



Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

INSIDE

HIV/AIDS, Malaria Focus of Laura Bush's Africa Trip

By Lea Terhune
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- First lady Laura Bush embarked on her third Africa tour June 25, during which she will visit U.S.-funded HIV/AIDS and malaria prevention and treatment projects. She also will highlight education and women's empowerment during her five-day trip to Senegal, Mozambique, Zambia and Mali.



Mrs. Laura Bush sits in on a roundtable discussion about malaria at Fann Hospital Tuesday, June 26, 2007, in Dakar, Senegal.

"People can live positively with AIDS for a long time, live a healthy life," she said at Howard University June 19, adding, "AIDS is not the death sentence that we once thought it was."

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New Africa Command To Have Unique Structure, Mission

By Jim Fisher-Thompson
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- The new Defense Department command in Africa, AFRICOM, will be unique in its mission and command structure, according to a senior Defense Department official.

Ryan Henry, principal Defense Department under secretary for policy, told reporters June 21 and June 22 that the United States is consulting extensively with African nations and other allies as planning for the new command, which is expected to become operational in the fall of 2008,

continues. Henry, who recently returned from his second round of consultations on AFRICOM, said he met with senior defense and foreign ministry officials from Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Egypt, Djibouti and the African Union on his

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It is a message she will bring to Africa as she visits programs funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), initiated by President Bush in 2003. He recently asked Congress to double the \$15 billion, five year commitment to contain the devastating epidemic.

"It's already an unprecedented program. There has never been a fight against a single disease of that magnitude before," Deputy Global AIDS Coordinator Jimmy Kolker told journalists at a White House briefing June 19. He said half the resources in the global fight against AIDS come from the United States.

PEPFAR funding allows grassroots organizations to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and implement programs for prevention, treatment and care of infected individuals.

Likewise, the 2005 President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) builds the capacity of nongovernmental organizations by funding prevention strategies such as pesticide spraying, mosquito bed net distribution and the purchase of the most effective anti-malarial drugs. The five-year, \$1.2 billion program aims to reduce malaria deaths in target countries in Africa by 50 percent. "People may not realize, we had malaria in the United States until 1946, and we were able to totally eradicate it," Laura Bush told CNN June 20. She said the ultimate goal of PMI is "to eradicate malaria in the countries that are the hardest-hit in Africa."

Every year a million malaria-infected people die, most of them African infants, children and pregnant women, according to the World Health Organization. Malaria is an intermittent fever transmitted by mosquito bites.

"I think this trip in particular is going to emphasize ... the integration of the fight against AIDS with other development health goals," Kolker said.



Mrs. Laura Bush meets Ambassador Girls' scholarship winners during a visit to Grand Medine Primary School Tuesday, June 26, 2007, in Dakar, Senegal.

The four African countries have unique national histories, plans and needs, and by "adapting to the local circumstances, following the national lead and with national partners, we're able to help people where they live and to relate to the reality on the ground for them," Kolker said.

Empowerment of women and education of girls also figures in Laura Bush's schedule. In Dakar, Senegal, the first stop on her tour, she will award five Ambassador's Girls' Scholarships provided by the Africa Education Initiative. The initiative will fund 555,000 scholarships to African girls by 2010. "It's critically important that they be educated, not only to be able to provide for

financial stability for their home, but also for their own health," the first lady's chief of staff, Anita McBride, said at the briefing.

Besides visits to PEPFAR- and PMI-funded programs in the four countries, Bush will participate in a women's empowerment round table in Mozambique and visit Flame, a transit home for orphans, and WORTH, an organization that educates and provides microfinancing for women in Zambia.

Bush also will launch the first public/private-funded PlayPump water system at Regiment Basic School in Lusaka, Zambia. Colorful merry-go-rounds for children, PlayPumps also give communities easy access to clean water.

In Mali, Bush will attend an event highlighting cooperation with the Millennium Challenge Corporation to encourage economic growth through key infrastructure development. The

gateway Bamako-Senou International Airport and agricultural irrigation in the Niger River Delta are the leading projects.

The emphasis is on the personal touch and grassroots participation. "While we're very proud of the huge financial contribution that the administration, the Congress, the American taxpayers have committed to AIDS, what we're most proud of is that we actually know the individuals who are being helped," Kolker said.

Laura Bush visited Rwanda, Tanzania, South Africa, Liberia, Ghana and Nigeria on two previous African trips. ♦

New Africa Command To Have Unique Structure, Mission

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latest trip. French officials also discussed AFRICOM with him during a stopover in Paris, where he also met with military attaches from 40 countries.

"We explained the broad outlines and goals of AFRICOM and then sought their viewpoints ... as their inputs are valuable to us as we start to make the decisions about the way ahead," Henry said.

The administration in February announced its intention to create AFRICOM. Until now, U.S. military involvement in Africa has been shared among the U.S. European Command, the U.S. Central Command and the U.S. Pacific Command. Defense Secretary Robert Gates called this divided responsibility "an outdated arrangement left over from the Cold War." Henry told reporters the purpose of AFRICOM is not waging war, but "to work in concert with our African partners for a more stable environment in which political and economic growth can take place."

This means "establishing the conditions" for a more effective use of humanitarian and development assistance as well as helping Africans defeat terrorism, he added.

Henry said another formal round of talks on AFRICOM would take place with representatives from the United Kingdom, France and other European countries sometime in the fall.

UNIQUE ASPECTS OF AFRICOM

Unlike other U.S. geographic commands, Henry said, AFRICOM would not have a headquarters in one African country. Instead, its

staff will be "distributed in different nodes [working locations]" throughout the continent.

Another unique feature of the new command will be the naming of a senior State Department official to serve as a deputy to the AFRICOM military commander. The civilian would be more than a political adviser as in other geographic commands, but "would also be in the command structure," Henry added.

And he reiterated that unlike other U.S. geographic commands, "AFRICOM is not meant to fight wars." No new U.S. troops or bases will be established on the continent when the command becomes fully operational in the later part of 2008.

Rather, its purpose is to work in partnership with African nations and other international partners to help find solutions to the nettlesome problems that jeopardize security on the continent, he said.

Henry said AFRICOM will emphasize humanitarian assistance, civic action, military professionalism, border and maritime security assistance, and response to natural disasters.

But, this "does not mean AFRICOM will take a leadership role in diplomacy" or in economic development, he added. "That will still be done by the [U.S.] ambassadors in the field ... and the [U.S.] Agency for International Development."

Henry sought to dispel several "myths" about U.S. motivation behind AFRICOM, including: that it was all about terrorism and "our interest in having a counterterrorism camp on the continent"; and concern about China's economic influ-

ence in Africa and U.S. interest in controlling Africa's oil resources.

Terrorism is a problem in Africa and it is something African nations are very concerned about, he said. But "it is clearly not the primary focus" of AFRICOM, which has no intention of committing troops or bases to the continent to pursue terrorists.

Acknowledging China's economic clout on the continent, Henry said, "We look forward to the rise of China ... and we are willing to work with them any place on the globe. If it [China] succeeds, the rest of the world succeeds. But we would expect China, as it rises, to be a responsible international [partner] and act accordingly."

Africa is rich in many natural resources, including oil, Henry said. "We think it's important for the world and for Africans that they are able to get their products into world markets" to gain the economic benefits from trade.

"We think the solution and guarantor of that is the Africans, not Americans," Henry told journalists. Working with African countries to help them get the "indigenous capability to provide the security environment" for securing and transporting oil supplies is a prime aim of AFRICOM, he said.

A transcript (<http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=3997>) of Henry's remarks to reporters June 21 is available on the Defense Department Web site. A transcript (<http://fpc.state.gov/fpc/87094.htm>) of his remarks at the Foreign Press Center on June 22 is available on the State Department Web site. ♦

Darfur Needs More from International Community, Rice Says

By Jim Fisher-Thompson
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Speaking on the eve of a United Nations-sponsored meeting in Paris on the crisis in Darfur, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice says she is disappointed at the failure of the international community to bring an end to the violence that has killed hundreds of thousands while displacing millions in Sudan's western region.

With the violence sponsored by the Khartoum government now in its fifth year, Rice said: "I will be very frank. I do not think that the international community has really lived up to its responsibilities here."

Rice made her comments at a June 24 press conference following a private meeting in Paris with French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner during which the crisis in Darfur was discussed.

She complimented Kouchner for his lifelong commitment to human rights and for hosting the conference on Darfur set for the next day. Rice added that she was pleased at the "renewed push from France" on more specific action.

Darfur, Rice told journalists, is "one of the true humanitarian disasters that we face in international politics today. The international community has simply got to act more quickly and more responsibly to stop the killing and the devastation in Darfur."

In the three years since the United States said the killing by bands of

roving militia called Jingaweit is genocide, the United States has continued "to try and rally the international community" to act more forthrightly, Rice said.

To that end, she said, the United States recently increased travel and financial sanctions against a number of Sudanese individuals and companies responsible for policies that continue and abet Jingaweit violence in Darfur.



French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and EU's Jose Solana in Paris June 25. (AP Images)

Rice added, "We will look at [U.N.] resolutions, and we are indeed working with our colleagues on a resolution" leading to an end to the violence.

Ultimately, said Rice, "this is going to come down to will" by the international community "to insist that the government in Khartoum" permit the deployment of a U.N. hybrid force to augment the already 7,000 overstretched African Union peacekeepers in Darfur.

This is necessary, Rice said, because of Khartoum's inability or

unwillingness to provide security for their own citizens and therefore "they must accept international help to do so."

The situation also requires international will to continue efforts on peace negotiations, she said. The United States was very involved in bringing about a peace agreement in Abuja in 2006, but "it is obviously an agreement that is weakened by the absence of the participation of certain rebel groups, and we have to work on that piece as well," she said.

Commenting on China's influence as one of Sudan's largest oil importers, Rice said China would attend the Paris meeting. The Chinese "have special responsibilities, of course, as members of the Security Council and because of their special relationships in Africa. And I think that they have recently begun to speak more forcefully about this issue, and I hope that that will continue and, indeed, intensify."

For more information on U.S. policy, 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>) ♦

Yale Alumni Chorus Shares Power of Music with South Africans

By Jim Fisher-Thompson
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Members of Yale University's alumni chorus hope to share the power of music as they perform in South Africa and donate concert proceeds and musical instruments to local groups.

The 150 singers in the group are giving concerts in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown and Cape Town June 20 to July 6, according to McKinney Russell, chorus member and former U.S. Information Agency officer.

Yale Alumni Chorus President Sharon Agar told USINFO that in addition to giving formal performances, members will reach out informally to South African singing groups as a way "to foster international understanding through the universal language of song."

The tour kicked off in Johannesburg, with the Yale singers performing with the city's Festival Orchestra and Chorus, along with leading South African soprano Bronwen Forbay.

Concerts will be held at City Hall in Pretoria, where the chorus will sing with four local choirs. Concert proceeds will be given to one of the choirs, whose entire membership is blind.

The Yale singers also will perform in the mainly black township of Zwide, outside Port Elizabeth, where they will learn about local

conditions as well as "the valuable social work of the Ubuntu Education Fund," said Agar. The fund provides comprehensive HIV/AIDS services for 40,000 at-risk children in the townships of Port Elizabeth.

Following the Zwide performance, the chorus will perform at the

supplying much-needed musical instruments.

Russell asked chorus members planning to travel to South Africa to scour their closets and attics in search of gently used instruments that could be donated to the Eastern Cape Philharmonic Orchestra (ECPO) Music Development Program. He said the response was overwhelming.

Thirty reconditioned instruments are being donated to ECPO, where "as many as 18 or more students often have to share one trumpet," Russell said.

In addition to donated trumpets, clarinets, flutes, oboes and violins, he said, several members of the

chorus used their own money to purchase two brand-new double French horns and a very good used wood bassoon for the ECPO students.

Established in 1998, the Port Elizabeth-based ECPO program teaches 300 children a year from disadvantaged backgrounds how to play musical instruments.

In the past 10 years, the Yale Alumni Chorus has performed in China, Russia, Europe and Latin America. Their "Power of Song Tour" in South Africa is sponsored in part by the Pfizer pharmaceutical company and General Motors of South Africa. ♦



The Yale Alumni Chorus performs a joint concert with Collegium Musicum of Leyden University in the Netherlands. (Yale Alumni Chorus)

Feather Market Centre in Port Elizabeth with the Ubuntu Children's Choir, the General Motors Employee Choir, the Eastern Cape Youth Orchestra and the Joy of Africa Choir. The Ubuntu choir will benefit from the proceeds.

A highlight of the tour will be joint performances with the Simon Estes Music School in Cape Town to help raise money for its arts-oriented programs. Agar said the chorus will "meet with teachers and students at the school to learn about their program, trade songs with the school's choir and explore ways the Yale group might support the work of the school."

An important part of the tour is

White House Celebrates Black Music

By Elizabeth Kelleher
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- The White House celebrated Black Music Month with an afternoon concert that included jazz, rhythm and blues (R&B) and classical-rap fusion music. At one point, the 220 guests, many of them prominent persons in Washington, stood up from gold-painted chairs to clap, tap and even dance.

President Bush called it his "chance to listen to some good music," emphasizing the word good, which caused laughter. His introductory remarks began the June 22 event in the East Room on a light-hearted note, setting it apart from the more formal public gatherings often held there.

Describing the music of violinists Tourie and Damien Escobar as "fusion that bridges classical, R&B and rap," Bush looked up from his notes and said, with a look of wonder, "I'm looking forward to it."

The Escobar brothers, who call themselves "Nuttin' But Stringz," studied classical music in New York as children but today play their violins over background music that sounds one minute like a melodic New Age organ track and the next like hip-hop dance music. They wear dazzling jewelry and untucked shirts, even at the White House, and play their violins as if they are Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones -- rocking back and forth, thumping their feet on the stage, circling each other and even playing while lying down.

Before the violinists, Kem Owens, who hails from Detroit and was influenced by Motown music, sang R&B love songs, accompanied by his seven-member band. The band's version of Al Green's "Let's Stay Together" got all heads bobbing and

all feet tapping, including the president's. Owens' percussionist stole the show, though, with the range of chimes, bird calls and other percussive wonders he brought into play during the song "Can't Stop Loving You."

dedicated to troops in Iraq.

Black musicians "define us as a nation," said Rachel Smith, Miss USA 2007, who emceed the concert. "They look to the past and the future, to R&B, pop, soul and hip hop."



Violinists Damien and Tourie Escobar of "Nuttin' But Stringz" perform at the White House June 22. (AP Images)

Owens, who was addicted to alcohol and drugs and lived on the streets for a time as a young man, said he especially had been moved by a visit he paid the day before to injured soldiers at Washington's Walter Reed Army Medical Center. "Young men -- 19, 20, 21 -- who have given so much," he said.

Karina Pasian, a 15-year-old child of immigrants from the Dominican Republic, played the piano and sang "Misty" and then stood up and belted out her original song, called "Can't Bring Me Down," which she

Samples of Kem Owens (<http://www.mp3.com/albums/572007/summary.html>)' songs are on an MP3 Web site. Samples of Karina Pasian (<http://profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendid=73622244>) songs are on a MySpace music Web page.

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

Charitable Donations by Americans Reach Record High

By Jeffrey Thomas
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Americans increased their charitable donations significantly in 2006 to more than \$295 billion -- a record, according to a study released June 25 by the Giving USA Foundation, which reports on charitable contributions.

The overwhelming majority of this money was donated by individuals, not corporations or foundations, according to the chairman of Giving USA, Richard Jolly. Donations from individuals, including bequests, accounted for 83.3 percent of total giving last year, or \$245.8 billion, he told USINFO.

"The total amount of money that was given to nonprofit institutions is remarkable," Jolly said. "What we see is when people feel engaged, when they feel a need is legitimate, when they are asked to support it, they do."

Americans have a long tradition of charitable giving and volunteerism -- the donation of time and labor on behalf of a cause. When disasters happen or a social need arises, government clearly has a responsibility, Jolly said. "But it's also obvious Americans believe they, too, can make a difference, and they reflect that in terms of giving away a lot of money."

The United States is "a land of charity," says Arthur Brooks, an expert on philanthropy and a professor at Syracuse University's Maxwell School, who sees charitable giving and volunteerism as the signal characteristic of Americans.

In 2006, Americans donated 2.2 percent of their average disposable, or after-tax, income, a figure above the 40-year average of 1.8 percent.

Brooks told USINFO that he sees over the past 50 years "a trend toward greater charitable giving" in the United States.

Jolly noted that 2005 was an "atypical" year because of the unusual number of major disasters, including the tsunamis in Asia, the earthquake in Pakistan, and hurricanes Katrina and Rita in the United States. Comparing nondisaster giving in 2006 with nondisaster giving in 2005, "what we see is growth, after adjusting for inflation, of about



Bill Gates, co-founder and chairman of Microsoft, and his wife, Melinda, created a foundation in 2000, which supports education, global health, and libraries, as well as charities.

3.2 percent, and that's a significant level of growth," Jolly said.

Corporate contributions in 2006 declined 10.5 percent from the previous year, to an estimated \$12.72 billion, a figure representing 4.3 percent of total donations. Part of the reason for the decline, according to Giving USA, was that corporations sharply increased their charitable contributions in 2005 because of the disasters that year, but then did not face the same level of calamity-driven need in 2006.

Other major categories of giving include foundation grants (\$36.5 billion, 12.4 percent of the total) and charitable bequests (\$22.91

billion, 7.8 percent).

The two largest categories of donations were to religious organizations, which received 32.8 percent of the total donations (\$96.82 billion), and educational institutions, which received 13.9 percent (\$40.98 billion). The fastest-growing field for donations was the arts, culture and humanities, which garnered 4.3 percent of the total (\$12.51 billion), an increase of 6.5 percent over 2005.

MEGAGIFTS AND THE SMALL GIVER

A significant trend in charitable giving in 2006 was the giving of large sums, most famously investor Warren Buffet's pledge to donate \$30 billion over 20 years to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The Giving USA figures reflect the first installment of Buffet's gift -- \$1.9 billion -- as well as another \$2 billion in megagifts by other wealthy individuals. These megagifts amount to a little more than 1 percent of total giving in 2006. Jolly sees the trend toward megagifts as positive "and something we want to watch going forward."

At the same time, Jolly emphasized that 65 percent of U.S. households with incomes of \$100,000 or less make charitable contributions. "Certainly, these very large megagifts are important, but so, too, are gifts from individuals who are not extraordinarily wealthy. We wouldn't have the total we have were it not for gifts from across the spectrum of wealth."

Americans long have preferred to donate their money through the private sector or to private charities. Of the \$122.8 billion of foreign aid

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Resettled Refugees Tell of Hardship and Hope

By David Anthony Denny
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- "We would have nothing to eat for as long as four or five days. I remember eating grass to get the juice from it. Once there was no food or water, and we made 'potatoes' out of mud and ate it just to stay alive."

John Dau spoke quietly, without apparent emotion, as he told of his escape from Sudan during its civil war. He joined four other resettled refugees from Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, North Korea and Burma at a World Refugee Day forum June 20 moderated by Ellen Sauerbrey, the State Department's top official for refugee matters.

"People think that if you don't eat for two or three days, you die," Dau said. "I can tell you myself: You don't." Dau fled to Ethiopia to escape Sudanese government troops. The trek took three months, he said, and during that time he and his companions were subject to starvation and disease. Many died.

In Ethiopia, they were helped by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. But the government of Ethiopia changed, and the new regime told Dau and the other boys he was with that they had just seven days to leave. More died after being fired on by Ethiopian troops as they left. Others were killed by crocodiles or drowned as they tried to swim across the river at the border.

Dau lived in a Kenyan refugee camp in 1994, where, at age 17, he first learned his "ABCs and 1,2,3s," he said. Now, he added, "I have no parents. Education is my mother and father." Dau immigrated to the

United States in 2001 and now is a student at Syracuse University in upstate New York.



John Dau a refugee from Sudan

"Americans are so generous, even with people they will never meet," Dau said. "They are more generous with strangers than with their own families." Dau was featured in the 2006 documentary *God Grew Tired of Us*, based on his book of the same title.

A North Korean widow was the newest arrival among the refugee panelists. Yeong Sook Kim said she left North Korea during a famine. Many of her neighbors were starving to death, she said, and after she and her husband went three days with nothing to eat they decided to leave. Yeong crossed illegally into China and spent 10 years there.

"China was difficult," Yeong said, with eyes glistening and voice husky with emotion. "I had to work

as a domestic, but couldn't get wages" or citizenship. So she went to Thailand, where the United States granted her refugee status. By now a widow and separated from her son during her flight from China, she arrived in the United States in February and concentrated on studying English. The International Rescue Committee, a nongovernmental organization partly funded by the U.S. government, provided her a place to live in Charlottesville, Virginia, and helped her find a job. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=November&x=20061124151822lajes-rom0.7794611>).)

"I am studying hard and working hard," she said.

The number of refugees that come to the United States each year is more than the combined total for all other countries, Sauerbrey said. Since 1975, she added, the United States has taken in a total of 2.6 million refugees. Sauerbrey heads the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.



Ellen Sauerbrey, the State Department's top official for refugee matters

"We are proud of those numbers," she added.

Sauerbrey cited the most recent U.S. actions to aid refugees, including providing an additional \$40 million for Palestinian refugees through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. This is in addition to the almost \$1 billion the United States spends annually to alleviate the suffering of millions of refugees caught

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Creative Student Web Sites Win Doors to Diplomacy Contest

By Louise Fenner
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington – Early in 2007, a group of American students traveled to Cambodia to learn about “citizen diplomacy” and undertake projects to help rural schools and orphanages. That trip inspired three of them to create an innovative Web site called Doors 2 Cambodia.

The three students are the American winners in the sixth annual Doors to Diplomacy Web site contest. They share the top honors with four Taiwanese students who created a Web site exploring Taiwan’s international medical assistance programs.

Doors to Diplomacy challenges students ages 11 to 18 around the world to create Web sites that teach the importance of international affairs and diplomacy. This year, 190 teams from 38 countries submitted entries.

The winning Web sites are Doors 2 Cambodia, created by students from Triton High School in Rochester, Minnesota, and International Medical Aid, developed by four students from Ming-Dao High School in Taichung County, Taiwan.

“Others can learn from the research they did,” said Yvonne Marie Andres, founder of Global SchoolNet (GSN), which coordinates Doors to Diplomacy for its sponsor, the U.S. Department of State.

“They did an excellent job of presenting their position on issues of global importance and documenting what their research was,” she said,

“and including multimedia and making it interesting.”

Global SchoolNet has pioneered global project-based learning, which brings students together online to collaborate on projects. The 2006 Doors to Diplomacy winners included three American students at

The videos include interviews with Cambodian scholars – some in the Khmer language – and a record of the students’ visit to the garbage dump at Stung Meanchey, a district of Phnom Penh where some 70 families live. In one video entitled Tanh Na Rouk (Hell), a Cambodian man describes the killing of his fa-



Doors to Diplomacy winners and their mentors from Rochester, Minnesota (Photo courtesy of Global SchoolNet)

an Internet-based “virtual school” who created their Web site entirely online through e-mail and conference calls. “It’s all becoming multimedia, digital media, and the students love it,” Andres told USINFO. “The students love to be able to create and then have an audience for their creation.”

The Minnesota students’ site incorporates more than 40 video clips about their trip to Cambodia for a service-learning class. The clips can be seen on YouTube.com, and the students also have a page on MySpace.com.

ther by the Khmer Rouge and the circumstances that forced him to move his family to the dump.

“Witnessing the tragic conditions [at the dump] was one of the worst feelings we experienced during the entire trip,” said the students on their Web site.

“One of the things that impressed the judges most about the Doors 2 Cambodia team was their work as ‘ambassadors’ for their project,” said Janice Clark, a public affairs specialist with the State Department. “Not only did they educate

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Speedy Muslim Integration into U.S. Society Seen as Vital

By Ralph Dannheisser
USINFO Special Correspondent

Washington -- American civic life, foreign policy and national security will benefit as Muslims become more fully integrated into U.S. society, a new report finds.

Muslim immigrants to America have achieved much economic and social success, but still face challenges in participating completely in U.S. civic and political life, says the report, the product of a year-long study by an independent 32-member task force -- representing equal numbers of Muslim and non-Muslim Americans -- that was sponsored by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

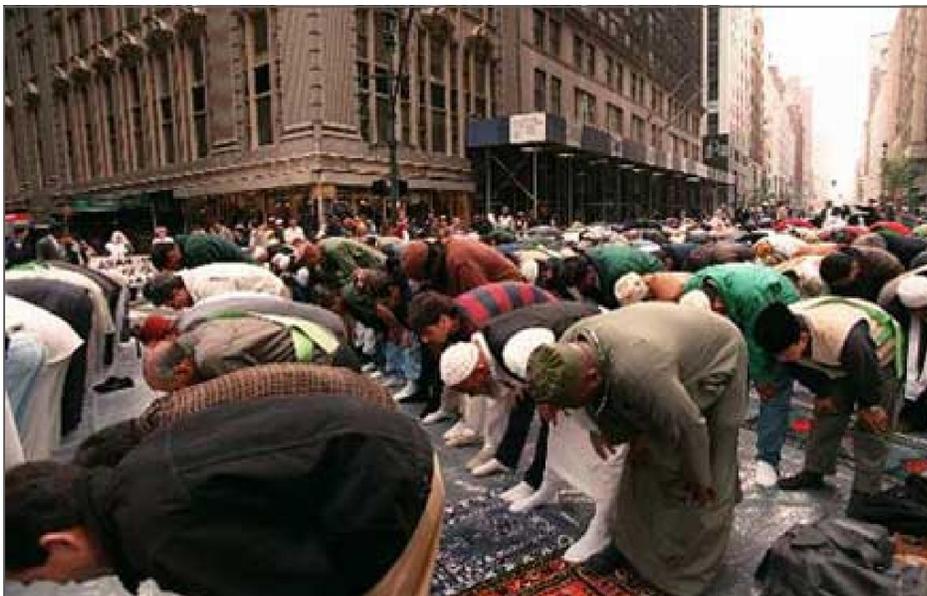
Leaders of the group, chosen from business, government, academia and nonprofit organizations, outlined their findings June 26 at a briefing co-sponsored by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington.

The group's charge, the council said, had been "to examine the Muslim American experience and provide a road map for accelerating Muslim American engagement in civic affairs and U.S. political life."

The report found that American Muslims are a diverse group, above the national average in education and income, who are making great contributions to the nation. In addition, as several task force members said at the briefing, American Muslims, on the whole, are much better integrated into their communities than Muslims are in European countries.

Another independent study released in May by the Pew Charitable Trusts underscored the "great suc-

cess of the Muslim American population in its socioeconomic assimilation." (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=May&x=200705231337351CJsamohTO.8263666>).)



Muslim men bow for afternoon prayer on New York's Madison Avenue in Manhattan before the start of the United American Muslim Day Parade. (AP Photo/Emile Wamsteker)

However, the Chicago task force said, American Muslims still lack strong community institutions and the political voices they need to gain the same access to government and media enjoyed by other groups within American society.

The task force cited an urgent need to accelerate full integration into the society, saying it would "not only increase security, but enrich our policies, our society and our standing as a nation that upholds basic human values of decency and fairness and that provides hope and opportunity for all."

The panel issued six specific recom-

mendations. Among them:

-- It called on American Muslims to work to win over the broad American public by stressing their opposition to terrorism and extremism, boosting efforts to prevent radical activity in the Muslim American

community, and better communication of those efforts. At the same time, it urged government agencies to do more to encourage American Muslims' participation in homeland security efforts.

-- It proposed fostering closer relations with the media -- including efforts to increase the number of Muslim American journalists -- and creating a national organization focused on "educating the public about Muslim cultures and societies."

-- It urged increased civic engagement among American Muslims, in part through development of

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Speedy Muslim Integration into U.S. Society Seen as Vital . . .

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stronger ties between Muslim and non-Muslim groups. As one specific measure, the document suggested "the country would benefit from greater cooperation among Muslim, Christian and Jewish organizations," focusing on domestic issues rather than disagreements over U.S. Middle East policy.

Other recommendations involved building stronger Muslim American institutions, by such means as expanding engagement with universities and policy research institutions; putting priority emphasis on developing "the next generation of Muslim American leaders"; and creating an "American diversity dialogue" among Muslim and non-Muslim leaders, coupled with a national philanthropic effort.

Farooq Kathwari, president and chief executive officer of furniture maker Ethan Allen Interiors Inc., who served as task force co-chair, said the group's proposals to empower American Muslims were spurred by findings that Muslim Americans "who continuously speak up against violence and extremism" are often not heard in public policy discussions.

Lynn Martin, the group's other co-chair, reiterated a point made in the formal written report, declaring, "This is not about foreign policy."

Martin, a former member of Congress and U.S. secretary of labor in the administration of President George H. W. Bush, said: "This is also not about Muslims of the world. This is about our fellow citizens and our hope-to-be fellow citizens who are Muslims."

But while no specific foreign policy

views directly were expressed, Wilson Center President Lee Hamilton made clear that if American Muslims achieve greater inclusion, they will gain a new voice in shaping American foreign policy.

Hamilton, also a former member of Congress and co-chair of the Iraq

grant community in our grand tradition of openness," Hamilton said.

The full text (http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/taskforce_details.php?taskforce_id=8) of the report is available on the Web site of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs,



Taking part in Cleveland, Ohio's pioneering tax-funded school voucher program, the first-grade class at Islamic School of Oasis learns about geography. (Photo by Steve Liss/TimePix)

Study Group, said: "At a time when America's relationship with the broader Muslim world has emerged as a hugely important foreign policy priority and indeed an issue of critical importance to the world, it is essential that we step back and examine how our foreign policies can benefit from the insights of Muslims here in the United States."

"The goal must be a Muslim American community that is fully integrated into the fabric of American society, including the discourse on our foreign policy and an America that benefits from this vibrant immi-

which describes itself as an independent, nonpartisan organization committed to influencing the discourse on global issues.

For more information, see Muslim Life in America (<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/muslimlife/>).

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Museum Showcases the Blending of Islamic and Western Cultures

By Judy Aita
USINFO Staff Writer

New York -- A new exhibition that examines the blending of Western and Islamic cultures through the art of Venice is drawing large crowds to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Venice and the Islamic World, 828-1797, explores the exchange of ideas and art objects between the great Italian maritime city and her Islamic neighbors.

The exhibition "is an important step ... because Venice is a Western city that had a fruitful and open and positive relationship with the Islamic world for so many, many centuries. It is important we try to convey this message ... and educate the American public," Stefano Carboni, administrator of the museum's Department of Islamic Art and the exhibition's curator, told USINFO.

The exhibition demonstrates the blending of cultures through trade and diplomacy as reflected in textiles, carpets, arms and armor, ceramics, sculptures, metalwork, furniture, paintings, drawings, prints and manuscripts. The three-month show, which includes nearly 200 works of art from more than 60 public and private collections around the world, closes on July 8.

A related exhibition, Europe and the Islamic World: Prints, Drawings and Books, is showing in adjacent galleries through July 15.

Examining the relationship between Venice and the Islamic world over a thousand-year period, the exhibition focuses on the artistic and cultural ideas that originated in the Near East and were absorbed and elaborated in Venice, a city that was a

commercial, political and diplomatic magnet, says Carboni.

"Pragmatism is probably the term that best defines Venice's relations with the Muslim Middle East," Carboni says. "Despite all of the wars, Venice remained a privileged partner, thanks to an almost perfect balance between religious spirit, chameleon-like diplomacy and acute business sense."



An anonymous 1511 painting entitled *The Reception of the Venetian Ambassadors in Damascus* (Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Some of the most startling pieces in the exhibition demonstrate the integration that occurred in religion: a carpet the same layout and size as Islamic prayer rugs incorporates Hebrew objects and Jewish symbols; a green glass cup made in Iran or Egypt and mounted as a chalice in Constantinople is from St. Mark's Basilica in Venice; Christian church vestments have Turkish designs; and Persian carpets are displayed that had once draped the fronts of high altars during religious festivals.

Not only were Islamic objects collected by the wealthy of Venice, but Islamic themes and influences were woven into European paint-

ings, portraits, religious objects and glassware -- all displayed in exhibition rooms painted in the rich colors taken from the objects. Islamic textiles appear in the patterned cloak worn by a figure representing the Virgin Mary in a 14th-century altarpiece and in the robes of doges and other Venetian aristocracy. The center of a Venetian family portrait shows a table covered by a Persian carpet; the leather bindings on the

classical texts of Renaissance scholar Fra Giocondo mimic those on Egyptian Qurans.

The glass for which Venice is now famous had its roots in Syria, and the exhibition has Eastern glass imported to Venice as well as Venetian glass commissioned for Ottoman mosques.

ISLAMIC EXHIBITIONS AT THE MET

Carboni expects that nearly 200,000 visitors will have seen the show before it closes, and reports a growing interest in Islamic art in the last few years, especially since Sep-

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Museum Showcases the Blending of Islamic and Western Cultures . . .

(Continued from page 12)

tember 11, 2001.

On that day, Glass of the Sultans, an overview of Islamic glass, was packed and "the trucks were ready to leave" the Corning Museum (in New York) to be installed at the Met, he said.

"Disaster happened and immediately we had to make a decision whether to take it or not, basically considering it was an Islamic art exhibition," Carboni recalled. "We decided we should do it because art can give consolation, can heal things."

"We had more visitors than we expected. I think it was exactly because people were trying to find some meaning in an exhibition of Islamic art," Carboni said.

The Metropolitan Museum sees education, which includes "gallery talks" and lectures by museum staff, as part of its mission. One indication of the exhibition's popularity has been the number of people seeking to learn more about Islamic art, he said. Carboni and his staff have been giving talks to the public and college groups almost daily on the topic.

THE PERMANENT COLLECTION

The Metropolitan's permanent galleries dedicated to Islamic art, currently closed for renovation, house works that reflect the diversity and range of Islamic culture and offer what the curator feels is "one of the top collections in the world."

One strength of the collection is that it contains all mediums, from miniature paintings to pottery, glass and textiles. "We have been collecting miniature paintings and books and illustrated manuscripts from the beginning of the 20th century. This is quite unusual for a museum collection," Carboni said.

"We are quite proud of the fact that whoever comes to see our own collection in our galleries can really have a complete overview of Islamic art from the very beginning of the seventh century all the way to the 19th century," he said.

The Metropolitan acquired its first Islamic treasures -- seals and jewelry -- in 1874 and received its first major group of Islamic objects in 1891 as a bequest. Since then its collection has grown to almost 12,000 objects.

Founded in 1870, the Metropolitan Museum has more than 2 million

works of art in its collection from all over the world, from ancient through modern times. About 6,500 objects, including 50 from the Islamic art collection, can be seen online at www.metmuseum.org (<http://www.metmuseum.org/> title= "http://www.metmuseum.org/).

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Terrorist Psychology Driven by Hate, Not Emotional Instability

By David McKeeby
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington – Countering the psychological factors that drive people to become terrorists will be a long, complex and difficult challenge, says a leading U.S. expert, who also stressed that it is incorrect to think of terrorists as being mentally or emotionally unstable.

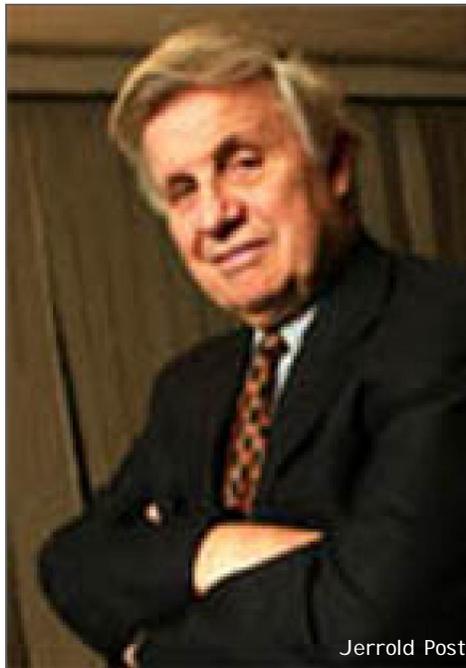
Jerrold Post told participants in a June 19 USINFO Webchat that the first challenge is to understand that despite their actions, individual terrorists are psychologically stable from a clinical standpoint.

Post, a professor of psychiatry and director of the Political Psychology Program at George Washington University in Washington, discussed his latest article, "Collective Identity: Hatred Bred to the Bone," which was featured in the May 2007 edition of e-JournalUSA, *Countering the Terrorist Mentality.* (See related publication (<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/0507/ijpe/ijpe0507.htm>)).

"To counter terrorism, we must get into the mind of the terrorists, and that mind is distinctly not derailed," Post said. He said terrorist groups systematically work to screen out emotionally unstable people when recruiting because they pose a significant security risk.

Instead, Post argues that terrorism is the product of collective identity, shaped over years, as children are indoctrinated with a message of hatred, either from community leaders or religious radicals whose interpretations of scripture are rejected by the vast majority of the population.

"One has to understand the perpetrators of this violence -- within their own cultural context -- and communicate with those not yet fully committed before their identity



Jerrold Post

is consolidated," Post said.

For example, Post said that while the tenets of Islam prohibit suicide, killing innocents and killing fellow Muslims, radical extremists justify terrorist attacks as *iftishad*, which means martyrdom or self sacrifice in the service of the faith.

Moderation is the enemy of extremism, Post said. Despite the danger, he said, communities must take action.

"It is absolutely imperative for mainstream Islamic leaders to counter the extremists in their midst," he said, "for a message not countered quickly assumes the mantle of 'truth.'"

But countering the message is fraught with challenges. As many as 4,800 radical Web sites actively

promote a community of "virtual hatred," which Post says must be countered by "a virtual community of mutuality and cooperation."

"The challenge," Post said, "is how to get voices into the information speech that challenge what, up to now, has been a virtual monopoly by the voices of hatred."

Terrorism is a form of psychological warfare, Post said, which must be met by a long-term strategy of preventing potential recruits from joining terrorist organizations, as well as producing dissent within groups, helping members leave terrorism behind and actively working to reduce support for terrorist organizations and leaders.

Nations also must be careful to fight terrorism in a manner that preserves their society's democratic ideals, Post said.

"We must guard against that extremity of counterterrorism," he said. "For ultimately it is the values of an open liberal democracy that is the most important antidote to the plague of terrorism with which we are currently afflicted, and which promises to be a continuing issue for generations to come."

A transcript (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=June&x=20070619171033Inkais0.7018091>) of Post's webchat is available on Webchat Station (<http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/Products/Webchats.html>), which also has information on previous and upcoming webchats.

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Countering Nuclear Terrorism Requires Global Cooperation

The following op-ed article by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State John C. Rood appeared in the June 15, 2007, edition of the Miami Herald. There are no republication restrictions.

(begin byliner)

Keeping Nuclear Arms Out of the Wrong Hands
By John C. Rood



We live in dangerous times and perhaps the greatest threat we face is the potential for nuclear terrorism. The specter of a mushroom cloud over a city or the casualties and chaos from explosion of a radioactive dispersal device is what has led more than 50 countries over the past year to join the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, which recently held its third meeting.

The technology, expertise and material needed to produce a nuclear weapon have become more widespread. The break-up of the A.Q. Khan network was critical in stemming the spread of the know-how and equipment needed to produce fissile material and nuclear weapons. But regrettably, proliferation of these sensitive technologies occurred before Khan and his associates were stopped.

Terrorists and their supporters continue to try to acquire nuclear material on the black market. This requires us to remain vigilant. Fortunately, most of the hundreds of cases over the past decade involved hoaxes or material unsuitable for a radioactive device. But there have also been troubling cases like the recent seizure in Georgia of highly enriched uranium (HEU) usable in a nuclear weapon.

Against this backdrop, the desire of al Qaeda and other terrorist groups to gain nuclear weapons or impro-

vised nuclear devices is a grave threat that we must urgently address.

Since 9/11, the Bush administration has actively responded to these threats.

For example:

In 2005, President Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed to accelerate security upgrades for Russian nuclear sites to be completed by the end of 2008. They also stepped up conversion of research reactors worldwide to no longer use HEU, thereby reducing vulnerability of this bomb-grade material to theft by terrorists;

We have worked closely with Russia in securing and eliminating nuclear materials as part of the Cooperative Threat Reduction programs and expanded the program to countries beyond the former Soviet Union.

Under the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, the Department of Energy has secured more than 540 vulnerable radiological sites overseas, containing more than 7.7 million curies -- enough for approximately 7,700 dirty bombs.

Nuclear material detection programs -- including the Container Security Initiative, Megaports, the Second Line of Defense and the Secure Freight Initiative -- strengthen the capacity of nations to screen cargoes for radiological material, and the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office was created to put detectors around the United States.

The International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1540 create additional legal authorities and obligations for

nations to bring to justice those facilitating nuclear trade.

More than 80 countries are now participating in the Proliferation Security Initiative to interdict trade in WMD and missile technologies.

Yet more was needed, which is why Bush and Putin launched the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism one year ago. With this initiative, we have brought together a diverse group of nations committed to countering nuclear terrorism.

On June 11-12, I co-chaired with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak the third meeting of the Global Initiative hosted by the government of Kazakhstan, which set the course for the next year of activities. At the same time, FBI Director Robert Mueller has hosted an important conference in Miami under the Global Initiative that brought together more than 500 law enforcement officers from 20 countries. The FBI conference in Miami is one of almost 20 activities that participating states have agreed to host over the next two years to build capabilities and cooperation.

To be sure, the challenge of nuclear terrorism will not be met alone by these meetings. But by bringing together the international community around a common goal, improving the ability of states to take concerted action and creating synergies, we will take important strides toward effectively addressing perhaps the greatest threat of the 21st century.

(John C. Rood is assistant secretary in the U.S. State Department's Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation.)

(end byliner) ♦

Cooperation Needed To Balance Medicine Patents, Global Needs

By Jaroslaw Anders
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington — The United States is trying to strike a delicate balance between the rights of U.S. pharmaceutical patent holders and the needs of poor and developing countries facing medical emergencies, U.S. officials say.

Recent disputes between some U.S. pharmaceutical companies and the governments of Thailand and Brazil illustrate the need for open dialogue and flexibility by all interested parties, they say.

The U.S. government believes protection of intellectual property is “absolutely essential to ensuring continued innovation in the development of new medicines,” including medicines for diseases that primarily effect developing countries, such as HIV/AIDS, malaria or tuberculosis, an official in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) told USINFO.

At the same time, the United States recognizes that developing countries often are unable to purchase patented drugs at the prices paid in developed countries. That is one reason the United States is a strong supporter of the Doha Declaration of 2001, which affirms the existence of certain “flexibilities” regarding medical patents’ protection provided under World Trade Organization (WTO) rules, the official said.

The United States acknowledges that WTO rules allow governments to make certain exceptions to patent holders’ rights in national emergencies. Exceptions can be made also in the case of a patent-holder’s anti-competitive practices or refusal to sell its product despite a “reasonable effort” on the part of a

government to reach a negotiated commercial solution.

In such cases, the government can issue a “compulsory license,” which allows production of the generic version of the patented drug without the consent of the patent holder. Under WTO rules, a compulsory license should be issued for a limited time only and adequate remuneration should be paid to the patent holder.

But the “flexibilities” included in WTO rules occasionally give rise to controversies.

On May 5, Brazil issued a compulsory license on the anti-retroviral AIDS drug STOCRIN patented by a U.S. company, Merck & Co., despite the fact that Merck offered Brazil a 30 percent discount, to \$1.10 per pill, from the price it charges in developed-country markets.

The company called the Brazilian decision “expropriation of intellectual property” that “sends a chilling signal to research-based companies about the attractiveness of undertaking risky research on diseases that affect the developing world.”

The case is being studied by U.S. trade authorities. “We would continue to hope that both the patent holder and the Brazilian government will be open to further dialogue,” the USTR official said.

In its 2007 “Special 301” report on the state of intellectual rights protection, the USTR office expressed concern about “the lack of transparency and due process” related to compulsory licensing actions taken by the Thai government, although it has stopped short of calling it a violation of WTO rules.

Representatives of the pharmaceutical industry say their companies work with governments around the world to help improve patients’ access to medicines.

According to the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), pharmaceutical companies donated \$4.34 billion in medicines, equipment, education and personnel between 2000 and 2005. Partnerships created by the pharmaceutical industry helped up to 539 million people over that period, most of them in sub-Saharan Africa, PhRMA said.

The U.S. government stresses the importance of good-faith discussion between governments and the pharmaceutical industry.

“Our perspective is that dialogue and discussion and open exchange between a government and a patent holder is almost always the best way to achieve an outcome that is in everyone’s interest,” the USTR official said. “We are committed to continue to do our best to strike the appropriate balance.”

For more information, see Protecting Intellectual Property Rights (http://usinfo.state.gov/ei/economic_issues/intellectual_property.html).

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Education Is the First Step in Fighting HIV/AIDS

By Jane Morse
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- The first step in fighting HIV/AIDS is education, and so communities across the United States are planning a wide variety of activities for June 27, National HIV Testing Day (NHTD), to heighten public awareness of the devastating disease.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) remain leading causes of illness and death in the United States. The CDC estimates that more than a million Americans are living with the disease, and another 250,000 people nationwide might be HIV-positive but unaware that they are infected.

HIV counseling and testing enables people with HIV to take steps to protect their own health and that of their partners. It also helps the people who test negative to get the information they need to stay uninfected.

NHTD was established 15 years ago by the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA-US). Established in 1983, NAPWA-US bills itself as the oldest coalition in the world of people living with AIDS. It advocates for disease victims and encourages at-risk individuals to receive voluntary HIV counseling and testing. The annual testing day is one way of helping raise public awareness.

Across the country, thousands of HIV counseling and testing sites, state and local health departments, and community-based HIV/AIDS service providers will mark NHTD

by holding health fairs, providing community and media outreach, hosting special testing-related events or extending operating hours.

"People can live positively with AIDS for a long time," the first lady said during a round table discussion at Howard University's Center for Infectious Disease Management and Research. "AIDS is not the death



[Peace Corps' HIV/AIDS Education Programs in Uganda](#)

In 2006, the CDC published new recommendations for health care providers, urging them to make voluntary HIV screening a routine part of medical care for all patients aged 13 to 64. The recommendations aim to simplify the HIV testing process in health care settings and increase early HIV diagnosis.

In Washington, Howard University Hospital -- which was founded in 1862, originally to care for newly freed slaves -- became the first hospital in the United States to implement the CDC's recommendations for routine HIV testing. First lady Laura Bush recognized this accomplishment with a June 19 visit to the hospital.

sentence that we once thought it was. And so to avoid testing is really making a big mistake," she said.

HIV TESTING DAY GOES GOING INTERNATIONAL

In 2006, the concept of an HIV testing day went international when the United Nations General Assembly passed by consensus a decision urging countries to hold a national HIV/AIDS testing day during 2007. The U.S. delegation to that meeting was led by Laura Bush, who urged that increased testing and counseling be made available to more people the world over.

Among the countries that have an

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Education Is the First Step in Fighting HIV/AIDS . . .

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annual day -- or even an entire week -- devoted to voluntary counseling and testing are Zambia, Malawi and Ethiopia.

Africa has been hit especially hard by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. According to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), "Southern Africa remains the epicenter of the global AIDS epidemic." UNAIDS notes that sub-Saharan Africa has just more than 10 percent of the world's population, but is home to more than 60 percent of all people living with HIV -- 25.8 million. In 2005, an estimated 3.2 million people in the region became newly infected, while 2.4 million adults and children died of AIDS.

On June 25, Laura Bush began her third visit to Africa -- a five-day trip that takes her to Senegal, Mozambique, Zambia and Mali, highlighting the U.S. commitment to combating HIV/AIDS on that continent and around the world.

President Bush announced May 30 that he would work with Congress to double the U.S. commitment in the global fight against HIV/AIDS to \$30 billion and reauthorize the legislation that established the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). If Congress grants the president's budget request for fiscal year 2008, and with the new \$30 billion proposal, the American people will have committed \$48.3 billion over 10 years to fight HIV/AIDS. The U.S. contribution is already the largest international health initiative dedicated to a specific disease.

Under PEPFAR, which has been in existence for just three years, the United States has supported treatment for 1.1 million people in 15 target countries, including more than 1 million in Africa.

PEPFAR is working in close collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNAIDS to jointly lead efforts to establish an annual International Voluntary HIV Coun-

seling and Testing Day (IVCTD). It will be disseminating an IVCTD Technical Toolkit (developed by USAID partner Health Systems 20/20) to assist countries with planning and implementing their activities, including country case studies highlighting best practices.

More details on the tool kit will be available soon. The final product will be available to countries by September 1 in hard copy, CD-ROM and on the WHO Web site.

For more information on U.S. policy, see HIV/AIDS (http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/hiv_aids.html).

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Resettled Refugees Tell of Hardship and Hope . . .

(Continued from page 8)

in crises around the world and help them resettle. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=June&x=20070618153702idybeekcm0.703396>).)

The United States also provides nearly \$80 million to nongovernmental and international organizations for emergency protection and assistance programs for Iraqi refugees in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.

(See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=June&x=20070620173222adynned0.600857>).)

Sauerbrey also encouraged support for the new International Fund for Refugee Women and Children, a public-private partnership to fund refugee relief efforts. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=June&x=20070619140524adynned0.7955286>).)

For further information about U.S. refugee policy, see Humanitarian Assistance and Refugees (http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/refugees.html).

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Space Station Might Open to Government, Commercial Clients

By Cheryl Pellerin
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington – NASA has formulated a plan to open part of the U.S. segment of the International Space Station to U.S. government and commercial clients for their own research projects beginning in 2011.

Critical to the plan, described in a May report to Congress, is a six-member station crew and the availability of commercial orbital transportation services that can provide travel to the space station.

The open part of the U.S. station segment will be called a national laboratory, allowing U.S. public and private organizations to use station facilities to pursue basic and applied research and applications unrelated to NASA's mission.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has 10 national laboratories that are part of a system created more than 50 years ago.

These laboratories support DOE missions and allow other federal agencies and private companies to use its research facilities and expertise.

"We've talked to a couple of government agencies," said Bill Gerstenmaier, NASA associate administrator for space operations, during a June 25 press briefing, "and at this point there is general interest [in using the space station for research], which is encouraging to us."

Several private companies also are discussing potential space station projects. Such projects would have to be as automated as possible, requiring only minimal help from the six-member space station crew.

NASA plans to share its space station facilities because an agency

believe that about half of the on-orbit U.S. payload capacity of the space station will be available for non-NASA uses."

ATLANTIS MISSION SUCCESS

Space shuttle Atlantis descended to a smooth landing at Edwards Air



NASA managers watch on NASA TV as the space shuttle Atlantis lands safely June 22. (AP Images)

restructuring that President Bush announced in 2004 directs NASA to focus its human space exploration activities on a return to the moon and future human missions to Mars and beyond. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2004&m=January&x=20040114182203rel-lufj0.6884729&t=xarchives/xarchitem.html>).)

As a result, said Mark Uhran, assistant associate administrator for the International Space Station, "We

Force Base in California June 22, ending a successful assembly mission to the International Space Station and traveling more than 9.3 million kilometers in space. Challenges posed during STS-117, NASA's designation for the mission, are invaluable learning experiences that will help the agency prepare for future exploration, said Gerstenmaier at a post-landing press conference.

The astronauts returned to their home base, Johnson Space Center
(Continued on page 20)

Space Station Might Open to Government, Commercial Clients . . .

(Continued from page 19)

in Texas, June 23. When Atlantis returns to Kennedy Space Center in Florida over the next several days, it will begin processing for the STS-122 mission, set to launch late in 2007.

The most recent mission began June 8. After its June 10 arrival at the station, the crew began installation of a truss structure and retracted a set of solar arrays on another truss.

Mission specialists Patrick Forrester, John "Danny" Olivas, Jim Reilly and Steven Swanson conducted four spacewalks to activate the truss and retract the arrays. The work increased the station's power capability, preparing for the future delivery of European and Japanese laboratories.

During the third spacewalk, Olivas repaired an out-of-position thermal blanket on the shuttle that lifted during the spacecraft's ascent to orbit.

While the crew worked in space, ground teams were seeking to correct a problem with Russian computers that help control the station's positioning in space. Russian specialists worked closely with U.S. teams to recover the computer capabilities.

ENDEAVOUR'S AUGUST LAUNCH

The next phase of station assembly is scheduled to begin August 9, the target date for Endeavour's launch to deliver another critical starboard truss segment, install a new gyroscope and add a spare-parts platform.

STS-118, Endeavour's first flight since November 2002, will have at least three spacewalks and debut a new system that lets docked shuttles draw electrical power from the station to extend visits to the outpost.

Veteran astronaut Scott Kelly will command the seven-person crew, which will include pilot Charles Hobaugh and mission specialists Tracy Caldwell, Richard Mastracchio, Alvin Drew, Canadian Space Agency astronaut Dave Williams and Barbara Morgan, the first educator chosen as a mission-specialist astronaut.

Twenty-two years after being named Christa McAuliffe's backup in the Teacher in Space Project, Barbara Morgan will strap into Endeavour as a fully trained astronaut.

Morgan trained side by side with McAuliffe and watched the 1986 Challenger accident that killed McAuliffe and six fellow crew mem-

bers.

The Teacher in Space Project was suspended following that accident, but Morgan went on the visits McAuliffe would have made, talking to children and teachers all over the United States.

In 1998, Morgan was chosen to become a full-fledged astronaut. In 2002 she was chosen as the first educator to become a mission specialist astronaut as part of the Educator Astronaut Project that evolved from the Teacher in Space Project.

More information (<http://www.nasa.gov/shuttle>) about Atlantis and the upcoming STS-118 mission is available on the NASA Web site.

The full text (http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/station/news/index.html) of the space station report is available at the NASA Web site.

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Charitable Donations by Americans Reach Record High . .

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provided by Americans in 2005, the most current data available, \$95.5 billion, or 79 percent, came from private foundations, corporations, voluntary organizations, universities, religious organizations and individuals, according to the latest annual Index of Global Philanthropy, which is published by a Washington research organization, the Center for Global Prosperity at the Hudson Institute.

The Giving USA report does not take into account the value of contributions Americans make in terms of time and labor. More than 61 million Americans volunteered for charitable and national service organizations in 2006, and about half of all Americans participate in volunteer activities each year, according to Brooks. Volunteerism is "a major cultural phenomenon in the U.S.," Brooks says. (See related article ([\[english&y=2007&m=February&x=20070226171408xlren-nef0.5726892\]\(http://english&y=2007&m=February&x=20070226171408xlren-nef0.5726892\) \).\)](http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-</p>
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The Giving USA report was prepared by the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, which has studied philanthropic giving since 1965.

For additional information on philanthropy and charitable giving in America, see the electronic journal Giving: U.S. Philanthropy (<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itsv/0506/ijse/ijse0506.htm>).

For more information about U.S. society and NGOs, see Volunteerism & Philanthropy (http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/life_and_culture/volunteerism/ngo_series.html).

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Creative Student Web Sites Win Doors to Diplomacy Contest . . .

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others, but [they] actually accomplished some tangible work." The students helped dig wells in Cambodia, and in preparation for the trip they raised money for bathrooms and chalkboards for some schools and orphanages.

The Taiwanese students faced the challenge of producing their Web site in English (a contest rule) as well as Chinese, and they had to use instant translating software for their research, since much of the material was in languages other than Chinese.

The students raised money for AIDS projects and recruited classmates to sponsor impoverished children through World Vision, a Christian humanitarian organization. On their Web site, they said

they discovered that even a small financial contribution could make a difference to those less fortunate.

Clark said she and the other judges were struck by the students' extensive research and their advocacy for Taiwan's international assistance programs. "Their theme was 'Taiwan used to need help, and now we're modern and we the Taiwanese need to give back,'" she said.

Each winning student receives a \$2,000 scholarship and the adult mentors receive a \$500 cash award for their schools.

In addition to the top two prizes, Doors to Diplomacy honored entries from Bulgaria, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, Malaysia, The Philippines, Romania, Singapore, Turkey, Turkmenistan and the state of

California.

Student peers and educational professionals did the preliminary judging, and final selections were made by the State Department's Bureau of Public Affairs.

More information about Doors to Diplomacy (<http://www.globalschoolnet.org/gsh/doors/>) is available from the Global SchoolNet.

The full text (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2007/may/851123.htm>) of the announcement of the winners is available on the State Department Web site. More information also is available on Future State (<http://www.future.state.gov/>), the State Department's youth site. ♦