



# Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

## INSIDE

### Saving Children's Lives from Pneumonia

#### U.S. Commemorates World Pneumonia Day in Ethiopia

On the first-ever World Pneumonia Day, November 2, 2009, the United States and countries around the world are observing this day as an opportunity to raise global awareness of pneumonia and reaffirm the commitment to save the lives of children.



A child suffering from pneumonia.

"A majority of child deaths can be prevented through vaccines, early diagnosis and proper treatment with antibiotics that cost less than a dollar," said USAID Mission

Director Thomas Staal. "Ensuring better health for the world's children is a gift we must deliver for

it will be today's children who will become tomorrow's doctors, scientists, engineers and leaders."

On behalf of the American people, USAID is working with the Ethiopian Government and partners to improve child health and save children dying of preventable causes. Our efforts are increasing coordination and scaling up known, effective child

(Continued on page 3)

### Clinton Reaffirms U.S. Commitment to Muslim Communities

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr. Staff Writer

Washington — In a speech to the sixth Forum for the Future, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to broad engagement with Muslim communities around the world and the equally strong U.S. commitment to comprehensive peace in the Middle East.



Secretary Clinton addresses the 6th Forum for the Future in Marrakesh, Morocco, on November 3.

"Our work is based on empowering individuals rather than promoting ideologies; listening and

embracing others' ideas rather than simply imposing our own; and pursuing partnerships that are sustainable and broad-based," Clinton said November 3.

"We believe that despite our differences, there is so much more that unites us."

After her speech to the Forum for the Future ( <http://>

(Continued on page 2)

#### AFRICAN ISSUES

U.S. Issues Travel Ban Against Prominent Kenyan Official (P 4)

U.S. Strongly Supports U.N. Investigation of Guinea Massacre (P 5)

Now Is the Time for Democracy in Guinea, U.S. Diplomat Says (P 7)

#### PEACE AND SECURITY

Obama Congratulates Afghan President and Urges Internal Reforms (P 8)

Clinton Seeks to Restart Palestinian-Israeli Peace Talks (P 10)

Clinton Calls for Strengthened Partnership with Pakistan (P 11)

Senate Vote Marks Next Step in Complex Effort to Close Guantánamo (P 12)

#### DEVELOPMENT

Ambassador Melanne Verveer Answers Questions on Girls' Education (P 14)

To Anyone Who Doubts Girls' Place in School: 'Batonga!' (P 15 )

Girls' School Breaks Cycle of Poverty, 10 Rupees at a Time (P 17)

#### ART AND CULTURE

Iranian Filmmakers Make First Hollywood Visit in 35 Years (P 18 )

---

## Clinton Reaffirms U.S. Commitment to Muslim Communities . . .

(Continued from page 1)

[www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/November/20091103083709bpuh0.9118311.html](http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/November/20091103083709bpuh0.9118311.html) ) meeting in Marrakesh, Morocco, Clinton was scheduled to travel to Cairo for consultations with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and senior government officials before returning to the United States. She met October 31 with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and separately with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in a renewed effort by the United States to restart the stalled peace talks, and the trip to Egypt is seen as a continuation of those consultations.

The Forum for the Future, founded in 2004, is a joint initiative between the countries of the broader Middle East and North Africa and the Group of Eight major industrialized economies. It provides an opportunity for the governments, civil society and the private sector to discuss political and economic reforms aimed at promoting greater freedom, democracy and economic growth in the Middle East region. Clinton, in a speech that was billed as an expansion of President Obama's June 4 speech in Cairo outlined three initiatives the United States is launching to expand engagement with Muslim communities around the world. The first of the three initiatives is partnering with Muslim communities to advance entrepreneurship, job creation and economic development.

"We are committed to building leaders of opportunity to help develop the enormous talents that reside in the people of this region," Clinton said. Early next year, the United States will host an entrepreneurship conference in Washington to convene people focused on creating small businesses, expanding their businesses, and translating the talent they have into income generation to assist their families and communities, she said.



*U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton (C) poses with participants at the 6th edition of the Forum for the Future in Marrakesh November 3, 2009. REUTERS/Jean Blondin (MOROCCO POLITICS)*

Second, Clinton said, the United States will partner with Muslim communities in laying the foundation for knowledge-based economies that will spur innovation through science and technology. As part of that initiative, the State Department has established a science envoys program that will send envoys to North Africa, the Middle East, and South and Southeast Asia to fulfill the president's mandate to foster scientific and technological collaboration, she said.

She added that the State Depart-

ment will expand positions for environmental, science, technology, and health officers in its embassies. "To finance these solutions, the United States Overseas Private Investment Corporation, known as OPIC, is launching a technology and innovation fund," Clinton said.

Education, Clinton said, is the third area for engagement. "We have also begun a program to support partnership between U.S. commu-

nity colleges and institutions in Muslim communities to share knowledge and to train students for good jobs," Clinton said. And the United States is expanding scholarship opportunities, including for underserved secondary school students.

To assist civil society groups, the United States is launching Civil Society 2.0, an initiative to empower

grass-roots civil society organizations around the world by helping them use digital technology, Clinton said.

The United States is launching expanded efforts to empower women and girls to participate fully in all aspects of their societies. "No country can achieve true progress or fulfill its own potential when half of its people are left behind," she said.

"We strongly support the call made at last year's Forum for the Future for the creation of a regional gender institute to help advance women's

(Continued on page 3)

---

## **Saving Children's Lives from Pneumonia. . .**

*(Continued from page 1)*

health interventions that can reach children to prevent or treat the most important causes of child death – pneumonia, malaria, and diarrhea.

USAID's strategy for pneumonia targets the household, the community, first-level health providers and first-level referral facilities. Efforts to improve antibiotic treatment, for example, focus on educating caretakers to recognize the signs of pneumonia, training and supporting community-based health workers to correctly classify and treat pneumonia, and working with private practitioners and public providers to improve the quality of their child health services.

USAID also supports vaccinations against all of the diseases that give pneumonia a foothold, promotes exclusive breastfeeding for new mothers, good nutrition, hand

washing, and works to reduce exposure to indoor air pollution. In addition, safe, effective vaccines are available that prevent two of the major causes of severe pneumonia: pneumococcus and Hib.

Pneumonia has long been one of the greatest threats to child survival, killing more than 2 million children under 5 each year—more than measles, malaria, and AIDS combined. But pneumonia is largely preventable and treatable with antibiotics.

USAID is also funding a 2010 Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey to support the monitoring and evaluation needs by tracking changes in key health indicators. Part of the survey is to collect high quality data on family health, including immunization coverage, among children, prevalence and treatment of diarrhea and other diseases.

Effective management of pneumonia is critical to improving child survival. Being able to treat children with severe pneumonia safely and effectively in their own homes would be of huge benefit to both families and health systems, by reducing the need for admission to hospital. In developing countries, where the nearest doctor may be a three-day walk away, pneumonia frequently goes undiagnosed. Ethiopia is making tremendous effort for improving primary health coverage by training and deploying over 30,000 Health Extension Workers (HEW). USAID is one of the key government partners in providing support to the health extension program through training and strengthening supportive supervisions. Though its Integrated Family Health program USAID is building the capacity of HEW and their supervisors in 300 woredas for implementing program interventions on FP/RH and MNCH. ♦

## **Clinton Reaffirms U.S. Commitment to Muslim Communities . . .**

*(Continued from page 2)*

empowerment across the board politically, economically, educationally, legally, socially and culturally," she added.

Clinton said the United States will provide initial funding for the launch of the BMENA Regional Gender Institute, and also \$2 million to fund innovative women's empowerment programs in the Middle East and North Africa.

### **MIDDLE EAST PEACE**

The United States is committed to a two-state solution in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, Clinton told Middle Eastern and North African leaders November 3.

"We are determined and persistent in the pursuit of that goal," she said. "I know this a matter that is of grave and pervasive concern among the countries represented here, but even far beyond this region." While saying that making the peace is attainable, Clinton acknowledged that the United States cannot do it alone.

"I believe that with your support, we can find a way through the difficult and tangled history that too often prevents us from making progress on this most important issue," Clinton said. "As leaders of countries that have a direct stake and care deeply about all of the final status issues that must be resolved, I would just ask you to think about how we can each demonstrate the commitment that is necessary for us to go forward." ♦

---

## U.S. Issues Travel Ban Against Prominent Kenyan Official

By Alan Boswell, VOA

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson held a flurry of meetings Monday with senior Kenyan officials and then announced a travel ban had been issued against one unnamed prominent official for impeding key government reforms. Three others are under threat to have their visas similarly revoked.

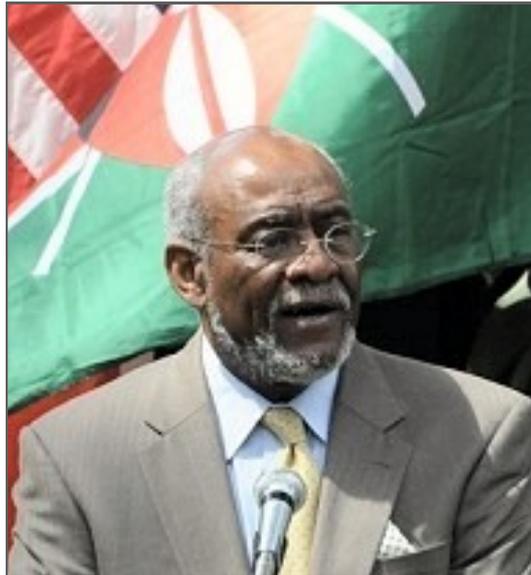
One month ago Carson sent letters to 15 Kenyan officials threatening action if they did not begin instituting the government reforms. The American ambassador to Kenya, Michael Ranneberger, had announced that some of those issued the letters would soon be barred from traveling into the United States.

US Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Johnnie Carson talks to the media as he stands in front of the US and Kenyan flags at US ambassador's residence in Nairobi, Kenya, 26 Oct 2009. Action has been promised for months now. The assistant secretary said that the U.S. would continue pushing for progress on reforms.

"President Obama's position is clear. We will maintain and steadily increase pressure for implementation and will not do business as usual with those who do not support reform or who support violence," he said. "At the same time we will recognize and support implementation of reforms when they are undertaken." The so-called reform agenda was a core component of the negotiations reached between now-President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga after the incumbent, Mr. Kibaki, was

controversially declared the winner of the disputed December 2007 elections.

The following weeks of violent ethnically-driven chaos were put to an end by an agreement that created



*U.S. Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Johnnie Carson talks to the media as he stands in front of the U.S. and Kenyan flags at U.S. ambassador's residence in Nairobi. (10/26/09)*

the new position of prime minister for Mr. Odinga, whose supporters believe actually won the presidential tally.

The mediation process was overseen by former United Nations chief Kofi Annan, and the final deal included provisions to address some of the underlying structural defects deemed partly responsible for the instability.

Carson commended recent progress made on the police reforms and anti-corruption fronts, praising the sacking of police head Hussein Ali and expressing satisfaction with parliament's role in forcing out re-appointed anti-corruption chief Aaron Ringera.

But the assistant secretary said that the United States was not happy with the pace of reforms in prosecuting the organizers of political violence, overhauling the judiciary, strengthening the rule of law, and creating a new constitution.

During a visit to Kenya earlier this month, Annan warned that Kenya was running out of time to implement the necessary changes before the 2012 election cycle kicks into full gear, warning of a return to violence if the agreement was not fully carried through.

Carson said a failed state in Kenya would have disastrous repercussions for the rest of the extended region.

"If Kenya implodes in violence, the impact goes from Mombasa all the way to Bukavu and Kisanjani [in the DRC]. It stretches north into Juba and into southern Ethiopia, across Burundi and Rwanda and into land-locked Uganda," added Carson. "This

country is a very important economic and financial and transportation keystone in this region."

The assistant secretary blamed slow paperwork for the reason that only one individual has been issued with the ban, saying that the visa revocation process was moving forward on the other targeted persons.

He said that the identity of the affected individual will likely be revealed in a short period of time.

Carson described Kenya as the United States' "strongest partner and friend in East Africa." This is the senior diplomat's third visit to Nairobi since taking the position in May this year. ♦

---

## U.S. Strongly Supports U.N. Investigation of Guinea Massacre

By Charles W. Corey  
Staff Writer

**Washington** — The United States government strongly supports a United Nations commission of inquiry to investigate the killings and sexual violence that took place September 28 in Guinea when security forces turned on and killed more than 150 pro-democracy demonstrators and raped countless others.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs William Fitzgerald made that point October 28 at the Washington-based U.S. Institute of Peace while speaking at a program examining the current situation in Guinea. Fitzgerald was joined on the program by Dane F. Smith Jr., the U.S. ambassador to Guinea 1990-1993, and Siba Grovogui, a Guinean who is a professor of political science at Johns Hopkins University outside of Washington.

Speaking to a capacity crowd of Guinea experts, diplomats and government officials and human rights advocates, Fitzgerald said U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and the American people remain "outraged" over the attacks.

"Somebody has to pay. It is this impunity that is completely unacceptable," Fitzgerald said, referring

to the September 28 massacre. The United Nations Security Council approved a resolution October 16 condemning the massacre and supporting the creation of a commission of inquiry for Guinea. "We support that very much," said Fitzgerald, a career diplomat whose present portfolio includes West Africa.

The State Department official said it is his understanding that the commission would likely not be

cials of the Guinean government and others linked to violence. On October 23, the United States imposed restrictions on travel to the United States by certain members of the military junta and the government, as well as other individuals who support policies or actions that undermine the restoration of democracy and the rule of law in Guinea.

"The citizens of Guinea deserve the right to choose their own leaders after decades of authoritarian rule," State Department spokesman Ian Kelly said in an October 29 statement on the travel restrictions. "The military junta in power has shown itself disrespectful of human rights and incapable of shepherding Guinea through a peaceful transition to democracy," he said.

Fitzgerald said the international non-government organization Human Rights Watch be-

lieves "the killings ... and especially the sexual violence were designed if not by [Moussa] Dadis Camara then by those around him as ... perhaps the greatest form of intimidation we have seen in Guinea in a long time." Camara is the leader of the military junta that controls Guinea.

Fitzgerald cited four recent killings that have also taken place in Guinea as another sign of yet more intimi-

*(Continued on page 6)*



*A man reacts to news that family members and friends were killed during a rally in Conakry, Guinea.*

"forensically oriented" (to perform duties such as exhuming bodies), but would be a fact-finding mission to interview victims and eyewitnesses. "That is very important and ideally should be happening soon," he said.

Fitzgerald said he thought casualty figures could rise considerably, and he said the United States government was considering targeted visa sanctions against high-ranking offi-

---

## U.S. Strongly Supports U.N. Investigation of Guinea Massacre . . .

*(Continued from page 5)*

dation. "I worry about political space and I worry about the possibility of having an election under the current circumstances," he said.

Fitzgerald told his audience he was sent to Guinea by the State Department shortly after the massacre to talk to Camara. Recalling that visit, he said he told Camara, "You are personally responsible for what happened in the stadium [where much of the violence occurred], whether you played a direct role or not."

Fitzgerald said Camara insisted that he was in his office at the military base at the time of the incident, knew something was going to happen, and desperately tried to stop it.

Fitzgerald refuted that point, saying, "No, in fact he [Camara] was aware the night before of the opposition march, and while he may not have orchestrated the attacks and released his thugs — and it was sheer thuggery — I think he was aware it was going to happen and certainly did not stop it."

Fitzgerald described Camara as "erratic" and said Camara told him, "After 50 years, two presidents, I have been on the job eight months. How do you expect me to control the military — a military that I have inherited that has had no training for years and years and years?" Fitzgerald said Camara then told him, "I can't leave power because who will control the military if I leave power?"

"To me, that sort of sums up Dadis Camara," Fitzgerald said.

Outlining U.S. policy toward Guinea, Fitzgerald said, "We are working multilaterally with a number of organizations, in particular the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and support the mediation of the Burkina-bee president, Blaise Compaore."

Fitzgerald praised the African Union (AU) for its response in the aftermath of the crisis and for "playing a very important role" by demanding that Camara tell the truth about his presidential ambitions — demands to which Camara has not yet responded. The AU is now seriously looking at additional sanctions against Camara, he said.

According to Fitzgerald, the United States is pleased the European Union also has placed targeted visa sanctions on certain individuals in Guinea. He said the United States is moving to similarly target the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD), to which many of the coup leaders belong, and members of government — those in power and those who are continuing to prop up the Camara regime. He acknowledged that U.S. leverage with Guinea "frankly is not as great as we would like," but he pledged that "nevertheless, we do have things we can do and plan to do them."

Fitzgerald said the U.S. Department of State is also talking with the U.S. Department of Treasury "to identify those who are profiting, those who have bank accounts,

those members of the government, members of the [CNDD] who have taken some of the wealth out of Guinea or who have it abroad, particularly in the United States."

Fitzgerald said U.S. policy is focusing not only on the unlawful seizure of power but also on the threat it poses to the countries of the Mono River Group. "The international community has invested so much, and the people of Sierra Leone and Liberia have suffered so much, that to have this negative force, this negative country, this negative state so close, is a clear danger to the region as a whole and that is unacceptable."

"It is a very dangerous time in Guinea, and we are watching it closely," he said.

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

---

## Now Is the Time for Democracy in Guinea, U.S. Diplomat Says

By Charles W. Corey  
Staff Writer

**Washington** — Now is the time for the people of Guinea to elect a democratic government of their choice, a senior U.S. State Department official told reporters October 30.

At a briefing on Guinea at the U.S. Foreign Press Center in Washington, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs William Fitzgerald said the people of Guinea have the right and deserve the opportunity to have a democratically elected government now.

"Fifty years of authoritarian rule has been debilitating to the country.

Money that went to the armed forces that could have been or should have been spent on health and education, social services, was basically squandered. In any case, the time is right, now, for the people of Guinea to get the elections they were hoping for," he said.

Fitzgerald visited Guinea following the September 28 massacre in which more than 150 pro-democracy demonstrators were killed when government security forces turned on them and countless women demonstrators were raped.

During his visit to Conakry, Fitzgerald said he reminded Captain

Moussa Dadis Camara — leader of the military junta ruling Guinea — that he bears full responsibility for the massacre and sexual violence perpetrated against the demonstrators. Fitzgerald said he also delivered a message on democracy to the junta leader: "The United States

years. Both were authoritarian and both completely ruled the country. There was little democracy or no democracy and that is important."

Fitzgerald said the last time anyone heard from Camara, elections in Guinea were slated for January 31, 2010. The projected date is quickly approaching and a lot of preparations have already begun, he told reporters. U.S. funds to help hold elections have not been shut off like other development funding, he said, because "we have a strong hope that in fact the elections will take place."

But right now in Guinea, Fitzgerald said, "there is no political space. The

opposition is shut down in the same way that the journalists have been harassed and driven to silence. I think the opposition is in a very difficult spot. Can you have credible elections tomorrow? Absolutely not! Can you have credible elections if Captain Dadis Camara runs? No. The people of Guinea deserve more."

Fitzgerald said the massacre, the killings of opposition figures and the rapes are meant to intimidate the opposition. "What happened on September 28 should never happen again," he told reporters.

Asked about China's role in Guinea,  
*(Continued on page 9)*



*Diallo Souleymane was injured during a pro-democracy rally in Conakry, Guinea, on October 1.*

wants you to step aside and we want you to allow the transition that you called for earlier to go forward" so there can be open and transparent elections in Guinea.

Fitzgerald, whose portfolio includes West Africa, cautioned, however, that the United States has no illusions.

"Part of the reason why we are all reacting to the situation in Guinea beyond even the really horrific violence of September 28 is ... looking at Guinea — which stands as the first independent Francophone country in Africa — from 1958 to 2008 they had a total of two leaders. Both served approximately 25

---

# Obama Congratulates Afghan President and Urges Internal Reforms

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

**Washington** — President Obama has congratulated Afghan President Hamid Karzai on winning re-election but also called for a “new chapter” to improve Afghan governance and end corruption. Obama also cited a need to increase the ability of Afghan forces to provide security for their own country.

Speaking to reporters with Swedish Prime Minister Frederik Reinfeldt at the White House November 2, Obama said that although the Afghan election process had been “messy,” the final outcome had been “determined in accordance with Afghan law.”

Afghanistan held presidential and provincial elections August 20. For several weeks after the vote, Afghan election officials investigated claims of fraud and irregularities and ultimately threw out millions of votes. Because Karzai did not win an outright majority in the final tally, a presidential runoff vote against Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, his closest challenger, was planned for November 7. That runoff was cancelled by an Afghan-led commission on November 2, following Abdullah’s November 1 decision to withdraw from the contest.

The final result is “very important not only for the international community that has so much invested in Afghan success, but, most importantly, [it] is important for the Afghan people that the results were in accordance with and followed

the rules as laid down by the Afghan Constitution,” Obama said.

Obama said he emphasized to Karzai that while the United States and the international community want



*Afghan President Hamid Karzai speaks during a press conference at the presidential palace in Kabul, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Musadeq Sadeq)*

to continue to work with Afghan leaders to help the country prosper and improve security, “this has to be a point in time in which we begin to write a new chapter based on improved governance, a much more serious effort to eradicate corruption, [and] joint efforts to accelerate the training of Afghan security forces, so that the Afghan people can provide for their own security.”

Obama cited President Karzai’s stated willingness to “move boldly and forcefully forward” to initiate internal reforms and take advantage of the international community’s interest.

“The proof is not going to be in words; it’s going to be in deeds,” the president said.

White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said November 2 that Karzai is “the legitimate leader of the country,” and despite the country having undergone a difficult electoral process, Afghanistan’s laws and institutions had prevailed.

“Obviously, that’s the beginning of a process whereby the rule of law carries the day,” he said.

In a November 1 statement, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton acknowledged Abdullah’s decision to pull out of the contest and said he had run “a dignified and constructive campaign” that earned him support from Afghans all around the country.

“We hope that he will continue to stay engaged in the national dialogue, and work on behalf of the security and prosperity of the people of Afghanistan,” Clinton said.

The secretary also pledged U.S. support for Karzai and the Afghan people “who seek and deserve a better future.”

## U.S. STRATEGY EXPECTED SOON

The Obama administration has been evaluating the situation in Afghanistan in preparation for announcing a new U.S. strategy. Press secretary Gibbs said that with Karzai’s election to a second five-year term, the administration’s discussions can now “take place with

*(Continued on page 9)*

---

## Obama Congratulates Afghan President and Urges Internal Reforms. . .

*(Continued from page 8)*

who we know is going to lead the country."

The president and his advisers are working on "how best to formulate a strategy that supports the goal of disrupting, dismantling and ultimately destroying al-Qaida," Gibbs said, and expected that the decision will be made "in the coming weeks."

"We want to ensure that a safe haven can't be created [in Afghanistan] in which [al-Qaida] could

come back and establish a stronghold, with which to plan and attack us," he said.

Obama's decision "was not dependent upon when a leader was determined" by the country, but Gibbs added that everyone in the U.S. national security team recognizes that no "strategy could be successful without successful governance of Afghanistan."

A transcript of remarks by Obama and Reinfeldt ( <http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/>

November/20091102162517eaifas0.0346033.html ) and the full text of Clinton's statement ( <http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/November/20091102111142eaifas5.823916e-02.html> ) are available on America.gov.

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

## Now Is the Time for Democracy in Guinea, U.S. Diplomat Says . . .

*(Continued from page 7)*

Fitzgerald said the Chinese are now increasing their investment there. "As you know, the Chinese have played a major role inside Africa in recent years," he said. Fitzgerald called the situation "very difficult — no doubt about it — that anyone should be supporting the Dadis Camara regime and accepting it as the legitimate government of Guinea," but he credited the Chinese for not blocking a recent U.N. Security Council resolution on Guinea.

Asked about the Obama administration's policy towards Africa, Fitzgerald recommended that everyone read the president's remarks delivered in Ghana ( <http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/July/20090711110050abretnuh0.1079783.html> ), which set out "straightforward" goals for U.S.

policy. "When I met with Dadis Camara he did not seem to understand that," Fitzgerald told reporters. "Our goal, our Number 1 objective, is to strengthen democratic institutions and to ensure the basic human dignity and human rights of people on the continent. And he missed the point."

Fitzgerald said the international community recognizes that "the people of Guinea have put up with authoritarian leaders for 25 years at a time — Ahmed Sékou Touré and President Lansana Conté. My concern is that the longer Dadis is in office, the more likely the Guinean people used to such authoritarian leaders are going to say, 'Well, he is there. We are just going to have to get on with our lives.'"

The United States is calling for a U.N. commission of inquiry, which would likely be investigative rather than forensic, to begin as soon as

possible. Camara has accepted that a U.N. commission of inquiry can enter the country to do such an investigation.

The United States is also calling for Camara to step down and allow a legitimate government to take Guinea to elections next year, Fitzgerald said, noting that the United States is working with Burkinabé President Blaise Compaoré to mediate the situation with Guinea.

Fitzgerald said the United States is also working very closely with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union to help resolve the situation.

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

---

## Clinton Seeks to Restart Palestinian-Israeli Peace Talks

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

**Washington** — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton met with Palestinian and Israeli leaders October 31 in a new effort to convince both sides to resume stalled peace talks.

Speaking at a joint news conference in Jerusalem, Clinton said, "I want to see both sides begin as soon as possible in negotiations." She met with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas on October 31 in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates, then flew to Jerusalem later in the day for meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other Israeli officials. Former U.S. Senator George Mitchell, the U.S. special envoy for Middle East peace, was with Clinton during the meetings.

Clinton said the important thing for the Israelis and Palestinians is to restart the negotiations. "I gave the same message today when I met with President Abbas," she said. President Obama met with Netanyahu and Abbas during the opening of the United Nations General Assembly in September in New York to encourage the two sides to set aside differences and resume talks. A significant sticking point

that has held up talks has been the question of settlements in the West Bank territories. Palestinian negotiators have said previously that before talks can resume, settlement construction must halt. In talks with Clinton, the Israelis offered a policy of restraint.

"We know that negotiations often take positions that then have to be

Saeb Erekat, chief negotiator for the Palestinian Authority, told CNN in an interview that halting all settlement construction in the West Bank is important to the Palestinians before talks could resume.

After her meetings with Israeli officials, Clinton left Jerusalem and arrived in Marrakesh, Morocco, early November 1 to attend the

sixth Forum for the Future, which brings together leaders from the Middle East and North Africa, the Group of Eight major advanced economies and other European nations, civil society organizations, and some international businesses to discuss economic development, trade and investment, and the advancement of democracy and good governance. While at the Forum, Clinton is expected to hold talks with Arab leaders on regional secu-



*Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton talk to reporters in Jerusalem.*

worked through once the actual process starts," Clinton said. "President Obama and I are committed to a comprehensive peace agreement because we do believe that it holds out the best promise for the security and future of Israel, and for the aspirations of the Palestinians."

Clinton said the Israelis offered "restraint" in settlement construction in the West Bank territories that includes no new settlements, which she described as unprecedented in the context of prior negotiations.

rity issues.

Clinton held three days of talks with Pakistani officials before her meetings with the Israelis and Palestinians.

A transcript of comments from Clinton and Netanyahu ( <http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/November/20091101092659ptellivremos0.5665966.html> ) is available on America.gov. ♦

---

## Clinton Calls for Strengthened Partnership with Pakistan

**Washington** — The United States seeks to be a partner with Pakistan in economic development and trade, education, health care, energy development and regional security, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton says.

Clinton, who wrapped up a three-day visit to Pakistan October 30, told business leaders at a roundtable discussion in Lahore that the United States is proud and pleased to be Pakistan's largest trading partner and its largest foreign investor. "We have seen the opportunities for investment and growth," she added.

She acknowledged that it is difficult for the business community — which creates the jobs, creates the businesses and makes the investments — to flourish in an unstable environment created by an insurgency that has spilled over from neighboring Afghanistan. She said the United States sees several ways to help create more jobs in Pakistan, which will directly affect the standard of living.

One is through direct programs such as the creation of reconstruction opportunity zones which can open market access to the United States, Clinton said. "We are working to accelerate this approach because it's essential that we provide more assistance in trade and investment and help to improve the environment for you to do more business."

Another is to encourage the government to do more through trade agreements, she said, and not just with the United States but with the immediate region and beyond.

Clinton also said that through a \$125 million U.S. energy initiative, which she announced October 28 in Islamabad, the Pakistani government will help eliminate rolling energy blackouts by repairing facilities, repairing dams and improving local energy providers, and help to refurbish more than 10,000 tube

crucial as security issues are between the United States and Pakistan, they are not the only element in the relationship.

"They are just one piece of a much broader partnership, one that we hope will improve the lives of people in both our nations in many ways," she said. "How many children who are denied an education or denied health care might have excelled at this great university, perhaps even joining the ranks of your Nobel laureate?"

"We don't know, because although talent is universal, opportunity is not."

Clinton said the Obama administration is placing heavy emphasis on approaches such as increasing access to education, supporting entrepreneurs, using microfinance and technology to connect and empower people, and increasing energy supplies so the economy has the resources it needs to thrive.



*Secretary Clinton speaks with reporters at the Pakistani Foreign Ministry in Islamabad October 28.*

wells to enhance local agriculture through reliable irrigation.

Clinton told business leaders that for any society to flourish in the 21st century, it must build a nation on three supporting pillars: a fully inclusive democratic political system, a market economy and a civil society.

### UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Clinton said in remarks to students at the Government College University in Lahore October 29 that as

"We are committed to working with you as true partners, and that means, first and foremost, listening and consulting with one another," Clinton said. "This is an opportunity for us to reaffirm our partnership and to turn the page on some of the past that, frankly, represent lost opportunities to strengthen the relationship between us."

One of those efforts, Clinton said, is to expand university and technical education through a \$45 million grant to Pakistan's Higher Educa-

*(Continued on page 13)*

---

# Senate Vote Marks Next Step in Complex Effort to Close Guantánamo

By Howard Cincotta  
Special Correspondent

**Washington** — Shortly after his inauguration, President Obama called for the closure of the detention facility at the Guantánamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba within a year, banned use of torture in interrogations, pledged adherence to the Geneva Conventions, and created a task force to develop a new policy for detainees.

“We uphold our most cherished values not only because doing so is right, but because it strengthens our country and it keeps us safe,” Obama declared in a May address. “Time and again, our values have been our best national security asset.”

Setting out the principles for a new Guantánamo policy has proven to be the easy part. Over the past nine months, the administration has had to move slowly in making legal determinations in each individual case.

## CONGRESSIONAL CONCERNS

On October 20, the U.S. Senate marked a step forward in the process by voting to allow the government to transfer prisoners from Guantánamo to federal courts in the United States for prosecution. The legislation, already agreed to by the House of Representatives, now goes to the president for signature.

The new provisions require the administration to submit a comprehensive plan before further transfers take place and prohibit any resettlement of prisoners in the United States.

Not all agree that this is the right approach.

“It’s quite unhelpful for the legislature to be putting restrictions both on the bringing of detainees here for continued detention and on their transfer to other countries,” said Benjamin Wittes of the Brookings Institution, a public policy research group in Washington, and author of *Law and the Long War: The Future of Justice in the Age of Terror*.

Wittes said such actions may reflect concern in Congress about the administration’s specific plans for the detainees. They also may reflect pressure from constituents to resolve the Guantánamo issue.

## COURTS AND DETAINEES

Earlier in the year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that foreign nationals sent to Guantánamo have the right to challenge their detention under habeas corpus. (Habeas corpus means they are entitled to a hearing where the government must justify their incarceration, although they would not have the automatic right to a full criminal trial afforded U.S. citizens.)

More recently, the Supreme Court has agreed to decide whether Guantánamo detainees can be ordered to be released in the United States if they are no longer a threat and have nowhere else to go. The case involves Chinese Muslims, or Uighurs, held at Guantánamo who were cleared of charges years ago but would be under threat of arrest if they were returned to China.

## LOWER NUMBERS

The United States has made progress in reducing the number of Guantánamo detainees. Since October 2001, when the war in Afghanistan began, 775 terrorist suspects

have been brought to Guantánamo. More than 400 have been released. Most were returned to their home countries.

Guantánamo held 245 detainees when the Obama administration took office in January; that number has dropped to just more than 220. Of those, 60 or so may face prosecution, while another 80 are awaiting release, according to news accounts.

“A bipartisan cross-section of distinguished Americans has called for the closure of the Guantánamo Bay detention facility, and has done so for a period of years,” said Jeh Johnson, general counsel for the Defense Department, in testimony before the U.S. Senate’s Judiciary Committee.

“The president imposed a deadline on us for closing Guantánamo Bay, and we remain committed to meeting the deadline, and we’re confident we’ll get the job done,” he said.

## DETAINEES AND THE LEGAL PROCESS

In closing Guantánamo, the administration has established four categories of prisoners. Detainees who no longer pose a threat will be released. Those who have violated U.S. criminal laws will be tried in civilian federal courts, if feasible.

A third category, individuals who violated internationally recognized laws of war, will be tried before reformed military commissions that meet legal standards set by the Supreme Court for due process and defendants’ rights.

*(Continued on page 13)*

---

## Senate Vote Marks Next Step in Complex Effort to Close . . .

*(Continued from page 12)*

The Defense Department has announced a number of rule changes to improve the legal process involved in military commissions for this third category of Guantánamo prisoners, according to the Defense Department's Johnson.

"We are confident that reformed military commissions can emerge as a fully legitimate forum — one that allows for the presentation of evidence gathered on the battlefield that cannot always be effectively presented in civilian courts," Johnson said.

David Cole, a law professor at Georgetown University in Washington, rejected criticism of military commissions by some human rights groups as premature. Cole is author of *Justice at War: The Men and Ideas that Shaped America's "War on Terror."*

"If military commissions are indeed reformed to provide for fair trials, what is the objection to using them?" he asked in a news commentary. "Surely, the label is not what is important — due process is."

There remains a final category of Guantánamo detainees who, be-

cause of tainted or coerced testimony, cannot be prosecuted but still pose a threat to the American people. Those individuals would continue to be detained under regular oversight and review by Congress and the Justice Department.

"Our goal is to construct a legitimate legal framework for Guantánamo detainees, not to avoid one," President Obama said.

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

## Clinton Calls for Strengthened Partnership with Pakistan . . .

*(Continued from page 11)*

tion Commission. It is primarily targeted to students coming from economically vulnerable areas, she said.

### MIDDLE EAST PEACE

In addition to Clinton's three-day visit to Pakistan for consultations with government officials and outreach to university students, business leaders and tribal representatives, she will also conduct negotiations with Israeli and Palestinian Authority officials in hopes of renewing stalled peace talks. She was scheduled to fly to Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates for a

meeting October 31 with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. She is also expected to consult with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"These meetings will build on the intensive work the administration has engaged in with both sides since the trilateral meeting last month," State Department spokesman Ian Kelly said October 29 in Washington.

"As President Obama has said, the administration is committed to comprehensive peace, including a two-state solution. As Secretary Clinton reported to the president last week, challenges remain as we continue

to work with both sides," Kelly said. "Her visit reflects the administration's commitment, and her personal commitment, to work through the challenges we face in pursuit of comprehensive Middle East peace."

Clinton will conclude her travel November 2–3 at the 6th Forum for the Future in Marrakesh, Morocco.

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

---

## Ambassador Melanne Verveer Answers Questions on Girls' Education

U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues Melanne Verveer responds to questions on girls' education submitted by America.gov's Facebook fans.

Question: Look at [www.aakewo.com](http://www.aakewo.com) ( <http://www.aakewo.com> ) to see what African American women are doing for Kenyan girls and their caregivers. We do this as a cultural reconnection and without [government] funds. [We] set up several libraries last year and supplied girls with sanitary napkins to keep them from missing school each month. — Dawn Mason

Ambassador Verveer: I want to thank Dawn for the work she's doing. The fact that she's doing it in Africa is something that we should applaud.

There are NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] to which people contribute that don't take any kinds of public resources. There is a great variety of NGOs and nonformal NGOs — for example, classes of students in a high school or a grammar school adopt a project.

A lot of religious communities are very active in providing support for a school — for bringing the kinds of resources that Dawn is bringing to this project.

We encourage this. The secretary [Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton] talks about public-private partnerships. She means that we in government can't do everything. We need civil society to be very active, whether it's individuals, colleges and universities, the religious community or the business community.



*U.S. Ambassador Melanne Verveer*

She [Dawn] mentioned sanitary napkins. Girls in so many places don't have access to these everyday things that we take for granted. And they literally stay out of school a week when they go through this biological process.

There are companies like Procter & Gamble who are coming together with NGOs to provide some of these necessities.

Anybody, no matter your station in life, can participate and make a difference.

Q: We have to respect the women like we respect our mother. No discrimination, but the women have to know their responsibilities as mother for their children and [as] wife. — Tgk. Hanief

A: We know that educating a girl is the single best investment that can be made. An educated woman will be a better mother. First, she will postpone marriage until an appropriate age.

She will provide better nutrition for her children. Mothers are the first teachers of their children.

Education provides the greatest possibility for gaining a good income. There is a statistic that for every year a girl is in school, her income potential is enhanced by 10 to 20 percent.

The byproducts of an education are not to be underestimated — whether it's for the benefits to the family, the benefits to the girl being educated, the benefits to her community or the benefits to her country. Education is truly fundamental.

Q: What is the [role] of governments and expectations that parents should expect with regards to the education of the girl child in Africa? From your experience in Kenya, what did you find [that is] hindering girl child education? ... Africa cannot develop without educated Mothers. — Ikechukwu Felix Ake

A: The questioner is very wise in making a statement about the importance of education.

There are many reasons that girls don't get educated. One is that the parents don't see the value of educating the girl. Girls are often viewed as the people who collect the firewood, fetch the water, do all the things in the home.

We need to work with parents to help them understand how much more valuable it is for them to educate their daughters than not to educate their daughters. We have found that often incentives — something as simple as a bag of flour — can benefit the family and help them send a daughter to school. Or a large can of oil. Or not having fees for school, because parents can't afford to pay. Or book

*(Continued on page 19)*

---

## To Anyone Who Doubts Girls' Place in School: 'Batonga!'

By **Phuong Ly**  
Special Correspondent

**Washington** — When puberty hits adolescents in poor countries, girls start disappearing from classrooms.

Unfortunately, that doesn't always bother adults as much as it should. While access to primary schools has dramatically improved throughout the developing world in recent decades, secondary education for females too often has been seen as an unnecessary privilege. Attendance prevents teenage girls from providing labor for their families or getting married and bringing in a dowry.

But recently, the education of adolescent girls has become a higher priority for governments and nonprofit

groups. Two particular organizations illustrate the priority shift well.

In five African countries, the Batonga Foundation pays for tuition, supplies and tutoring for girls attending school. Batonga was started in 2006 by Benin native and New York resident Angelique Kidjo to help girls stay in school.

Kidjo, a successful singer and UNICEF ambassador, recalls that, as a youngster in Benin, she was taunted for being a girl in school.

To cope, she made up the word "batonga" to describe the empowerment education gave her. The word became the title of her hit song telling an African girl to "do as you please regardless of what anyone tells you." After recording the

families a \$25 goat or sheep if they keep their teen girls in school and unmarried for at least two years.

Keeping or re-enrolling teen girls in school is challenging, but crucial to improving social and economic con-



*The Batonga Girls' Education Program offers scholarships, tutors and mentors to help West African girls like these stay in school.*

song, Kidjo used the word to name her foundation, which helps girls succeed in secondary school.

Nearly 84 percent of children worldwide attend primary school, compared to just 60 percent of children attending secondary school, according to a 2006 report by the Academy for Educational Development. Most of those missing are girls. In sub-Saharan Africa, only 17 percent of girls enroll in secondary school. In one country, Ethiopia, a United Nations Foundation program gives

ditions, said Cynthia Lloyd, author of a forthcoming report, "New Lessons: The Power of Educating Adolescent Girls," sponsored by the Population Council. The more educated a girl is, the more likely she is to delay marriage, have better health, engage in civic activities and earn more money. "Essentially, education helps protect and transform girls in a critical phase of life," Lloyd said.

So far, more than 500 girls in Be-

*(Continued on page 16)*

## To Anyone Who Doubts Girls' Place in School: 'Batonga!' . . .

(Continued from page 15)

nin, Mali, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Cameroon have received Batonga Foundation scholarships. In 2008, the second full year of the program, 95 percent of the girls returned to class, according to the foundation.

In Benin and Mali, Batonga helps girls whose earlier school education had been funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and administered by World Education. Previously, all financial support had stopped after fifth grade.

The cost of educating a girl in these countries is relatively low by Western standards. Batonga pays from \$75 to \$300 per year per girl for uniforms, school fees, transportation and supplies, depending on the country. But for many African families, the cost is prohibitive, said Stephanie Shearer Cate, the program's director.

The burden isn't just measured in tuition; it's also the labor that is lost when a girl is in class. In addition, secondary schools are few and far between, so students have to travel long distances. When families are able or willing to make such sacrifices for education, it's usually for a boy, rather than a girl, who is expected to eventually get married and join her husband's family.

Once those barriers are lifted, "parents see that and say, 'Oh, I'm proud of my child getting an education,'" Cate said. "If [those children]

grow up and send their own child to school, that'll have a ripple effect."

Even one extra year of schooling beyond the average makes a difference, according to various World Bank studies. The eventual wages of girls may rise an extra 10 percent to 20 percent and thereby help

Fund in partnership with the Ethiopian government and Nike Foundation provides mentors, financial support for school, and informal workshops on topics such as HIV/AIDS and sexual abuse. This is the program that awards a goat or sheep to families with successful girl students. In its first "graduation

ceremony," about 750 girls who delayed marriage and stayed in school received an animal, which helps their families' standard of living.

The program also helps girls who have fled to cities to escape forced early marriages. Mentors go door to door in Bahir Dar, the capital of the Amhara region, and in Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa to recruit the girls, many of whom work as housekeepers. For a few hours each week, the girls receive counseling and formal classes on farming and marketing. The United Nations estimates



*In Benin, Mariette, left, with Angelique Kidjo, says she was very happy to be selected for the Batonga Girls' Education Program.*

raise their countries' overall per capita income.

In Ethiopia, education reduces child marriage rates. Child marriage rates in the Amhara region, in the northwest part of the country, are among the highest in the world, with 19 percent of girls married by age 15.

But a five-year program started in 2005 by the U.N. Foundation's Girl

that 11,000 girls have been reached by the program. Some have attended one workshop; some have stayed in school for two years.

With such successes, perhaps the sight of a teen girl in class won't be so unusual anymore, said Tamara Kreinin, director of the Girl Fund. It will be an accepted norm. ♦

---

## Girls' School Breaks Cycle of Poverty, 10 Rupees at a Time

By Karen Calabria  
Special Correspondent

**Washington** — Virender Singh left his rural Indian village of Anupshahar for the United States a half-century ago, when he was 23 years old, but the fate of those he left behind was never far from his mind.

Singh's mind often fixed upon concerns he had about the villagers and others in India. Chief among his concerns was the 42 percent of India's population living below the poverty line. Singh knew that women bore a disproportionate share of the ills that accompany poverty: human trafficking, early marriage and domestic violence.

A few years ago, the dual American/Indian citizen felt compelled to act. Immediately following his retirement in 2000 as vice president of chemicals firm DuPont South Asia Limited, Singh, 70, cashed in all his savings, sold his home in Virginia and returned to Anupshahar, 113 kilometers miles east of New Delhi, to break ground on the Pardada Pardadi Educational Society (PPES). The words "Pardada Pardadi" form a Hindi term that means "great grandparents." Singh named his new endeavor thus to evoke the central role family plays in education in India.

The new school would cater strictly to girls. "If you want to solve the problem, you've got to solve the root cause," Singh said. By educating girls, he said, "we can enlighten future mothers, and they in turn will create an enlightened family, which will create an enlightened village, then nation."

This is not a revolutionary idea. Ex-

perts on development long have embraced this ideology. Recently, in a speech celebrating World Literacy Day in India, Nicholas Burnett, an education official at UNESCO, avowed: "No social progress can happen without educating women."

During its first year of operation, in 2000, the institute enrolled 45 students, and only 13 of them stayed to the end of the year, despite an unusual incentive that pays girls to attend. For each day of school a girl attends, 10 rupees (84 cents) are



Courtesy Lindsey Johnson

*Students of Pardada Pardadi Educational Society on a bus en route to school. Free transport makes attendance easier for many girls.*

But PPES, a free academic and vocational institute for girls, was a risky venture. In a country where United Nations statistics show only 55 percent of women over the age of 15 are literate, changing perceptions about the need to educate girls was an uphill battle.

Taruna Sharma, 23, a social science teacher at the school, put it this way: "Girls are considered property in India. When they marry, they are going to leave their family, so [the prevailing attitude is] 'why spend time, energy and resources on them?'"

deposited in her account. By graduation, a student will have earned 30,000 rupees (\$630). The money is strictly for the student, not her family. She gains access to her account upon her marriage, provided she marries after age 18, or on her 21st birthday, whichever occurs first.

The institute also provides books, uniforms, transportation to and from school, and three meals a day in a country where child malnutrition is rampant.

With an annual operating budget of nearly \$500,000, the institute relies

*(Continued on page 19)*

---

## Iranian Filmmakers Make First Hollywood Visit in 35 Years

By Azam K. Gorgin  
Staff Writer

**Washington** — A group of Iranian filmmakers traveled to Hollywood on October 8 — the first such visit in 35 years.

According to Ellen Harrington, director of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' international outreach program, the academy began work on the visit in cooperation with the Tehran-based Khaneh Cinema (House of Cinema) in the summer of 2008.

Both organizations agreed to carry out the program in the spirit of cultural exchange, a tradition that dates back in recent times to 1997, when Iranian President Mohammad Khatami initiated a cultural exchange program with the United States to permit scholars, poets, scientists and artists to travel between the two countries.

The 2009 exchange began in February when Khaneh Cinema welcomed an academy delegation to Iran. The American delegation included producers Sid Ganis, Tom Pollock, and William Horberg; actresses Annette Bening and Alfre Woodard; writer/directors Frank Pierson and Phil Alden Robinson; and documentarian James Longley. The Americans met with members of the Iranian film industry and participated in seminars and workshops.

For the October program, the academy and the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) Film & Television Archive co-hosted a week-long screening of Iranian films. The academy chose UCLA as a partner because it has a history of hosting

Iranian film festivals and, Harrington said, the university has "a well-established audience of people who are interested in Iranian films."

Shannon Kelly, head of public programming at the UCLA Film & Television Archive, said UCLA has hosted individual directors, but this visit was its first from a group of directors.

The event, titled *Up Close and Personal*, also featured discussions with academy members and the visiting Iranian delegation, including



*Iranian filmmakers visited Hollywood's Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in October.*

directors Mohammad Mehdi Asgarpour, Ebrahim Hatamikia, Reza Mir-Karimi, Mojtaba Raie, Rakhshan Bani Etemad and Alireza Raisian; actor Amin Tarokh; and screenwriter Farhad Tohidi.

Harrington said turnout for *Up Close and Personal* was "very, very good. We had full houses for a couple of nights and very enthusiastic audiences for the rest of the nights. The films that come out of Iran are really excellent. Very compelling stories, good screenplays, very well photographed and well acted. Overall, it's a very dynamic group of work that we were able to share and they were received very well."

Although efforts to improve cultural exchange programs between the United States and Iran continue, there are persistent challenges. According to Harrington, Iranian authorities held back the passports of documentarian Mojtaba Mirtahmasb and actress Fatemeh Motamed-Arya, both of whom were slated to join the Iranian group. Motamed-Arya was one of the signatories of an open letter by artists and intellectuals that protested the 2009 Iranian presidential election results.

Despite the political climate in Iran, modern Iranian cinema has achieved recognition, fame and respect among critics and moviegoers and at international film festivals. Iranian filmmakers have won major awards in world-renowned film festivals such as those Cannes, France; Venice, Italy; Berlin; Moscow; and Toronto, among others. Iranian directors and actors also participate in many of these festivals as jurors who select award winners.

The academy plans to continue its collaboration with Iranian filmmakers. "This is an established program to reach international filmmakers since our first trip to Vietnam in 2007," Harrington said. "Iran has been of some interest to the academy for their ideas and outstanding people." And UCLA will host another Iranian film festival in February 2010 marking the 20th anniversary of Iranian film festivals at the university.

*(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



See also

<http://www.america.gov/>

Telling America's story

**Ambassador Melanne Verveer Answers Questions . . .**

*(Continued from page 14)*

fees. Or uniform fees. All of these things are costs, which are impediments for parents.

A meal in school often is the magnet that entices parents to send their daughter or son to school. Governments need to provide these incentives.

We need to make sure that governments understand the correlation between educating children and the country's prosperity. In so many of these places you see schools of one room with several grades, literally almost 100 children packed in.

We have to upgrade the quality of the teaching and learning.

We need to find ways to keep girls — who often are victims — safe in school. Parents are afraid that their daughters are going to be harmed in school because terrible things happen, in terms of violence. Parents need to know their children can be

safe going to and leaving school.

Q: We must care about them, they are life and a lot more [be]cause they are also human being[s]. — Kadek Yoga

A: He is right. It goes back to violence. To education. Fundamentally it's respecting that women's rights and girls' rights are human rights.

A group of girls in Africa told me how every minute of their lives, they worry about violence that they could experience — in their homes, in their schools, walking — and what they had to do to understand how they could protect themselves.

We need to give girls mentors in their lives to be there for them.

Mr. Yoga is exactly right — every girl has the same rights as boys. But, a lot of people don't share his view. And we have to work to turn that around. ♦

**Girls' School Breaks Cycle of Poverty, 10 Rupees at a Time . . .**

*(Continued from page 17)*

on a mix of corporate and private donors for funding. Among the contributors are Singh's former employer, DuPont; the Ford Foundation; and the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi.

Today, nine years after the school doors opened, it is struggling to find space for all its applicants. Nearly 1,000 students enrolled for the 2009-10 academic year, and Singh plans to add 250 more next year. The dropout rate has dwindled to single digits.

"Those first students became our best ambassadors. They started talking to other girls about what they were learning here," school principal Shajan Jose said.

In addition to standard academic

courses, the school offers vocational training in textiles. Students learn hand and machine embroidery, beadwork and appliqué. Their handcrafts are sold through the school's Web site, and the profits are reinvested in the school.

The benefits of education aren't always tangible, said Lindsay Johnson, 23, a Nashville, Tennessee, native volunteering at the school as an English teacher. "Besides basic education and skills, school also provides these girls with a lot more confidence. Seeing that there are different opportunities available to all kinds of people is just as important as their education."

Other changes are apparent to Johnson: Students show improvements in hygiene, in cleanliness, and in using correct grammar and

speaking in complete sentences. "People are taking note and slowly starting to adjust their attitudes," Sharma said.

After her parents were killed in a property dispute, Chaudhri and her brother were sent to their grandparents, who struggled to support them. "If I weren't here at Pardada Pardadi, I would be collecting firewood or grass fodder for my animals. I'd be married off to a much older man and have several children," said Chaudhri, 17, now first in her class. "If it wasn't for school, life would be very miserable."

"Now that I'm educated, I will be self-reliant and independent, financially and socially. I'll be in a position to help others," she said. ♦