondent**

**Washington** – U.S. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack joined human rights advocates around the world in condemning the death of a jailed Iranian student dissident, Akbar Mohammadi. Mohammadi, 38, died July 30 after a nine-day hunger strike in Tehran's Evin Prison.

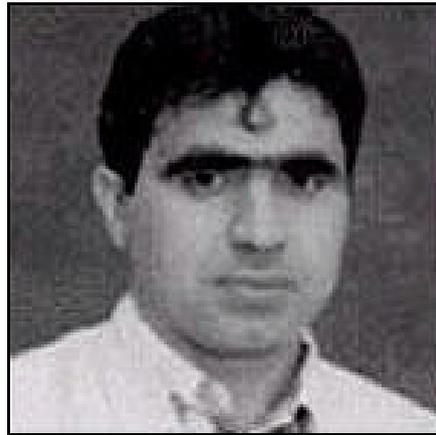
"The United States condemns the Iranian government's severe repression of dissidents, and its continued crackdown on civil society and those fighting for personal freedom in Iran," said McCormack in a statement issued August 1. The detention and harsh treatment of dissidents and opposition leaders, he said, is "part of a deliberate campaign by the Iranian government to silence the student movement in particular, and civil society more broadly."

Mohammadi had been arrested and sentenced to death for throwing Molotov cocktails during the 1999 protests at Tehran University. His sentence was commuted to 15 years imprisonment. He was given nearly two years leave for medical treatment of injuries sustained during his incarceration. He was arrested again in June.

Iranian Justice Minister Jamal Karimirad told Reuters Mohammadi was on a hunger strike. "He was under intense supervision by the prison physician. Last night his health deteriorated," he said, add-

ing that the coroner will investigate his death.

But Mohammadi's lawyer Khalil Bahramian said he would distrust results of a forensic examination unless a neutral doctor conducted it. He also said he had been denied



**Akbar Mohammadi**

access to his client by prison authorities.

Human Rights Watch calls Mohammadi's death "suspicious," and Amnesty International, in an August 1 statement, said it "signals a need for justice reform" in Iran. The human rights groups also called for a halt to "torture and other ill-treatment in Iranian prisons."

Human rights advocates and the U.S. government have also expressed concern about the well being of Mohammadi's brother Manouchehr Mohammadi, who is in Evin Prison for participating in the same 1999 protests. Former

Member of Parliament and student leader Ali Akbar Moussavi Khomeini and labor union leader Mansour Osanloo are two among a number of dissidents who remain imprisoned for speaking out.

"[W]e call on the Iranian Government to respect the human rights of all Iranian citizens, including students, members of religious minorities, workers and women, and to release those arrested and imprisoned as a consequence of defending universally accepted human rights and freedoms," McCormack said.

*(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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## Negotiations Continue on Mideast Resolution, U.S. Says

**By Judy Aita**  
**Washington File United Nations**  
**Correspondent**

**United Nations** -- The United States and France, co-sponsors of the Security Council draft resolution intended to end the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict, continue to work on the text and to respond to Lebanese concerns and proposals after meeting with a Lebanese/Arab League delegation.

The draft resolution and Lebanon's counter proposals were also discussed at a public Security Council meeting August 8 by the Arab League delegation, led by Foreign Minister Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabir Al-Thani of Qatar, Lebanese Special Envoy Tarek Mitri, and by Israel's U.N. ambassador, Dan Gilman. Their comments will be factored into the final draft resolution, diplomats said.

The United States does not see Lebanon's proposals as a setback to the resolution, White House spokesman Tony Snow said.

"Diplomacy takes time. And you've got a lot of interested parties who have their own view on how to proceed," Snow said. The real challenge is to work forward in a manner consistent with the position of leaders of the 2006 Group of Eight (G8) Summit and with the draft resolution presented by the United States and France on August 5.

"Everybody is really still pulling in the same direction," he said. "There are a lot of ideas about how best to get there."

The co-sponsors presented a draft resolution calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities as a first step in ending the conflict and laying out conditions for a long-term political settlement. Under the current draft, a second resolution would be needed to establish and international force to patrol southern Lebanon and set procedures to disarm Hezbollah. (See related article ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-eng-lish&y=2006&m=August&x=20060807130829esnamfuak0.4689905> ).)

Diplomats said that taking into account the meetings with the Arab League delegation and Security Council rules of procedure that require a 24-hour period for governments to review a final draft, it is unlikely that the council will vote before August 10.

Resolving the different approaches "comes down to timing and sequencing. And that's what's being hammered out up in New York as well as in capitals around the world," State Department spokesman Sean McCormack told reporters August 8.

One of the key issues remaining is how to ensure that an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanese territory will not leave a vacuum that will be filled again by Hezbollah. A new element is Lebanese Prime Minister Faud Siniora's proposal to deploy 15,000 Lebanese troops south to patrol a buffer zone along the Blue Line, McCormack said.

McCormack said that the United States considers the Lebanese deployment proposal an important and "a necessary step for peace."

But that deployment must be made in such a way that armed militias are not able to roam Lebanon's southern border, "free to threaten Israel and plunge the region into violence," he added.

In addition, an international force is needed to support the Lebanese army, which at this point is not "a robust enough entity to be able to, on their own, exercise total control of that southern area of Lebanon," McCormack said.

Also under discussion is the timing and character of that international force.

The Arab League, Lebanon, Israel and the United States all share the same goal -- to end the violence, McCormack said.

"Nobody wants to be back in this same situation three weeks, three months or three years from now. We've seen the results of negotiating cease-fires in which you have groups like Hezbollah that are allowed to rearm, build themselves back up, build fortifications and pose a threat to peace and stability in the region," the spokesman said.

Qatari Foreign Minister Al Thani warned the council against adopting a resolution that it could not enforce.

Any resolution, the foreign minis-

*(Continued on page 19)*

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## U.S. Supports Quick Passage of U.N. Resolutions on Mideast

**Washington** -- President Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said the two draft resolutions to be presented to the U.N. Security Council provide a "strong basis" for the end of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Speaking to reporters August 7 at the president's ranch in Crawford, Texas, Bush said the resolutions call, respectively, for a "stop of all hostilities" and the introduction of a "robust international force" to help the Lebanese government extend its authority to the southern part of the country that previously had been under the control of Hezbollah.

"The loss of life on both sides of the Lebanese-Israeli border has been a great tragedy," Bush said. "Millions of Lebanese civilians have been caught in the crossfire of military operations because of the unprovoked attack and kidnappings by Hezbollah. The humanitarian crisis in Lebanon is of deep concern to all Americans, and alleviating it will remain a priority of my government."

Bush said the United States will work with its international partners to get the resolutions passed "as quickly as possible," and said their implementation would "help the international community deliver humanitarian relief and support Lebanon's revival and reconstruction."

He also said that Israeli civilians "should not have to live in bunkers in fear of missile attacks," and that by addressing the "underlying conditions" behind this crisis, namely Hezbollah's ability, as a "state operating within the state," to pro-

voke a crisis, a lasting peace could be established to protect civilians on both sides of the border.

Secretary Rice acknowledged that both Lebanon and Israel have their own views on how to stop the crisis.

"The views are not going to necessarily be consonant about how to stop it. The international commu-



**President Bush and Secretary Rice speak to reporters in Crawford, Texas, August 7. (©AP/WWP)**

nity has a view. But of course we're going to take a little time and listen to the concerns of the parties and see how they can be addressed," she said.

However, the two draft resolutions would provide a strong basis for ending hostilities and provide for a process to address the root causes, the president and Rice said.

"[W]e also believe that it's going to be very important that this first

resolution lay a very quick foundation for passage of the second resolution. So these have to be worked, in a sense, together," Rice said.

She added that both countries have "more agreement than you might think about how to prevent again a situation in which you have a state within a state able to launch an attack across the Blue

Line." Both countries respect the international boundary between them, agree that the Lebanese government should extend its authority throughout the country and that armed groups should not be able to operate in southern Lebanon as Hezbollah has, she said.

"I think we have a reasonable basis here that both sides can accept," Rice said, though she also acknowledged that "there are some issues of timing and se-

*(Continued on page 19)*

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## U.S. Supports Quick Passage of U.N. Resolutions . . .

*(Continued from page 18)*

quence that need to be worked out," as well as "some concerns about when an international force would actually be available."

Bush said the United States is willing to offer "logistics and command and control" to the international force, but expressed concern that sending American troops "would create a sensation around the world that may not enable us to achieve our objective."

Asked about U.S. contacts with Syria and Iran, which have been supporting Hezbollah, the president said that after previous contacts with the regime in Damascus, "Syria knows what we think. ... The problem is that their response hasn't been very positive. Matter of fact, it hasn't been positive at all."

He said his administration also has told Iran that the United States is willing to "sit at the table" with Iran if the Iranian government will honor previous nuclear obligations and "verifiably stop enrichment" of nuclear materials.

"[T]here's a way forward for both countries. The choice is theirs," he said.

The president said the United States wants Lebanon's democratic government "to survive and to be strengthened," and added that efforts by terrorist groups to stop the advance of democracies around the world is "the great challenge of this century."

"[T]his is the beginning of a long struggle against an ideology that is real and profound. It's Islamofacism. It comes in different forms. They [terrorists groups] share the

same tactics, which is to destroy people and things in order to create chaos in the hopes that their vision of the world become predominant in the Middle East," he said.

The transcript ( <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/08/20060807.html> ) of the press availability is available on the White House Web site.

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## Negotiations Continue on Mideast Resolution, . . .

*(Continued from page 17)*

ter said, must call for a comprehensive cease-fire, withdrawal of Israeli forces, and an expanded mandate for the current U.N. peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon, UNIFIL -- demands already made by Lebanon.

Israeli Ambassador Gilman urged the council to make sure that its resolution does not create a vacuum for Hezbollah to fill.

"The terrorists are watching," Gilman said. "If the council adopts concessions and mere declarations we will find ourselves back at this table facing a tragedy of similar or greater proportions."

*(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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## U.S. General Says Middle East Militias "Curse" of Region

**By Jacquelyn S. Porth**  
**Washington File Staff Writer**

**Washington** – The U.S. commander who oversees military operations in the Middle East says extremism “remains a serious danger to global peace and stability” and that the influence of private militias in the Middle East must be curbed.

Army General John Abizaid, who leads the U.S. Central Command, told members of the Senate Armed Services Committee August 3 that



**Army General John Abizaid**

the forces of extremism are strong, ruthless and well-connected.

The enemy exists not only in Iraq and Afghanistan, he said, but in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. But the vast majority of the people in this broad region of the world do not want to see extremism win, the commander added.

Testifying on the subject of Iraq, Afghanistan and the global war on terrorism, Abizaid said the Iraqi government, in particular, understands the need to increase its military capacity over time in order to defeat the extremists there. Pakistani and Saudi forces also are fighting extremists daily in their respective countries, he said.

Abizaid faulted Iran for arming Hezbollah forces in Lebanon with cruise and anti-ship missiles that can reach the Israeli port of Haifa and beyond. This, in turn, has given “Hezbollah a state-like existence and capacity that is unlike any other militia anywhere in the region,” he said.

Abizaid described private militias as “the curse of the region” and stressed the importance of curbing their influence in the Middle East.

### **LEBANON MUST REGAIN SOVEREIGNTY OVER ITS TERRITORY**

It is important that Lebanon exist as a sovereign country, Abizaid said. “It is key to stability in the Middle East.”

The Lebanese government will need the help of an international force to regain sovereignty over its territory, he said.

Over time, the general predicted, there will be ways -- working in conjunction with the international community -- to disarm Hezbollah. In addition, he said, the Shi’ia who have participated in the political life of Hezbollah “can be readily accommodated within the Lebanese body politic.”

Abizaid said the sectarian violence in Iraq, especially in Baghdad, is as bad as he has ever witnessed. If that violence is not halted, he warned, “it is possible that Iraq could move toward civil war.” But he also said that a violent period could be followed by the stability that Iraq needs.

Marine General Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the Shi’ia and Sunni have to decide they love their children more than they hate each other, so that the level of violence can be tempered.

He said the Iraqis who aspire to a better way of life must “seize the moment,” and he predicted that they would do so once they lose patience with the current security situation.

Both military officers said they do not expect Iraq to gravitate toward civil war because Iraqi government institutions are intact and the necessary diplomatic, political and military steps are being applied to bring the situation under control.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, who also testified with Pace and Abizaid, said the U.S. role is to support the Iraqi government and, so far, it is holding together, as is the Iraqi army. (See related article ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-eng-lish&y=2006&m=August&x=20060802173347idybeekcm0.5907099> ).)

Abizaid did express concern that

*(Continued on page 22)*

## U.S. Humanitarian Aid Flowing to Lebanese Villages

**By Lea Terhune**  
*Washington File Staff Writer*

**Washington** – Relief agencies are taking every opportunity to get aid to the worst hit areas in Lebanon, but safe passage amid heavy exchanges of fire between Israel and Hezbollah remains inconsistent.

The International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) was able to deliver 3,000 meals and hundreds of blankets and tarpaulins to the village of Hasbaya near Marjayoun in southern Lebanon on August 2. The same day, an ICRC ship filled with 110 tons of relief supplies docked at the port of Tyre.

The ICRC, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Medical Corps are distributing U.S. medical supplies in Beirut and southern Lebanon. But progress is slow.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), in its August 2 report on the Lebanese humanitarian emergency, said, "Ongoing conflict continues to restrict humanitarian access." According to the United Nations, several planned convoys to southern Lebanon have been cancelled because of Israeli military operations in the area.

The World Food Program (WFP), a U.N. agency tasked with delivery of humanitarian aid, has negotiated the delivery of two fuel shipments to the ports of Beirut and Tyre to meet critical fuel needs. WFP spokeswoman Christiane Berthiaume told the Associated Press, "Almost all the petrol stations are shut. Fuel supplies for power stations and water pumping stations are all but exhausted."

The two tankers will carry 50,000 tons of fuel oil and 37,000 tons of diesel oil. The United Nations and other relief agencies are working with the Higher Relief Council (HRC) of the government of Lebanon to distribute aid from the ports to the interior of the country.

"Since the start of the crisis, WFP has dispatched nine humanitarian

150,000 of those to Syria. Although the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) estimates that 75 percent to 80 percent of the population has fled from the Lebanon-Israel border, many villages remain unreachable. The government of Lebanon puts the total number of displaced persons at nearly 700,000.



**Workers unload canned food, distributed as aid from the Red Cross, at a school in the southern port city of Tyre, Lebanon, August 3, 2006. (©AP/WWP)**

convoys to south Lebanon from Beirut, supplying the following locations: Tyre, Jezzine, Sidon, Qana and Tebnin. In total, the convoys have delivered some 280 metric tons of food, enough to feed 80,000 people for one week," WFP reported August 2. Deliveries include food, medical supplies and shelter materials.

Most Lebanese displaced by the conflict are in south Beirut, Tyre, Sidon, Chouf and Aaley. Many are living in schools or other public areas. An estimated 220,000 people have fled to neighboring countries,

U.S. military continue to assist in humanitarian operations and "have been integral in delivery of ... USAID emergency relief supplies," according to the USAID report.

Approximately \$20 million of the \$30 million in aid money already committed by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice will come from USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA).

Aside from U.N. agencies and the ICRC, other partners in relief distribution are Mercy Corps and the

*(Continued on page 22)*

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## U.S. Humanitarian Aid Flowing to Lebanese . . .

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International Organization for Migration. American nongovernmental organizations on the ground in Lebanon include the American Friends Services Committee, Catholic Relief Services, Save the Children USA, and World Vision, among others.

Rice said August 1 that a cease-fire and lasting settlement in the three-week-old conflict between Israel and Hezbollah likely will come within "days not weeks."

She said there should be a cease-fire as soon as it is clear that the

U.N. Security Council has formulated a resolution that will support the extension of Lebanese government authority over the entire country. After intensive discussions in the region with Israeli and Lebanese leaders, Rice sent the matter to the Security Council where U.S. and French diplomats are working on a resolution that would provide for a sustainable cease-fire, introduce a multinational force to support the Lebanese army in south Lebanon, and create a "sustainable and durable" peace that allows Lebanon's government to operate effectively throughout its territory. Additional information ( [\[www.usaid.gov/locations/asia\\\_near\\\_east/middle\\\_east/\]\(http://www.usaid.gov/locations/asia\_near\_east/middle\_east/\) \) and updates on humanitarian assistance to Lebanon is available on the USAID Web site.](http://</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

*(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. General Says Middle East Militias "Curse" . . .

(Continued from page 20)

the Iranian Revolutionary Guards have trained rogue Shi'ia groups in Iraq. He also indicated that the Iranian government is paying some members of the private Mahdi army in Iraq. The general said it is vital to persuade groups who have pledged allegiance to militias to pledge their loyalty to the state, instead.

### **IRAQI DEATH SQUADS WILL BE TARGETED**

The Iraqi government will do what is necessary to bring the sectarian violence under control and end the death squads, Abizaid said. When pressed on this issue, he said U.S. military forces will work with the Iraqi security forces to eliminate known death squads.

While some Iraqis are fighting because they do not want to embrace a new government and some want to promote anarchy, Abizaid said, most of the Iraqis want a free, independent nation that is not dominated by Shi'ia extremist groups or by Iranian influences.

Combating extremism, whether it is in Iraq or elsewhere, requires the international community to exhibit a strong, united, collective will to face down the extremist threat from any direction, whether Iran or al-Qaida, according to Abizaid.

While weapons of mass destruction may not have been discovered in Iraq, Abizaid said that does not mean the extremists are not trying to develop such weapons. Because the extremists are working daily to obtain these weapons, he

said, it is incumbent on the United States to help shape the regional environment so that the opponents of extremism can help themselves. The United States is pursuing a strategy to defeat al-Qaida, deter Iranian nuclear ambitions and find a lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict to facilitate this, he said.

For more information about U.S. policy, see the Middle East and North Africa ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/> ) and Response to Terrorism ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/is/international\\_security/terrorism.html](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>)*

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## U.S. Energy Agency To Invest \$250 Million in Bioenergy Centers

**By Cheryl Pellerin**  
**Washington File Staff Writer**

**Washington** – The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) will spend \$250 million to establish and operate two new bioenergy research centers to accelerate basic research in developing cellulosic ethanol and other fuels derived from plant byproducts, called biofuels, DOE Secretary Samuel Bodman announced August 2.

Cellulose is plant fiber that forms the main constituent of the cell wall in most plants, and is important in manufacturing products such as paper, textiles, pharmaceuticals and explosives.

"This is an important step toward our goal of replacing 30 percent of transportation fuels with biofuels by 2030," Bodman said.

The centers' mission, he added, "is to accelerate research that leads to breakthroughs in basic science to make biofuels a cost-effective alternative to fossil fuels."

### MIMICKING NATURE

The work the centers will do, said DOE Undersecretary for Science Raymond Orbach, during an August 2 press briefing, "is an attempt to mimic what nature does but in a more efficient way and on a scale where it can make a major difference to the transportation fuels in this country."

DOE is making the announcement now to solicit proposals from would-be operators of the centers. The agency will accept applications for the funding until February

1, 2007, with the winners to be announced in about a year after evaluation of the proposals by scientific peer review. The centers are expected to begin work in 2008 and will be fully operational by 2009.

DOE's Office of Science will provide \$25 million in the first year to establish each center and up to \$25 million per year for the next four years to support each center's operations -- for a total award of up to \$125 million per center.

The centers' mission will be to conduct systems biology research on microbes and plants to harness nature's powerful mechanisms for producing energy from sunlight.

A major focus will be on understanding how to re-engineer biological processes for more efficient conversion of cellulose into ethanol, a substitute for gasoline.

### FUEL FROM PLANTS

Fifteen billion liters of ethanol have been produced so far in 2006 in the United States, mainly from corn.

The 2005 Energy Policy Act, which calls for new programs to improve the technology and reduce the cost of biofuels production, requires that by 2012, at least 28.4 billion liters per year of renewable fuel be blended into the U.S. fuel supply.

To meet these goals, future biofuels production will have to use more diverse feedstocks, including cellulosic materials such as agricultural residues, grasses and other inedible plants.

Universities, national laboratories, nonprofit organizations and private firms are eligible to compete for an award to establish and operate a center.

DOE began supporting research on microbes and microbial communities in 2000 to tap microorganisms' powerful and diverse capabilities to produce renewable energy, clean up the environment and manage atmospheric carbon.

Since initiating the Human Genome Project in 1986, DOE has played a major role in advancing modern biotechnology. The department's recent research on microbes for energy production builds on those advances.

A fact sheet ( <http://www.doegenomestolife.org/centers/brcfactsheet.pdf> ) (PDF, 2 pages) on the bioenergy research centers is available on the DOE Web site.

More information on energy policy issues is available in the Energy Policy Archive ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global\\_issues/energy\\_policy/energy\\_policy\\_archive.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/energy_policy/energy_policy_archive.html) ).

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## New Tracking Method May Improve Storm Predictions

**Washington** – The National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) is conducting an experiment that may lead to increased accuracy in predictions of impending rainfall.

In an experiment running through August 11, NCAR is using multiple Doppler weather radars to track water vapor in the lower atmosphere with the idea that this information will allow forecasters to pinpoint the locations and timing of storms that may strike within moments or hours.

The project is named REFRACTT, meaning Refractivity Experiment for H<sub>2</sub>O Research and Collaborative operational Technology Transfer. An August 1 press release from NCAR explains that refraction – the deflection from a straight path – of radar signals is expected to be a critical element of this method. Measuring changes in the speed of the radar signals caused by refraction is expected to reveal the presence or absence of atmospheric moisture.

Strong contrasts in atmospheric moisture can help stir intense storms, but, with current observation methods, the location of these contrasts is often hard to identify before a storm actually starts.

“Nobody’s ever seen such high-resolution data on moisture before,” said NCAR scientist Rita

Roberts in the press release. “We believe this could greatly help forecasters predict where heavy rains might develop.”

Radars operated by the National Weather Service (NWS) currently detect rainfall and winds, but not water vapor. Weather stations and balloons that do gather data on water vapor are separated by significant distances.

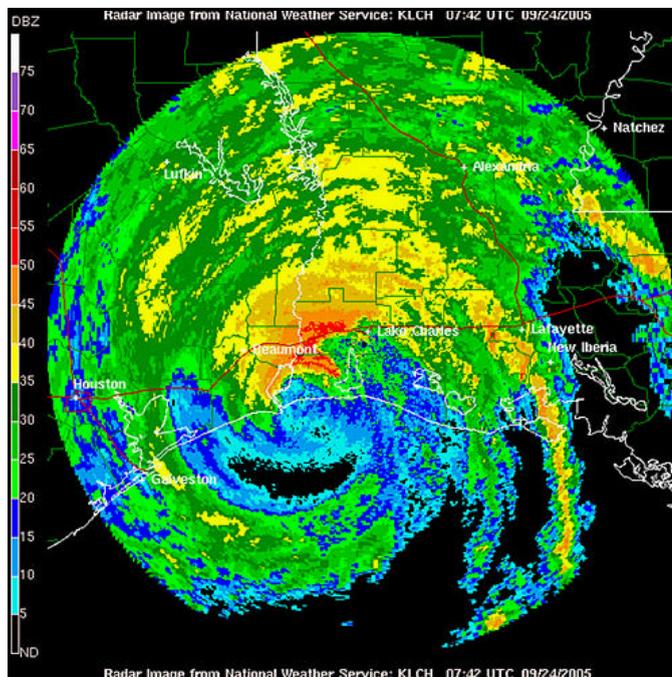
The REFRACTT method adds a third data set – the speed of the signals. Using fixed, stationary targets on the landscape – buildings or geographic features – the meteorologists can track the speeding or slowing of the signal as it encounters variations in water vapor. Plotting that data provides scientists with a detailed picture on the movement of moisture through the atmosphere.

The trial of this new method has been under way in the summer months across the Western state of Colorado, and local forecasters are excited about the data they are getting.

“I think it’s a great example of how you can move technology into the operations realm pretty quickly if you’re committed to it,” said Larry Mooney, meteorologist at the Denver NWS office.

When this Colorado field trial is completed, the long-term goal would be to add the data on refractivity to the national network of Doppler radars operated by the NWS, operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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



**Doppler radar image of Hurricane Rita, September 24, 2005. In a new experiment the NCAR is using multiple Doppler weather radars to track water vapor in the lower atmosphere. [file photo] (©AP/WWP)**

When meteorologists use Doppler radar to track storms, they are seeing how signals strike raindrops, or snowflakes and then bounce back toward the radar. The strength of the returning signals indicates the intensity of the precipitation, and the change in frequency provides information on wind speed.

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
SECTION  
AMERICAN EMBASSY**

P.O.Box 1014  
Addis Ababa  
Ethiopia

Phone: 251-11-5174007  
251-11-5174000  
Fax: 251-11-1242454  
Email: pasaddis@state.gov



**Envoy for Mauritius, Seychelles Cites . . .**

*(Continued from page 5)*

ment of the Republic of the Seychelles on the successful presidential elections held July 28 to 30.

"International observers," he added, "have noted that the election was conducted peacefully and with few irregularities, and that it met international standards for a credible election. We commend the Seychellois people on their high voter turnout and their commitment to the democratic process."

Concluding his testimony, Cabrera said both Mauritius and the Seychelles have proven to be reliable and valuable partners in the U.S.-led fight against international terrorism.

"Both nations continue to participate in U.S. counterterrorism training and are central to regional efforts to

combat money laundering and piracy. The Seychelles, in particular, is playing an important role in anti-piracy efforts by the U.S. Navy. I will build on this cooperation and encourage both nations to share their expertise with neighboring governments," he said.

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**Iraq's "Difficult Transition" Depends on . . .**

*(Continued from page 13)*

able peace in the region, Rice noted that "while clearly this terrible spasm of violence has had tremendous cost" in human losses for both Lebanon and Israel, any ceasefire must do more than stop the violence temporarily. The agreed-upon solution must, according to Rice, "not allow this to happen again in several months or even in several years."

**CUBA WILL HAVE U.S. SUPPORT DURING TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY**

Addressing the issue of Cuban dictator Fidel Castro's failing health,

Rice reiterated the U.S. position expressed in her address to the people of Cuba via Radio and TV Marti, noting that in the event of a regime change in Cuba, the United States is ready to provide aid to the Cuban people.

"We're working with international partners to make certain that the Cuban people know that they would have support and help in what will undoubtedly be a difficult transition," Rice said.

Asked about the possibility of a mass exodus from Cuba, the secretary said the United States believes Cubans should stay in Cuba and "be a part of what will be a transition to democracy."

A transcript ( <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/70009.htm> ) of Rice's interview with MSNBC is available on the State Department Web site.

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