



# Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

## INSIDE

### U.S. Embassy and CJTF-HOA Assist Fire Victims in Sidist Kilo Area

**ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia** – United States Ambassador to Ethiopia Donald Yamamoto and members of the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) handed out more than 345 sleeping bags and pillows to fire victims in Addis Ababa’s Sidist Kilo area on Tuesday, May 20, 2008 at the community’s temporary shelter.



*The Civil Affairs team and Ambassador Yamamoto hands out a sleeping bag and a pillow to one of the fire victims of the kebele.*

Before distributing the bedding items, Ambassador Yamamoto addressed the community. He said, “We pray for you, and

we thank you for letting us be part of your community.” Kebele officials

noted that this was the third donation from the

*(Continued on page 5)*

#### AMERICAN NEWS

Barack Obama Says Democratic Nomination “Within Reach” (P 3)

Improved Economies Will Lead to More Visa Waiver Agreements (P 6)

Muslim Chaplaincy Student Wants to Help the Poor, Homeless (P 7)

Poll Finds Widespread Support for Democracy Worldwide (P 8)

Mortgage Markets Boost Home Ownership, U.S. Economy (P 9)

#### MIDDLE EAST

Bush Reiterates Support for Palestinian State (P 10)

Democracy Could Transform Middle East, Says Bush (P 11)

Bush Remarks in Honor of 60th Anniversary of Israel (P 12)

Bush Finds Growing Mideast Agreement on Iran (P 15)

#### INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

President Bush’s Trip to Europe June 9-16 (P 16)

USAID on Relief Efforts in China (P 16)

United States Increases Humanitarian Assistance to China, Burma (P 18)

Bush Extension of National Emergency with Respect to Burma (P 19)

New Public-Private Fund Aims to Serve Muslim Women (P 20)

United States Supports Saudi Arabian Civil Nuclear Program (P 21)

#### SPACE NEWS

NASA Constellation Program on Track to Return People to Moon (P 22)

### Memorial Day Holiday Honors American War Dead

**By Michael Jay Friedman**  
Staff Writer

**Washington** -- The Memorial Day holiday celebrated by Americans on the last Monday of May represents for many the unofficial beginning of summer. Many will travel over the long holiday weekend to seek out friends and family, beaches and amusement parks. But most will pause at some point to recall the holiday’s true purpose:

*(Continued on page 2)*



*Marine Staff Sergeant Tim Chambers from Marine Corps Base Twentynine Palms, California, salutes U.S. war dead as motorcycle riders pass by during the Rolling Thunder tribute ride near the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington on Memorial Day 2006.*

*(© AP Images)*

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## Memorial Day Holiday Honors American War . . .

*(Continued from page 1)*

honoring those who died defending their nation.

Memorial Day entertainments throughout the United States range from large sporting events to quintessentially small-town celebrations. The Indianapolis ("Indy") 500 motor race, by some measures the world's largest single-day sporting event, attracts an estimated global audience of more than 320 million.

Meanwhile, in Waterloo, New York -- the place where Memorial Day began (at least according to Waterloo) -- festivities include a parade, arts and crafts show, a strawberry festival, music, tours of the town's Civil War museum and an antique car show. Civil War buffs in period uniforms and dresses hold a two-night encampment and stand by for live cannon fire demonstrations. Those not too full from the pizza-eating contest can compete in a 5-kilometer race.

The story of Waterloo, and that of the holiday itself, is woven deeply into the nation's history.

During the American Civil War of 1861-1865, which claimed the lives of more than 550,000 people, many citizens began to place flowers on the graves of the war dead. A number of northern municipalities continued these "Decoration Days" after the war ended, but the decisive event occurred in 1866 in Waterloo, 450 kilometers from New York City.

### THE FIRST ANNUAL OBSERVANCE

In 1865, Waterloo resident Henry C. Welles, the town's druggist, hit

on the idea of formally setting aside a day to honor those killed in the war. He was supported by one of his customers, John B. Murray, who had risen to the rank of brigadier general in the Union (northern) Army, and Murray's friend, Major General John A. Logan, another retired Union commander. In 1866 Waterloo held the first formal, village-wide, annual observance of a day dedicated to honoring the war dead, and it has continued to do so for 142 years. On Memorial Day



*A rifle with its bayonet buried in the ground, a helmet and dog tags are displayed on Memorial Day in Marion, Indiana. (© AP Images)*

weekend, visitors inflate the town's population to several times its normal size (5,118 according to its Web site).

Logan, founder of the Grand Army of the Republic, an organization of Union veterans, in 1868 designated May 30 as a day "for strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the

late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet churchyard in the land."

Among the ceremonies held that day was one at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, across the Potomac River from Washington. President Ulysses S. Grant presided. After the speeches and tributes, thousands of war orphans, veterans and others decorated the graves of the Civil War dead. There were more than 20,000 such graves at Arlington Cemetery alone.

By the turn of the century, nearly every state had declared Decoration Day an official holiday. After World War I, Decoration Day was expanded to honor those killed in all of the nation's wars, and after World War II it became known as Memorial Day. (Veterans Day, which honors all veterans, living and dead, is celebrated each year on November 11.)

Several Northern and Southern cities claim to be the originators of Memorial Day, but in 1966, President Lyndon B. Johnson proclaimed Waterloo, New York, as its official birthplace.

Congress established Memorial Day as a federal holiday in 1971 and fixed its observance on the last Monday in May.

### HONORING OUR WAR DEAD

The original Waterloo commemoration centered on the decoration of soldiers' graves, the lowering of flags to fly at half-staff, and the organization of veterans' parades. These ceremonies continue in cities and towns across the nation on Me-

*(Continued on page 13)*

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## Barack Obama Says Democratic Nomination “Within Reach”

**By Michelle Austein**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- Illinois Senator Barack Obama earned a majority of pledged delegates May 20, but this still leaves him about 370 delegates shy of securing the Democratic nomination.

As polls in recent days indicated, Obama won Oregon’s Democratic primary May 20. With 88 percent of the vote counted in the only U.S. state that conducts all voting by mail, Obama was leading by 16 percentage points. Oregon is a north-west state on the Pacific coast with one of the most liberal populations in the country.

On the same day, Hillary Clinton defeated Obama by 35 percentage points in Kentucky, a southern state with a large, white, working-class population. Its demographics are similar to those of neighboring West Virginia, where Clinton won by 41 percent May 13.

In order to become the party’s nominee, a candidate needs to earn the votes of a majority of convention delegates. This includes pledged delegates and unpledged delegates, better known as “superdelegates.” To secure the nomination, a candidate must receive the votes of 2,026 delegates.

U.S. media organizations and political parties each use their own formulas for determining just how many delegates a candidate has earned. Often the counts are estimates, because it can take days or even weeks for states’ parties to determine exactly how many delegates each candidate will receive. America.gov uses the delegate count calculated by the organization

the Green Papers. As of the morning of May 21, the Green Papers said Obama has earned 1,655.5 of the 3,253 pledged delegates. Clinton has 1,498.5 pledged delegates.



*Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., speaks at a rally in downtown Des Moines, Iowa, on Tuesday, May 20, 2008. (AP Photo/Kevin Sanders)*

Many U.S. media and political organizations include in their delegate tallies the votes of superdelegates who have made their intentions known. Superdelegates are elected officials and party leaders who can vote for any candidate they choose. This means they can change their minds about whom they support, as a handful have done this election season.

As of the morning of May 21, 304.5 of the 797 superdelegates said they intend to vote for Obama, while 277.5 superdelegates said they plan to vote for Clinton. Democrats Abroad and some U.S. territories award delegates in half-vote increments so that more people can participate in the national convention.

In a speech May 20, Obama said that with a majority of pledged delegates, he is “within reach of the Democratic nomination for presi-

dent of the United States of America.”

Typically this election season, the candidates have given speeches in a

state that just held a primary. But Obama chose to speak in Des Moines, Iowa, which some political experts said signified that he was turning his attention to the general election. Iowa not only was the state where Obama won the first nominating contest of the 2008 campaign, but also is a swing state in which candidates from both parties will want to campaign in this fall.

Talking to the many Iowa supporters who voted for him in the state’s January caucus, Obama said: “You came out on a cold winter’s night in January, in numbers that this country has never seen, and you stood for change. ... And because you did, a few more stood up, and then a few thousand stood up, and then a few million stood up.”

“And tonight ... we have returned

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## Barack Obama Says Democratic Nomination . . .

(Continued from page 3)

to Iowa with a majority of delegates elected by the American people.”

In Louisville, Kentucky, Clinton said she will continue to campaign for the nomination because neither candidate has enough delegates yet to guarantee the position.

“Neither Senator Obama nor I will have reached that magic number when the voting ends on June the 3rd,” Clinton said. Three Democratic nominating contests remain: Puerto Rico holds its primary June 1, followed by South Dakota and Montana June 3.

“This continues to be a tough fight, and I have fought it the only way I know how: with determination, by never giving up and never giving in.

“And I'm going to keep standing up for the voters of Florida and Michigan. . . . Democrats in those two states cast 2.3 million votes, and they deserve to have those votes counted,” Clinton said.

In the fall of 2007, the Democratic National Committee (DNC) said it would not count Florida and Michigan's pledged delegates because the states violated party rules by scheduling their primaries prior to February 5. The presidential candidates agreed not to campaign in those states, and Barack Obama and most other Democratic candidates removed their names from the Michigan ballot.

Clinton earned the most votes in both of those states' primaries, and has argued that voters deserve to have their voices heard. Obama has

maintained that it is unfair to count those delegates because candidates did not campaign in those states.

Both candidates visit Florida May 21. Clinton will work to encourage party leaders to count the state's delegates, while Obama reaches out to Florida voters who might be offended that votes cast by their Democratic delegates currently would not be counted toward the nomination. Political experts say this outreach is important because, as Americans remember from the 2000 election, Florida is a key swing state.

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

### **ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Are you a U.S. Company? Or are you representing U.S. Firms in Ethiopia?**

**If so, please send us information on:**

- Name of your company
- U.S. firm or firms you represent
- What sector you are engaged in
- Physical location (sub-city, woreda, kebele, and house #)
- Office telephone, fax, e-mail and mobile

**Please send the above information to the Economic/Commercial Section of the U.S. Embassy either via e-mail ([YilmaF@state.gov](mailto:YilmaF@state.gov)) or fax (011-124-2431).**

**U. S. Embassy Addis Ababa  
Economic/Commercial Section**

## U.S. Embassy and CJTF-HOA Assist Fire Victims in Sidist . . .

(Continued from page 1)

Embassy community and expressed thanks.

The CJTF-HOA personnel distributed warm-weather sleeping bags and pillows to the community in cooperation with officials from Arada Sub-City and Kebele 11/12. The U.S. Embassy's Community Liaison Office distributed food items to the community members at the shelter.

The donations were part of a larger effort by U.S. Embassy employees and their families to assist victims of this terrible fire that destroyed many homes. The Embassy's efforts started when an employee living in Sidist Kilo shared with his American and Ethiopia colleagues concerns about the fire's devastation. The Embassy's Community Liaison Office spearheaded efforts

to collect donations from the entire Embassy Community. The Embassy's Ethiopian Security Guard

At the distribution, Civil Affairs Team Seargeant Alan Laville explained his team's role in humanitar-



*Members of CJTF-HOA unloaded the boxes of sleeping bags and pillows.*

Force raised more than 5,000 Birr, contributing to a total collection of 10,000 Birr. The Embassy used the funds to purchase food and supplies for the fire victims.

As one part of the Embassy community, the Civil Affairs team requested available Humanitarian Assistance supplies from their headquarters at CJTF-HOA in Djibouti.

They received \$35,000 worth of sleeping bags and pillows.

ian assistance. "I am part of the Army Reserves. That means I volunteer for one year to come work in Ethiopia and help people here. It is an honor for my family and my fellow American citizens that I am able to work in your community."

Civil Affairs teams -- like the one working Tuesday at Sidist Kilo -- contribute to United States Government efforts to promote a more prosperous tomorrow for all Ethiopians through short-term projects to support clean water, functional schools, better roadways and improved medical facilities. CJTF-HOA's development projects contribute to its overall mission: to conduct unified action with local military forces and government representatives in the Horn of Africa and Great Lakes region to prevent conflict, promote regional stability, and protect the region from terrorist



*Civil Affairs Team Seargeant Alan Laville (center) explained his team's role in humanitarian assistance. "I am part of the Army Reserves. That means I volunteer for one year to come work in Ethiopia and help people here. It is an honor for my family and my fellow American citizens that I am able to work in your community."*

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## Improved Economies Will Lead to More Visa Waiver Agreements

**By Stephen Kaufman**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- The vast majority of visitors to the United States who overstay their visas do so for economic reasons, and Bush administration officials expressed optimism that as non-U.S. economies improve, more countries will become eligible to participate in the visa waiver program (VWP) that allows visits for business or pleasure for up to 90 days without a visa.

Richard Barth, assistant secretary of the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Policy Development, told members of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe May 14 that countries with high rates of visitors to the United States and low rates of rejection on U.S. visa applications are ideal candidates for the program.

The State Department's deputy assistant secretary for visa services, Stephen Edson, told the subcommittee that economic factors are "the primary driver for nonimmigrant visa refusals," because the rejected candidates are seen as likely to overstay their visa and to try to work illegally in the United States. An increase in economic opportunities in their home countries or in other countries where they can work legally likely would lower the rate of refusals for U.S. visas, making the country more eligible to participate in the VWP.

Program guidelines have required that the refusal rates for nonimmigrant visas in a country cannot exceed 3 percent, but recent legislation has given Homeland Security

some flexibility if the refusal rate remains below 10 percent.

Subcommittee Chairman Robert Wexler (Democrat from Florida) said data from 2006 showed that more



*U.S. and Estonian officials shake hands in March after signing a memorandum on beginning a visa waiver program. (© AP Images)*

than 15 million people used the program to enter the United States for business, education, tourism and visits with friends and family.

"The visa waiver program is a crucially important security, economic, cultural and diplomatic tool for the United States, and has enabled temporary visa-free travel for Americans and citizens in 27 allied nations for over 22 years," Wexler said.

The current participants are: Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

In addition, memorandums of understanding have been signed between the United States and the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia, Malta and the Republic of Korea.

Assistant Secretary Barth said the Bush administration wants to bring the new members into the program "this year if at all possible," and said he has also visited Poland, Romania and Bulgaria to discuss future participation in the program.

"I would submit that over probably a very short time, in the next several years, their [visa] refusal rates will come down pretty dramatically because, from firsthand witnessing, their economies are booming and developing." Because the typical reason for visa refusal is to prevent an overstay, "their improved economies will decrease the refusal rates," Barth said.

### **SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS, PROGRAM EXPANSION LINKED**

The twin goals of the VWP, security and expansion of the program, are complimentary, he argued. "Expanding the circle of countries admitted creates tremendous incentives for VWP aspirants to enhance their security standards at home and deepen their cooperation with the United States on security-related issues," Barth said.

Wexler said that two countries, Argentina and Uruguay, have been removed from the program due to the number of their citizens overstaying their visas. However, Barth said the vast majority of visa waiver

*(Continued on page 14)*

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## Muslim Chaplaincy Student Wants to Help the Poor, Homeless

**By Jeffrey Thomas**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- For a large part of her life, Ra'ufa (Sherry) Tuell was a very devout Christian, not someone recognizable as a future student in a Muslim chaplaincy program who intends to work with the poor, the homeless and the battered.

But 15 years ago, Tuell found herself leaving her church and searching for something she could not define, she said in an interview. "It



*Ra'ufa Tuell plans to become an interfaith chaplain to the poor, the homeless and the battered. (Courtesy of Ra'ufa Tuell)*

was a good period of growth, but very, very difficult. I came to the end of myself, so to speak, or the end of the search, and found myself crying out to God, and shortly after that I found myself at an introductory evening on Sufism."

Sufism, or Islamic mysticism, appealed to her. "Sufism is like the bee that pollinates all the flowers," she explained. "The first in that continuum of coming closer to God or the creator Allah is the conversion experience and coming into the realization that we are a created being and that there is a creator

and the maturation process is surrendering and becoming righteous or right with God. And then it progresses, like any maturation process, spiritually -- everything grows," she said. "As a Sufi, I only want to be closer to God."

Sufism led Tuell to enroll in the Islamic Chaplaincy Program at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut.

In the United States, chaplains are often members of the clergy, but they also can be lay people providing spiritual advice and care in settings as various as colleges, prisons, hospitals and the military.

Hartford Seminary offers the only accredited Islamic Chaplaincy Program in the United States. The program has two components. The first, a master of arts degree with a concentration in Islamic studies and Christian-Muslim relations, is designed to train students in Islamic religious thought and practice, historical and contemporary perspectives on Islamic societies, and theological and social interaction between Islam and Christianity. The second component, which results in a graduate certificate, seeks to develop skills a chaplain needs for pastoral care and multifaith relations.

Hartford Seminary's Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations is the oldest center of its kind in the United States. Hartford Seminary sees itself not as a traditional residential divinity school, but as "an interdenominational theological cen-

ter."

"Our goal is to provide an education that enables graduates both to understand themselves and their faith traditions better and to be able to contribute more fully to a culture of dialogue and creative leadership in our civic and faith communities," says the president of Hartford Seminary, Heidi Hadsell, on the seminary's Web site.

Muslims represent the second-largest group on campus (12.4 percent), exceeded only by students belonging to the United Church of Christ, a mainline Protestant denomination. Many other Protestant denominations are represented among the seminary's student body, as are Catholics and Jews.

Tuell never had met anyone who grew up in a predominantly Muslim society until she went to Hartford Seminary to begin her chaplaincy program, which includes Arabic study, as she must be able to read the Quran to graduate.

"This seminary offers a unique opportunity to learn firsthand about Islam by interacting with the Muslim students," she said. "I lived, for example, the first many months upon arrival here in Hartford this past fall with six Muslim women from Syria and one from Saudi Arabia, and the house was always filled with others -- other women from other Muslim cultures -- Indonesia and [Burma]."

"It was quite beautiful and like basking in a warm sun to be in their presence," she said. "It was a cultural immersion for me."

*(Continued on page 13)*

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## Poll Finds Widespread Support for Democracy Worldwide

**By Eric Green**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- Even though support for democracy is widespread worldwide, advanced democracies are not always fulfilling the needs of their citizens, a public opinion analyst tells America.gov.

Steven Kull, director of the Washington-based WorldPublicOpinion.org, says citizens of a country can become dissatisfied with democracy if they are convinced their government is not trying to "serve the will of the people."

Kull commented following the May 12 release of his group's poll of 19 nations. The poll found broad public support for the principles of democracy, but, in nearly every nation surveyed, majorities are "dissatisfied with how responsive their government is to the will of the people."

The poll of public attitudes toward democracy included respondents in the United States, Great Britain, France, China, India and Russia, among the nations surveyed.

WorldPublicOpinion.org describes itself as an international collaborative project aimed at giving "voice to public opinion around the world on international issues." The project is managed by the University of Maryland's Program on International Policy Attitudes.

Kull said citizens of some authoritarian nations, such as China, have confidence their government "is actually trying to do what's best for the people, and they perceive that the government is more attentive and responsive to the will of the

people than in democracies." However, Kull said, citizens of authoritarian nations also want their governments to be more democratic.

The pollster suggested governments such as the United States should do more domestic polling of its citizens, in the same way the State Department polls public attitudes abroad. The polling, he said, would be aimed at helping policymakers understand better which public policy issues are important to citizens. The polling could be based on information from multiple sources, asking questions in many different ways, said Kull.

This survey of citizens' attitudes toward democracy, said Kull, is part of a larger series of polling by his group on different aspects of the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, created 60 years ago. Other polls have surveyed attitudes on women's rights, racial equality and freedom of the press. The poll on press freedom, released April 30, found worldwide support "for the media to be free to publish news and ideas without government control."

Kull said that "perhaps the most important point of all" from the poll on democracy is that the public in democratic states does not always think the "outcome of competing interests" in a country will result in something "reflective of the will of the people."

In a press release announcing the poll results, Kull said that "most see their governments as primarily serving big interests rather than the people as a whole." Kull said the "perception that governments are not responsive to the popular will

appears to be contributing to the low levels of confidence in government found around the world."

In a positive assessment about democracy, the poll found that majorities in all nations surveyed said "government leaders should be selected through elections in which all citizens can vote," a principle enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### DEMOCRACY EXPERT DISCUSSES POLL'S IMPLICATIONS

Thomas Carothers, an expert on the subject of building democracies, said the policy concern is that it becomes "particularly dangerous when you have weak or fragile democratic regimes where the citizens are really dissatisfied and feel that the government doesn't care about them."

In such circumstances, "people tend to vote in" individuals outside the regular political system who appeal to a "disgruntled electorate," Carothers said.

"This raises the prospect of a breakdown of the existing party order or system," said Carothers, who is the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's vice president for studies on international politics and governance.

Carothers said the election of such self-styled populists as Presidents Hugo Chávez in Venezuela and Rafael Correa in Ecuador resulted from citizen frustration based on the feeling that the countries' previous governments were "unresponsive."

*(Continued on page 24)*

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## Mortgage Markets Boost Home Ownership, U.S. Economy

*By Howard Cincotta  
Special Correspondent*

*This is the sixth and final article in a series on the U.S. financial system and market regulation.*

Washington -- Owning a home long has been equated with the realization of the "American Dream." The encouragement of homeownership in the United States has been a major factor shaping government economic and tax policies, especially in regard to housing loans or mortgages.

In recent months, the housing market has come under intense scrutiny with a credit crisis triggered by the collapse of the subprime mortgage sector. Subprime mortgages are high-rate loans for borrowers who cannot qualify for lower-interest conventional loans.

During the housing boom of recent years, mortgages were sold as securities. When subprime borrowers began defaulting on their loans, the shock wave rippled through the entire housing sector -- lowering median home prices for the first time in decades and doubling the number of foreclosures -- and led to swift government action. (See "U.S. Central Bank Takes Sweeping Action to Avert Financial Crisis." ( <http://www.america.gov/st/economic/2008/March/20080317172727liameruoy0.6984369.html?CP.rss=true> ))

### DREAMS AND HOMES

For much of American history, owning a home was more dream than reality, with Western settlers who built their own homes swamped, statistically, by vast numbers of urban immigrants and city dwellers

who almost all rented their dwellings.

By 1900, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, less than half of Americans owned their homes.

Homeownership soared after World War II as a result of favorable mortgage rates, a rising economy and a housing industry that grew swiftly to meet the new demand for suburban housing. The homeownership rate topped 60 percent in 1960 and peaked at 68 percent to 69 percent in recent years.

### HOUSING AND TAXES

"Homeownership is something this country desires," said David Lereah, chief economist for the National Association of Realtors, to the New York Times.

The role of the housing sector in the overall economy is huge. William Poole, former head of the St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank, estimated that America's "net housing wealth" (the combined value of all household real estate and mortgages) totaled almost \$11 trillion in 2006 -- equal to about 80 percent of the nation's entire gross domestic product.

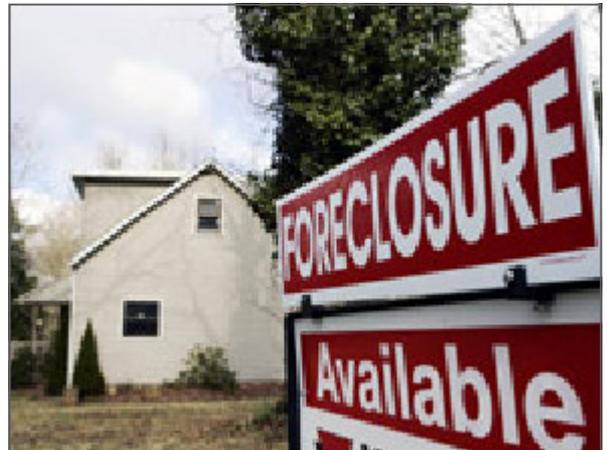
Home construction remains one of the nation's largest industries; the monthly number of housing starts and building permits is considered an important indicator of the near-future direction of the economy.

The average American has enjoyed homeownership for another reason: homeowners can deduct from taxes

the interest paid on a mortgage loan.

What is a gain to homeowners, however, is a loss to the Treasury. Overall, the mortgage-interest deduction is estimated to represent a loss of about \$80 billion annually in potential revenue to the federal government.

### FANNIE AND FREDDIE



*Foreclosed home in Egg Harbor Township in New Jersey (© AP Images)*

Housing experts cite the overall availability of mortgage funds, or liquidity, as a significant factor in the relatively high rate of homeownership. The institutions chiefly responsible for maintaining mortgage liquidity are two oddly named companies, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

The Federal National Mortgage Association, or Fannie Mae, was established in 1938 to ensure a consistent supply of mortgage funds at reasonable rates for communities and home buyers. Congress re-chartered Fannie Mae in 1968 as a shareholder-owned company funded solely with private capital.

*(Continued on page 17)*

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## Bush Reiterates Support for Palestinian State

**By Merle D. Kellerhals Jr.**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- The Palestinian people have suffered for decades and have earned the right to their own homeland, President Bush says, and the United States strongly supports the creation of a Palestinian state based on the rule of law and social justice.

"I believe that the Palestinian people will build a thriving democracy in which entrepreneurs pursue their dreams, families own homes in lively communities, and young people can grow up with hope in the future," the president said at an economic conference. The Middle East peace conference in Annapolis, Maryland, last year made a hopeful beginning toward a long-sought agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority that can make statehood a reality, he said.

"A peace agreement is in the Palestinians' interest, it is in Israel's interest, it is in Arab states' interest, and it is in the world's interest," Bush said. "I strongly support a two-state solution."

Bush acknowledged, in a speech at the World Economic Forum on the Middle East, taking place in the Egyptian Red Sea resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh, that building a free Palestinian society is enormously demanding and that it requires action from every side. A peace agreement can be reached by the end of the year, and it will outline what the new Palestinian nation will look like: a contiguous state where Palestinians live alongside Israel and enjoy peace, prosperity and dignity, he said.

"Palestinians must fight terror and continue to build the institutions of a free and peaceful society," Bush said. "Israel must make tough sacrifices for peace and ease restrictions on Palestinians."

And Arab nations, especially the oil-rich states, must invest in the Palestinian people and leave behind old resentments against Israel, he said.

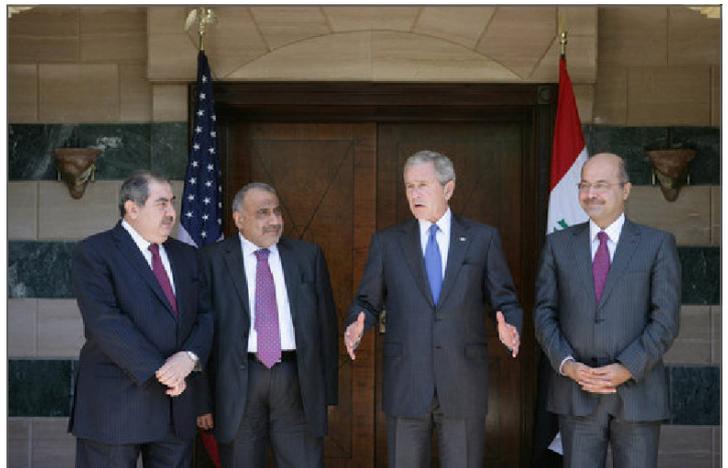
Bush's May 18 speech came at the end of his five-day mission to Israel, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, which included extensive talks with leaders from key nations within the region on an array of issues from Palestinian

statehood to fighting terrorism. It was his second diplomatic mission to the region this year, and another trip may become necessary before he leaves office next January, if it will advance the goals set out at the Annapolis Conference, National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley says.

The World Economic Forum on the Middle East is fashioned after the annual meeting of political and business leaders held in Davos, Switzerland.

Bush emphasized that political changes in the second half of the 20th century have replaced dictatorships of the past with peaceful

democracies that once seemed unimaginable -- places like Chile, Indonesia, Poland, the Philippines and South Korea. These nations have different histories and different traditions, he said, but each made the same democratic transition on its own terms.



*President George W. Bush stands with Iraqi leaders after their meeting Sunday, May 18, 2008, in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. With him from left are: Hoshiyar Zeaban, Foreign Minister, Vice President Abd al-Mahdi, and Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih. (White House photo by Chris Greenberg)*

"From diversifying your economies, to investing in your people, to extending the reach of freedom, nations across the region have an opportunity to move forward with bold and confident reforms -- and lead the Middle East to its rightful place as a center of progress and achievement," Bush said.

Making that possible requires economic reform that is also supported by political reform, he said, and free trade.

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

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## Democracy Could Transform Middle East, Says Bush

**By David McKeeby**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- Democracy could bring a new future to the Middle East by undermining extremism and giving voice to millions of families across the region yearning for justice and tolerance, freedom and hope, says President Bush.

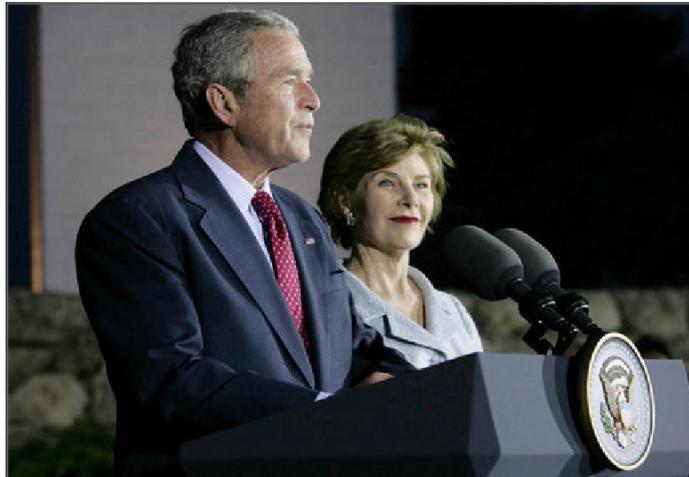
"These values are the self-evident right of all people, of all religions, in all of the world," Bush said in a May 15 speech to Israel's parliament, the Knesset, as the country celebrates the 60th anniversary of its founding.

Since independence, Israel has built a thriving democracy with a dynamic economy and open society, all the while under continuous threat from the forces of extremism, Bush said. A new generation of regional leaders must defy extremists by making the hard choices necessary for peace, rooted in democratic values. "We must stand with the reformers working to break the old patterns of tyranny and despair. We must give voice to the millions of ordinary people who dream of a better life in freedom."

"Leaders who are accountable to their people will not pursue endless confrontation and bloodshed. Young people with a place in their society and a voice in their future are less likely to search for meaning in radicalism. And societies where citizens can express their conscience and worship their God will not export violence, they will be partners

for peace," Bush said.

Democratic values have shaped Israel's "unbreakable" alliance with the United States, Bush said. Democracies such as the United States and Israel counter the darker visions offered by the terrorists groups such as Hamas, Hezbollah and al-Qaida.



*With Mrs. Laura Bush by his side, President George W. Bush delivers remarks at a reception Thursday, May 15, 2008, at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem in honor of the 60th anniversary of the state of Israel.*

*(White House photo by Chris Greenberg)*

"These killers claim the mantle of Islam, but they are not religious men. No one who prays to the God of Abraham could strap a suicide vest to an innocent child," Bush said. "In truth, the men who carry out these savage acts serve no higher goal than their own desire for power. They accept no God before themselves."

As a leading sponsor of terrorism, Iran also must be prevented from acquiring nuclear weapons, Bush said. "[Israeli] Jews and Americans have seen the consequences of disregarding the words of leaders who espouse hatred. And that is a mis-

take the world must not repeat in the 21st century."

By standing behind democratic reforms in the region and steadfastly defending its freedoms, Israel could celebrate its 120th anniversary beside a free and prosperous Palestinian state and a region transformed, Bush predicted.

"From Cairo and Riyadh to Baghdad and Beirut, people will live in free and independent societies, where a desire for peace is reinforced by ties of diplomacy, tourism, and trade. Iran and Syria will be peaceful nations, where today's oppression is a distant memory and people are free to speak their minds and develop their talents," he said.

"I truly believe that if we stay firm in our resolve, resist the temptation to give in to the terrorists, and believe in the transformative

capacity of liberty, someday other nations in the region will share the blessings of democracy and liberty," Bush said in an address later in the evening at Jerusalem's Israel Museum. "Someday, they'll know that they'll have governments that respond to the people. They'll build schools instead of bombs. They'll not want a war with their neighbors -- but want to live in peace. And that's the dream, and that's the hope. And I firmly believe it can come true."

Bush urged critics to consider how democracy has shaped today's Israel, as well as transformed other

*(Continued on page 17)*

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## Bush Remarks in Honor of 60th Anniversary of Israel

### THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Jerusalem)  
May 15, 2008

**REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
IN HONOR OF THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL**

*The Israel Museum*

*Jerusalem*

**THE PRESIDENT:** Thank you all for coming. Never a man to shy away from a microphone. (Laughter.) Didn't realize it gets so cold here in Jerusalem in May. Yes, but thanks

would take time to be here, as I am. Members of your cabinet, members of the Knesset. We've got leaders from around the world who are here to share in this fantastic celebration. Laura and I really wanted to come by and say thanks to our fellow Americans for coming as well. (Applause.)

So I'm driving in the limousine, waving at friendly faces, half of whom seem to be from California or -- (laughter.) I hope you're having as much fun as we are. It's been a -- it's been such a fantastic couple of days for us. And what a fitting way to end with our buddies from the United States of America. You know, Israel has got no closer ally

Biblical texts. I don't know if you've had a chance to go through the museum. I strongly urge you to do so -- if they open it up for you. (Laughter.) But these documents tell the story of the righteous -- of a righteous God and his relationship with an ancient people. There's no doubt in my mind that the patriarchs of ancient Israel and the pioneers of modern Israel would marvel at the achievements of this nation. And if you really think about it, I doubt few of the prognosticators would have projected Israel to be what it is today: a modern, thriving democracy in the heart of the Middle East. It's been an amazing transformation -- of dry valleys to fertile lands. And the new technologies being nurtured here are a great testimony to the truest resource of the Israeli people, and that's the brain power and ingenuity and drive.

I gave a speech today in the Knesset. It was such an honor to stand in that hallowed hall. (Applause.) One of the things I wished I would have projected maybe more clearly was the fact that this is a land of courageous people -- people who have had to withstand bombings and suiciders, but never lost faith; people who have shown incredible resilience. And it's a nation worthy of our support, and a nation worthy of our friendship.

As I said in my speech, I'm -- I truly believe that if we stay firm in our resolve, resist the temptation to give in to the terrorists, and believe in the transformative capacity of liberty, someday other nations in the region will share the blessings of democracy and liberty. Someday they'll know that they'll have gov-

*(Continued on page 14)*



*President George W. Bush stands with Dalia Itzik, Speaker of the Knesset, and Israel's President Shimon Peres on the floor of the Knesset Thursday, May 15, 2008, in Jerusalem. (White House photo by Shealah Craighead)*

for coming.

I first want to thank James Snyder and the museum folks for hosting this fantastic reception.

(Applause.) Mr. President, thanks for joining us, and Mr. Prime Minister, I'm so honored that you all

than America, and one of the reasons why is because of the connections between citizens of the U.S. and the citizens of Israel.

And so we're thrilled to be with you. We're also honored to be steps away from some of oldest

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## Memorial Day Holiday Honors American War . . .

(Continued from page 2)

memorial Day. The U.S. president or vice president typically presides at Arlington National Cemetery, where a small American flag is placed on each grave. Solemn observances are held at Civil War battle sites, including Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and Sharpsburg (Antietam), Maryland.

At 3 p.m., a National Moment of Remembrance unites Americans in prayer and thought as they contemplate the sacrifices made in their behalf.

Thus, even as Americans enjoy their long weekend and the prospect of summer, they also can be found in more somber moods.

Wreaths will be laid, thanks given and heads bowed in recognition of those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

For additional information on U.S. celebrations, see "An Overview of U.S. Holidays ( <http://www.america.gov/st/diversity-english/2008/January/20080113151228abretnuh0.5784265.html> )."

Also see Diversity-At Leisure ( <http://amlife.america.gov/amlife/diversity/atleisure.html> ).

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## Muslim Chaplaincy Student Wants to Help the Poor, . . .

(Continued from page 7)

Learning about Islam and Muslim culture and getting to know other Muslims have been the most important aspects of the seminary experience for her, Tuell said.

Previously, Tuell had done lay chaplaincy work and taught Sufism in prisons. As part of her program at Hartford, she expects to spend a year as an intern chaplain in a hospital. After that, she said, "I have a strong urge to work as an interfaith chaplain with the poor, the homeless and the battered -- those who have fallen between the cracks of society and are unwanted and uncared for."

"I see myself as an interfaith person," she added. "I believe that we're all the children of Allah, that there is only one creator, and Allah

is very diverse in manifesting creation, and I find great beauty and depth and richness in the various ways of coming into relationship with the creator -- whether it be Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam."

Tuell's brother, sister and son have been supportive. "My parents have both passed away in the last five years," she said. "Most of my friends are like me: they're either Sufis or they are so spiritually oriented that they can't help but support a practice that is about love and service for others."

"To me, true Islam is love and service to others in need. It's the pouring out of ourselves to others in service to Allah," she said.

See also "Bangladeshi American Is First Muslim Chaplain in Marine

Corps ( <http://www.america.gov/st/diversity-english/2008/February/20080204123903cpataruk0.6934015.html> )" and "Poetry of Rumi a Unifying Force of Civilizations ( <http://www.america.gov/st/arts-english/2008/April/20080421141644zjsredna0.6308405.html> )."

See Diversity-At Worship ( <http://amlife.america.gov/amlife/diversity/atworship.html> ).

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## Improved Economies Will Lead to More Visa Waiver . . .

*(Continued from page 6)*

participants are indeed leaving the United States within the 90-day limit, and some of the reported overstays are due to the failure of airlines to turn in proper documentation that the visitor has left the country.

President Bush signed the 9/11 Commission Act into law in summer 2007. Among its provisions were more stringent requirements for travel document standards and information sharing for countries aspiring to join the visa waiver program. The new law also allows flexibility for countries whose visa refusal rates are less than 10 percent, broadening the potential for wider participation.

"With the advancement of both new security technologies and new security risks, we can and must ensure that for VWP participants and aspirant countries, we are able to assess the risks posed by individuals on a traveler-by-traveler basis, rather than a country-by-country basis alone," Edson said. "The changes to the VWP in the 9/11 act give us the tools to do this."

Wexler and other members of the subcommittee expressed concerns over the lack of progress on VWP negotiations with Greece, which originally had been slated to join the program in the near term along with the other eight countries. Barth said in his meetings with Greek authorities earlier in 2008 he was presented with a draft memorandum of

understanding that differed greatly from the working version from the previous year and included many elements that would make enforcement logistically difficult for U.S. officials.

For more information, see "Officials Urge Congress To Modernize, Expand Visa Waiver Program ( <http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2007/May/200705251507041CJsamohT6.930178e-02.html> )."

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## Bush Remarks in Honor of 60th Anniversary . . .

*(Continued from page 12)*

ernments that respond to the people. They'll build schools instead of bombs. They'll not want a war with their neighbors -- but want to live in peace. And that's the dream, and that's the hope. And I firmly believe it can come true.

I do want to pay tribute to one brave soul, and that is Liviu Librescu. I don't know if you remember him, but he was a teacher at Virginia Tech. His folks live in Israel. I bring him up because it was a courageous act of selflessness --

he blocked the doorway to his -- to his classroom with his body to allow his students to escape. And I think it's a fitting final statement here in Israel for me to make, to say that, isn't it amazing that a survivor of the Holocaust gave his life for others in the Virginia countryside. And I just want his family to know that we appreciate his courage, and that his legacy lives on.

And so, thanks for coming. Thanks for honoring a great nation and a worthy friendship. I'm proud to be here on Israeli soil as the President of the United States of America.

I'm proud to carry our banner of liberty around the world. And I'm proud to proclaim our deep desire for peace.

Thanks for coming. God bless you. God bless Israel, and God bless America. (Applause.)

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## Bush Finds Growing Mideast Agreement on Iran

**By David McKeeby**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- Progress toward Israeli-Palestinian peace dominated President Bush's latest mission to the Middle East, and the president also reported growing agreement among regional leaders regarding Iran's challenge to peace and security.

"There is big concern about Iran, given the fact that Hezbollah is destabilizing Lebanon, Hamas is trying to prevent the creation of a Palestinian state, and, of course, Iranian action inside of Iraq," Bush said. He spoke after meetings with leaders at the World Economic Forum on the Middle East at the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on the final leg of his May 13-18 trip to the region.

"There is a struggle going on in this region between the forces of change and progress and reform, and those that are supporting terror and the killing of civilians as a tool to achieve political power," National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley said at a May 18 briefing. "There is now a consensus understanding of what is going on in this region, and that Iran is very much behind that struggle."

In Lebanon, Bush said, Iranian-backed Hezbollah showed its true nature May 7 when it turned weapons on the Lebanese government in response to a political dispute. Bush dispatched General Martin Dempsey to help Lebanese officials assess security needs. The president also welcomed efforts by the Arab League to broker peace. (See "America Stands with Lebanon, Bush Says." ( <http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec->

[english/2008/May/20080513133810idybeekcm0.5706598.html?CP.rss=true](http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-english/2008/May/20080513133810idybeekcm0.5706598.html?CP.rss=true) ))

"The Lebanese people deserve a peaceful democracy and our aim is to help them," Bush said.

Some experts in the region are seeing Hezbollah's latest attacks on Lebanon as a "strategic failure," Hadley said, and the attacks may accelerate pressure to dismantle the radical militia, as called for in the wake of the group's August 2006 attack on neighboring Israel.

"Hezbollah made a show of military power, but in doing so it exposed that it is actually not the great resistance movement," Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice told reporters returning to the United States with Bush aboard Air Force One. "And they made it very clear that what they are is an arm of Iran."

Meanwhile, the Gaza Strip remains dominated by Iranian-backed Hamas, which allows continuing rocket attacks targeting civilians in neighboring Israel in an effort to disrupt the peace process pursued by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

As in Lebanon, Bush urged leaders to support the peace process and efforts to build a Palestinian state, Hadley said. "There is an opportunity in the standing up of a Palestinian state and giving a positive alternative to the vision of Hamas to deal a setback to Iran, and bring stability and peace to the region." (See "U.S. Backs Peaceful Solutions, Democratic Leaders in Middle East." ( <http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-english/2008/May/20080508154740dmslahrellek>

[0.5806238.html?CP.rss=true](http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-0.5806238.html?CP.rss=true) ))

Iran is troubled by the fact that democracy is taking root in Iraq, Bush said. Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's government recently has seen new successes by Iraqi security forces deployed to Basra to confront Iranian-backed militants.

"They were armed and trained by Iran, and they got beat in southern Iraq," said Rice, adding that U.S.-led coalition forces continue finding and detaining members of Iran's elite al-Quds Force operating in Iraq.

"Iraq is changing," said Bush, "and it's in the interest of the United States that we help it continue to change to the better."

Iran's recent moves in Lebanon, the Palestinian Territories and Iraq reveal "significant vulnerabilities," said Rice, as a growing number of Tehran's neighbors share U.S. concerns about Iran's regional actions, which are in addition to Iran's internationally controversial nuclear program, the subject of three rounds of U.N. political and economic sanctions.

As European negotiators prepared to offer Iran a new package of incentives to suspend its uranium enrichment program, Bush reiterated the U.S. offer to join Iran at international negotiations in exchange for a verifiable suspension of its nuclear program.

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

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## President Bush's Trip to Europe June 9-16

**THE WHITE HOUSE**  
**Office of the Press Secretary**  
**May 20, 2008**

### **STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY**

The President and Mrs. Bush will travel to Europe from June 9 to June 16, 2008, to strengthen the trans-Atlantic partnership and to celebrate the enduring friendship between our nations based on

shared democratic values. The President and Mrs. Bush's visit will also commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Marshall Plan and the Berlin Airlift, underscoring the historic and continuing U.S. role in supporting a Europe increasingly whole, free, and at peace. The President will begin his trip by participating in the annual U.S.-European Union (EU) Summit in Slovenia. Following the Summit, the President and Mrs. Bush will visit

Germany, Italy, the Holy See, France, and the United Kingdom.

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

## USAID on Relief Efforts in China

### **USAID Provides Equipment and Training for Earthquake Relief Efforts in China**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – May 19, 2008- The American people, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), are providing more than \$815,000 in additional assistance, including specialized search, rescue, and recovery equipment, to the people of China in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake that struck on May 12. As part of this effort, a nine-person USAID team of specialists will travel to China to train local rescue workers on the use of this equipment. This brings total USAID

assistance to China to more than \$1.3 million.

The equipment is expected to arrive in Chengdu, China on Wednesday and will include saws, hand tools, hydraulic gear, concrete cutters, generators, and personal safety equipment.

USAID will continue to monitor the situation and coordinate with the Government of China in order to provide needed assistance to those affected by the earthquake.

For more information about USAID's emergency humanitarian assistance programs, please visit:

[www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/humanitarian\\_assistance/disaster\\_assistance/](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/) ( [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/humanitarian\\_assistance/disaster\\_assistance/](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/) ).

The American people, through the U.S. Agency for International Development, have provided economic and humanitarian assistance worldwide for nearly 50 years.

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

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## Mortgage Markets Boost Home Ownership, . . .

(Continued from page 9)

The Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, or Freddie Mac, was created in 1970 to stabilize and expand the mortgage market as well -- in effect, competing with Fannie Mae.

Previously, a bank would make a mortgage loan and then wait for repayment, usually for years. Now, the lending institution can replace its capital investment by selling the mortgage to Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac -- and use the money to issue a new mortgage.

Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac package these mortgages and sell them as debt securities on U.S. and international financial markets.

By law, moreover, both institutions must buy a certain number of mortgages issued to low- and moderate-income people to encourage lending to the broadest range of potential homebuyers. Both companies have undertaken steps to increase mort-

gage funding during the current crisis.

### OVERSIGHT AND INSURANCE

As public-private hybrids, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac operate as profit-making companies whose shares are listed on the New York Stock Exchange. At the same time, they are supervised by an office in the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The primary mission of another HUD agency, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), is to provide mortgage insurance for loans made by FHA-approved lenders. The agency has guaranteed more than 34 million home loans since its founding in 1934.

"We're the largest issuer of mortgage insurance in the country," said Brian Montgomery, FHA commissioner and assistant HUD secretary for housing. "Our programs are critical to helping Americans keep their homes."

Recently, the FHA announced a new program to help as many as 500,000 families facing possible foreclosure refinance their high-interest loans with lower-cost, FHA-approved mortgages.

"We want to be able to help families who are in the right house, but [have] the wrong mortgage," said Montgomery.

More information on mortgages is available on the Web sites of the Housing and Urban Development Department ( <http://www.hud.gov/news/fhasecure.cfm> ), Federal Housing Administration ( [http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page?\\_pageid=33,717234&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL](http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page?_pageid=33,717234&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL) ) and American Bankers Association ( <http://www.aba.com/Solutions/Mortgage.htm> ).

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

## Democracy Could Transform Middle East, . . .

(Continued from page 11)

regions of the world in the past 60 years.

"When Europe was destroying itself through total war and genocide, it was difficult to envision a continent that six decades later would be free and at peace. When Japanese pilots were flying suicide missions into American battleships, it seemed impossible that six decades later Japan would be a de-

mocracy, a lynchpin of security in [East] Asia, and one of America's closest friends."

"This fundamental insight, that freedom yields peace, is the great lesson of the 20th century. Now our task is to apply it in the 21st," Bush said.

The full text of Bush's remarks to the Knesset ( <http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2008/>

May/20080515115051xjsnommis0.9087183.html ) is available on [America.gov](http://www.america.gov).

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

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## United States Increases Humanitarian Assistance to China, Burma

**By Merle D. Kellerhals Jr.**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- The United States has stepped up humanitarian support to China in the aftermath of the May 12 earthquake in Sichuan province, providing more than \$815,000 in assistance that includes specialized search, rescue and recovery equipment, according to the U.S. Agency for International Development.

"As part of this effort, a nine-person USAID team of specialists will travel to China to train local rescue workers on the use of this equipment. This brings total USAID assistance to China to more than \$1.3 million," the agency said May 19.

The equipment is expected to arrive in Chengdu, the capital of the mountainous province, May 21. It will include saws, hand tools, hydraulic gear, concrete cutters, generators and personal safety equipment, USAID says.

President and Mrs. Bush visited the Chinese Embassy in Washington May 20 to sign a book of condolences for China's earthquake victims.

"We've come to express our country's condolences for those who mourn for the loved ones. We stand ready to help in any way that the Chinese government would like," Bush said.

"Natural disaster is very hard on many of your people. And we extend our deepest sympathies and pray for recovery and pray for the strength of those whose lives have been torn apart during this terrible tragedy," he said.

On May 12, a magnitude 7.9 earthquake struck Wenchuan County in China's Sichuan province. After-shocks have continued, but in lessening magnitude, authorities have reported. China began an official three-day mourning period for earthquake victims May 19.

viding satellite images of the earthquake-stricken areas of Sichuan province to the Chinese government to assist in damage assessments. The imagery support follows two U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster cargo jets that flew supplies into China May 18. The cargo, deliv-



*President George W. Bush and Mrs. Laura Bush stand with China's Ambassador to the United States Wenzhong Zhou and his spouse, Shumin Xie, during a moment of silence Tuesday, May 20, 2008, in honor of the victims of China's May 12 earthquake. (White House photo by Joyce N. Boghosian)*

According to the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, the earthquake caused approximately 500,000 buildings to collapse throughout the province.

"USAID will continue to monitor the situation and coordinate with the government of China in order to provide needed assistance to those affected by the earthquake," the agency said. Assistance is being provided to China as the government makes requests of the United States, but USAID and the U.S. military stand by to deliver additional assistance, U.S. officials say.

In addition, the U.S. National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency is pro-

vided to Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport, included food, water containers, blankets, lanterns, generators and hand tools from U.S. military relief stocks in Hawaii and Guam, the Pentagon said May 19.

The Chinese government said the number killed has reached 40,000 and another 32,000 are missing, according to state news agency Xinhua. Chinese authorities previously said they expected the final death toll to exceed 50,000.

### U.S. AID TO BURMA CONTINUES

From May 16 to May 19, the U.S. Defense Department conducted

*(Continued on page 24)*

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## Bush Extension of National Emergency with Respect to Burma

**THE WHITE HOUSE**  
**Office of the Press Secretary**  
**(Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt)**  
**May 17, 2008**

### **CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO BURMA**

On May 20, 1997, the President issued Executive Order 13047, certifying to the Congress under section 570(b) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1997

The President also declared a national emergency to deal with the threat posed to the national security and foreign policy of the United States by the actions and policies of the Government of Burma, invoking the authority, inter alia, of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.

On July 28, 2003, I issued Executive Order 13310 taking additional steps with respect to that national emergency by putting in place an

expand prohibitions to include the Burmese regime's financial supporters and their companies, as well as individuals determined to be responsible for or to have participated in human rights abuses or to have engaged in activities facilitating public corruption. On April 30, 2008, I issued Executive Order 13464 taking additional steps with respect to the Government of Burma's continued repression of the democratic opposition in Burma.

Because the actions and policies of the Government of Burma continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States, the national emergency declared on May 20, 1997, and expanded on October 18, 2007, and April 30, 2008, and the measures adopted to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond May 20, 2008. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency with respect to Burma. This notice shall be published in the Federal Register and transmitted to the Congress.

**GEORGE W. BUSH**

The White House,  
May 16, 2008.

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

(Public Law 104-208), that the Government of Burma has engaged in large-scale repression of the democratic opposition in Burma after September 30, 1996, thereby invoking the prohibition on new investment in Burma by United States persons contained in that section.

import ban required by the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003 and prohibiting exports of financial services to Burma and the dealing in property in which certain designated Burmese persons have an interest. On October 18, 2007, I issued Executive Order 13448 to



*U.S. President George W. Bush*

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## New Public-Private Fund Aims to Serve Muslim Women

**By Jane Morse**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- A unique, new public-private program aims to improve lives around the world, one woman at a time.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice launched the One Woman Initiative, which will be aimed exclusively at Muslim women living in some 40 countries. A "women's empowerment fund" of \$100 million -- \$67 million from the U.S. government and the rest from private corporations and foundations -- will support programs such as business and leadership training and improved access to justice.

In introducing the program May 12 at the State Department, Rice told her listeners that "in an age where women are climbing to new heights, we must pause for a moment and direct our concerns toward those who have been left behind."

### **INSPIRED BY BENAZIR BHUTTO**

The initiative is inspired by Benazir Bhutto, the former prime minister of Pakistan who was assassinated December 27, 2007, while campaigning for another term as prime minister after eight years in exile.

The death of this moderate Muslim woman leader was an inspiration "to help nurture others who could become forces for moderation and peaceful change," Rice said.

Ambassador Shirin Tahir-Kheli, Rice's senior adviser for women's empowerment, told America.gov that the State Department was approached by a number of people

who felt the tragic death of Bhutto was an opportunity for "shoring up women around the Muslim world."

Tahir-Kheli said the One Woman Initiative is unique because it will enhance currently funded programs and help other programs that might not otherwise get assistance.

Rules governing who can qualify for government funding "are pretty onerous," the ambassador acknowledged. "So small NGOs [nongovernmental organizations], small women's programs that have capacity to make a big difference often don't have the wherewithal to even apply."

In contrast, the One Woman Initiative, itself a nonprofit organization, will have a greater ability to reach out to individuals and small programs through its private-sector arm, she said.

"What's exciting," Tahir-Kheli told America.gov, is that "this is the first public-private sector initiative in the United States that is focused on three areas: justice, opportunity, leadership."

Government funding will be supervised by Henrietta Fore, administrator and director of U.S. foreign assistance at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

The private-sector segment will be chaired by Carly Fiorina, chairwoman and chief executive officer of Carly Fiorina Enterprises, which is focused on global economic development and grassroots empowerment programs.

Working with Fiorina are Sheila Johnson, philanthropist, entrepre-

neur and co-founder of Black Entertainment Television (BET); Pat Mitchell, president of the Paley Center for Media; and Farooq Kathwari, chief executive officer of Ethan Allen Interiors.

Rice, during a May 12 interview on CBS's *The Early Show*, said the treatment of women is "a bellwether of how well we're doing in terms of the spread of decency, of dignity for human beings."

The One Woman Initiative is an "initiative to recognize what can be done if women are empowered. ... [I]f you can empower one woman, she can empower a village. That village then can empower a town and, ultimately, a whole society," Rice said.

A fact sheet ( [http://www.carlyfiorina.com/pdf/OneWoman\\_FactSheet.pdf](http://www.carlyfiorina.com/pdf/OneWoman_FactSheet.pdf) ) on the program is available on the Fiorina Foundation Web site.

Transcripts of the secretary's remarks ( <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2008/05/104629.htm> ) and her CBS interview ( <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2008/05/104669.htm> ) are available on the State Department's Web site.

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## United States Supports Saudi Arabian Civil Nuclear Program

**By David McKeeby**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- President Bush met with Saudi King Abdullah to celebrate 75 years of diplomatic relations and announce a new agreement pledging U.S. support for Saudi Arabia as it builds a civil nuclear energy program that benefits its people, observes international nonproliferation standards and prevents the spread of nuclear weapons.

"This agreement will pave the way for Saudi Arabia's access to safe, reliable fuel sources for energy reactors and demonstrate Saudi leadership as a positive nonproliferation model for the region," a May 16 White House fact sheet said. The agreement is one of four reached between Bush and Abdullah during a day of private talks at

Janadriyah, the King's horse farm and retreat outside Riyadh.

As home to the world's largest oil reserves, Saudi Arabia produces 7.5 million barrels of oil per day but seeks nuclear energy for use in industrial-scale desalinization and medicine -- as showcased in first lady Laura Bush's visit to a Saudi women's cancer clinic during the day -- and as an environmentally sustainable alternative to fossil fuels.

The United States will provide training and support to build a civil nuclear program that will operate according to guidelines established by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), according to the fact sheet. The agreement will be the first step toward building a comprehensive framework for future U.S.-Saudi nuclear cooperation similar to a March 2008 agreement with neighboring Bahrain. (See "Bahrain, United States to Cooper-



*President George W. Bush and the King of Saudi Arabia Abdullah bin Abdulaziz sit for tea prior to dinner, Friday May 16, 2008, in the King's Villa at his Al Janadriyah Ranch in Saudi Arabia. (White House photo by Joyce N. Boghosian)*

ate on Nuclear Energy." ( <http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-english/2008/March/20080325155024idybeekm0.5472223.html> )

The agreement will also further Saudi efforts to formulate a joint nuclear technology program with fellow Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) members Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

Saudi Arabia's plan for civil nuclear energy, as well as those of its Gulf neighbors, stands in marked contrast to the internationally controversial nuclear program of nearby Iran, says Bush's National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley.

"Iran, of course, got into the nuclear business in secret with a program outside the IAEA safeguards, that we only found out about it because of the action by the IAEA, tipped off by dissident groups within Iran," said Hadley.

As a further demonstration of Saudi Arabia's commitment to the safe pursuit of civil nuclear power, it also became the latest country to join the Proliferation Security Initiative, an 85-nation partnership established by the United States in 2003 to track and freeze shipments of banned weapons worldwide. Saudi Arabia also joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, a 70-nation partnership launched in 2006 by Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin to strengthen controls and

enhance international cooperation in the name of nuclear safety.

In recent years, Saudi Arabia's oil wealth has become a terrorist target, as seen in the February 2006 attack on the Abqaiq complex. Al-Qaida subsequently claimed responsibility for the incident, in which operatives detonated two large car bombs, then unsuccessfully attempted the storm the facility, killing four security guards and wound-

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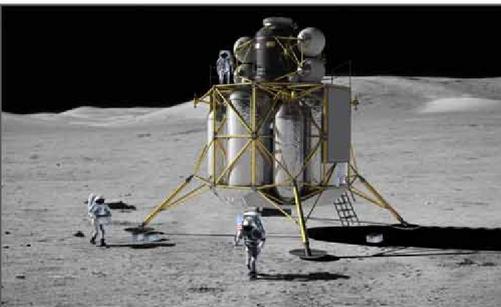
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## NASA Constellation Program on Track to Return People to Moon

*By Cheryl Pellerin*  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- NASA engineers report progress on the Constellation program, whose Ares I rocket and Orion spacecraft are taking shape to transport human explorers back to the moon by 2020 and then on to Mars and other solar system destinations.

The massive development effort, taking place as NASA races to complete the International Space Station, is unparalleled in the U.S. spaceflight enterprise since the shuttle program formally began in 1972.



*NASA artist's rendering depicts the Constellation program's Altair lunar lander (NASA photo)*

The remaining shuttle fleet -- Atlantis, Discovery and Endeavour -- is scheduled to retire in 2010, and Orion's first manned launch is scheduled for March 2015. In the five-year interval, Russian Soyuz and possibly other spacecraft will transport astronauts and supplies to the International Space Station.

The Constellation program will modify and use both space-shuttle launch pads and the massive vehicle assembly building, but the Ares I and Ares IV rockets, a mobile launcher, the Orion spacecraft and the Altair lunar lander are new designs.

"I hope that folks can understand at least some of the complexities of having to design both the rocket and the spacecraft that goes on top at the same time," Jeff Hanley, manager of the Constellation Program at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, said during a May 15 briefing. "This is a challenge that many missions don't face, but we've made incredible progress."

### **BUILDING ORION**

Orion will be similar in shape to the Apollo spacecraft but much larger. The Apollo-style heat shield is the best-understood shape for re-entering Earth's atmosphere, especially when returning directly from the moon.

The spacecraft will be 5 meters in diameter and weigh about 22.7 metric tons. The interior will be more than 2.5 times the volume of Apollo so Orion can accommodate four crew members on missions to the moon and six on missions to the space station or Mars-bound spacecraft.

Orion is scheduled to fly its first missions to the space station by 2015 and make its first flight to the moon by 2020.

"We're in the midst of preliminary design and that will culminate in a [November 21] preliminary design review," said Orion Project Manager Mark Geyer, at NASA's Johnson Space Center. "That's a critical milestone, when we and our customers get together and say that we have the right vehicle and we're ready to move forward. So it's essential that we get it right."

Orion will be able to carry crew and cargo to the space station and rendezvous with a lunar landing module and an Earth departure stage in low-Earth orbit to carry crews to the moon and, one day, to Mars-bound vehicles assembled in low-Earth orbit.

It also will be the Earth re-entry vehicle for lunar and Mars returns. Its shape is borrowed from capsules of the past but takes advantage of 21st-century technology in computers, electronics, life support, propulsion and heat-protection systems.

A launch abort system on top of the Orion capsule will be able to pull the spacecraft and its crew to safety if there is an emergency on the launch pad or at any time during ascent.

For missions to the moon, an Ares V cargo launch vehicle will precede the launch of the crew vehicle, delivering to low-Earth orbit the Earth departure stage and lunar module that will carry explorers on the last part of the journey to the moon's surface. Orion will dock with the lunar module in Earth orbit, and the Earth departure stage will propel both to the moon.

Once in lunar orbit, the astronauts will use the Altair landing craft to travel to the moon's surface while the Orion spacecraft stays in orbit. When the astronauts' mission is complete, they will return to the orbiter using a lunar ascent module. The crew will use the service module main engine to break out of lunar orbit and head back to Earth.

### **WAITING FOR HUBBLE**

Atlantis will be the first spacecraft

*(Continued on page 23)*

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## NASA Constellation Program on Track to Return People . . .

(Continued from page 22)

to be retired as the shuttle program winds down. Its final mission (STS-125), originally scheduled for August 28, will be an 11-day repair mission for seven astronauts to the Hubble Space Telescope. But a new processing schedule for the external tank has added four weeks to five weeks to NASA's launch manifest, slipping the repair mission to late September or early October. (See "Discovery to Deliver Heart of Japanese Lab to Space Station ( <http://www.america.gov/st/space-english/2008/May/20080509151048cniirellep0.7113459.html> ).")

This will affect the schedule for the first test of the Ares I rocket, called Ares I-X, scheduled for April 15, 2009. Ares I-X will use one of the shuttle mobile launchers, which will be in use during the Hubble mission.

"The first-blush impact assessment suggests a day-for-day slip," Hanley

said, meaning that the flight test also would slip four weeks to five weeks.

The engineers are looking for work that can be done in parallel to mitigate the effect on the Ares I-X schedule, he added, "but if we can't come up with anything and it has to be a day-for-day slip, then ... that's perfectly workable. We walked into using shuttle assets for I-X with our eyes wide open that this could happen, so we're all working together as a team."

More information about the Constellation Program ( [http://www.nasa.gov/mission\\_pages/constellation/main/index.html](http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/constellation/main/index.html) ) is available on the NASA Web site.

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*An artist's rendering shows Ares I being stacked in the vehicle assembly building at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida. (NASA)*

## United States Supports Saudi Arabian Civil Nuclear . . .

(Continued from page 21)

ing 10 others. A fourth U.S.-Saudi agreement will strengthen security ties by creating a joint commission tasked with further strengthening Saudi borders and coasts and expand cooperation with the Saudi Interior Ministry.

Bush will complete his Middle East tour in Egypt's Red Sea resort Sharm El-Sheikh, where he will

meet with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, Afghan President Hamid Karzai, Pakistani Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani and other regional leaders gathered for the World Economic Forum on the Middle East.

A White House fact sheet ( <http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2008/May/20080516114535xjsnommis0>

.620907.html?CP.rss=true ) on the U.S.-Saudi agreements is available from America.gov.

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**PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
SECTION  
AMERICAN EMBASSY**

P.O.Box 1014  
Addis Ababa  
Ethiopia

Phone: 251-11-5174007  
251-11-5174000  
Fax: 251-11-1242454  
Email: pasaddis@state.gov



**Poll Finds Widespread Support for . . .**

*(Continued from page 8)*

Carothers said that certain democracies have experienced a "fairly low level of public satisfaction with government over the last 20 to 30 years. This has been a fact for awhile."

More about the poll on democracy ( [http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/home\\_page/482.php?lb=hmpg1&pnt=482&nid=&id=](http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/home_page/482.php?lb=hmpg1&pnt=482&nid=&id=) ) is on the WorldPublicOpinion.org Web site.

For additional information, see "Universal Declaration of Human Rights Remains Relevant ( <http://www.america.gov/st/hr-english/2008/May/20080501173517ajesrom0.2817652.html?CP.rss=true> )."

( <http://www.unhchr.ch/udhr/lang/eng.htm> )

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights ( <http://www.unhchr.ch/udhr/lang/eng.htm> ) is available on U.N. Web site.

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**United States Increases Humanitarian Assistance to China, . . .**

*(Continued from page 18)*

seven flights of USAID relief supplies -- including plastic sheeting, water containers and hygiene kits - - from Utopao, Thailand, to Rangoon, Burma's largest city, according to USAID. The relief supplies, valued at approximately \$414,400, were handed over to nongovernmental organizations, which are providing the supplies to the Burmese.

To date, the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team and Defense Department have completed 31 airlifts of emergency relief supplies from Utopao to Rangoon, to provide assistance to more than 106,000 people, USAID says. The Pentagon says that to date the humanitarian flights have delivered

330,000 kilograms of water, food, mosquito netting, shelters, medical supplies, hygiene supplies and other relief.

Burma began a three-day mourning period May 20 for those who died in Cyclone Nargis and its aftermath. The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has placed the number of dead between 63,000 and 101,000, according to USAID, and 220,000 missing. The Burmese government has placed the death toll at 77,700 and the missing at 55,900.

The total number of people displaced by the cyclone and its subsequent storm surge stands at 550,000, according to the United Nations. And the Office for the

Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that international aid agencies have reached an estimated 500,000 Burmese, which is about 20 percent of the cyclone-affected population.

USAID said that, to date, the United States has provided \$19,153,746 in humanitarian assistance to Burma.

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