



**United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors
Office of Inspector General**

Inspection of Embassy Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



Photograph of exterior of embassy

The Malaysian government and the embassy's leadership are in transition. Overall, Office of Inspector General (OIG) found that the post performs well, considering the complexity and challenges of the local political environment. The embassy has been effective in policy advocacy and has the highest commitment to protecting U.S. economic interests and promoting U.S. exports.

The embassy seeks to maximize public diplomacy opportunities. OIG encouraged embassy management and the public affairs officer to translate this dynamic into balanced, long-range, mutual understanding programs for groups such as Malaysian students.

OIG made several recommendations related to public diplomacy. They include converting the Lincoln Resource Center to a smaller information resource center and assigning the space for other uses, revising the Bi-National Agreement on educational exchanges to ensure uninterrupted operation of its board of directors, and seeking guidance from the Department on accounting practices for Fulbright commissions.

The embassy has enlarged its consular space to adapt consular operations to the post-September 11, 2001, requirements for border security. OIG agrees that the embassy should reexamine the need for a four-person Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Visa Security Unit, in view of the composition of visa applicants in Malaysia. A smaller DHS presence may be appropriate.

In addition, the report recommended that the embassy address its lack of a permanently assigned human resources officer. OIG believes that an experienced human resources officer could standardize practices and ensure that the embassy meets Equal Employment Opportunity standards. OIG also recommended that the embassy revise the Foreign Service national handbook.

OIG Report ISP-I-05-19A, Embassy Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The fieldwork for this report was conducted by the Office of Inspections in February and March of 2005. This is an unclassified summary of a full report, which receives limited official distribution.

Background



Map of Malaysia

parties, led by the United Malays National Organization, has ruled the country continuously since independence in 1957.

Malaysia is an advanced developing country with an annual per capita gross domestic product of about \$4,000. The economy was expected to grow by seven percent in 2004, thanks to strong demand from major export markets, and is forecast to grow around six percent in 2005. Malaysia is a producer of petroleum and natural gas and has a sophisticated manufacturing sector based on significant investment by American and other foreign electronic companies. Exports are vital to the economy, and total trade equals 182 percent of annual gross domestic product. Malaysia is the United States' 10th-largest two-way trading partner, while the United States is Malaysia's largest export destination and largest source of foreign direct investment.

In 2004, the Malaysian people elected a new leader, who is prepared to construct a positive and collegial bilateral relationship with the United States. This opened up a wide range of opportunities for bilateral and multilateral cooperation on such key issues as regional security and counterterrorism.

Office of Inspector General

The Office of Inspector General's (OIG's) mission is to assess Department of State and Broadcasting Board of Governors operations and recommend ways to strengthen their integrity, effectiveness, and accountability.

OIG's Office of Inspections provides systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department of State, its posts abroad, and related activities. Inspections cover policy implementation, resource management, and management controls. As part of the inspection, particular attention is given to consular, security, and information technology operations.