



Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

INSIDE

USAID Project To Stimulate \$450 Million Increase In Agricultural Exports Over Three Years

Addis Ababa -U.S. Embassy on September 19, 2006, the Director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) today launched a \$ 20 million, five-year Agribusiness and Trade program in partnership with the Government of Ethiopia. Funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and implemented in close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD), the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI), and the private sector, the Agribusiness and Trade Expansion Program is a market-led effort designed to increase sales and incomes for thousands of Ethiopian farmers, processors and traders in four key sectors: horticulture, coffee, leather, and oilseeds / pulses.



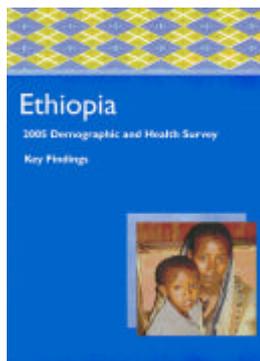
State Minister Ato Tadesse Haile, Charge d' Affaires Janet Wilgus and USAID Director Mr. Glenn Anders at the ceremony.

Mr. Glenn Anders stated that "the program projects a \$450 million increase in export sales in the next three years". It is implemented by Fintrac Inc., a leading U.S. agri-

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USAID Mission Director Announces Dissemination of the 2005 Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey

Addis Ababa -U.S. Embassy -The results of the 2005 Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS) were released by the Central Statistical Agency and the Ministry of Health in Addis Ababa on Monday, September 18th.



The 2005 EDHS is a national survey based on interviews with over 14,000 women and over 6,000 men. The survey was carried out by the Central Statistical Agency and funded by the United States Agency for International Development.

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New Grant Highlights U.S. Cultural Support

Agreement Helps Preserve Historic Addis Ababa Theatre

Addis Ababa (U.S. Embassy) – September 21)- Public Affairs Counselor Dr. Anthony Fisher joined Addis Ababa City Administration Bureau Head for Information and Culture, H.E. Ato Misgnaw Arga on Thursday, September 21, to sign a grant that will make possible the structural consolidation of the historic Hager Fikir Theatre. The grant, in the amount of \$35,000, is being provided through the Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation, an annual competitive program of the U.S. Department of State.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Dr. Fisher noted that Ethiopia's strong participation in the 2006 Ambassador's Fund competition is a sign not only of deep U.S.-Ethiopian cultural ties, but also of the recognition by the American people of the richness and depth of Ethiopia's cultural heritage. He pointed out that the site preserved by this funding is an important cul-

tural symbol for Ethiopia. "Built in 1934, *Hagr Fikir Mahaber* is the oldest indigenous playhouse in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is a special place not only for Ethiopians but also for all Africans, as the first theatre to be built by Africans for Africans south of the Sahara. *Hagr Fikir* has played a formative role in the evolution of Ethiopian theatre, music, and dance. It is a living cultural landscape that continues to serve the public, and has its own unique subculture of the actors, dancers, and musicians."

Previous Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation grants in Ethiopia have supported conservation efforts at Shiekh Nur Hussen Shrine in Oromia, Guzara Castle in North Gondar and a structural



U.S. Public Affairs Counselor Dr. Anthony Fisher & A. Ababa City Administration Bureau Head for Information and Culture H.E. Ato Misgnaw Arga Signing the grant.

study of the historic monument at Yeha in Tigray. The Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation is the only U.S. Government program that provides direct small grant support to cultural heritage preservation in less developed countries. In creating the fund in 2001, the U.S. Congress noted that "in efforts to assist in preserving the heritage of other cultures, we show our respect for them." In 2006, 104 countries were eligible to participate in the Ambassador's Fund; Ethiopia's successful proposal was one of 87 chosen for funding out of a total of over 164 submitted from countries around the world.♦

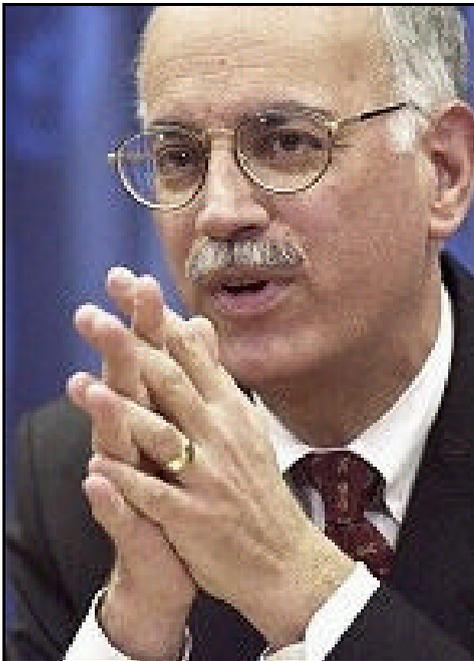


Hager Fikir Theatre

Bush Names Special Envoy for Darfur

By Judy Aita
Washington File United Nations Correspondent

United Nations -- President Bush has named Andrew Natsios, former administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), as a presidential special envoy to lead U.S. efforts to bring peace to the Darfur region in Sudan.



Andrew Natsios
Former Administrator of the U.S.
Agency for International Development
(USAID)

In his speech at the opening of the 61st U.N. General Assembly, the president focused on Darfur, addressing his remarks directly to the people of the region. "You have suffered unspeakable violence, and my nation has called these atrocities what they are -- genocide," Bush said.

"The world must step forward to provide additional humanitarian

aid, and we must strengthen the African Union force that has done good work but is not strong enough to protect you," he said.

If the Sudanese government does not accept a transition from the African Union (AU) peacekeeping force to the larger, more robust U.N. peacekeeping operation in Darfur quickly, the president said, "the United Nations must act" because thousands of lives and the credibility of the United Nations are at stake.

The president also called on the international community "to step forward to provide additional humanitarian aid" and asked NATO to strengthen the AU force (AMIS) while it remains in Darfur.

With world leaders at U.N. headquarters for the assembly, diplomats see the week of September 18 as a critical one opportunity for focusing attention on Darfur and for convincing Sudanese officials to change their position on a U.N. peacekeeping force for the region.

The United States has submitted a draft resolution to the U.N. Security Council that would extend the mandate of the U.N. Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) for another six months.

UNMIS was established by the council in 2005 (Resolution 1590) to support the peace agreement between the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army to help with humanitarian aid and guard against human rights abuses. Resolution 1706, adopted by the council on August 31, 2006, expanded the mandate of UNMIS to include Dar-

fur and instructed the U.N. secretary-general to speed up planning for an expanded force in the region. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=September&x=20060911165439ajatdia0.7224542>).

The Security Council is planning to meet September 22 with Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir, who is opposing the deployment of the 20,000 peacekeepers and police units in Darfur under U.N. command.

"We deplore the ongoing violence in Darfur and the consequent deterioration of the humanitarian situation," U.S. Ambassador John Bolton said September 18. "At this critical juncture, it is imperative that the Security Council reiterate the need for the transition of AMIS to a United Nations operation."

It is critical that the missions be expanded concurrently to ensure the urgent assistance to AMIS is not jeopardized, Bolton said.

Bolton said that just as Sudan's Government of National Unity was able to overcome decades of violence in southern Sudan by respecting the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and cooperating with UNMIS, so should Khartoum be prepared to ensure a better future for its citizens in Darfur through the Darfur Peace Agreement and cooperation in the deployment of U.N. forces in Darfur.

"The notion that Sudan is not going to accept the presence of a U.N. peacekeeping force is some-

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USAID Project To Stimulate \$450 Million Increase In . . .

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business consulting firm, and a consortium of partners. To implement this ambitious program, Fintrac collaborates with:

The Economic Competitiveness Group (ECG) -- known world-wide for its successful formation of economic clusters in 28 countries around the world. ECG recently commenced work on a cluster in the hides, leather and skins industry in Ethiopia.

Manchester Trade -- one of America's leading trade promotion firms, Manchester recently assisted the Ethiopian delegation to attend the June 2006 AGOA Conference which included meetings at the White House, the State De-

partment and with the U.S. private sector.

Boot Consulting -- this California-based firm is currently establishing coffee traceability systems and handling online auction sales that have resulted in the recent record-shattering prices for Ethiopian coffee exports -- over \$22.00 a kilo to the USA (source East Africa Fine Coffee Association newsletter of September 6, 2006)

Rainforest Alliance -- in the midst of establishing its first coffee certification program on the African continent here in Ethiopia.

Under the auspices of the USAID Agribusiness and Trade Expansion Program, it is anticipated that horticultural exports will increase 700

percent, coffee exports by 59 percent, hides/skins/leather exports by 73 percent, and oilseeds and pulses by 45 percent. For more information please contact the Agribusiness & Trade Expansion Program office below.♦

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USAID Mission Director Announces Dissemination of the 2005 . . .

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ment (USAID), the Government of Ethiopia, the United States' President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the Governments of the Netherlands and Ireland, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Technical assistance for the survey was provided by ORC Macro, a U.S.-based company. The 2005 EDHS is the second survey of its kind in Ethiopia.

The Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) project is a global data collection effort funded by USAID and carried out by ORC Macro and in-country implementing organiza-

tions. These nationally representative household surveys collect data on demographic patterns, fertility, maternal and child health, malaria, HIV, and nutrition for policy and program planning.

Glenn Anders, USAID Mission Director, and representatives from the Ministry of Health and the Central Statistics Agency jointly announced the 2005 EDHS. Mr. Anders called the survey a "gold mine of information for everyone working to make Ethiopia a healthier and more prosperous nation". He also cautioned that collection of demographic and health data is not enough, and urged program and

policy makers to make good use of the data. "It is your use of this data that can lead to change. The use of the information is what makes surveys such as these worthwhile".

Key findings of the 2005 EDHS include both good and bad news for Ethiopia. According to the survey, infant and child mortality has declined significantly since the year 2000, and married women are reported to have doubled their use of family planning. However, few women are receiving antenatal or obstetric care, and almost half of Ethiopian children suffer from chronic malnutrition.♦

Top U.S. Official for Africa Defends Darfur Peace Agreement

By Jim Fisher-Thompson
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer vigorously defended the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) from criticism that it is a failed attempt at diplomacy to stop the genocide that has killed more than 200,000 people since a rebellion flared up in the Sudanese province more than two years ago.

That violence, perpetrated mainly by groups of marauding militias called Jingaweit and supported by the Sudanese government in Khartoum, was termed genocide by the U.S. government and continues despite a cease-fire agreed to by all sides more than two years ago.

The DPA, signed by representatives of the Sudanese government and major rebel factions on May 5, 2006, in Abuja, Nigeria, capped more than six months of talks toward ending the violence that also displaced more than 2 million Darfurians. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/af/Archive/2006/May/06-121988.html>).

The Sudanese government, led by President Omar al-Bashir, recently mounted an assault in northern Darfur on the rebel holdouts that have not signed the agreement. Some observers say this is an excuse by Khartoum to continue its campaign to depopulate that potentially resource-rich western province.

Speaking at a September 12 conference on Sudan and U.S. policy sponsored by the National Defense University (NDU), Frazer said, "There are some in our own country whom I think have irresponsibly

stated that the DPA is a flawed document."

On the contrary, she said, "It is a good agreement" and offers a "fair deal" to all the parties involved.

"Most importantly," said Frazer, the DPA creates a vehicle through which "the rebels themselves and nonsignatories can come to the table and negotiate" with the [Sudanese] government "to achieve their ends through political means rather than killing innocent civilians, attacking humanitarian workers and attacking the African Union forces that are there [in Darfur] with no other reason than to save lives and protect civilians."

John Prendergast, Sudan program officer for the International Crisis Group based in Brussels, Belgium, told an NDU panel before Frazer spoke that he believed President Bashir was using the DPA as an excuse to mount a military campaign in Darfur. "Bashir can do this with impunity," he added, because the DPA failed to provide for monitoring by outside forces like the United Nations and therefore the document was "flawed" from the beginning as a peace agreement.

Bashir, on the other hand, has interpreted the Abuja agreement to allow operations in Darfur by his security forces, including an offensive against factions in the province that have not yet signed the agreement. Therefore, Bashir has said, calls by the United States and the U.N. Security Council to replace an African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur with 12,000 new troops are unnecessary and contrary to the DPA.

Frazer said Bashir was operating in "bad faith." She explained, "We believe that the [Sudanese] Government offensive is a violation of its obligations under the Darfur Peace Agreement" as well as under a previous cease-fire agreement.

In addition to the U.S. government's vigorous push for a U.N. peacekeeping force for Darfur, Frazer said, "We will continue to work on a political front with the nonsignatories to bring them on board to the DPA [because] the Sudanese government is basically using the nonsignatories as an excuse for attacking and launching its new offensive in Darfur."

Frazer reminded her audience that President Bush has said "there was no military solution to the crisis in Darfur and that we must extend the United Nation's Mission in Sudan mandate to protect innocent lives."

She said Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice spoke to the Sudanese foreign minister recently "making it very clear to his government that there is no prospect of improving bilateral relations with the United States as long as the crisis and killing in Darfur continue."

For more information, see Darfur Humanitarian Emergency (<http://usinfo.state.gov/af/africa/darfur.html>).

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

U.S. Labor Protests Mugabe Attacks on Workers in Zimbabwe

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

Washington -- More than 50 trade unionists marched outside the Zimbabwean Embassy in Washington September 18 to protest recent attacks against members of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) by the government of President Robert Mugabe.

The Americans were protesting the September 14 action by Zimbabwean security forces, who broke up a peaceful demonstration by 250 ZCTU members demanding openness in government and better wages. A number of senior labor officials were beaten severely and arrested after they protested economic mismanagement by Mugabe that has led to a staggering 1,000 percent inflation rate and joblessness of more than 50 percent.

Chanting, "Stop the beatings, stop the torture," and "ZCTU, American workers support you," members of AFL-CIO, a major U.S. labor organization, marched in front of the Zimbabwean Embassy carrying placards that read "Promote workers' rights worldwide" and "Mugabe: Free unionists."

Barbara Shailor, an AFL-CIO program officer, said: "It is very important that we come here today because this is the day Mugabe is coming to New York to attend the annual meeting of the U.N. General Assembly. And we need to tell the embassy that we will not stand for the violation of trade union rights in Zimbabwe."

As a result of the September 14 attacks, Shailor said, ZCTU Gen-

eral Secretary Wellington Chibebe has "severe cuts to his head, three broken bones and severe bruises." ZCTU President Lovemore Matombo, has "a broken arm," and First Vice President Lucia Matibenga has "scratch marks all over

Tony Baker, another CBTU member, told the crowd: "Almost 20 years ago, CBTU led a demonstration to the South African Embassy" protesting apartheid. "There is nothing different about South Africa then and Zimbabwe



Zimbabwe police keep an eye on detained trade union protestors in Harare, Sept. 13, 2006. (© AP Images)

her back. Her neck is swollen and her eardrums were damaged." All three also were taken into custody.

"What these people have gone through must not go unnoticed as Mugabe moves about the streets of New York," Shailor said.

David Claxton, an officer with the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU), read out a number of demands for Mugabe, including investigation of the September 14 attacks, medical care for all those injured, protection of the right of labor to organize and "active government engagement with the ZCTU to resolve the economic crisis" in Zimbabwe.

now. The only difference was that [South Africa] was a white regime oppressing black workers and this [Zimbabwe] is a black regime oppressing black workers."

David Dorn, director of international programs for the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), said, "We are here because this suppression of labor in Zimbabwe has just gone on far too long.

"Our organization has been working with the teachers' union in Zimbabwe for a number of years now, actually with help from the State Department. But the problem is people are suffering so much it's hard to sustain an edu-

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Bush Says CIA Interrogation Program Has Saved Lives Worldwide

Washington -- President Bush said he is working with the U.S. Congress to pass "two vital pieces of legislation" essential to winning the War on Terror that would provide legislative backing to surveillance and CIA interrogation programs.

Speaking in his weekly radio address to the American people September 16, Bush said one bill would authorize military commissions to try suspected terrorists for war crimes, as well as provide "clear rules" for U.S. security personnel involved in their detention and in questioning captured terrorists.

The president said the legislation must allow the CIA's interrogation program to continue.

"The information the Central Intelligence Agency has obtained by questioning men like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed has helped disrupt terrorist plots, including planned strikes inside the United States and on a U.S. Marine base in East Africa, an American consulate in Pakistan, and Britain's Heathrow Airport," Bush said. "This CIA program has saved American lives, and the lives of people in other countries."

The other bill would modernize U.S. electronic surveillance laws and "provide additional authority for the terrorist surveillance program" designed to quickly monitor communications between Americans and suspected terrorists overseas.

"The principle behind this program is clear: When al-Qaida operatives are calling into or out of our country, we need to know who they are calling, why they are calling,

and what they are planning," he said.

An audio link (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/09/20060916.a>.ram) to the president's remarks is available on the White House Web site.

Following is the transcript:

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
Saturday, September 16, 2006

RADIO ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT TO THE NATION

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. On Monday, I visited New York, Pennsylvania, and the Pentagon to attend memorials marking the fifth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. It was an emotional day for me and for our country. On that day, we remembered those who lost their lives, and we paid tribute to those who gave their lives so that others might live. We rededicated ourselves to protecting the American people from another attack.

Next week, I will return to New York, where I will address the United Nations General Assembly. I look forward to talking to the world leaders gathered there about our obligation to defend civilization, and how we must work together to support the forces of freedom and moderation throughout the Middle East.

As we work with the international community to defeat the terrorists and extremists, we must also provide our military and intelligence professionals the tools they need to keep our country safe. Congress is considering two vital

pieces of legislation to help us do just that. My Administration is working closely with members of both parties to pass these bills.

The first bill would allow us to use military commissions to try suspected terrorists for war crimes. We need this legislation because the Supreme Court has ruled that military commissions must be explicitly authorized by Congress.

I recently announced that 14 suspected terrorists, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the man believed to be the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks, had been transferred to Guantanamo Bay. As soon as Congress acts to authorize the military commissions I have proposed, the men our intelligence agencies believe helped orchestrate the deaths of nearly 3,000 Americans on September the 11th, 2001, can face justice.

This bill will also provide clear rules for our personnel involved in detaining and questioning captured terrorists. The information the Central Intelligence Agency has obtained by questioning men like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed has helped disrupt terrorist plots, including planned strikes inside the United States and on a U.S. Marine base in East Africa, an American consulate in Pakistan, and Britain's Heathrow Airport. This CIA program has saved American lives, and the lives of people in other countries.

Unfortunately, the recent Supreme Court decision put the future of this program in question, and we need this legislation to save it. There is debate about the specific proposals in this bill, and my Ad-

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Bush Names Special Envoy for Darfur

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thing we don't find to be credible," Bolton said.

Peace activists held "Save Darfur" rallies around the world September 17 in an effort to highlight the desperate situation. "The world must act and it must do it now because time is not on our side," former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright told an estimated crowd of 30,000 in New York City's Central Park.

Senator Norm Coleman, a Republican from Minnesota, and Senator Barbara Boxer, a Democrat from California -- members of the U.S. delegation to the General Assembly -- stressed that both major U.S. political parties are united on Darfur.

"Quite often we find ourselves on different sides on a number of issues, but on the issue of the importance of dealing with the genocide of Darfur we stand united. There is absolutely no question about it," Coleman said after meet-

ing with Sudan's ambassador to the United Nations September 18.

"We need increased focus and attention to this issue. Resolution of these issues is often complex, there are nuances and layers, but the reality of this is genocide, is not complex. It's very clear ... it simply has to be done," Coleman said.

Boxer added that Americans and people around the world have shown great compassion by taking the time to rally, speak and raise funds. "To the very brave NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] and U.N. personnel who are going in there, we can only say thank you for keeping this issue on the agenda of the world," she said.

Having lost many family members during the Holocaust, Boxer said, she knows that "shining the light of truth on these inhumane acts is the first step to stopping them."

U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour has reported that, despite the May peace

accord, the situation in Darfur has worsened steadily, with human rights abuses being committed on a large scale by government forces, the marauding Jingaweit militias and rebel groups. The high commissioner told the Human Rights Council in Geneva that there is a "continued and clear failure or unwillingness" by the government to hold the perpetrators of horrific crimes accountable.

UNICEF says that more than 400,000 have lost their lives, some 2 million more have been driven from their homes in Darfur in the last three years and nearly 3 million depend on international aid for food, shelter and basic health needs.

For additional information, see Darfur Humanitarian Emergency (<http://usinfo.state.gov/af/africa/darfur.html>).

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

U.S. Labor Protests Mugabe Attacks on Workers . . .

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cation program in a country where people are scrabbling just to get by from day to day."

The United States has condemned the attacks. "The U.S. government condemns the Mugabe government's suppression of planned marches by the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions. Over 100 individuals were arrested, including

senior union leaders, and some were severely beaten as part of the effort to prevent the marches from taking place," U.S. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said September 15.

"The government's actions against those wishing to protest on behalf of greater democracy, better wages and access to treatment for AIDS sufferers is another example of its denial of the basic rights of

its citizens. We call for the immediate release of those detained and access to medical treatment for those who were injured," he said.

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

Laura Bush Hosting White House Literacy Conference

By Judy Aita
Washington File Staff Writer

New York -- As world leaders gather for the opening of the U.N. General Assembly, U.S. first lady Laura Bush will be highlighting the importance of literacy for both individual and national growth by hosting the first White House Conference on Global Literacy September 18 at the New York Public Library.

"Literacy improves the lives of mothers and children. Literacy boosts economies. And literacy helps people make good, informed decisions about their health," she said in a conference announcement.

The conference will underscore the need for sustained global and national leadership in promoting literacy and will encourage greater international and private-sector involvement in literacy programs, according to Sonya Medina, director of projects for the White House Conference on Global Literacy. It also will highlight successful programs supported by the United States, UNESCO and private or local groups around the world.

Over 60 first ladies and spouses of leaders and education ministers are expected to attend, Medina said.

According to UNESCO, 780 million adults, two-thirds of whom are women, are unable to read. Another 100 million children worldwide are not in school. Eighty-five percent of the world's illiterate live in just 35 countries that are concentrated in regions of high poverty. In Washington, the first lady's chief of staff, Anita McBride, said representatives from

30 of these countries will attend the conference. The African region will be heavily represented, she added.

Laura Bush is honorary ambassador for the United Nations Literacy Decade. A former public school teacher and librarian, she has used her positions as first lady of Texas and first lady of the United States to highlight the importance of

2005, she visited 27 countries and was able to see reading programs at work in many places.

"Literacy is vital to strong, free societies. And reading changes lives," she said recently. "Mothers who can read raise children who can read. They can also make informed decisions that protect the health of their families and can participate in local economies. Lit-



First lady Laura Bush stands with a group of Afghan girls in Kabul. (White House photo)

reading and education, especially for women and girls. Her dedication and support of literacy programs is seen in such projects as the first National Book Festival in Washington in 2001 and the teacher recruitment program Teach for America.

The first lady often recalls that as a child she loved listening to her mother read to her. Over her lifetime, she has realized how important that experience was and how critical such a simple gesture between mother and child is for children all over the world and the countries in which they live. In

eracy strengthens families just as it strengthens communities and societies."

Panels and discussions at the conference will focus on those three areas: mother-child literacy, literacy for health and literacy for economic self-sufficiency. Nine programs that are easily replicable will be showcased.

MOTHER -- A CHILD'S FIRST TEACHER

The first panel, entitled "Mother-Child Literacy and Intergenerational

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Laura Bush Hosting White House Literacy . . .

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Learning," features programs that focus on mothers, children's first teachers. When mothers learn to read, they can impart those skills to their children, beginning a cycle of literacy that continues from one generation to the next.

Even in the United States, one-third of the children begin school without basic skills, Dr. Perri Klass, president of the U.S. Reach Out and Read National Center, said at a press conference September 14. Her program links health care and literacy by giving books to mothers at doctors' offices and clinics at least twice a year and encouraging them to read to their babies and young children.

The mother-child panel will also feature Maria Diarra Keita, director of the Institute for Popular Education in Mali, and Florence Molefe, facilitator of the Family Literacy Project in South Africa. The White House's McBride said there is excitement among conference organizers about Molefe's success in bringing literacy to areas where there is no running water or electricity. "Small steps in the least likely places" can inspire other educators in impoverished areas of the world, she said.

The second panel, "Literacy for Health" focuses on the importance of reading so adults can not only make informed decisions about their family's health, but also do basic things such as understand instructions on a medicine bottle.

In Afghanistan's rural communities women often are not allowed to leave their homes to attend school, said Hasina Mojadidi, instructional

development coordinator for Learning for Life. Her program began working with women at home teaching basic health issues. As the program has progressed, she said, men have seen the value and encouraged not only their wives, but also their daughters, to study. "Mrs. Bush stands with the women of Afghanistan," said McBride. In 2005, the first lady visited the Women's Teacher Training Institute, where men and women teachers are trained in separate classrooms.

"In many cases, it's the man who needs to be educated, and cultures need to be changed, but it needs to be done with the people's support," said Randall Tobias, head of the U.S. Agency for International Development, a partner in hosting the literacy conference.

Other health-related literacy projects will be presented by Gonzalo Fiorilo of Bolivia, and by Salah Sabri Sebeh of Egypt.

LEARNING BASIC BUSINESS SKILLS

The third panel features programs that help women learn basic business skills that generate income, foster independence, and boost local economies.

In Burkina Faso, 90 percent of women are illiterate and 85 percent of women are agricultural workers, said Koumba Boly Barry, coordinator for development and cooperation, Program for Literacy and Training. Her program targets women in agriculture, helping them develop income-generating activities and teaching needed skills.

Both men and women are beginning to see the difference education is making, Barry said. "We also show them that as they become successful, the country is becoming more successful."

The panel on literacy's effect on economic well-being will also feature Regina Celia Esteves de Siqueira, who is chief executive of a nonprofit literacy program in Brazil, and Krishna Mohan Rao, an education expert for the government of Andhra Pradesh, India, who will talk about award-winning programs in India.

McBride said UNESCO's director general, Koichiro Matsuura, will announce follow-up, regional literacy conferences that will take place during the next two years. She said she was certain that there would be such a follow-up conference in Africa.

Additional information (<http://www.globalliteracy.gov/>) on the White House Conference on Global Literacy will be available on its Web site, including videos of the presentations, conference news, speeches, and links to partner Web sites in four languages: English, French, Spanish and Arabic.

Elizabeth Kelleher contributed to this article from Washington.

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

Muslim, Jewish Communities Secure Halal-Kosher Labeling Law

By Michael Jay Friedman
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Muslim and Jewish communities in the state of Virginia successfully have lobbied for enactment of a halal/kosher labeling statute. The new Virginia law requires that any food offered for sale as kosher or halal be labeled with the name of the person or organization certifying the item kosher or halal. Violations are punishable by a \$500 fine.

Observant Muslims and Jews observe similar, but not identical, dietary restrictions. These practices -- halal for Muslims and kashrut (kosher) for Jews -- forbid consumption of certain foods and regulate how animals may be slaughtered. Trained individuals and organizations ensure compliance with these standards and permit vendors to affix their symbol of compliance on the product packaging.

In the United States, the "Crescent M" is a leading halal certification symbol. There are a number of common kosher symbols, or hekhshers.

Legal issues arise when state governments' legitimate desire to protect their citizens from fraud bumps up against the constitutional prohibition against laws "respecting an establishment of religion."

In recent years, the courts have invalidated laws that use religious standards to categorize food products. The New Jersey Supreme Court, for example, in 1996 de-

clared unconstitutional regulations that defined kosher as complying with "Orthodox Jewish law." That definition, the court held, "impose[s] substantive religious standards ... and authorize[s] civil enforcement of those religious standards with the assistance of clergy, directly and substantially entangling government in religious matters."

After that decision, several states enacted laws that focus not on whether food meets religious standards but instead on fraudulent labeling. These laws typically require those who represent their food as kosher or halal to make public names and other information about the certifying authority. These measures allow consumers to decide for themselves whether a particular item comports with their dietary code.

The growing Muslim community in Virginia "had little recourse if food labeled halal turned out not to be genuine," civic leader Imad Damaj told the Richmond Times-Dispatch. The onus fell on the consumer, Muneer A. Baig, vice president of the nonprofit Muslim Association of America, told to the Washington File.

Several Muslim leaders suggested to their local legislator that Virginia join the growing number of states enacted a halal-labeling law. Virginia already had a kosher law, but that law was believed susceptible to the type of court challenge that had prevailed in New Jersey and elsewhere.

The two communities decided to work together toward the nation's

first joint kosher and halal statute. With a coalition of Muslim, Jewish and interfaith organizations supporting it, the new law was passed by a unanimous state Senate vote and by 96–2 in the General Assembly. It then was signed into law by Governor Tim Kaine, a Democrat, in the presence of Muslim and Jewish community leaders in early August.

With the new law in place, the onus for selling mislabeled food now falls on the vendor, says Baig.

Rabbi Leibel Fajnland of Chabad Lubavitch of Northern Virginia agrees that the statute fills a real need. He told the Washington File that government should empower citizens to ensure that neither suppliers nor merchants take advantage of their efforts to fulfill a "cornerstone" spiritual practice.

Fajnland believes a disclosure statute like Virginia's is appropriate. "You have the right to know what you are eating, but government should not be able to say what is kosher."

Partnership between communities to advocate common goals is the essence of the American political system. "When people work together as partners to humanity" they can achieve success, Baig says. When they work against each other, "we all lose."

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

U.S. Promotes Safe, Legal and Humane Migration

**U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Population, Refugees,
and Migration
Washington, DC
September 11, 2003**

Fact Sheet

The United States - A Nation Committed to Safe, Legal, and Human Migration

America can be a lawful society and a welcoming society at the same time. Our new immigrants are just what they've always been - people willing to risk everything for the dream of freedom. And America remains what she has always been -- the great hope on the horizon, an open door to the future, a blessed and promised land. We honor the heritage of all who come here, no matter where they come from, because we trust in our country's genius for making us all Americans - one nation under God." - George W. Bush, President of the United States of America

A Traditional Immigrant Nation - Migration to the United States

The United States is proud of its history of immigration. Since 1907, 20.9 million immigrants from all over the world have become U.S. citizens. Of the more than 190 million migrants in the world today, 20% reside in the United States. Between 2000 and 2005, 3.7 million immigrants chose to become citizens and the United States granted legal permanent residence to 5.8 million people. The United States is also the largest refugee resettlement country in the world, having admitted

more than 2.66 million refugees since 1975 (a yearly average of 127,000) who came to the United States to escape persecution, conflict, and war.

Migrants bring a rich array of cultures to their new communities. Their contributions have made the United States the country it is today. Americans are bound together by a shared belief in principles guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution - freedom and opportunity, equality before the law, respect and tolerance for differences, and the right of citizens to govern the nation.

The choice to become an American citizen is voluntary, but the United States encourages those eligible to apply for citizenship. The United States promotes civic education. Full civic participation in American life is key to successful integration. Integration is a multifaceted process that aims to foster a sense of belonging. Federal, state, and local levels of government, as well as non-governmental organizations, faith-based groups, the business sector, communities, and immigrants themselves are essential contributors to the successful political, social, economic, and cultural integration of immigrants.

Immigrants come to the United States in search of opportunity. The welcoming nature of U.S. society creates conditions that enable them to achieve high levels of success across public and private sectors. Naturalized Americans represent the United States as members of Congress, federal Cabinet Secretaries, and diplomats. They are CEOs, notable sci-

entists, cultural icons, teachers, police officers, and other members of their communities. They are the face of the United States.

A Country of Compassion - The United States as a Leader in Migration Policy

The United States is committed to promoting safe, legal, and humane migration throughout the world. Embracing international protection obligations, the United States is dedicated to assisting asylum-seekers, refugees, victims of trafficking in persons, and other vulnerable migrants. Globally, the United States supports capacity-building activities that emphasize effective and humane migration management. The United States partners with other governments and non-governmental and international organizations to establish programs throughout the world to combat trafficking in persons and assist vulnerable migrants. These programs offer a wide range of return and reintegration services such as transportation, medical care, vocational training, psycho-social counseling, and job creation activities. The U.S. Return, Reintegration, and Family Reunification Program provides support to victims of trafficking found in the United States, who elect to return to countries of origin or remain in the United States.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 highlighted vulnerabilities in U.S. border security. Following those events, the U.S. government took dramatic new actions to increase border and travel security, including the creation of

(Continued on page 24)

Citizenship Week Inspires Hope for Civic Renewal

By Carolee Walker
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Increased community service and voting in the United States since September 11, 2001, is heartening, but the full-fledged civic renewal for which leaders hoped has not yet occurred, according to U.S. Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales.

"We can take heart in the progress, but must take stock of what is missing," Gonzales said in Washington at the National Conference on Citizenship on September 18 in honor of Constitution and Citizenship Week.

The post-9/11 spirit of citizenship is vibrant among troops serving in Iraq and among naturalized U.S. citizens, Gonzales said, "but I know that it is not universal in our country. I think we all thought, and hoped, that the renewed sense of citizenship and patriotism would last [after 9/11] and that it would be one more way in which we show our enemies that they won't win this War on Terror.

"I often leave naturalization ceremonies wondering, when is that moment of pride and allegiance for those of us who were fortunate enough to be born here? And how can we inspire that feeling in those who may not know how fortunate they are?"

"Citizenship" is more than just being a citizen and calls for involvement in American politics and society, Gonzales said.

The attorney general said three key elements of American citizenship teach and inspire civic in-

volvement. Learning and appreciating America's history and foundations, especially in everyday life by respecting the rule of law, is first, he said, followed by voting and volunteering.

Gonzales suggested the possibility of a rebirth of citizenship through a renewed emphasis on the Consti-



Alberto R. Gonzales
U.S. Attorney General

tion in American history classes. "Every leader in public life should call on American schools and teachers to spend more time studying the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution with their students," Gonzales said.

Citizenship depends on Americans going to the polls and voting, Gonzales said, and they must have confidence that their vote will be counted. "We cannot expect to have populist government if the public does not broadly exercise

their right to hire and fire their representatives," Gonzales asserted. "The right to vote is the lifeblood of our democracy."

Gonzales added that in such new democracies as Afghanistan and Iraq, "despite continuing danger, the citizens of those countries have participated [in elections] in the millions," Gonzales said.

Volunteerism is an element of citizenship that is good for society and good for the soul, he added.

"Whenever I speak to young lawyers I always encourage them to consider public service because in giving to others we rekindle and refine ourselves," he said.

"Whether it is the war on poverty, the war on drugs or the war on illiteracy we have citizen soldiers who confront daily the evils of our society so that our country remains a place where dreams still come true," Gonzales said.

The full text (http://justice.gov/ag/speeches/2006/ag_speech_060918.html) of Gonzales' prepared remarks is available on the Department of Justice Web site.

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

United States Promotes Religious Freedom for All, Rice Says

By Michelle Austein
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington – "The United States seeks to promote religious freedom and tolerance and build a more peaceful world for the peoples of all faiths," Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said at the release of the International Religious Freedom Report September 15.

The U.S. Department of State released the eighth annual report to Congress September 15. The 2006 report examines 197 countries' commitment to advancing religious freedom. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenlish&y=2006&m=September&x=20060914164724hnmnietsua0.1669384>). The United States hopes the report will serve as a resource for those who share concerns about religious freedom, Rice said. "We also hope that it will serve as a source of encouragement to those whose plight is documented in the report and whose right to believe and practice and worship as they choose is still denied by their governments."

Events over the past year, including the incidents surrounding the printing of cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad in European newspapers, "have shown the need to go beyond the protection of religious freedom in law to a concerted effort to create the conditions for harmony, mutual understanding and respect within our societies," said Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom John Hanford.

Many governments are taking im-

portant steps to improve religious freedom, according to Hanford. For example, in Afghanistan the government is seeking to uphold constitutional guarantees of religious freedom despite a long-standing culture of intolerance. In Turkmenistan, additional religious groups have been able to obtain legal status.

The report also documents governments that routinely suppress religious freedom, including those of Eritrea and China, which use repressive registration laws as a means of restricting nonapproved religions or outlaw certain faiths entirely, Hanford said. In particular, Hanford said, Uzbekistan has further tightened its laws on religion, and congregations have been harassed and deregistered. Some Muslims in that nation have been arrested inappropriately, Hanford added.

The fifth anniversary of the September 11, 2001, attacks was a reminder that "the entire world is threatened by the extremist ideology of hate and bigotry and religious intolerance," Rice said.

"Religious freedom is deeply rooted in our principals and our history as a nation. And it is now integral to our efforts to combat terrorism and the ideology of ha-

tried that fuels it," Rice said.

Transcripts of Rice's remarks (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/72267.htm>) and Hanford's remarks (<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/rm/2006/72303.htm>) are available on the State Department Web site, as are the full texts of the 2006 report (<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2006/>) and previous reports ([A photograph of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice speaking at a wooden podium. She is wearing a dark blazer and a necklace. Behind her is a blue backdrop with the American flag and the State Department seal. To her right is a large screen displaying a colorful graphic of a tree with roots and branches, representing the report's title.](http://www.</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice introduces the State Department's 2006 Annual Report on International Religious Freedom at a press conference in Washington, D.C., September 15, 2006. (State Department photo/Mike Gross)

[state.gov/g/drl/irf/rpt/](http://www.state.gov/g/drl/irf/rpt/)).

For more information, see International Religious Freedom (http://usinfo.state.gov/dhr/human_rights/intl_religious_freedom.html) and Democracy Dialogues' Freedom of Religion (http://www.democracy.gov/dd/eng_democracy_dialogues/religion.html).

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

State Department Releases 2006 International Religious Freedom Report

By Michelle Austein
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The U.S. Department of State released its eighth annual International Religious Freedom Report September 15. The 2006 report examines countries' commitment to advancing religious freedom from July 1, 2005, to June 30, 2006.

The International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 requires an annual review of the status of religious freedom worldwide. The report to Congress documents governments' actions that could be a barrier to religious freedom, including repressing religious expression, persecuting people for their beliefs or tolerating violence against religious minorities. The report also lists governments that respect, protect and promote religious freedom.

In addition, the act requires designating countries that have "engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom" as a "country of particular concern (CPC)." In November 2005, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice designated Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Vietnam as CPCs. The 2006 report reviews actions taken by the U.S. government to advance international religious freedom in these countries.

The actions taken by the United States have varied with each CPC, according to the report. For exam-

ple, the United States has imposed a variety of trade sanctions on Burma while in Eritrea, U.S. officials meet regularly with members of religious communities. State Department leaders have also visited other countries to promote religious freedom. In November 2005, Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick hosted an interfaith forum with Christian and Muslim leaders in Khartoum, Sudan, and Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Barry Lowenkron held talks on religious freedom during a February visit to Beijing.

Among the CPCs, Vietnam was cited for improving its overall respect for religious freedom during the 2006 reporting period. In May 2005, Vietnam began making improvements with new laws protecting religious activities.

The 2006 report considers a government broadly repressing peaceful religious expression to be abusive. Additionally, the report states, "countries and situations in which authorities' over-zealous actions taken against observant believers suspected of extremism have had the principal effect of restricting religious freedom. In some countries, for example, many are afraid to attend mosque frequently lest the government characterize them as religious extremists."

The report cites countries that have enacted legislation favoring the majority religion and discriminating against minority religions.

"These governments implement policies designed to demand that adherents recant their faith, cause religious group members to flee the country, or intimidate and harass certain religious groups," according to the report. This has happened in some countries in which the government is dominated by a majority ethnic group.

The report also identifies as religious abuse the practice of discriminating against certain religions by describing them as dangerous cults or sects.

The full texts of the 2006 report (<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2006/>) and previous reports (<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/irf/rpt/>) are available on the State Department Web site.

For more information, see International Religious Freedom (http://usinfo.state.gov/dhr/human_rights/intl_religious_freedom.html) and Democracy Dialogues' Freedom of Religion (http://www.democracy.gov/dd/eng_democracy_dialogues/religion.html).

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

U.S. Official Outlines Essential Elements of Democracy

By Eric Green
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The Organization of American States (OAS), on behalf of the 800 million people in the Western Hemisphere, must be committed to defending democracy in the region, says U.S. official John Maisto.

In September 12 remarks at the OAS commemorating the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, Maisto said the charter enumerates the "essential elements of representative democracy."

Maisto, the U.S. permanent representative to the OAS, said those elements of democracy are respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; the rule of law; the holding of periodic, free and fair elections based on secret balloting; a pluralistic political system; and the separation of powers between branches of government.

He also emphasized that the "democracy we are talking about is not a U.S. model of democracy," nor a model of democracy from Brazil, Canada, Venezuela, Costa Rica or Jamaica. The elements of democracy, he said, represent "fundamental, universal, non-negotiable human liberties. And in the Americas, we have a positive agenda to assure that all 800 million people enjoy these freedoms."

The U.S. envoy said that if democracy is to help reduce poverty and inequality in the Americas, "then democratic institutions must be effective. Institutions must be reformed to fight corruption and to function transparently. And every democracy must have the strength

to create opportunities for improved health and education for all of its citizens."

Maisto said that "to prevent a breakdown of this democratic infrastructure," the Democratic Charter, adopted by the United States and the 33 other OAS members on September 11, 2001, "must be a relevant tool for action, not just a piece of paper."

On that date, when the United States was attacked by terrorists and citizens of more than 30 countries in the hemisphere were killed, hemispheric leaders committed themselves "not only to defend our territory, our security, and our people," but also to defend democracy, said Maisto.

He added that under the auspices of the charter, the OAS has helped or is helping those member states where democratic practices or institutions are challenged, including in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela. In addition, Maisto said that over the last 24 months, the OAS has fielded "high quality, successful election observer missions or other missions" in Bolivia, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, the Dominican Republic, Panama, El Salvador, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, St. Vincent, Suriname and Nicaragua.

Maisto said that even though the charter can serve as an effective tool to "ward off political crises or impending challenges to constitutional order, there is still reluctance on the part of some countries to use it in this way."

With this in mind, Maisto said the charter does not "anticipate rushing to sanction or to suspend" an

OAS member state. Rather, he said, the charter "contemplates a gradual, measured response to political crises" and "incorporates very practical measures -- both remedial and preventive -- to strengthen and restore democracy."

Maisto said the two 9/11 events -- the terrorist attacks on the United States and the adoption of the charter -- are "seminal in the course of our hemisphere's history, and they will forever remain tied inextricably by fate's hand." He added that "at face value, both could not be further apart in their human dimensions: one, an act of premeditated evil, the other, a symbol of great human achievement that exalts civilization."

But on that date, Maisto said, "we saw our countries, our region, and our world come together as a community of nations to provide comfort, solidarity, and hope. And we saw political will and determination by each one of our governments to make a historic and explicit commitment to the preservation and promotion of democracy, on the very day that our democratic values and way of life came under attack."

For the text of the OAS democratic charter, see Democracy Dialogues (http://usinfo.state.gov/dd/democracy_dialogues/keydocs/interamerican_charter.html).

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

Bush Plans To Focus on Mideast Democracy at United Nations

By Judy Aita
Washington File United Nations
Correspondent

United Nations -- While he is in New York for the opening of the 61st U.N. General Assembly, President Bush will focus on his "freedom agenda," especially his positive vision for the Middle East, in both his speech to the assembly and during private meetings, according to senior administration officials.

"Because they know that freedom will defeat them, terrorists, tyrants and traitors to humanity are doing all they can to stop the expansion of freedom. The Middle East is the central battleground. The bright, democratic future that we see for the Middle East [is] in contrast to some who have almost a backward looking vision for that region," a senior official who asked not to be identified told reporters September 15 via teleconference.

In his speech to the General Assembly September 19, Bush plans to emphasize the need to work with democratically elected governments such as those in Lebanon and Iraq to help strengthen their democratic institutions as well as help people in other countries achieve their freedom, the officials said. The president will be urging the international community to help those in the Middle East to realize that desire for freedom.

The freedom agenda is not for the Middle East alone, although the region -- particularly in Iraq, Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories -- is the main battleground in the struggle for democracy at this time, the officials said.

The president will have "in each case -- Iraq, Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority . . . very concrete suggestions about the path forward for realizing his vision of freedom and the role that the international community can play in that," one administration official said.

Iran also will be addressed in the president's speech. The Iranian people have the potential to be part of Bush's positive vision for the region, the officials said.

pend their enrichment-related activities," one official said.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED WITH LEADERS OF OTHER DEMOCRACIES

Even though military and police efforts are needed to combat terrorists, the ultimate weapons in the War on Terror are justice, freedom and opportunity -- topics that will be discussed in the president's private meetings September 18 with Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad



President George W. Bush addresses the United Nations General Assembly in New York City Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2006.

White House photo by Shealah Craighead

Bush will not be meeting with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who also will address the General Assembly on September 19. Iran's uranium enrichment program and its refusal to meet the Security Council's August 31 deadline to halt enrichment is expected to be a key topic during the assembly.

"We don't have contacts with the Iranians, and we're not going to have it, unless and until they sus-

Badawi of Malaysia, President Antonio Saca of El Salvador, President Ricardo Maduro of Honduras, President Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania, and on September 19 with President Jalal Talabani of Iraq, the official said.

Malaysia, the official said, is a democratic country with a moderate form of Islamic government and "a very good demonstration of how Islam and democracy are fully compatible concepts."

(Continued on page 21)

U.N. Member States Search for Answers to Migration Problems

Washington – With its long tradition of accepting immigrants, the United States renewed its commitment September 15 to international cooperation in the voluntary, orderly movement of populations.

“The United States’ commitment to promoting orderly migration as a positive development for all nations is firm and undiminished by the challenges of the post-9/11 world,” said Assistant Secretary of State Ellen Sauerbrey, who oversees the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration. She spoke at the U.N. High-Level Dialogue of the General Assembly on International Migration and Development held September 14-15 in New York.

More than 120 nations were represented at the meeting, which gives particular focus to migration as it affects development.

“We are deeply and sincerely committed to promoting legal, orderly and humane international migration as an engine for economic growth and prosperity for all countries,” Sauerbrey said. “We are also, without hesitation, fully committed to respect for the human dignity and human rights of migrants.”

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan has proposed a global forum on migration within which countries would have an ongoing discussion on the best practices, ideas and experiences for dealing with migration. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/is/Archive/2005/Oct/06-718298.html>).

Belgium offered September 14 to host the first meeting in 2007 to launch an ongoing multilateral dialogue on the many issues facing the world’s 190 million migrants.

Sauerbrey said the United States favors a regionally focused approach to resolution of migration concerns.



Ellen Sauerbrey
Assistant Secretary of State

“In our experience, migration relationships work best between neighbors and neighborhoods, near and far, where there are common interests and concerns that lead to tangible outcomes,” Sauerbrey said in her speech to a plenary session. “We are not interested in grand and elaborate global dialogues simply because we have seen the inherent weakness that results from the size and scope.”

Sauerbrey said the United Nations and the international community have adequate fora for discussion of migration issues, citing the Global Migration Group and the In-

ternational Organization of Migration.

As a nation that has welcomed migrants for more than 200 years, the United States has a long history of mistakes and experience with immigration. Sauerbrey offered the U.S. example to other nations that might be facing the issue for the first time.

“All the countries of the U.N. family have shared with us their people, their culture and their faiths, representing the magnificent glory and range and reach of God’s human creation,” Sauerbrey said.

For more information, see a fact sheet (<http://www.state.gov/g/prm/rls/fs/2006/72145.htm>) on the State Department Web site.

For ongoing coverage of this issue, see Immigration Reform (http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/immigration.html).

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

Aid Group Launches Program to Educate Children in Conflict Areas

By Kathryn McConnell
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The humanitarian assistance organization Save the Children announced a five-year program to bring education to children living in countries affected by armed conflict. The initiative was launched concurrently in more than 40 countries, according to a Save the Children press release.

The U.S.-based group announced the launch of its "Rewrite the Future" education initiative at a press briefing September 12 at the U.S. Capitol. The event was attended by members of Congress who support increasing educational opportunities for children around the world.

The goal of the initiative is to provide hope for the future for millions of children by helping them "gain access to and reap the current and future benefits of a quality education," according to the release. The program aims to bring basic education to 3 million young children by 2010 and provide improved education to 5 million more children by that time.

Charlie MacCormack, Save the Children chief executive officer, urged aid donors to expand their concept of how to respond to crises caused by war or natural disasters. That response traditionally is limited to providing emergency aid such as medicine, food and shelter. In addition, he said, "education has to be part of the normal response to a crisis."

Education is "a casualty of war," Save the Children said in its recent "Rewrite the Future" report.

"Students and teachers often have to flee as school buildings are bombed or commandeered by armed forces ... essential education money gets diverted towards military action, teachers' salaries dry up and materials stop reaching schools," the report states.

"Unless children affected by conflict are protected and educated, their future, and the future of their nations, are seriously imperiled," it adds.

Early investment in education protects children from the most damaging aspects of conflict -- such as being forced into militias, raped or subjected to other forms of abuse -- and is a significant factor in breaking the cycle of violence, building peace and helping countries get on a positive track for development, MacCormack said.

VALUING EDUCATION

"I value education a lot," said Mercy Acayo Aremo, a former refugee from Sudan now living and going to school in Baltimore, Maryland.

Children "are the leaders of the future," she said at the program's U.S. launch.

In a Save the Children public service film, Actress Eva Longoria said that "education can save our children and engage them in society. [It] offers hopes and teaches tolerance."

"Just as education is the ticket out of poverty, it is a means to achieving stability, security and prosperity" in areas that have been af-

ected by conflict, Representative Nina Lowey said at the launch.

Education is for children who, for all or most of their lives, have "seen nothing but violence and bloodshed" and is "key to rebuilding shattered societies and for rehabilitating child soldiers," she said.

More information (http://www.savethechildren.org/news/releases/release_091206.asp) station-pub=i_hpln_091206&ArticleID= &



Charlie MacCormack
Children Chief Executive Officer

NewsID=) about Rewrite the Future is available on the Save the Children web site.

For additional information about how the U.S. government, groups and individuals are helping people around the world, see Partnership for a Better Life (<http://usinfo.state.gov/partners/>).

Holocaust Museum Honors Waitstill and Martha Sharp

By Michael Jay Friedman
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The United States Holocaust Museum (USHM) honored the Reverend Waitstill Sharp (1905–1999) and his wife Martha Sharp (1902–1984) at a September 14 ceremony. The Sharps, and the Unitarian service organization they helped create, were responsible for the escape of approximately 2,000 Jews and political dissidents from near-certain death in Nazi-occupied Europe.

In June 2006, the Sharps were named "Righteous Among the Nations" by Yad Vashem, the Jerusalem memorial to the six million victims of the Nazi Holocaust or Shoah and to the heroes who often risked their own lives to save them. The Sharps are only the second and third Americans so honored.

In 1939, Waitstill Sharp was the minister at a Wellesley, Massachusetts, Unitarian church. His wife, Martha, was a social worker trained at the famous Hull House settlement in Chicago, a volunteer center that provided social services and education to poor workers and recent immigrants.

With Czechoslovakia already partially occupied by Nazi Germany, the Unitarian Service Committee sought volunteers to aid Czech Unitarians. The first 16 ministers turned down the assignment. The Sharps accepted, left their two children in the care of friends and family, and arrived in Prague in February 1939, just one month before the complete occupation of the Czech state.

They quickly understood that the situation required more than emergency relief. As Waitstill later related, it was necessary to help "those individuals who could escape in time to save their lives and souls in a foreign land."

With most nations reluctant to accept large numbers of refugees, the Sharps worked to overcome bureaucratic obstacles to emigration. They crisscrossed Europe to secure necessary travel papers, job offers or scholarships often required for entry visas. Later they arranged transit and frequently accompanied their charges on their often dangerous journeys to freedom.

This work quickly brought the Sharps to the attention of the Gestapo, or Nazi secret police, which ransacked the Unitarian mission in Prague. Undaunted, the Sharps continued their work out of private residences, literally until one day before the Gestapo planned Martha's arrest. They returned to the United States in August 1939.

BACK IN HARM'S WAY

Long before many others, the Sharps recognized the deadly peril that the Nazis posed to millions of European "undesirables." They described the threat to the newly formed Unitarian Service Committee (today the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee), which asked them to lead its on-the-scene humanitarian efforts. Again

the Sharps agreed to place their lives in peril.

Working with such champions of justice as the writer Varian Fry (the first American named a Righteous Among the Nations) and the American diplomat Hiram Bingham IV, the Sharps established the USC office in Lisbon, Portugal, a key departure point for refugees. At



Martha and Waitstill Sharp wave goodbye as they board a ship bound for Europe in 1939

Fry's request, Waitstill also served as Emergency Rescue Committee representative in Marseilles. (See related story (<http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/Archive/2006/May/26-736045.html>) on Hiram Bingham.)

The Sharps' efforts were instrumental in the dramatic escape of, among others, novelist Lion Feuchtwanger, whose works were among those torched in the Nazi book burnings, Otto Meyerhof, Nobel laureate in medicine, and Franz Werfel, the novelist, playwright and poet who in the United States

(Continued on page 21)

Bush Plans To Focus on Mideast Democracy at . . .

(Continued from page 17)

Twenty years ago, El Salvador was torn by factional strife with insurgency, death squads and violence. Democracy seemed impossible, he said. But for the past 15 years El Salvador has been "a very successful democratic country where people who were former combatants have managed to reintegrate into what is a very prosperous, successful society."

Tanzania is "an emerging democracy in Africa, but there are serious concerns about terrorists using its terrain. So the president will engage with President Kikwete on

the challenges of fighting terrorism in East Africa," the official said. The president also will be participating in a meeting of the U.N. Democracy Fund, a group that was created in 2006 at the suggestion of President Bush to provide a way for established democracies to help new democracies and strengthen democratic institutions around the world.

The group of about 25 nations will meet for the first time with several nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) working on democracy issues such as training election observers or defending political prisoners. The group will discuss how

the fund can support the work of NGOs worldwide. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=March&x=20060306181320MVyelwarC0.8435938>).

For further information, see The United States and the United Nations (http://usinfo.state.gov/is/international_security/UNGA_2005.html).

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Holocaust Museum Honors Waitstill and . . .

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published the acclaimed novel *Song of Bernadette* in 1942.

Working in Marseilles, France, Martha Sharp arranged for the exit visas, transit permits and identity papers that allowed 29 children and 10 adults to sail for New York in December 1940. One of those children, 14-year old Eva Rosemarie Feigl, would provide Yad Vashem with eyewitness testimony of the Sharps' heroism. The Unitarian Service Committee presence established by the Sharps is credited with saving an estimated 2,000 refugees during the Second World War.

WHO WILL BE THE RIGHTEOUS TODAY?

At the June 2006 Yad Vashem ceremony, the Sharps' daughter, Martha Sharp Joukowsky, described her parents as "modest and ordinary people who responded to the suffering and needs around them ... as they would have expected everyone to do in a similar situation." She praised the "unseen efforts" of the many people who made her parents' work possible, "the kind of network that is needed again today to stop the slow genocide in Darfur."

In August 2006 the Holocaust Museum declared its first-ever "genocide emergency," calling for international efforts to halt violence against civilians in the western Sudanese province of Darfur.

Among the figures speaking at the ceremony were Senator Jack Reed of Rhode Island, museum director Sara J. Bloomfield and the Sharps' grandson, Artemis Joukowsky III, who asked, "Who will be the righteous among nations today? Who will be the witness of the inhumanity of this era?"

Additional information (<http://www.ushmm.org/>) about the United States Holocaust Museum is available on its Web site.

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Newly Confirmed Cases Boost Human Bird Flu Toll

By Charlene Porter
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Cases of illness in Indonesia that occurred earlier in 2006 now are being confirmed as human cases of the H5N1 strain of avian influenza, according to a report from the World Health Organization (WHO) September 14.

One of the cases involved a 27-year-old male who might have been infected while caring for a 15-year-old sister confirmed in May to have H5N1.

The man from the West Sumatra province developed mild symptoms of cough and abdominal discomfort, but not the high fever that has stricken many people infected with this virus. He was given a course of an anti-viral drug that has proven effective against H5N1, and recovered.

Testing conducted at the time did not reveal signs of H5N1 infection, but follow-up testing in August showed an increased level of antibodies that meets the criteria for laboratory confirmation under standards revised by WHO.

"The investigation determined that he had exposure to his sister during her hospital stay," said the WHO September 14 report, "and that human-to-human transmission could not be ruled out as the source of his infection."

The overwhelming majority of confirmed human cases of this highly pathogenic form of avian influenza -- now numbering 246 -- have been traced to direct contact with poultry.

The cases in which human-to-human transmission is suspected have been limited to close contacts among ailing family members.

International health authorities are concerned that the H5N1 virus might mutate to become easily transmissible among people, a development that could lead to a human disease pandemic.

The second human case of H5N1 newly confirmed by the Indonesian Ministry of Health and WHO involved a 5-year-old boy in West Java province. He died in March after about a two-week illness.

Confirmation of his case also comes after re-evaluation of test results in keeping with WHO's revision of its standards for identifying cases.

The U.N. health agency changed its standards August 29 to ensure the use of standardized language for communication among health authorities dealing with the avian influenza outbreaks at different times and in different places. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=Agust&x=20060829153554cmre trop0.2507288>).)

Of the 246 confirmed human cases of H5N1, 144 have ended in death, according to cumulative reports compiled by WHO. The cases have occurred in 10 countries; Indonesia has reported more deaths than any other country.

The high level of concern that H5N1 could be the trigger for a global human pandemic has prompted a coordinated international effort to contain and control the spread of this virus and to bolster animal and human health systems in the most vulnerable countries.

The United States has been a leading nation in this effort, dedicating



A patient is treated for bird flu symptoms in Sumatra, Indonesia, May 24, 2006.
[file photo] (©AP/WWP)

more than \$330 million to an array of activities in more than 45 countries. (See fact sheet (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=June&x=20060703145105cmretr op0.4437372>).

For ongoing coverage of the disease and efforts to combat it, see Bird Flu (Avian Influenza) (http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/bird_flu.html).

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Insecticide DDT Returns to the Anti-Malarial Arsenal

Washington – The World Health Organization (WHO) announced September 15 new guidelines to promote the indoor use of the pesticide DDT as a means to prevent malaria, a disease that takes more than 1 million lives a year.

Widespread use of DDT was discontinued in the 1960s after it was found that the pesticide was a persistent organic pollutant having great longevity in the environment and causing damage to other life forms. That decision had a public health consequence in malaria endemic areas where local officials were deprived of one of their best tools to control mosquitoes and prevent malaria.

Re-evaluation of the use of the insecticide now reveals that the use of this substance indoors in a controlled manner will better protect people from mosquitoes and the malaria parasites they carry without broadcasting the pesticide in the environment at large.

“Indoor residual spraying (IRS) is useful to quickly reduce the number of infections caused by malaria-carrying mosquitoes,” said Dr.

Anarfi Asamoah-Bah, WHO’s assistant director-general for HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria. “IRS has proven to be just as cost effective as other malaria prevention measures, and DDT presents no health risk when used properly.”

Indoor residual spraying involves spraying the inside walls of a dwelling so that a residue of insecticide remains and offers long-term protection against disease-causing

bugs. Studies show that correct and timely use of indoor residual spraying can reduce malaria transmission by up to 90 percent.

“Indoor spraying is like providing a huge mosquito net over an entire household for around-the-clock protection,” said U.S. Senator Tom Coburn, a Republican from Oklahoma who is a leading advocate for global malaria control efforts.

Even prior to this WHO decision about DDT use, a number of malaria-ridden nations – India and South Africa among them – had adopted indoor residual spraying with success. The WHO announcement likely will open the door for more nations to adopt this strategy

Bush’s \$1.2 billion commitment to cut malaria deaths in half will include substantial indoor residual spraying activities, including many that will use DDT,” said Admiral R. Timothy Ziemer, coordinator of the President’s Malaria Initiative.

“Because it is relatively inexpensive and very effective, USAID supports the spraying of homes with insecticides as a part of a balanced, comprehensive malaria prevention and treatment program.”

President Bush announced the President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI) in June 2005. It is a \$1.2 billion, five-year collaboration of several government agencies that attempts to take a comprehensive approach to preventing and treating malaria. The program aims to reduce malaria in Africa by 50 percent by 2010. Seven high-risk African nations currently are targeted, and 15 ultimately will be included.

The distribution of bed nets to protect families from mosquitoes while sleeping is another low-tech solution in the effort to reduce malaria. More effective medicines also are becoming available to replace older drugs to which the malaria parasites have become resistant.

For ongoing coverage of this issue, see Health (http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/health.html).

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Spraying for mosquitos in Indonesia. Indoor use of DDT helps to prevent malaria.
(file photo, ©AP Images)

for the prevention of malaria, a disease widely recognized as an impediment to development and advancement because of its disproportionate effect on poor nations. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfileenglish&y=2006&m=Agust&x=20060801112833cmre trop0.3886682>).

“I anticipate that all 15 of the country programs of President

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Bush Says CIA Interrogation Program . . .

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ministration will work with Congress to find common ground. I have one test for this legislation: The intelligence community must be able to tell me that the bill Congress sends to my desk will allow this vital program to continue.

The second bill before Congress would modernize our electronic surveillance laws and provide additional authority for the terrorist surveillance program. I authorized the National Security Agency to operate this vital program in response to the 9/11 attacks. It allows us to quickly monitor terrorist communications between someone overseas and someone in America. It has helped detect and prevent terrorist attacks on our own country. The principle behind this program is clear: When al Qaeda operatives are calling into or

out of our country, we need to know who they are calling, why they are calling, and what they are planning.

Both these bills are essential to winning the war on terror. So we will work with legislators from both sides of the aisle to get them passed. By passing these critical bills, we will bring terrorists to justice, continue collecting vital intelligence from captured terrorists in a lawful way, and monitor terrorist communications, so we can stop new attacks on our nation.

Thank you for listening.

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U.S. Promotes Safe, Legal and Humane . . .

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a new government agency (the Department of Homeland Security) and the inclusion of biometric data in the processing of visitors and immigrants. A "secure borders, open doors" policy allows the United States to continue to welcome large numbers of immigrants, while ensuring that national security needs are met. In fact, 18% of the total foreign born population in the United States arrived after the year 2000.

Partnerships - The Importance of Regional Consultative Processes and Networks

The United States believes the most practical way to advance effective, humane migration policies is to support regional migration

dialogues. Regional dialogues promote open, informal discussion and information exchange on shared migration concerns. In these fora, member states may identify areas for cooperation and develop migration strategies that are humane and stress orderly, authorized movements of individuals. The congenial, informal nature of these regional approaches allows governments to discuss migration issues of common interest, build consensus, and undertake joint initiatives to improve migration management and the situation of migrants in their regions.

The United States is an active member of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) and the Intergovernmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee, and Migration Policies (IGC). The United

States also participates as an observer in the "Bali Process" and supports migration dialogues in other regions. The United States proudly will host the 2007 RCM, which will bring together North and Central American countries.

"The U.S. response to global challenges in population and migration reflects our values of promoting human rights and protecting people from exploitation or coercion." -Ellen R. Sauerbrey, Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration

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