



Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

INSIDE

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Johnnie Carson in Ethiopia

The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Ambassador Johnnie Carson, visited Ethiopia from July 6 to 8, 2009. Carson said the visit was a reflection of the two country's longstanding relationship. During his time in Addis Ababa, the Assistant Secretary had fruitful discussions with members of the government, including Prime Minister Meles and Foreign Minister Seyoum. He also met with opposition political parties and humanitarian organizations. Ambassador Car-



Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, ambassador Johnnie Carson,

son and Ethiopian leaders discussed how to work together to promote peace and stability in the Horn of Africa and to support democratic transformation and economic growth in Ethiopia. Ambassador Carson also spoke about the importance of inclusive democracy in promoting stability and prosperity. Ambassador Carson leaves Ethiopia to join President Barack Obama in Ghana in time for the President's major address on Africa this Saturday. ♦

Citizen Involvement Essential to Ghana's Development Successes

By Kathryn McConnell
Staff Writer

Washington — Committed to a democratic government that involves civil society, Ghana has become "one of the better-performing developing countries in Africa," said the top U.S. aid official in the country.

There are "tremendously important linkages" between good governance and development, Robert Hellyer, director of the



Two young Ghanaian girls smile for the camera during a community event organized by the MCC.

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Citizen Involvement Essential to Ghana's Development Successes . . .

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U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Ghana, told America.gov.

President Obama will visit Ghana's capital, Accra, and a former center of the slave trade, Cape Coast, July 10–11. He is expected to receive an enthusiastic welcome in the country of 23 million people.

Hellyer said one example of Ghana's commitment to its people is the priority attention for education, which receives 30 percent of the government's budget.

That commitment and support from USAID have resulted in a rapid increase in primary school enrollment — from 73 percent in 1999 to 95 percent in 2008.

Yet challenges in education remain. Low-quality schooling is still a problem, said Bob Davidson, a USAID education officer in Ghana.

In 2004, in cooperation with Ghana's government, USAID launched a six-year program to raise the reading and arithmetic skills of Ghanaian children. The program also focuses on increasing girls' school attendance, getting members of communities involved in education and preventing HIV/AIDS.

Today, 40 percent of students at USAID-supported schools meet reading competency standards, compared to 17 percent in 2005. The program has been extended through 2013, with a focus on improving education quality and finding ways to provide more educational opportunities for students with special learning and physical

needs, said Davidson.

PARTNERSHIPS BOOST GHANA'S DEVELOPMENT

Because Ghana has adopted good governance practices, such as allowing citizens to view their district's budgets and question local representatives, the United States is deploying more resources to assist the country's development, Hellyer said. In 2009, estimated U.S. spending will be more than \$362 million, more than double the amount spent in 2008.

USAID is working with the Millennium Challenge Corporation to build schools in rural areas and train teachers for those schools. Peace Corps volunteers are teaching in rural schools.

USAID has been a long-term partner with the Ghanaian government in improving the health of Ghanaian citizens — particularly by increasing the quality and use of maternal and child health services, including family planning. Child mortality has dropped sharply in the past decade, although more remains to be done to reduce the number of maternal deaths.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other U.S. agencies have joined USAID in combating malaria and HIV/AIDS.

A USAID program dealing with water and sanitation helps provide mass protection against selected tropical diseases.

In agriculture, USAID is working with the government of Ghana to improve production, increase private-sector investment in agricul-

ture and help Ghana compete in local, regional and international markets.

Through a USAID partnership with Africa's Ecobank, Ghanaian exporters can learn how to develop business plans and financial statements. The first loan from the bank helped a company to produce handicrafts for sale at gift stores in the United States and Europe. A port services company received a loan to purchase forklifts to move cargo at the port at Tema.

LONG BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

The United States and Ghana began their development relationship in 1957, initially in higher education exchanges. With the creation of USAID in 1961, the relationship expanded to agriculture and rural development, and later to other areas, including good governance.

A recent example of good governance cooperation between USAID and Ghana is the preparatory work leading up to the December 2008 presidential election in Ghana. Working with citizen groups, USAID trained and deployed thousands of poll observers to oversee the voting. The cooperation also resulted in the training of civil society groups to conduct parallel vote tabulations as checks and balances to official election results. The support helped build Ghanaians' confidence in the electoral process and thwart fraud.

"This has translated into civic pride in being a role model across the continent," Hellyer said. ♦

Obama, Russia's Medvedev Agree to Further Missile Defense Talks

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States and Russia have agreed to continue talks on proposed missile defenses in Europe.

"We have instructed our experts to work together to analyze the ballistic missile challenges of the 21st century and to prepare appropriate recommendations, giving priority to the use of political and diplomatic methods," President Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev said in a joint statement released July 6 in Moscow.

Positioning a limited anti-ballistic missile system in Europe has been a significant issue between the United States and Russia. Under President George W. Bush, the United States proposed stationing 10 interceptor missiles in Poland and an advanced radar station in the Czech Republic to protect allies in Europe and thwart rogue states with nuclear ballistic missiles. Russian officials have expressed concern over the scope of the anti-ballistic missile system.

Obama and Medvedev said they have directed their missile experts "to conduct a joint review of the entire spectrum of means at our disposal that allow us to cooperate on monitoring the development of missile programs around the world." Obama ordered his own review of the proposed U.S. anti-missile system shortly after taking office to determine if the system is effective in meeting security needs and not too costly.

On July 5, Admiral Mike Mullen, the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of



Obama and Medvedev holding discussion

Staff, said the proposed U.S. system is defensive. "It's not meant, in any way, shape or form, to be threatening to Russia," he said on CBS News' Face the Nation television show.

NUCLEAR COOPERATION

Obama and Medvedev also announced a commitment to strengthen cooperation in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and highly enriched uranium and to keep equipment and technology from falling into the hands of rogue states and extremists. The two leaders pledged to dispose of existing stockpiles of weapons-grade materials that are surplus to defense needs under obligations in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The two presidents signed a joint agreement to guide the remainder of negotiations for a treaty to replace the existing Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or START-I, which expires December 5. The joint agreement commits the United States and Russia to reducing their nuclear arsenals to a range of 1,500–1,675 warheads, and the

means to deliver them to a range of 500–1,100. The means to deliver nuclear warheads includes intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarines and long-range bombers.

Under the expiring START arrangement and the Moscow Treaty, the maximum allowable level of warheads is 2,200 and the maximum allowable level of launch vehicles is 1,600.

"These numbers reflect a new level of reductions of strategic offensive arms and delivery vehicles that will be lower than those in any existing arms control agreements," a joint fact sheet said. "The new agreement will enhance the security of both the U.S. and Russia, as well as provide predictability and stability in strategic offensive forces."

Previously, the U.S. and Russian negotiating teams met in April, May, June and July. They will continue their work for a final agreement that will require signature by both presidents and ratification.

In other side agreements, the United States and Russia agreed to work toward bringing stability and security in Afghanistan, and agreed that the United States will be able to transport its military personnel and equipment across Russia to support U.S. and coalition forces in Afghanistan.

"This agreement complements a NATO-Russia arrangement, under which the United States began

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Russia, U.S. Seek to Lead Nonproliferation Efforts by Example

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — Citing shared concerns over nuclear security and the spread of nuclear weapons, President Obama says the United States and Russia are increasing their security cooperation and have signed a preliminary agreement to reduce their nuclear arsenals.

"As the world's two leading nuclear powers, the United States and Russia must lead by example," Obama said in Moscow July 6, adding that it is difficult to exert leadership on the issue "unless we are showing ourselves willing to deal with our own nuclear stockpiles in a more rational way."

The follow-on agreement to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or START-I, will be completed by the end of 2009 and "will reduce our nuclear warheads and delivery systems by up to a third from our current treaty limitations," Obama said.

Under the joint understanding signed July 6, the United States and Russia will reduce their numbers of strategic warheads from a maximum of 2,200 to a range of 1,500–1,675, and their strategic delivery vehicles from a maximum of 1,600 to a range of 500–1,100. The president added that he hopes further reductions can be made through subsequent agreements and treaties.

Speaking at a press conference with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, Obama repeated his call to "reset" relations between the two countries, which he said have



President Obama says the U.S. and Russia are committed to leaving behind the suspicion and rivalry of the past.

"suffered from a sense of drift."

"President Medvedev and I are committed to leaving behind the suspicion and the rivalry of the past so that we can advance the interests that we hold in common," the president said. During his talks in Moscow, U.S. and Russian officials signed several agreements and issued joint statements on topics ranging from the resumption of military-to-military cooperation to the establishment of a bilateral presidential commission and working groups to focus on areas of mutual security and prosperity issues. (For more information, see "Obama's Agenda for U.S.-Russian Relations (<http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-english/2009/July/20090612104349dmslahrellek0.9058496.html>).")

The two leaders expressed their concern about nuclear proliferation and acknowledged a shared responsibility to prevent the spread of nuclear arms.

Medvedev said there are "negative trends in the world, and they are due to the emergence of new nuclear players." Pointing to the Middle East and Korean Peninsula, the Russian leader said these were re-

gions where the presence of nuclear arms "would create huge problems," and he called for closer cooperation with the United States.

Some of the new players "are not officially members of the nuclear club, but they have aspirations to have nuclear weapons and declare so openly or, which is worse, are doing it clandestinely. And of course it has a very negative bearing on the world," Medvedev said.

Obama said North Korea has continued to "flout its own commitments and international obligations in pursuit of nuclear weapons," and that Iran's pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability would spark a nuclear arms race in "perhaps the most volatile" region of the world.

"It is almost certain that other countries in the region would then decide to pursue their own programs," Obama said.

In addition, Obama pointed to the possibility that proliferation could cause extremist organizations to obtain a nuclear weapon and use it against civilian populations, including those in Russia and the United States.

Obama said the United States and Russia have agreed to pursue cooperation on securing loose nuclear materials and to cooperate on a "reinvigorated" nonproliferation treaty that would allow countries to obtain peaceful nuclear energy without gaining the capacity to weaponize it.

"We've actually suggested a global nuclear security summit that we intend to host next year. And I dis-

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Russia, U.S. Seek to Lead Nonproliferation Efforts by Example . . .

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cussed with President Medvedev the strong possibility that in a subsequent summit, it could be hosted by Russia, where we bring all the countries together around the world to start making progress on this critical issue," he said.

The two presidents also held discussions on areas of disagreement, such as the Republic of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Obama said that while the two countries are working through their disagreements over Georgia's borders, "we do agree that no one has an interest in renewed military conflict. And going forward, we must speak candidly to resolve these differences peacefully and constructively."

On anti-ballistic missile (ABM) defense, both countries agreed to continue discussions over a system that could protect European coun-

tries from a missile launched from Iran, North Korea or elsewhere. Obama said it is legitimate for the discussions to include both offensive and defensive weapons systems. (See "Obama, Russia's Medvedev Agree to Further Missile Defense Talks. (<http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-english/2009/July/20090706122119dmslahrellek0.8060266.html&distid=ucs>)")

He acknowledged that the Russian government has deep concerns over the ABM system, but said hard work will help break down longstanding suspicions and could make an understanding possible.

Medvedev said the linkage between offensive and defensive weapons "already ... constitutes a step forward," and "this opens up the opportunity of bringing positions closer to each other."

Medvedev said Russia's relationship

with the United States has not met its potential and does not match the current age. But he said he viewed his conversations and negotiations with Obama in Moscow "as a first but very important step in the process of improving full-scale cooperation between our two countries, which should go to the benefit of both states."

"If both states benefit by it, that means everybody will benefit by it," he added.

A transcript of the press conference (<http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/July/20090706154403xjsnommis0.3955914.html&distid=ucs>) is available on America.gov.

What foreign affairs decisions should President Obama consider? Comment on America.gov's blog (<http://blogs.america.gov/campaign/2009/01/21/day-2-what-should-obama%e2%80%99s-top>

Obama, Russia's Medvedev Agree to Further Missile Defense Talks . . .

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shipping non-lethal equipment to Afghanistan through Russian territory earlier this year," a White House-issued fact sheet said. "This will permit 4,500 flights per year." Admiral Mullen and Russian General Nikolai Makarov, chief of the Russian armed forces' General Staff, signed a new strategic framework for military-to-military engagement, the White House said. The U.S. and Russian armed forces have agreed to conduct nearly 20 exchanges and operational events in 2009, including strategic discussions between the respective joint chiefs of staff, orientation for Russian military cadets

at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, planning for hijacked aircraft emergencies, and visits by the faculties of U.S. and Russian military colleges.

Planning is also under way with the U.S. European Command, based in Brussels, Belgium, to meet with the Russian Ministry of Defense for a more enlarged work plan in 2010, the White House said.

In addition, the U.S. and Russia reached agreement on accounting for missing service members of both countries dating back to World War II, and pledged fresh

cooperation on significant public health issues.

The full texts of the joint statement on missile issues (<http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/July/20090706115752xjsnommis0.5118328.html>), on public health issues (<http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/July/20090706101443xjsnommis0.3481409.html>) and on missing service members (<http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/July/20090706102553xjsnommis0.7671472.html>) are available on America.gov. ♦

Pirate Attacks off Africa Less Successful, Official Says

By Lauren Caldwell
Staff Writer

Washington — More pirate hijackings have been prevented this year, thanks to self-protection measures and international coalitions, according to a State Department official.

"The success rate for pirate attacks is below 25 percent compared with 2008, when success rates were over 40 percent," said David Foran, an officer in the State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, in an America.gov webchat June 30.

Piracy, occurring most recently off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, increases the cost of shipping, slows regional development and prevents humanitarian aid from reaching Africa. Last year, owners of hijacked ships paid about \$30 million in ransom to Somali pirates.

(See Combating Piracy (<http://www.america.gov/piracy.html>).)

Although the U.S. Naval Forces Central Command projects the number of pirate attacks will double in 2009, new deterrence strategies are in place and the international community is better prepared to defend its ships.

Self-defense provides the greatest deterrence against pirates, according to Foran. The U.S. Coast Guard recently advised vessels operating near Somalia to consider the use of armed or unarmed security. Panama, Liberia, the Marshall Islands and the Bahamas require their vessels to employ self-protection measures, he said. Many ships use nonlethal defense tactics, including fire hoses, rubber bullets and sonic weapons.

There has been some recent move-



David Foran, an officer in the State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs

ment among U.S. officials, lawmakers and analysts toward accepting the idea of private security on commercial ships. But industry representatives continue to express reserve about armed security guards because of their concerns about liability for accidents. Foran, when asked whether arming commercial ships would deter pirates, said, "The short answer is we don't know." (See "Global Coordination Can Stop Pirates" (<http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-english/2009/May/20090501133050akllennoccm0.918255.html>).)

"Deterrence due to the presence of an international coalition of naval vessels also has significantly disrupted pirate operations," Foran said. At any given time, there are between 20 and 30 vessels from up to 20 nations engaged in anti-piracy patrols.

The Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, established in January, serves as an informal venue for governments and organizations to share information about their progress in fighting piracy. More than 40 countries and international organizations are members. In May, the group created an interna-

tional trust fund that will pay for the prosecution of suspected pirates and building regional capacities.

"The [Contact Group] has looked at impediments to the prosecution of pirates and is encouraging countries to change their laws if need be," Foran said. Most countries have laws that allow for the prosecution of pirates, but the greatest challenge is convincing governments to use these laws, he said.

Other challenges must be addressed, Foran said. Despite the availability of satellite technology, the expanse of the seas and small size of most pirate boats — less than 10 meters — make detection a challenge. It is also difficult to identify pirates on land and to determine who funds them.

The United States has been a part of the fight from the beginning — by co-founding the Contact Group, by dispatching naval vessels to prevent attacks, and by encouraging ships to self-protect and discouraging concessions to hostage-takers, Foran said.

"We believe that the payment of ransom encourages pirates," Foran said. "Clearly, pirates are in it for the money. If companies stopped paying ransom, that would be a deterrent."

If the fight against piracy in this region is to continue to succeed in coming years, it will depend on what happens politically in Somalia, he said, and on that nation's ability to control criminal activity within its borders. "Our hope is that [in time] there will be a stable Somali government in control of its territory."♦

Non-Nuclear Iran Would Reduce Need for Missile Defense

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — President Obama urges Russia to support efforts to prevent nuclear arms races in East Asia and the Middle East, saying the successful enforcement of international law will remove causes of disagreement between the United States and Russia.

Obama told graduating students July 7 at The New Economic School in Moscow that he is aware of Russia's opposition to the planned missile-defense configuration for Europe. The system is meant to guard against a potential attack from Iran, he said, and Russia's inclusion in the defense architecture "would make us all safer."

"But if the threat from Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile program is eliminated, the driving force for missile defense in Europe will be eliminated, and that is in our mutual interests," the president said.

Russia and the United States "should be united in opposing North Korea's efforts to become a nuclear power and opposing Iran's efforts to acquire a nuclear weapon." Obama said that along with the security threats, the credibility of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the U.N. Security Council are at risk and international law could "give way to the law of the jungle" unless nations are held accountable.

Both Russia and the United States, which inherited the power to destroy the world with nuclear weapons, as well as the knowledge that the use of those weapons would bring about their own destruction, cannot be certain that extremist



President Obama told Russian students that a great power can no longer show its strength by dominating other countries.

groups will show the same restraint, Obama said. At the same time, India, Pakistan and North Korea have conducted nuclear tests, and "without a fundamental change," nuclear weapons will likely continue to spread over

the next 20 years.

"This is the core of the nuclear challenge in the 21st century. The notion that prestige comes from holding these weapons, or that we can protect ourselves by picking and choosing which nations can have these weapons, is an illusion," he said.

"That's why America is committed to stopping nuclear proliferation, and ultimately seeking a world without nuclear weapons," Obama said.

The president said there is an erroneous and outdated assumption that Russia and the United States are destined to be antagonists and that two strong nations must be in opposition and "forge competing blocs to balance one another."

In the current era, a great power does not show its strength by dominating or demonizing others, he said. "The days when empires could treat sovereign states as pieces on a chess board are over." Attempts

to elevate one nation or group over another are doomed to failure, and "the pursuit of power is no longer a zero-sum game — progress must be shared," Obama said.

The president said Russia and the United States should work together for a different future in Central Asia "in which we leave behind the 'Great Game' of the past and the conflict of the present," and jointly contribute to the region's security. Neither country wants to see Afghanistan or Pakistan governed by the Taliban, he said, and al-Qaida and its affiliates in the region "have the blood of Americans and Russians on their hands," as well as the blood of Muslims around the world.

The president said the United States remains committed to promoting democratic governments that protect the rights of their people. He acknowledged shortcomings in American democracy, but said universal values have allowed the United States to correct itself and grow stronger over its history.

"Freedom of speech and assembly has allowed women and minorities and workers to protest for full and equal rights at a time when they were denied. The rule of law and equal administration of justice has busted monopolies, shut down political machines that were corrupt, ended abuses of power. Independent media have exposed corruption at all levels of business and government. Competitive elections allow us to change course and hold our leaders accountable," he said.

"If our democracy did not advance

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Final Unresolved 2008 U.S. Election Contest Settled

By Michelle Austein Brooks
Staff Writer

Washington — Nearly eight months later, the final race in the 2008 U.S. elections is complete. After months of recounts and legal challenges, the Minnesota Supreme Court determined June 30 that Democrat Al Franken is the winner of an extremely close Senate contest. In the United States, there are often races deemed “too close to call” on Election Day, meaning no winner is projected because the number of votes separating the two candidates is too slim to accurately predict who will win once every vote is counted and the results certified by the appropriate state authorities. But rarely has a race’s outcome taken this long to determine.

Each state establishes its own procedures for counting votes. Typically, votes cast at polling places can be tabulated fairly quickly, while mailed-in absentee ballots take more time to verify and count. Each state has its own laws governing the manner in which votes are cast, counted and, if necessary, recounted. Some states, like Minnesota, automatically require votes to be recounted in races where the number of votes separating the two candidates falls below a certain percentage of the total number of votes cast.

Among the 2.9 million ballots counted in the Minnesota race, the initial Election Day count found Republican incumbent Norm Coleman ahead by about 200 votes. A week-long hand recount of all the ballots determined that Franken actually had 225 more votes than Coleman. Coleman filed a lawsuit, arguing that some absentee ballots had

been improperly counted. Because Minnesota law prevents the state from certifying the results during a lawsuit, the Senate seat remained vacant during the legal proceedings.

“Over the last eight months, as the nation has watched this all unfold in this state, Minnesotans have earned the right to take pride in the transparency and the thoroughness of our process and in the integrity of our election officials,” said Franken, a comedian-turned-politician known to Americans for his performances on the Saturday Night Live television show.

Speaking to Minnesota citizens following the court’s unanimous ruling, Franken said that no matter who they voted for, “I’m ready to work for all of you” and “I’m committed to being a voice for all Minnesotans in the U.S. Senate.”

Coleman conceded the race and congratulated Franken. Saying he respects the court’s decision, “It’s time for Minnesotans to come together under the leaders it has chosen and move forward.”

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SENATE

Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty, a Republican, has certified the election results, clearing the way for Franken to be sworn in as a senator next week. “I am glad there is a decision. We need two senators; hopefully this will bring the state together,” Pawlenty said.

In a statement, President Obama said, “I look forward to working with Senator-elect Franken to build a new foundation for growth and prosperity by lowering health care costs and investing in the kind of

clean energy jobs and industries that will help America lead in the 21st century.”

Franken’s arrival in the Senate will mean Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents will hold 60 of the 100 Senate seats. Holding 60 seats is important because 60 votes are needed to end a filibuster — a parliamentary procedure that allows senators to continue a debate indefinitely and block or delay a vote on a measure or nomination.

Filibusters have been used effectively throughout U.S. history. It was a tactic frequently used by Southern senators seeking to block civil rights legislation in the 1960s. More recently, filibusters have been used a record number of times in the 110th Congress, effectively preventing the Senate from holding votes on certain issues.

The term filibuster, coined from the Dutch word for pirate, came into use in the 1850s. But the practice of filibustering to keep the legislative body from voting on a bill predates this term. In 1917, senators adopted a rule allowing debate to end with a two-thirds majority vote. This device, called “cloture,” can halt filibusters, but it was used rarely because it was so difficult to gain the support of that many senators. In 1975, the Senate reduced the number of votes needed for cloture to three-fifths (60).

But even with 60 senators, this does not mean the party always will be able to prevent filibusters. Senators hold a wide range of political views, and not all party members will favor cloture on the same issues.♦

Scientists Take Lessons from Past Pandemics for New H1N1 Virus

By Cheryl Pellerin
Science Writer

Washington — As cases of the novel H1N1 flu rise to 77,201 worldwide and three new human cases of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian flu bring that global total to 436 since 2003, scientists in the United States are examining past pandemics for lessons that might help with the response to the 2009 pandemic H1N1.

Deaths from the novel H1N1 flu stand at 332 in 16 of 115 countries officially reporting cases to the World Health Organization (WHO). Deaths from H5N1 — the majority in Indonesia (141) and Vietnam (111) — total 262 in 11 of 15 countries that have reported H5N1 cases to WHO.

To help with the spreading and moderately severe wave of illness, U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced July 2 that the United States will provide 420,000 treatment courses of the anti-viral medication Tamiflu (oseltamivir) to the Pan American Health Organization to help fight the pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean.

"The U.S. is committed to supporting and enhancing the health security in the region by reducing transmission and severity of illness," Sebelius told officials at a meeting for health ministers throughout the Americas in Cancun, Mexico.

Pharmaceutical companies also are making contributions. On June 17 at the Pacific Health Summit in Seattle, Christopher Viehbacher, chief executive of Sanofi-Aventis, announced that his company would



Chinese medical workers register students of a primary school who had contact with H1N1 flu cases July 1.

nate 100 million doses of an H1N1 vaccine to WHO to help developing countries fight the pandemic.

On July 1, Tamiflu maker Roche announced a program to produce and store Tamiflu stockpiles for developing countries that are members of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization at a significantly reduced price and spread the cost over several years.

H1N1 HISTORY

Scientists around the world are working to understand the novel H1N1 virus and how it will ultimately play out among people planetwide. The search for knowledge includes every available tool, from epidemiology, systems biology and molecular genetics to an examination of pandemics and outbreaks caused by other H1N1 viruses in the 20th century.

Different genetic strains of the H1N1 virus were involved in the deadly 1918–1919 pandemic, an epidemic in the United States in 1976 and a reemergence of the virus in 1977 in the former Soviet

Union, Hong Kong and northeastern China.

Since 1977, Dr. Shanta Zimmer and Dr. Donald Burke wrote in the June 29 edition of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, human H1N1 strains derived from the 1918 H1N1 virus have circulated in people and have "maintained a continual presence during seasonal epidemics."

"All human-adapted influenza A viruses of today — both seasonal variations and those that caused more dramatic pandemics," Dr. Jeffery Taubenberger of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) said in a June 29 statement, "are descendants, direct or indirect, of that founding [1918] virus."

Taubenberger, Dr. David Morens and NIAID Director Dr. Anthony Fauci are coauthors of an article published online June 29 by the *New England Journal of Medicine*. They write that the world has been in an influenza pandemic era since 1918 and the 2009 H1N1 virus is part of that original viral family.

PANDEMIC LESSON

In 1918–1919, a deadly flu pandemic spread a human H1N1 virus worldwide and killed up to 50 million people. That virus, Zimmer and Burke wrote, "is thought to have emerged almost simultaneously from birds into humans and swine. In contrast, [the 2009 H1N1 virus] probably emerged from swine into humans."

In January 1976, an outbreak of

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respiratory disease occurred among soldiers returning to an Army base in Fort Dix, New Jersey. A novel H1N1 swine-origin virus was identified as the cause of the epidemic that resulted in 230 cases and one death.

“When the CDC isolated this virus,” Dr. Harvey Fineberg, director of the Institute of Medicine, said in a June 30 briefing at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, “they called together their advisers and thought hard about what to do.”

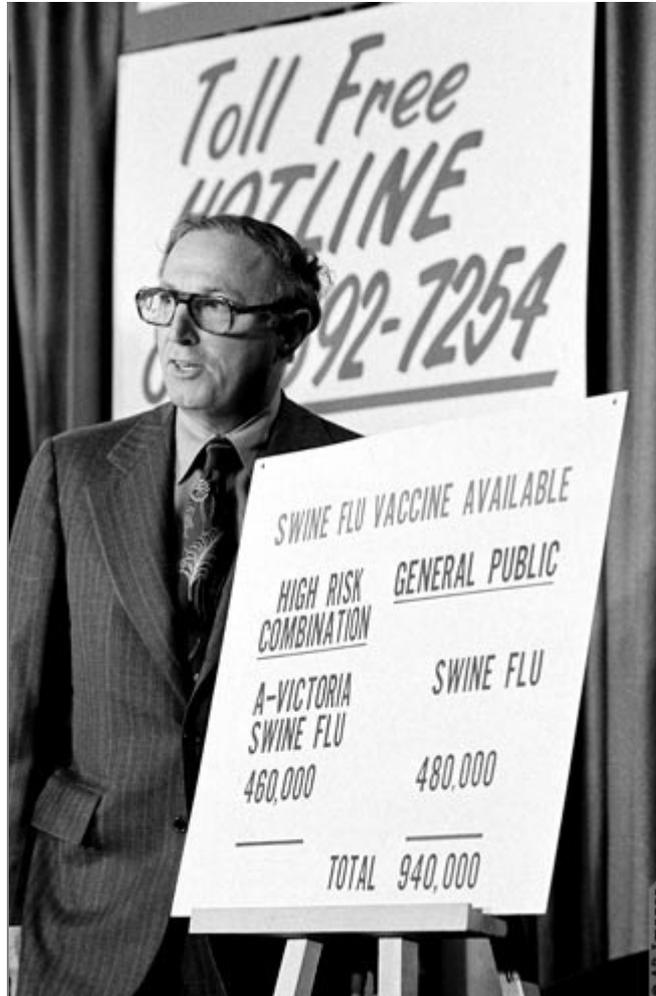
The decision, made in March 1976 by the White House and a group of leading virologists that included polio-vaccine developers Albert Sabin and Jonas Salk, “was to mount a nationwide public-private immunization campaign to protect the American public against influenza,” Fineberg said.

By October 1976, he said, “with no transmission anywhere in the country [outside Fort Dix], the campaign was ready to go forward and in the first 10 days 1 million people were immunized.”

Ultimately, the program produced 40 million civilian vaccinations, Zimmer and Burke wrote, and 532 cases of the paralysis-causing Guillain-Barre syndrome, a rare side effect of that flu vaccination, before the vaccination campaign was halted in December 1976.

EIT RAMPSX

“As a policy matter,” Fineberg said, “rolling up every aspect of the deci-



Pennsylvania Health Secretary Dr. Leonard Bachman announced in 1976 that the free swine flu vaccine would go first to the elderly.

sion into a single go-no go proposition way back in March [1976] was premature and probably unwise and certainly unnecessary because there was additional information to be learned in the coming months.”

At the same briefing, Fauci said CDC had isolated the novel H1N1 virus for vaccine production and distributed it to manufacturing companies that have made pilot lots of the vaccine. The National Institutes of Health will perform clinical trials

to make sure the vaccines are safe, to determine dose amounts and to test the responses of special populations like pregnant women and the elderly.

“If everything goes right,” Fauci said, “we hope to start vaccinating people — if the decision is made to vaccinate people — throughout the fall and get as many people protected, especially those in high-risk groups, for the fall season,” when scientists expect a possible second wave of novel H1N1 infections.

“The decision to test, the decision to produce and the decision to administer are completely uncoupled,” he added. “This is dif-

ferent from 1976, where in one day, in one room, the decision was made to make and administer [a vaccine], with no exit ramps on that approach. Even though there were no new cases of swine flu throughout 1976, the train was out of the station. Right now, we have multiple steps along the way in which we can stop or go.”♦

The Greening of U.S. Architecture: Building a Sustainable Future

By Lauren Monsen
Staff Writer

Washington — With many residential and corporate clients now requesting an environmentally friendly approach to their design needs, so-called “green architecture” has become an increasingly hot commodity, and a number of U.S. universities have responded by developing sustainable-design courses for their architecture programs.

Most often, students themselves are driving that trend, say two prominent educators.

Architecture professors Linda Keane (of the Art Institute of Chicago) and Walter Grondzik (of Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana) described to America.gov how architecture is evolving to meet new energy requirements — and how young architects-in-training are learning new skills to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Although public awareness of “green” architecture is a relatively recent phenomenon, Keane said that its foundations can be traced to the 1970s, when a small vanguard of progressive architects began creating “passive solar” buildings that drew upon renewable energy sources.

“There were firms practicing this way, but they were on the fringe,” Keane recalled, “and it wasn’t called ‘green architecture’ then.” She cited the “age-old principles of natural ventilation and use of sunlight,” which were already being incorporated into certain design schemes — and which have been rediscovered and embraced by to-

day’s environmentally conscious practitioners.

A few schools “were teaching sustainable principles 30–40 years



In step with the “green architecture” movement, New York City’s Empire State Building was retrofitted to become more energy-efficient.

ago, ahead of the curve,” Grondzik said. These days, more schools are offering courses on energy-efficient design and the use of sustainable materials, but Keane and Grondzik both cautioned that the “greening” of U.S. architecture programs is in its infancy. Grondzik estimated that

“maybe 10 percent of U.S. architecture schools do a fairly good job” of grounding students in the precepts of sustainability.

“It’s a slow process,” he said. “And it’s definitely not mandatory” for students to address environmental concerns in most architecture programs. But in years to come, he predicted, the sustainable-design movement “will be gaining momentum” as a new, “greener” crop of architects enters the work force.

“It’s all about generational change,” he said. “I think the stronger architecture programs have been student-initiated. Schools have responded to student demand” for more instruction on sustainability.

Keane agreed. “It takes time to change behavior; people are often resistant to change,” she said. “But a lot of younger

people are attuned to the concept of sustainable design, and this will probably turn the tide in the years ahead.”

Even at architecture schools that excel in teaching sustainability, re-

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quirements for graduation may vary — but most programs expect students to undertake internships so that they acquire some hands-on design experience, whether eco-related or not. “A broad internship is a linchpin of our program” at Ball State University, Grondzik said.

At the Art Institute of Chicago, “we have a series of courses known collectively as The Green Zone,” Keane said. “These are a cluster of courses that focus on energy-efficient design, and students who are interested can take them all.” Moreover, “some schools offer LEED [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design] courses,” she said, referring to a rating system that recognizes outstanding sustainable design. “Many of our students are LEED-certified as they graduate. We also have a historic preservation program” that emphasizes the retrofitting of existing structures to reduce their carbon footprint.

Retrofitting is an important aspect of sustainable architecture; no less a landmark than New York’s iconic Empire State Building has recently undergone a multi-step conversion process to become more energy-efficient. While academic programs tend to focus on designing new buildings that are sustainable from the start, “a lot of practitioners are aware of retrofitting as a potential growth industry,” Grondzik said.

According to Keane, bringing sustainable design to urban areas can restore a sense of connection to the natural world. “The most visual change has been the green roofs” that often feature grass, trees and plants, she said. “It’s an amazing

thing to be on a green roof in the middle of surrounding skyscrapers. Everything else in the city is paved in hard surfaces. It’s a return to



An architectural rendering of Chicago's Sears Tower (slated for "green" remodeling) shows a roof with solar panels and wind turbines.

trying to live more gracefully.”

Grondzik observed that there is much confusion about terms such as “green” and “sustainable,” which are closely related but not synonymous. “Sustainability is really our ability to live within our environmental means,” he said. “A sustainable project cannot pollute, and cannot rely on nonrenewable resources. Green is a step towards sustainable, but it’s not completely carbon-neutral.”

Whether merely “green” or fully sustainable, architecture is adapting to meet the needs of the modern world. “I read an article that says more than 50 percent of clients initiate the demand for sustainable design,” Grondzik said. “In many

cases, they’re actually pulling the architects along.” Added Keane: “It’s an exciting time. When I came to the Art Institute of

Chicago in 1985, no one was interested in sustainable design. Now, artists, architects, designers and scientists — everyone’s interested. It feels like we’re on the cusp of change.”

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

**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



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Telling America's story

[An Invitation to Africans: Send a message to President Obama](#)

Starting July 3, you are invited to send a text message to President Barack Obama with your questions and comments in advance of his visit to Africa.

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Non-Nuclear Iran Would Reduce Need for Missile Defense . . .

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those rights, then I, as a person of African ancestry, wouldn't be able to address you as an American citizen, much less a president. Because at the time of our founding, I had no rights — people who looked like me. But it is because of that process that I can now stand before you as president of the United States."

Obama told his young audience that, as a rising generation, they will decide what is coming next. "You get to choose where change will take us because the future does not belong to those who gather armies on a field of battle or bury missiles in the ground; the future belongs to young people

with an education and the imagination to create. That is the source of power in this century. And given all that has happened in your two decades on Earth, just imagine what you can create in the years to come," he said.

A transcript of Obama's remarks (<http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/July/20090707062839abretnuh3.549922e-02.html&distid=ucs>) is available on America.gov.

See also "Analysis: Obama and Medvedev Ease Tensions, Strengthen Trust ([\[k0.600033.html&distid=ucs\]\(http://www.america.gov/k0.600033.html&distid=ucs\) \)" and Obama in Russia: A New Start \(\[http://www.america.gov/obama_ru.html\]\(http://www.america.gov/obama_ru.html\) \).](http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-english/2009/July/20090707103645dmslahrelle</p></div><div data-bbox=)

What foreign affairs decisions should President Obama consider? Comment on America.gov's blog (<http://blogs.america.gov/campaign/2009/01/21/day-2-what-should-obama%e2%80%99s-top-priorities-be/>).

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