



Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

INSIDE

Bush Says Islam Is a "Great Religion that Preaches Peace"

By Stephen Kaufman
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Ahead of hosting an iftar celebration at the White House, President Bush said the Islamic religion "is a great religion that preaches peace," and that Americans are free "to worship any way they see fit."



President George W. Bush welcomes guests to the Iftar Dinner with Ambassadors and Muslim leaders in the State Dining Room of the White House, Thursday, Oct. 4, 2007.
(White House photo by Chris Greenberg)

Bush spoke October 4 with Al Arabiya television and answered questions concerning the War on Terror and the freedom of religion in the United States.

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U.S. Leads in Humanitarian Food Assistance

Key Players in Food Aid

More than half of the world's food aid comes from the United States. Getting food from U.S. farms to food aid recipients in the developing world can be a daunting and controversial task. Pulling off the complicated journey from fields to feeding centers calls into play a number of dis-

parate players, including international bodies, national legislatures, the agriculture industry and its lobbyists, nongovernmental organizations, and advocacy groups. And only a few major organizations provide guidance on the process. Who is involved and what laws and initiatives govern how the food is distributed?

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID): USAID, which operates the Food for Peace program, is the lead U.S. government agency providing humanitarian food assistance to developing countries. The program marked its 50th year in 2004. It was initially created as a way to

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Bush Says Islam Is a “Great Religion that Preaches . . .

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Muslim extremists have “done a good job of propagandizing” the idea that Americans do not like the Islamic faith, Bush said, stating his own belief that the global community, regardless of individual faiths, “prays to the same God.”

The president later hosted an iftar event at the White House, celebrating the daily breaking of the fast observed by Muslims during the month of Ramadan.

“I believe that Islam is a great religion that preaches peace,” Bush said, and Americans are free “to worship any way they see fit.”

“You can be free to worship, and it’s your choice to make. It’s not the state’s choice, and you shouldn’t be intimidated after you’ve made your choice,” Bush said, adding that religious freedom is “a right that I jealously guard.” (See related article ([english&y=2007&m=September&x=20070919144138esnam-fuak0.1800806 \).](http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

The president said he does not believe that those who murder innocent men, women and children for political objectives are “religious people,” whether they be suicide bombers in Iraq or self-proclaimed Christians such as Timothy McVeigh, who killed 168 people in a 1995 bombing in Oklahoma City.

“That’s not a Christian act to kill innocent people,” Bush said, and those who carried out the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks against New York and Washington “do not reflect the views of the vast majority of peaceful people in the Middle East.”

The president said “the last thing” he wants to be is a president during wartime and added the war against terror “is not a struggle against ... the Muslim religion.”

“It is a struggle of honorable, peaceful people throughout the

world against the few who want to impose their vision” upon them, he said.

“I think people, if given a chance, will seize freedom,” he said.

See transcripts of the president’s interview with Al Arabiya (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=texttrans-english&y=2007&m=October&x=20071005170532xjsnommis0.7430078>) and remarks at the White House iftar (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=texttrans-english&y=2007&m=October&x=20071005111959xjsnommis0.4339563>).

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U.S. Leads in Humanitarian Food . . .

(Continued from page 1)

stem hunger and malnutrition in some of the world’s poorest regions and to help the U.S. agriculture industry. The official mandate comes from Public Law 480, Title II. The law calls for USAID to make donations of aid to “cooperating sponsors,” such as nongovernmental organizations, in both emergency and long-term efforts in food assistance. Subsequent laws over the years have expanded and clarified this mission. In 2006, the United

States provided \$2.2 billion in food aid to 82 developing countries, making it the top provider of food aid in the world.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA): USDA is a close partner with USAID in carrying out the U.S. government’s food aid programs, but it focuses more on the agribusiness aspects of humanitarian food assistance, both for U.S. producers and for agribusiness in developing countries. USDA is responsible for international trade agreements and

negotiations on food aid as well. USDA’s international experts are based in more than 90 countries, and there are also agricultural trade offices in key markets to serve U.S. exporters and foreign buyers.

United Nations: The primary players here are the U.N. World Food Program (WFP), the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and the U.N. Development Program (UNDP). Any ap-

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President Bush's Remarks at White House Iftar

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
October 4, 2007

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT IFTAAR DINNER

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you all for coming. Please be seated. Ramadan Mubarak. Laura and I are pleased to have you here for our seventh Iftar dinner. Tonight we celebrate traditions of Islamic faith, which brings hope and comfort to more than a billion people. For Muslims around the world, the holy month of Ramadan is a special time of prayer and fasting. It is a time for charity and service to those less fortunate. It's a time to celebrate Islam's learned and vibrant culture, which has enriched civilization for centuries.

Ramadan is also a good time for Americans of all faiths to reflect on the values we hold in common -- including love of family, gratitude to the Almighty, devotion to community, and a commitment to religious liberty. The freedom of worship is central to the American character. It's the first protection in the Bill of Rights. It holds together the fabric of American society -- supporting every individual's right to practice his or her beliefs without fear.

Today, our world is at war with violent extremists who seek to tear the fabric of our society -- and stop the advance of freedom in Muslim societies around the world. They attack holy sites, destroy mosques and minarets, and kill innocent men, women and children -- including Muslims who do not share their radical views. They believe that by spreading chaos and violence they can frustrate the desire of Muslims to live in freedom and peace. We say to them, you don't represent Muslims, you do not represent Islam -- and you will not succeed.

America is standing with mainstream citizens across the broader Middle East. We stand with nearly 12 million Iraqis who voted for a democratic future for their children. We're standing with Afghan people, as they defend their young democracy against the Taliban and al

donesia and Sri Lanka and Thailand. We're rallying the world to confront the genocide in Sudan, and deliver humanitarian aid for those in dire need. And we support the establishment of a Palestinian democracy to live side by side with Israel in peace.



President Bush speaks during the Iftar Dinner with Ambassadors and Muslim Leaders in the State Dining Room of the White House in Washington, Oct. 4, 2007
(AP Images)

Qaeda. We're standing with the Lebanese people, who raised the banner of a Cedar Revolution to reclaim their freedom and independence. We're standing with all who seek the blessings of liberty -- and the peace that freedom brings.

Americans have a history of standing with Muslims facing suffering and hardship -- and it's a proud history. Our country defended Muslims in Bosnia and Kosovo after the breakup of Yugoslavia. We supported Kuwait after it was invaded by Saddam Hussein. Americans came to the aid of victims of devastating earthquakes in Pakistan, India, and Iran. Americans responded with urgency and compassion to the wreckage of the tsunami in In-

As you break your Ramadan fast at this Iftar dinner, let us renew our faith in the universality of freedom. Let us celebrate the millions of Muslims that we are proud to call American citizens. And let us honor the many Muslim nations that America is proud to call friends.

Laura and I are grateful you're here. Thank you for coming. We wish you a blessed Ramadan. And now I ask the Imam to say the blessing.

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U.S. Leads in Humanitarian Food . . .

(Continued from page 2)

peal for emergency food aid — for earthquake victims or refugees of civil war — will more than likely come from the World Food Program, the best known of the U.N. family of hunger agencies. It is the first responder in the world of food aid.

The WFP, which is based in Rome, distributes food assistance to nearly 88 million people, with about one-third of that going to development projects and the remaining two-thirds going to emergencies and relief and recovery operations. The WFP works with multilateral and bilateral groups, individual countries, corporations, and foundations to collect and distribute food and other commodities.

The other U.N. organizations focus on the underlying causes — and solutions to — food insecurity. The FAO works on identifying and reversing the causes of world hunger in rural areas. It helps countries modernize their agriculture sectors so that they will be able to feed their people. The Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal (CSSD), which was established by FAO, attempts to properly dispose of surplus food by facilitating donations to countries where the food is needed and can be of use without disruptions to the normal flow of commerce in those countries.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development provides low-interest loans and grants to fund these sorts of agriculture improvements. To date, the figure amounts to about \$10 billion invested in rural agriculture projects. The UNDP works on a number of development issues, with combating food insecurity being one part.

Nongovernmental Organizations/Private Voluntary Organizations (NGOs/PVOs): NGOs and PVOs play leading roles in feeding the hungry

Businesses and Foundations: Increasingly, national and international corporations are promoting their work — or the work of their foundations — in combating world hunger. Corporate social responsibility is the catch-phrase to describe such efforts, which typically provide needed goods and expertise in developing countries. Well known are a few big foundations such as the Rockefeller Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Some companies have found mechanisms that allow them to



Bags of U.S. cornmeal. The United States ships millions of tons of food aid to Africa each year.
(Jason Beaubien)

in emergency and nonemergency situations. Their workers are the ones television viewers typically see on site in some dangerous or dire situations, passing out food aid to those in need. Some of the better-known outfits are Catholic Relief Services, CARE, Oxfam, and World Vision, but dozens of similar organizations with lower profiles work in countries where food security is perilous.

partner with governments and with bilateral and multilateral organizations to help spread their largess. Land O'Lakes, a leading U.S. farmer-owned cooperative, works with USAID, for example. Volunteers in its Southern Africa Farmer-to-Farmer program provide agricultural and business expertise in Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, and Zambia. Land O'Lakes volunteers work also in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Russia.

Guiding Agreements

Food Aid Convention (FAC): The Food Aid Convention, agreed to in

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U.S. Leads in Humanitarian Food . . .

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1967, is set for reauthorization in 2007. The FAC has been reauthorized a number of times over its lifetime. The pact addresses cooperation among 23 large food aid donor countries and sets minimum donation levels that are intended to ensure enough food for people in developing countries who need it. It is run by the London-based International Grains Council, which is responsible for keeping statistics on the amount of food aid donated and where it is going.

World Trade Organization (WTO): WTO members have yet to come to an agreement on how that body will address food aid. The latest round of negotiations has been suspended, with food aid reform as one of the points of contention.

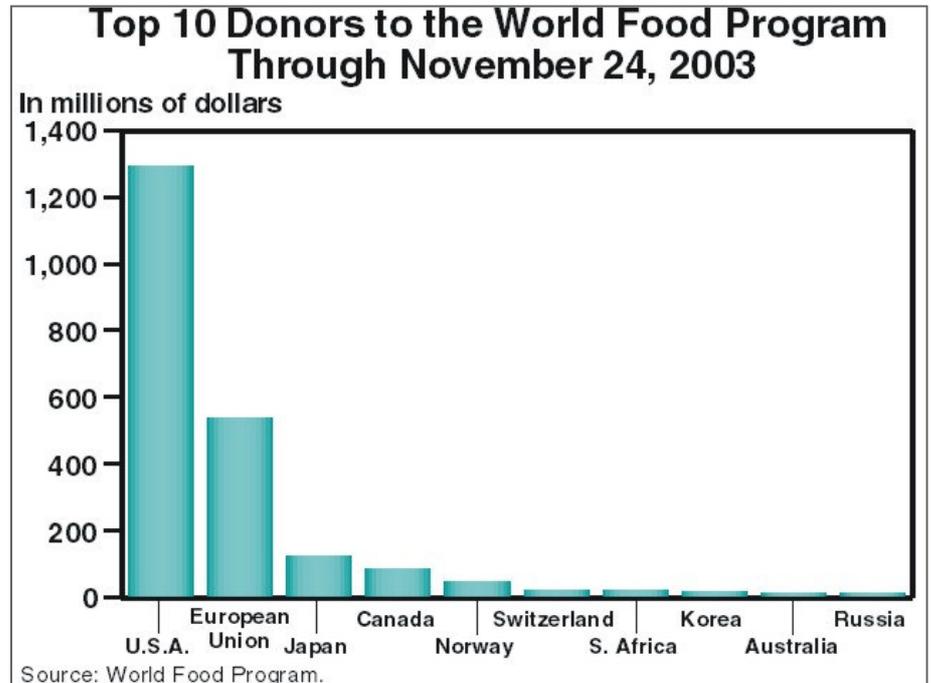
Commitments for Future Progress

U.N. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): The first of the U.N.'s Millennium Development Goals calls for eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. Specifically, the goals call for a reduction by half of the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. This and seven other MDGs were created at the beginning of 2000 by U.N. member nations in an effort to begin the new century with an ambitious plan to improve the world. The target date for the hunger and all other goals to be met is 2015.

At the end of 2006, progress was measurable but slow. Even though hunger rates (a measure of the percentage of people who suffer from chronic hunger) have dropped, the actual number of people who are hungry has increased. The goals and deadline are meant to encour-

age wealthier countries to take meaningful steps to help poor countries defeat hunger within their borders.

Presidential Initiative to End Hunger in Africa: This initiative from the United States was announced in 2003. It is part of the U.S. effort to meet commitments made at G8



G8 Initiative: In 2004, the Group of Eight industrialized countries (G8) — the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the United Kingdom — made promises to address hunger in countries on the African continent with some of the direst situations, particularly in the Horn of Africa. The approach is three-pronged: provide a safety net for communities that routinely face food insecurity, improve global response to food crises on the continent, and boost agriculture production in rural areas of Africa. The goal is to end famine in the Horn of Africa by 2009. G8 summits in 2005, 2006, and 2007 included progress updates on the effort. In 2005, in particular, the world's richest countries addressed development in Africa.

summits to address the issue. Under this initiative, the United States, through USAID, is working on agriculture reform in sub-Saharan Africa under the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Program.

- Compiled by Angela Rucker, USAID

The above article appears in the September issue of the State Department's electronic journal. The entire issue, U.S. Food Aid: Reducing World Hunger, can be viewed at <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/ites/0907/ijee/ijee0907.htm>

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U.S. House Passes Historic Ramadan Resolution



Congressman Keith Ellison, co-sponsor of Ramadan resolution, looks at the Quran once used by Thomas Jefferson. (AP Images)

By Lea Terhune
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington – A resolution recognizing the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and expressing the "deepest respect to Muslims in the United States and throughout the world" was adopted in the U.S. House of Representatives October 2 by a vote of 376-0.

The resolution acknowledging the importance of Muslims in America, the first of its kind, was introduced by Texas Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson and co-sponsored by 30 legislators, including Representative Keith Ellison of Minnesota. Ellison is the first Muslim to be elected to the U.S. Congress. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2007&m=January&x=20070104154843ndybl ehs0.6852838>)).

"It's a sign of respect and recognition. It's a very American thing to do. We are a nation of religious tolerance and religious inclusion," Ellison told USINFO.

"The basic idea is to demonstrate not only to the Muslim world but to the whole world that the U.S. Congress is a place where all faiths are respected, all faiths are recognized, where we embrace our diversity and where we believe that the promise of America is that you may seek the Divine as you see fit within your own judgment, and in your own tradition and in your own way," he said.

California's Brad Sherman, who strongly supported the bill, said when presenting the resolution for discussion and a vote on the floor of the House: "The observance of Ramadan requires devotion to faith, community and family, truly universal values we all share." He said it is "appropriate and necessary" for Congress to recognize the observance to express "the deep respect we all feel for Muslims in the United States and around the world."

The author of the bill, Eddie Bernice Johnson, told the House, "The Muslim American community contributes to the vibrant growth of American society and culture. Muslim Americans play a significant role in our nation's political process, economic growth, scientific development, free enterprise, religious tolerance, law enforcement and homeland security."

"American pluralistic ideals, democratic institutions and multiculturalism are expanded and strengthened by the contribution of Muslim American civic participation," she said, adding, "During this holy

month, I'd like to say Ramadan Mubarak to all Muslims." Ellison told legislators that as a Muslim observing Ramadan, "I can tell you it is a time of reflection, a time of renewal, and regeneration," adding, "It's important to reassess your life, to contemplate your role in society and to benefit your neighbor."

He described a joint breakfast held in this spirit by his mosque and Temple Israel in Minneapolis on the Jewish holiday Yom Kippur that drew 160 people. "We didn't have enough chairs for everybody, but we had enough food because we shared it ... showing again that we're not too far apart."

New Jersey's Bill Pascrell pointed out features Islam has in common with other faiths and said, "It should be imperative for all of us non-Muslims to learn about this faith, which too often has been misunderstood and mischaracterized."

"As the grandson of immigrants, I know true assimilation means preserving traditions while achieving success. I am in awe at how quickly the Muslim-American community has mastered both," Texas Representative Nick Lampson said, attributing their success to "shared values of hard work, discipline, community, family and culture."

The resolution reiterates support for American Muslims in the face of hate crimes, and maintains a strong stand against intolerance. "May Ramadan this year truly be a time when Muslims and people of all faiths embrace freedom and tolerance for all, and reject violence and extremism," said Texas Representative Ted Poe.

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Ramadan Is Time for Getting To Know Muslims in America

By Carolee Walker
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- The image of American life often held outside the United States differs from the real experiences of Muslims in America, says Imam Mohamad Bashar Arafat.

Visitors to the United States who interact with Americans see respect for Islam and Muslims' lives and practices, Arafat said in an October 5 USINFO Webchat.

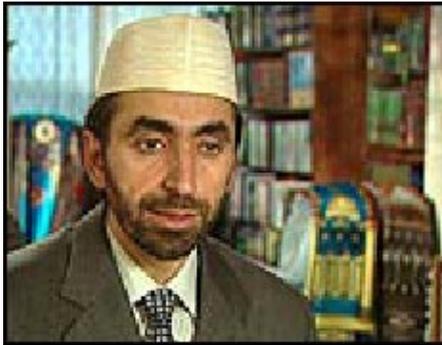
This is especially true during Ramadan, the Muslim holy month of fasting and reflection, as many Muslim communities in the United States open their homes and mosques to neighbors for nightly iftars to break the daily fasts, and interfaith centers, churches and synagogues co-sponsor charity drives with Muslim organizations. Even the president hosts iftars attended by prominent Muslims and average U.S. citizens. (See related transcript (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=texttrans-english&y=2007&m=October&x=20071005111959xjsnommis0.4339563>).

During the month of Ramadan, which this year ends on October 12 or 13, depending on the sighting of the moon, Muslims refrain from eating or drinking during daylight hours and break their fast at iftars after sunset.

In the United States today, Arafat said, mosques and Islamic centers use the month of Ramadan to reach out to their fellow American citizens and to build bridges with the community at large.

"It is wonderful to see the strength of social and family ties and the

generosity and commitment during Ramadan within the community to conduct food drives, donate sadaqah [charitable gifts], sponsor orphans and increase their involvement in each other's charitable



Imam Mohamad Bashar Arafat

work," Arafat said. In predominately Muslim countries, restaurants are closed during Ramadan and people refrain from eating in the streets, Arafat said.

In America life goes on as normal during Ramadan, Arafat said. Although it can be challenging observing Ramadan in the United States where only several million people out of 300 million are Muslim, Arafat said, there are no laws preventing people from practicing their faith in the United States.

"Muslims are free to practice their religion in America," Arafat said. Some Muslims may face challenges due to their work schedules or professions but most employers make accommodations. During Ramadan, many companies adjust work schedules and lunch hours and allow employees to take vacations particularly during the last 10 days of Ramadan, Arafat said.

Young children are not required to fast during Ramadan, according to Arafat, but "young Muslim children

in America feel proud that they are fasting."

Sometimes, Muslim students in public schools bring dates with them to introduce to their classmates. Traditionally, dates are the first food Muslims eat when they break the evening fast. Muslim children often make special presentations in their classes about Ramadan, and some Muslim parents allow their children to have iftar parties and invite both Muslim and non-Muslim friends.

Many American schools allow fasting students to spend lunchtime in the library or a study hall instead of the school cafeteria and some allow students to take a day off for Eid al-Fitr, Arafat noted. Eid al-Fitr is an especially festive break-the-fast celebration on the last day of Ramadan.

Students on university campuses who may be observing Ramadan away from home for the first time are offered support from Muslim student associations and campus imams. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=September&x=20070914141043bcrek-law0.5827448>).

Arafat served for nearly 10 years as the imam for the Muslim Student Association at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, where he noticed a surge in interfaith activities each year during Ramadan.

Arafat said women are free to wear the hijab, or traditional headscarf, in the United States, where freedom of expression is guaranteed by the Constitution, and many Muslim

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U.S. House Passes Historic Ramadan . . .

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A hate crime is "a violation of law, it's a violation of our culture and a violation of the American way of life," Ellison said later.

American Muslim reaction to the resolution is "overwhelmingly positive," according to Corey Saylor of the Council on American-Islamic Relations. "It's a sign that Muslims in America are growing in their recognition as being part of the mainstream fabric of the United States."

"America is a pluralistic society, and it welcomes all different faiths, but it's up to each of those different faiths to assert itself in the public sphere, and what this resolution does is shows that American Mus-

lims are learning more and more how to assert themselves in the public sphere," he said. Executive Director of the Muslim



The Quran which was once owned by Thomas Jefferson. (AP Images)

Public Affairs Council Salam Al-Marayati said, "It's definitely a milestone for America and a positive

reinforcement for the tradition of religious pluralism in our country," which has been a haven for diverse religious minorities. "It's a sign of reassurance and a sign of inclusion and a sign of social harmony, and people are very pleased with the resolution for having accomplished these things."

The House resolution, "Recognizing Commencement of Ramadan and Commending Muslims for Their Faith," Ellison said, shows "solidarity between America and the Muslim community across the world."

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Ramadan Is Time for Getting To Know Muslims . . .

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women in America feel they are providing an example of the "true Muslim woman."

Muslim women in the United States see themselves living in a comfortable environment where they do not have to compromise their faith, Arafat said. Yet, as teachers, doctors, engineers, business owners and mothers -- in addition to being involved in other fields and professions -- Muslim women do not need to refrain from using the talents they were blessed with by Allah, according to the imam.

"America is a society where Muslim women do not feel restricted," Arafat said.

Arafat is the president of the Islamic Affairs Council of Maryland and the founder and president of Civilizations Exchange and Cooperation Foundation.

(USINFO is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S.

Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)◆



Muslim men bow in prayer on Madison Avenue in New York. (Emile Wamsteker / AP Photo)

Ramadan Fosters Community Interaction on U.S. College Campuses

By Stephen Kaufman
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Although Muslim students are a minority on U.S. college campuses, some are finding that their observance of Ramadan not only is a special time for their community to interact, but also an opportunity to reach out to their non-Muslim friends and classmates in the spirit of interfaith dialogue.

Students from Georgetown University in Washington told USINFO they were pleasantly surprised to find an energetic Muslim Students' Association (MSA) on campus that



Imam Yahya Hendi, right, chats with students at an iftar at Georgetown University in Washington September 13, the first night of Ramadan. (Janine Sides/State Dept.)

actively seeks their participation in campus activities and prayers during the holy month.

Before she came to Georgetown from her native Karachi, Pakistan, Nimrah Karim initially worried she would be observing Ramadan "in my dorm room alone eating a bagel or cereal" to break her fast each evening.

But Asra Ashfaq, who is Georgetown's current MSA president, said the organization makes it a point to identify incoming Muslim students

to encourage their involvement in its activities, including its evening iftars to break the day's fast. Currently, there are about 450 Muslims enrolled at Georgetown out of more than 14,000 students.

"I didn't realize there would be many Muslims around me who would be fasting or wanting to eat with me. ... I was completely wrong when it came to my impressions of what it would be like," Karim said, reflecting that Ramadan on campus became an occasion where "we got to see each other so often that I never felt alone and I never felt that I was experiencing the experience on my own as I had feared."

While the class schedules do not change during Ramadan, the students adjust their own daily schedules, especially by getting up early in the morning so they can eat before sunrise. Ashfaq said many then "stay up instead of going back to sleep ...

so they can get some of their work done," preferring to find time later in the day to sleep.

Upperclassman Reaz Mehdi said many Muslims also change their gym workout schedule to either early morning or later at night. "It just has to shift with when you have energy," he said.

He said he finds it difficult to concentrate on class work until later at night "when I start to get more sugar in my blood," but added, "It takes a lot of discipline but we do it

as a community, so that really helps. ... It keeps us motivated."

STUDENTS SHOULD AVOID BEING IN A "MUSLIM BUBBLE"

Many of the students' non-Muslim friends and classmates knew very little about Islam or Ramadan when they first came to the university. Karim related that when Ramadan began during her first year on campus, many of her friends expressed dismay that they no longer could eat lunch together as usual.

"It seemed like something hard for them to put up with, not only with me as a friend fasting but also just to be able to conceptualize just what Ramadan was or fasting was to them," she said.

Fellow student Saad Omar found that the observance of Ramadan was "very intriguing" to his classmates, and was encouraged by their response when he told them that many Muslims fast in order to share the experience of the very poor, who often must go without food.

"I think it's something that is popular amongst the community and I think there's a dynamic relationship when you hear from people from different faiths. The way they talk about Ramadan and the way they understand it ... increases your own understanding," he said.

He encourages other Muslim students to be open about their faith, saying that when living on a college campus where the majority of the people are not Muslim "you can't go into a little Muslim bubble" during Ramadan and not interact with other groups.

"Because you're fasting and be-

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U.S. Africa Command at Initial Operating Capability

U.S. Africa Command Stuttgart, Germany

Press Release 08-001
October 1, 2007

New commander declares initial stand-up of U.S. Africa Command

Washington, DC – U.S. Africa Command, or AFRICOM, officially stood up today when its commander, General William E. “Kip” Ward, declared the organization had reached an “initial operating capability” (IOC) to start functioning as the Pentagon’s newest regionally-focused headquarters.

Nominated by President Bush in July, Ward was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on September 28 as AFRICOM’s first commander.

AFRICOM’s IOC marks a realignment of the U.S. Defense Department’s regional command structure, creating one headquarters staff that is responsible to the Secretary of Defense for U.S. military relations with 53 countries on the African continent. For its first year, AFRICOM will operate under U.S. European Command (EUCOM), which currently has responsibility for the bulk of U.S.-African military relationships, as it progressively accepts oversight of the many programs and activities that the U.S. military conducts with African nations. AFRICOM is projected to become a fully operational unified command by October 2008.

Since February 2007, a team of military and civilian specialists in Stuttgart, Germany has been designing the organizational structure and developing mission focus areas for AFRICOM. The team, currently about 120 members, now represents the core staff of AFRICOM, and will continue to grow over the

next year to fill out the new headquarters design.

Unlike traditional military commands, the AFRICOM headquarters structure integrates staff members from other parts of the U.S. government, primarily the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), which lead U.S. policy and development efforts in Africa. One of Ward’s two deputies will be Ambas-



*General William E. "Kip" Ward
U.S. Africa Command*

sador Mary Carlin Yates, a senior State Department official and former ambassador to Ghana who has been named as the Deputy to the Commander for Civil-Military Activities. Ward’s military deputy will be Navy Vice Admiral Robert T. Moeller, who has been named Deputy to the Commander for Military Operations.

Ward told the U.S. Senate in late September that AFRICOM will seek to work closely with the African Union, with regional African institutions, and with individual nations. Rather than take a leadership role on the continent, he said AFRICOM will seek to provide unique “value-added” capabilities to enhance al-

ready existing U.S. and international programs.

“A fundamental focus of the AFRICOM Commander’s engagement should include careful consideration of what our partners need from the U.S. to help them develop to meet their stated needs,” Ward said September 27 in written responses to questions by the Senate Armed Services Committee.

“Just as EUCOM focused on security cooperation activities with African nations, so too will AFRICOM continue developing capabilities of African nations to help solidify our relations, achieve our mutual goals, and provide a bright future full of promise and opportunity for Africans everywhere,” Ward told the Senate. He stressed that “AFRICOM’s exercises, training, and humanitarian assistance efforts across the continent must occur in ways that demonstrate value-added through its existence.”

More information is available on the U.S. Africa Command Website: www.africom.mil

For more information, Contact the U.S. Africa Command Public Affairs Office in Stuttgart, Germany, at +49-711-729-4714 or 4711. Email: PublicOutreach@africom.mil

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

Mozambique-U.S. Relationship “Excellent”

Relations between the United States and Mozambique are excellent, the U.S. ambassador-designate to that country told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee October 3.

William R. Steiger said the recent visit to Mozambique by first lady Laura Bush, the signing of the Millennium Challenge Compact in July and the recent visit by U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Michael O. Leavitt to Mozambique, shows the strength of the U.S.-Mozambique bilateral relationship.

In the past 15 years, Mozambique has seen “real democratic advancement” and “remarkable economic growth that has earned it the respect and support of international financial institutions,” he told the lawmakers.

Despite such progress, however, Mozambique still must “aggressively address the devastating reality of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases,” Steiger said.

“Helping Mozambique fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic, malaria and tuberculosis are among the U.S. government’s highest priorities,” he continued.

Following is the text of Steiger’s statement to the committee, as prepared for delivery:

STATEMENT OF DR. WILLIAM R. STEIGER

UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO MOZAMBIQUE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

October 03, 2007

Chairman Biden, Ranking Member Lugar, and distinguished members of this Committee: It is a privilege and an honor to appear before you today as you consider my nomination to serve as Ambassador to the

Ever since the United States helped broker the 1992 peace accords that ended 16 years of civil war, relations between our two countries have been excellent. Now our relationship is even closer and more robust, as demonstrated by the June 2007 visit of First Lady Laura Bush, then the signing of a Millennium Challenge Compact in July, and, finally, the August visit of



Mrs. Laura Bush and Ms. Jenna Bush meet with Mozambique's President Armando Guebuza and his wife Mrs. Maria da Luz Dai Guebuza Wednesday, June 27, 2007, at the Presidency in Maputo, Mozambique. The visit came on the second day of a four-nation, Africa tour. (White House photo by Shealah Craighead)

Republic of Mozambique. I am grateful for the President’s nomination, and for the support of Secretary Rice, and I want to thank the Committee for granting me this hearing. If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working with this Committee and the many others in Congress who are interested in Mozambique’s progress.

Health and Human Services Secretary Leavitt.

That staff members from this very Committee have visited Mozambique in recent weeks further emphasizes the increasing importance and dynamics of U.S.-Mozambique relations. The past fifteen years have seen real democratic advance-

(Continued on page 13)

U.S. Agencies Ramp Up Science, Technical Collaboration in Libya

By Cheryl Pellerin
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- A year after renewal of U.S.-Libyan diplomatic relations, scientists from technical agencies in both nations are moving forward on a range of collaborations.

Activities include health care delivery, water management, seismic monitoring, solar power technology and science education. Nearly four years after Libya's historic renunciation of weapons of mass destruction, the United States also is preparing to negotiate a framework science and technology cooperation agreement with Libya to facilitate new and ongoing collaborations.

The first collaboration took place March 29, 2006, when a NASA-led science expedition traveled to Tripoli, Libya, and then the Sahara to witness and study a total solar eclipse with Libyan scientists and other researchers from across the globe.

Libya's efforts "to build goodwill, demonstrate its commitment to join the international community, and join in the fight against terrorism encouraged the United States to collaborate with Tripoli on science and technology matters," said Paula Dobriansky, under secretary of state for democracy and global affairs, in a statement read during the September 20 premiere of a film about the collaboration.

NASA and the State Department funded and coordinated the expedition.

"I am happy that [U.S.-Libyan] relations have moved, maybe not very

fast, but steadily," Ambassador Ali Suleiman Aujali, charge d'affaires at the Libyan Embassy in Washington, said at the premiere. "Technical cooperation is very important. Libya is a small country -- infrastructure is important, education is important,

public health system to prepare it for possible outbreaks of pandemic flu or another infectious disease.

In 2007, Jane Coury, Health and Human Services program officer for the pandemic influenza grant, told



A solar power plant in the Mojave Desert uses mirrored panels to concentrate the sun's rays.
(AP Images)

communication is important. American people, American companies, American media also, they can play a very important role."

SHARING SCIENCE

In 2006, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the National Center for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control of the Libyan General People's Committee for Health and the Environment signed a letter of intent to cooperate. That agreement resulted in a \$1 million grant to enhance Libya's

USINFO that Libya sought and received a \$250,000 supplemental grant to continue strengthening its public health infrastructure.

The elements of such an infrastructure, Coury said, include a disease surveillance system, staff members trained in epidemiology and surveillance, a good laboratory system to test specimens and a good data system for feeding local information to top health officials.

"We're soon going to have Centers
(Continued on page 15)

Mozambique-U.S. Relationship . . .

(Continued from page 11)

ment in Mozambique. The country is a multi-party democracy under the constitution of 1990, and in 1994 Mozambique held its first democratic elections. Provincial elections are planned for January 2008, to be followed by municipal elections, and then Presidential and legislative elections in 2009. Recent elections in Mozambique have been judged as generally free and fair by the Carter Center and international observers, and if confirmed I pledge to help ensure future elections are transparent and open to all political parties, so that Mozambique can secure and enjoy a position among the world's functioning democracies.

Additionally, Mozambique has enjoyed remarkable economic growth by pursuing policies that have earned it the respect and support of international financial institutions. Despite remaining one of the world's poorest countries, Mozambique's Gross Domestic Product per capita has more than tripled since the conclusion of the peace accords. If confirmed, I will work to encourage an open and favorable business climate necessary to attract foreign direct investment and responsible economic stewardship that will bring further prosperity to the country.

Although Mozambique has enjoyed political and economic improvement, it must also aggressively address the devastating reality of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases. Nationwide HIV prevalence is now greater than 16 percent within Mo-

zambique's adult population. It is extremely troubling that the number of new infections each year still appears to be increasing. Malaria also takes a huge economic and human toll in Mozambique. The disease is responsible for an estimated 40 percent of all outpatient visits to health facilities and for some 60 percent of admissions to hospital of children. There are as many as six million cases of malaria each year in Mozambique--a country with a population of just under 20 million. Helping Mozambique fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic, malaria, and tuberculosis are among the U.S. Government's highest priorities.

Mozambique is currently one of only two nations in the world that is a focus country for both the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) and has also signed a Millennium Challenge Compact. Mozambique's MCC compact includes a \$204 million Water/Sanitation Project over five years, aimed at providing fresh-drinking water and curbing the incidence of malaria, and also includes a five-year \$176 million project for road construction and rehabilitation. Because the MCC and our Mozambican partners realize that improved roadways mean greater movements of people, the road construction and rehabilitation project will also develop HIV/AIDS-awareness programs along heavily traveled routes to educate people in disease prevention.

In brief, because of the size of these investments, the U.S. is the largest bilateral donor to Mozam-

bique. Mozambique is among the top recipients of U.S. Government assistance in Africa, and is also one of the top ten recipients of U.S. assistance worldwide. Mr. Chairman, since 2000, I have gained much experience coordinating our international programs and policies at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Such experience has provided me with the knowledge and insight to advocate for our Government's goals in Mozambique while helping fortify and expand the successes we've already achieved through our considerable efforts.

My service on the interagency steering groups for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the President's Malaria Initiative, as well as my time as the U.S. Representative on the Board of Directors of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, have given me an intimate understanding and knowledge of some of our largest investments in Mozambique and the challenges associated in realizing them.

Finally, my fluency in Portuguese will enable me to interface with Mozambicans on a more personal level than a non-lusophone. However, I am sure my Brazilian accent will be the source of good-natured humor at my expense. If confirmed, I will work diligently with the Mozambican Government on the transnational and regional issues most important to the United States. Mozambique has signed all of the United Nations counter-terrorism conventions and has allied itself

(Continued on page 24)

Successful Future for Namibia Important to United States

The United States can play a "critical role" in the success of Namibia's future, the U.S. ambassador-designate to that country, Denise Mathieu, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee October 3.

Mathieu identified three key areas where the United States can help:

President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, known as PEPFAR, which is projected to grow to \$104 million in 2008, up from \$97 million the previous year;

The successful conclusion of a Millennium Challenge Corporation compact agreement currently under negotiation that could lead to the investment of approximately \$275 million in Namibia's agricultural, tourism and educational sectors; and

The consolidation of Namibia's democratic gains and enhancement of its economic development goals.

Following is the text of Mathieu's statement, as prepared for delivery:

**STATEMENT OF DENNISE MATHIEU
AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO
NAMIBIA
BEFORE THE U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
October 3, 2007**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am pleased and honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to serve as Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia. I sincerely appreciate the confidence in me that the President and Secretary Rice have shown by putting forth my name for your consideration.

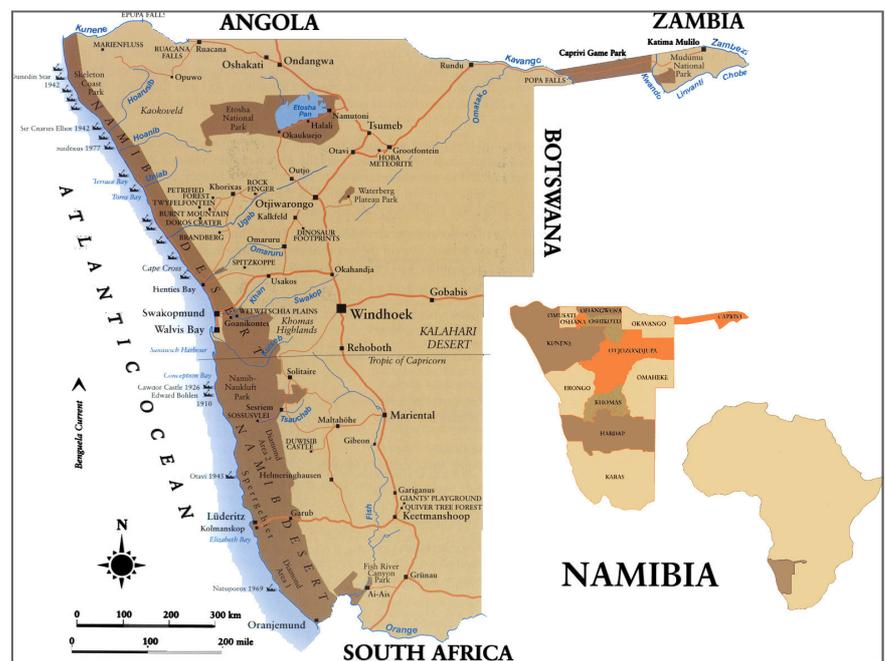
I am here this morning with my husband, Erick.

Mr. Chairman,

During my assignments over the past 10 years as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Niger, Deputy Chief of Mission in Accra, and Deputy Director of West African Affairs, I was committed to strengthening democratic processes; advancing economic development,

Sustained and well-tailored American engagement will help ensure that Namibia remains on a positive course.

Today, I would like to focus on three areas where the United States can play a critical role in the success of Namibia's future. First, I am pleased to note that funding for Namibia under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, also known as PEPFAR, is projected to



trade and investment; and building cooperation on law enforcement and security matters in Africa. If confirmed, I will continue this work with dedication.

Since independence from apartheid South Africa in 1990, Namibia has pursued a path of democracy and free market economics. As Namibia struggles to address multiple challenges, unexpected events and historical ties could lead it down a very different path in the future. While our cooperative efforts and assistance programs are essential, our diplomatic skills are also needed to keep Namibia's doors open to the United States and our interests.

grow to \$104 million, up from \$91 million in FY07. This funding will continue to support Namibia's own efforts to mitigate the suffering and enormous cost to society caused by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Namibia has an estimated 19.7 percent HIV/AIDS prevalence rate, one of the highest in the world, which dramatically undermines economic growth and social progress. While Tuberculosis is the leading direct cause of death in Namibia, an estimated 60 percent of TB patients are co-infected with HIV/AIDS. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will ensure that all mission activities are complementary and mutually reinforcing in or-

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U.S. Agencies Ramp Up Science, Technical Collaboration . . .

(Continued from page 12)

for Disease Control staff assigned to do global disease detection [at the U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit No. 3] in Cairo [Egypt], and they will provide technical assistance on site in Libya," Coury added. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=January&x=20070125113122lcnirellep0.3603327>).

To help Libya develop clean sources of power generation, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is sending a team of experts from its National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado to collaborate on concentrating solar power.

Many power plants use fossil fuels as a heat source to boil water and generate steam that rotates a large turbine that activates a generator that produces electricity. Concentrated solar power systems use mirrors that focus the sun to heat liquids to produce steam.

"Where humidity is relatively low and there are lots of sunny days, concentrated solar is an effective technology for producing energy," John Mizroch, principal deputy assistant secretary at DOE for energy efficiency and renewable energy, told USINFO, "and Libya is a very suitable country for these technologies."

The Libyans, he added, would like to use the technology for power generation and water desalination.

EARTH AND SKY

In the exploratory stage is a project involving the Libyan Center for Remote Sensing and Space Science in Tripoli and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to upgrade one of the seismic stations in Libya's national network for inclusion in the U.S. Global Seismographic Network (GSN).

The global network, with 128 seismographic stations in more than 80 countries on all continents, provides coverage for earthquake monitoring and worldwide reporting and research and monitors nuclear explosions worldwide.

"The GSN would benefit from having a station in Northern Africa," William Leith, USGS associate coordinator for the GSN, told USINFO, "and Libya is almost perfectly situated in terms of its geographic location to improve the network's coverage."

Potential areas of cooperation, said Michael Foose, USGS regional specialist for Africa and the Middle East, include "remote sensing as applied to monitoring land use and land change, and we have the capacity to work with them to develop tools to monitor their coastal environment" and the nation's southern regions.

In another area of science, researchers worldwide -- with help from the United Nations and NASA -- are working with Libyan scientists through the International Heliophysical Year 2007, an international pro-

gram to unite the science community from all U.N. member states to study the Earth, the sun and the solar system as one system.

Through the program, said Joseph Davila, an astrophysicist at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland who was part of NASA's Libyan solar eclipse expedition, scientists from research institutions in the United States, Switzerland and many other countries collaborate with Libyan and other scientists to place space physics and geophysics instruments in local institutions.

The instruments will become part of global observatories to measure things like Earth's ionosphere and solar physics.

"During the coming year, there will be two more installations of instruments in Libya," Davila said, "and that follows on successful installations we already have in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia."

More information (http://www.nasa.gov/vision/earth/everydaylife/eclipse_libya.html) about the NASA-State Department solar eclipse expedition to Libya is available on the NASA Web site.

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Namibian Musicians Bring Traditional Music to Washington

By Louise Fenner
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Audience members usually do not dance during concerts at Washington's Kennedy Center, but by the time Ounongo Pamwe -- an ensemble of some of Namibia's finest musicians -- played its final number, about 100 people, joyfully swaying to the music, filled the space in front of the stage.

sponsored visit to Washington, Baltimore and New York City. They are in the United States to promote Namibian traditional music and learn how American institutions preserve traditional music and foster new talent. They also want to meet American artists and musicians, particularly those involved in the fight against AIDS.

Kaujeua and Papa (Ndasuunje) Shikongeni are the band's coordina-

not from the same band, but we came together backing each other, and it's just beautiful."

Namibian Ambassador Patrick Nandago, who hosted a luncheon at the embassy for the band, told the concert audience the musicians "show our culture in all its diversities." It is through cultural exchanges like this, he said, that "our people get to know one another better."

Among the band's favorite stops in Washington were the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, a secondary school for talented young musicians and artists, and the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage.

"I want to learn about the real American culture and music, not the hip-hop or other kind of music they always show on TV," Wahengo told USINFO. "I want to see the original American cultural music." On television in Namibia, he said, "you only see [rapper] Snoop Dogg and the other young guys. I was thinking America is just those guys, there's no traditional music."

In fact, many radio stations and music venues in the United States focus on jazz or traditional genres such as bluegrass, an onlooker noted. "Yes, that's what I'm finding out," Wahengo replied.

During the concert, the group played traditional Namibian music rearranged to give it an innovative style. Instruments included acoustic guitar, electric guitar and bass, congas, cymbals and snare drums, harmonica, egg shakers and a tambourine.

"We are trying to transform our tra-
(Continued on page 17)



Namibian musicians Axue, Jackson Kaujeua and Tunakie perform traditional music from their country October 6 at the Kennedy Center in Washington. Some 400 people attended the concert, including many Namibians wearing traditional garments. (Kennedy Center photo)

"It was a beautiful crowd," said ensemble member Jackson Kaujeua following the October 6 concert. "I just didn't know what to expect. It was amazing."

A standing-room crowd of about 400 heard the group perform on the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage. Perhaps a third of those in the audience were Namibians, many in traditional dress, and some had traveled from New York, Boston and elsewhere for the event.

The musicians were on the first leg of a 10-day State Department-

tors. The other musicians are Tunakie (Maria Uushona), Set-son Wahengo, Axue (Sebulon Gomachab) -- all Namibians -- and Manda Saize, a Zimbabwean. They sing in several Namibian languages including Otjiherero, Damara>Nama and Oshiwambo.

"It's what I call the melting pot of cultures," Kaujeua said of the various regions, cultures and musical forms represented by the band, which came together specifically for this tour. "It's like a pot you put on the fire; it's up to us to add different spices to the meat. ... We are

Namibian Musicians Bring Traditional Music to . . .

(Continued from page 16)

ditional music into modern using modern contemporary instruments," said Shikongeni. The group wants to raise awareness and respect for traditional music among young Namibians. "This is important," he said. "Music is our heritage."

Kaujeua, who is well-known for his participation in the Namibian independence struggle through his music, said foreign music has dominated the Namibian market, but "we've noticed in recent years that people are beginning to listen to their own thing, and in their own language."

Axue, for example, released a top-selling album in 2006 of modernized Damara music, and the Mighty

Dreads -- featuring Wahengo and Saize -- have created a popular new genre called Shambo, featuring traditional Oshiwambo music played with modern instruments.

Tunakie, the youngest in the band at age 24 and a popular singer and dancer among young Namibians, was a big draw for some in the Kennedy Center audience. "I just had to come," said Liz Jonas, a student at the University of Massachusetts, who drove from Boston. Jonas wore a traditional Ovambo scarf and dress and was one of the first people to start dancing during the concert.

"I love that Tunakie is singing the traditional music our grandmothers and great-grandmothers sang, but in a much more rhythmic way," she

said. "It's more energetic." "I love the message behind it," she added. "Respect your parents and your culture and know who you are."

Free Kennedy Center Millennium Stage concerts are held 365 days a year. Live and past performances -- including Ounongo Pamwe's October 6 concert -- can be viewed on the Millennium Stage (<http://www.kennedy-center.org/programs/millennium/>) Web site.

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Successful Future for Namibia Important to . . .

(Continued from page 14)

der to maximize the effective utilization of PEPFAR funds and other available resources, for the prevention, care and treatment of HIV/AIDS.

Secondly, it is in our interest to promote economic growth to help Namibia reach its full potential as a stable partner for the United States and the region.

Conclusion of a Millennium Challenge Corporation compact agreement, currently under negotiation, could lead to the investment of approximately \$275 million that would positively transform the Namibian agricultural, tourism, and educational sectors. Namibia has seized some opportunities offered by the African Growth and Opportunity

Act, and if confirmed, I would work to assist Namibia diversify its exports and derive even greater benefits. I would also focus on activities to advance the empowerment of women in an effort to accelerate Namibia's economic development.

Thirdly, it is essential that Namibia, a maturing democracy, consolidate its democratic gains and ensure that economic development takes root in a society that is justly ruled. The current government has expanded the political space for civil society to participate in shaping public policy and deterring corruption. If given the opportunity of leading our mission in Windhoek, I would work to foster future free and fair elections, good governance, and continued respect for human rights. A strong democracy in Namibia would serve as a regional model.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, if confirmed, I will use every opportunity to strengthen U.S.-Namibia cooperation, roll back the pandemic of HIV/AIDS, bolster democratic institutions, and promote economic prosperity, including opportunities for American businesses. I will also fully commit myself to the protection of American citizens and interests in Namibia.

Thank you for inviting me to appear before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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

Opposing Viewpoints Enjoy Free Expression in the United States

By Lea Terhune
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- The bitterest opponents of U.S. foreign policy may voice opinions freely to audiences in the United States, underscoring a deep respect in the country for the principles of free speech and a free press.

"I think it's something we value as a nation more than almost any other nation," Freedom House advocacy director Paula Schriefer told

Ahmadinejad's talk at New York's Columbia University drew attention because of the controversy surrounding it among politicians and others who demanded the lecture be cancelled.

Former Pulitzer Prize winning journalist, now director of international programs at Columbia University, Joshua Friedman said the event was welcomed by students there, "especially at the journalism school. It gave them a chance to see how an event gets covered" when there is wide interest.



Student Alana Adler hangs an Ahmadinejad lecture poster at Columbia University, New York.

(AP Images)

USINFO. Freedom House, a Washington-based, independent nonprofit organization, supports political and economic freedoms internationally.

While many Americans may disagree with or even revile the views of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, he spoke freely at various venues during his September visit to New York to attend the United Nations General Assembly.

"It's a very positive thing that we have a free press and we have venues like universities that can provide opportunities for him to speak and to engage," Schriefer said.

He told USINFO that free speech is "like a pressure valve. ... In authoritarian countries where the people in power control what is stated, the people out of power just keep festering and getting angrier and angrier, and that can lead to much more violent confrontation."

Columbia University President Lee Bollinger sparked further controversy at the event by his introduction of Ahmadinejad. Many, including Iranian Americans and expatriates who are staunchly opposed to the current Iranian regime, considered Bollinger's speech rude and ungracious. Others said it was fair, citing Iran's treatment of scholars and journalists. A lively debate in the media and on the Internet ensued.

"It really provides a tremendous amount of grist for discussion. It was quite an event," Friedman said. Before exercising his own right of free speech to censure the guest, Bollinger answered critics of Columbia's invitation to Ahmadinejad: "[I]t

is required by existing norms of free speech, the American university, and Columbia itself. ... We must have the most full freedom of inquiry."

The importance of free speech evolved from the diverse interests of the United States' founders, Friedman explained. "We live in a revolutionary society. Our country was founded out of a revolution," he says. The U.S. Constitution was "essentially a compromise of the interests of the landholders, small farmers, business people, merchants; people involved in industry, [the] religious, idealists." For it to be ratified by all of the United States' original 13 Colonies, 10 amendments had to be made immediately. "One of them was a prohibition against the government making any law that would prohibit free speech," he said. Some of the founders were from minority groups and "felt very strongly about that."

"Looking back on it, it was an amazing development. Very few countries have such a thing. Most countries have a law that regulates free speech. We're not allowed to have a law that regulates free speech," Friedman said.

The right of free speech becomes contentious and complex in the United States where criminal activity is concerned. Legal lines are drawn when free speech abets hate crimes or threatens national security: posting bomb-making instructions on the Internet, for example. Journalists' right to protect sources is another issue that repeatedly has come before the courts in recent years. Free speech is still evolving in the United States.

(Continued on page 20)

U.S. Presidential Candidates Use Sports To Woo Voters

By Eric Green
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- U.S. presidential candidates are using the time-honored practice of declaring their allegiance to American sports teams to show their affinity with regular people.

The most publicized examples of these displays are with New York Democratic Senator Hillary Rodham



Republican presidential candidate Rudy Giuliani is an avid New York Yankees baseball supporter. (AP Images)

Clinton and Republican Rudy Giuliani, the former mayor of New York City. Clinton and Giuliani are considered the front-runners for their respective political parties' presidential nominations in 2008.

The two presidential aspirants are seen wearing caps of baseball's New York Yankees, which political observers say is an attempt to boost their "bona fides" that they sport the "common touch."

New York Times sportswriter Murray Chass told USINFO that politicians "attach themselves to

sports connections because sports are popular with much of the public."

Clinton's motivations drew skepticism in 2000, said Chass, when during her New York race for the U.S. Senate that year she wore a Yankees cap to demonstrate her allegiance to the home team.

Chass said that "everyone knew she [originally] was from Chicago and a fan" of the National League's Chicago Cubs, "but [Clinton] said the Yankees" of the American League was also "her team."

"Few people seemed to believe her," said Chass.

Clinton said she is indeed a fan of the Cubs. But as a young girl, she needed an American League team to root for, so "I became very interested and enamored of the Yankees."

Meanwhile, Giuliani, a longtime Yankees fan, is seen at almost every playoff and World Series game that the team has played since 1995. Giuliani is described as "Yankee Fan Number One."

Chass said the late John Lindsay's campaign to win a second term as mayor of New York in 1969 received a boost from being in the clubhouse of the New York Mets after the team won that year's World Series in October. Chass said that following the Mets' victory, Mets players poured champagne on each other and on Lindsay.

That raucous scene on TV made Lindsay, who came from an elite background, seem like a "regular guy and part of the Mets success,"

said Chass. He added that the TV pictures "translated into votes" that helped Lindsay win re-election in November 1969.

COMMENTS OF DAVID BRODER

Washington Post syndicated political columnist David Broder told USINFO that Clinton and Giuliani "show up at ballparks and risk being booed." Broder said "it's always a risk for politicians" to attend a game "because you never know how fans are going to react" to what may seem a transparent attempt to score points with voters.

Broder said he does not believe wearing Yankee baseball caps will help either Clinton or Giuliani in their presidential bids.

"Hillary is not particularly New York, but Giuliani is very New York" and "I've been surprised that he has done as well as he has" in U.S. Midwestern states, said Broder in referring to differences in the cultural mindset of the two regions.

Broder said facetiously that the fact both candidates persist in wearing the Yankee caps "shows that they are people of principle."

Broder said President Bush, a former owner of the Texas Rangers baseball team, is a "real baseball fan." Broder said that when he visited Bush's ranch in Texas, "the first thing he showed me is his display case of 30 or more autographed baseballs that he had collected over the years."

However, Bush's ownership of the Rangers did not particularly help his presidential candidacies in 2000 and 2004, said Broder. Bush used to joke about the "terrible trades"

(Continued on page 20)

U.S. Presidential Candidates Use Sports To . . .

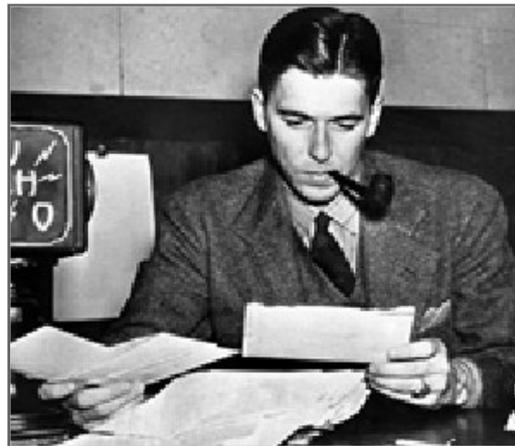
(Continued from page 19)

of players he made as the Rangers' owner, "but I don't think he bragged much" about being a baseball owner, Broder said.

He added that the late U.S. President Ronald Reagan was also a "real sports fan." For example, Broder said Reagan hosted a 1981 White House reception for old-time baseball all-stars.

Reagan was a former radio sports announcer, who in the 1930s recreated games of the Chicago Cubs for station WHO in Des Moines, Iowa. From the WHO studios, Reagan would provide "play by play" to his radio audience of the Cubs games based on several words he took from teletype reports of the action. Reagan later used those same broadcast skills when he ran for president, earning the encomium of "The Great Communicator" for his ability to inspire voters.

Broder said ex-professional sports figures commonly use their athletic background to boost their political careers, such as former New York Representative Jack Kemp, who



Ronald Reagan worked as a sportscaster for WHO radio in Des Moines, Iowa in 1932. (AP Images)

previously was a star quarterback for professional football's Buffalo Bills.

Other athletes who have gone on to political careers include former New Jersey Senator Bill Bradley, a star for professional basketball's New York Knicks; Philadelphia Phillies Hall of Fame pitcher Jim Bunning, now a U.S. senator from Kentucky; and Jesse "the Body" Ventura, who served as governor of Minnesota from 1999 to 2003 following a career in professional wrestling.

For related stories, see Sports (http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/life_and_culture/sports.html) and U.S. Elections (<http://usinfo.state.gov/dhr/democracy/elections.html>).

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Opposing Viewpoints Enjoy Free Expression in . . .

(Continued from page 18)

There is a broad spectrum of media, from extreme left to extreme right: print, radio, television and in recent years, the Internet.

"The beauty is ... if you are interested in really seriously trying to understand what somebody like Ahmadinejad thinks about some of the important issues, you can find venues that will focus on that. Then you have others that will sort of play his game, focusing on the kind of issues with the kind of spin that he likes to put on them," Schriefer said.

"If you have a vibrant enough and diverse enough media, you can have people express even the most reprehensible of opinions and people can form judgments about those. They also have access to media which will provide contradictions to those opinions," Schriefer said, adding that even if it is "a little unpleasant or shocking to hear what people have to say, we, by and large, think you are much better off having access to those thoughts."

Americans are lucky to have such safeguards, Friedman said, because if those with power "weren't con-

strained by the Constitution they would try to eliminate free speech for people with minority views." He said it "shows the power of the Constitution and the resilience of our society. That's why we've had a democratic country for more than 200 years. It's very durable."

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

U.S. Presidential Hopefuls Release Campaign Finance Data

By Stuart Gorin
USINFO Special Correspondent

Washington -- At the end of each quarter of the calendar year, U.S. presidential candidates must reveal how much money they have raised to fund their campaigns. The monies pay for such expenses as campaign travel, office space, television and radio advertising, telephone service and printing literature.

The official figures for the three months ending September 30 will be released by the Federal Elections Commission (FEC) on October 15, but the staffs of many campaigns already are announcing the amounts they will report to the FEC.

Staffs of Democratic candidates in the 2008 race, especially the staff of New York Senator Hillary Clinton, tell journalists they raised considerably more money than did their Republican rivals. Republicans agree. Strategists in both parties say the imbalance indicates that Democrats currently are more energized in their battle to reclaim the White House.

Clinton's campaign said it received \$27 million in donations during the 90-day cycle. Federal law allows her to spend approximately \$22 million of that during the primary season; if she wins the party's nomination, the other \$5 million will be available for the general election.

Although candidates are setting aside small portions of their fund-

raising for the general election, the bulk of it is being devoted to the primaries. Once the two parties' nominees are determined, the focus of the campaign will shift to the general election, and the national political parties -- which remain neutral in the primaries -- will become



Senator Hillary Clinton leads the presidential field in raising campaign funds, pulling in \$27 million from July to September. (AP Images)

involved.

Illinois Senator Barack Obama, who takes second place behind Clinton in most opinion polls on Democratic candidates, reportedly raised \$20 million during the third quarter. Aides said Obama's total includes donations from 93,000 new supporters, many of whom used the Internet to contribute.

On the Republican side, observers said former Tennessee Senator Fred Thompson, the most recent arrival to the campaign, raised more than \$8 million during the period. Thompson also is depending on his Web site to gain contributions. Without releasing a tally, former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani,

who is leading in opinion polls on Republican candidates, said he expects to do as well as others, and perhaps better than some. Observers expected the figure to be about \$10 million.

A Republican familiar with Arizona Senator John McCain's campaign finances said he raised more than \$5 million during the quarter. McCain said money never has been an important part of his campaigns and he is satisfied with how things are going.

Advisers to former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, without revealing the quarterly figures, said they expected to have raised nearly \$40 million over the first nine months of

2007 and that the millionaire businessman would supplement that with another \$15 million of his own. His personal fortune is estimated at between \$190 million and \$250 million. Observers call Romney's candidacy a "hybrid" campaign -- neither traditionally built on individual donations, nor a totally self-funded effort.

Candidates must follow specific rules about campaign fundraising. Over the years those rules have changed numerous times and faced many court challenges.

It is assumed widely that most donors to a campaign agree with their candidate's political views, but crit-

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Six-Party Talks Agree on Second-Phase Actions

Washington -- The latest session of the Six-Party Talks concluded October 3 with the release of a statement outlining a second phase of actions to implement the parties' Joint Statement of September 19, 2005, the goal of which is the verifiable elimination of nuclear programs from the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner.

The talks were held in Beijing September 27-30 and included representatives of China, North Korea, Japan, South Korea, Russia and the United States.

The parties:

listened to and endorsed the reports of their five working groups;

confirmed the implementation of the initial actions provided for in the February 13 "Denuclearization Action Plan";

agreed to push forward the Six-Party Talks process in accordance with the consensus reached at the meetings of the working groups; and

reached agreement on second-phase actions for the implementation of the Joint Statement of September 19, 2005.

Specifically, North Korea agreed to disable all existing nuclear facilities subject to abandonment under the September 2005 Joint Statement and the February 13 agreement.

At the request of the other parties, the United States will lead disable-

ment activities and provide the initial funding for those activities. As a first step, the U.S. side will lead an expert group to North Korea within the next two weeks to prepare for disablement.

Second, North Korea agreed to provide a complete and correct declaration of all its nuclear programs, in accordance with the February 13 agreement, by December 31.

Finally, North Korea reaffirmed its commitment not to transfer nuclear materials, technology or know-how.

With regard to the normalization of relations between the parties, North Korea and the United States reaffirmed their commitment to improving bilateral relations and moving toward a full diplomatic relationship. The two sides will increase bilateral exchanges and seek to enhance mutual trust.

North Korea and Japan also agreed to make sincere efforts to normalize their relations.

In accordance with the February 13 agreement, economic, energy and humanitarian assistance up to the equivalent of 1 million tons of heavy fuel oil (including the 100,000 tons already delivered) will be provided to North Korea.

The parties reiterated that the Six-Party Ministerial Meeting will be held in Beijing at an appropriate time and agreed to hold a heads-of-delegation meeting prior to the Ministerial Meeting to discuss the agenda.

President Bush welcomed the agreement, saying that it "reflects the common commitment of the participants in the Six Party Talks to realize a Korean Peninsula that is free of nuclear weapons."

The full texts of the October 3 agreement on second-phase actions (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2007/oct/93223.htm>), the February 13 Denuclearization Action Plan (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2007/february/80479.htm>) and the September 2005 Joint Statement (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2005/53490.htm>) are available on the State Department Web site.

For more information on the Six-Party Talks, see *The U.S. and the Korean Peninsula* (http://usinfo.state.gov/eap/east_asia_pacific/north_korea.html).

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U.S. Presidential Hopefuls Release Campaign . . .

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ics say some contributors expect something in return for their money, such as action on specific legislation. Therefore, in efforts to eliminate perceived political corruption, restrictions have been placed on fundraising sources and techniques, and the government offers candidates the choice of public funding to use, instead of their private financing.

Public funding money comes from taxpayers, who have the option on their federal tax forms to contribute \$3 from their tax assessment to cover the cost of presidential campaigns. Candidates who opt to use these funds must comply with spending limits.

Former North Carolina Senator John Edwards, a Democratic presidential candidate currently third in many polls, announced that he will accept public financing during the primary season. This would give him an additional several million dollars, but, at the same time, will preclude him from further private fundraising.

According to FEC regulations, an individual may contribute no more than \$2,300 to a candidate in a specific election, and \$28,500 to a political party during any calendar year. These limits determine what portion of the total funds raised by a candidate is available for the primary campaign and how much must be held in reserve for the general election.

The first federal attempt to regulate campaign finance was in 1867, when the Naval Appropriations Bill prohibited officers and government

employees from soliciting money from naval yard workers. Among other important campaign finance milestones:

The Civil Service Reform Act of 1883 precluded federal workers from having to make campaign contributions to keep their jobs;

The Hatch Act in 1940 barred individuals and businesses working for the federal government from soliciting contributions for federal candidates;

The Taft-Hartley Act in 1947 banned contributions from unions and corporations;

The Federal Election Campaign Act in 1971 created a framework for finance regulation; and

The Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 distinguished between so-called "hard" money that is given only to candidates, and "soft" money that is contributed to political parties and political action committees, rather than to individuals.

The 2002 act, known as the McCain-Feingold bill because it was introduced in the Senate by Republican John McCain and Wisconsin Democrat Russ Feingold, still faces court challenges. Critics of the leg-

islation say it restricts First Amendment free speech rights and that the ban on soft money simply redirects donations to special interest groups, which face less stringent oversight.



Republican presidential hopeful Mitt Romney appears at a fund raising event, September 28, in Salt Lake City. Romney affirmed his commitment to conservative family values and his connection to Utah at the "Rally for Romney" event.

(AP Images)

For more stories about the campaigns and candidates for the 2008 U.S. presidential election, see U.S. Elections (<http://usinfo.state.gov/dhr/democracy/elections.html>).

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Mozambique-U.S. Relationship . . .

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with nations fighting the war on terror.

Mozambican military units have deployed as part of peacekeeping operations in the past, and we would like them to do so again, with our help. Human trafficking remains a serious problem in Mozambique, and, if confirmed, I will advocate for the legal and administrative reforms necessary for the Government in Maputo to address this challenge. In sum, Mozambique is taking its place as an important player in the world community, and if confirmed, I will work with Mozambicans from government and civil society to coordinate our efforts on pressing matters of conflict resolution, peace, and the preservation of human dignity.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed by the Senate, I will maintain a sense of perspective on our excellent bilateral relationship with the Government of Mozambique while continuing to vigorously press our national interests.

Thank you again for this opportunity to address you. I would be pleased to answer any questions you and your colleagues might have.

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Ramadan Fosters Community Interaction on U.S. . . .

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cause people know you're not eating, they ask a lot of questions and you get these beautiful [interfaith] conversations," he said.

Omar pointed to the example of the Prophet Muhammad who lived his life in Mecca and Medina when both Saudi Arabian cities had significant non-Muslim populations.

"It's actually closer to the prophet's life, the way we're doing it in America, where there are people of different faiths. ... So that's something really good," he said, and credits his overall university experience as having "facilitated my growth as a Muslim, which is something I did not expect at all."

Some Muslim students also invite their non-Muslim friends to the evening iftar dinners. "It was nice to see that there weren't just Muslims at the iftars," Ashfaq said.

Others participate in the campus Fast-A-Thon, which invites non-Muslim students to fast for a day with their Muslim classmates to raise money for charity.

Karim, who organized Georgetown's 2006 Fast-A-Thon, said she liked the fact that the entire campus community comes together in solidarity to help a charity organization. "[I]t's no longer an event for one faith group, but an event for all faith groups. ... It really promotes this pluralism in society as well," she said.

Muslim and non-Muslim Fast-A-Thon participants end their day breaking the fast together at the evening iftar.

"People were all exchanging experiences about how their fast was and relating to their Muslim friends all of a sudden," Karim recounted. "I think the general feeling amongst all the fasters who don't generally fast was that this was a really powerful experience," she said, adding that many said they were looking forward to repeating the event in the coming year.

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