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MEDIA NOTE

U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation Awards for 2008
Support for Cultural Preservation in 59 Countries

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is pleased to announce the results of the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation 2008 competition. This year, the Fund will support 68 projects in 59 countries, ranging from the restoration of historic buildings to the documentation of traditional forms of music.

Established by Congress in 2001, the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation provides direct grant support for the preservation of cultural sites, cultural objects and collections, and forms of traditional cultural expression in developing countries in all regions of the world. The Fund offers U.S. Embassies an opportunity to show a side of the United States that is non-commercial, non-political, and non-military. By taking a leading role in efforts to preserve and protect cultural heritage, the United States shows its respect for other cultures. Since its inception, the Fund has supported more than 500 cultural preservation projects in more than 100 countries.

Projects supported in 2008 include—

- Restoration of three historic chhortens, distinctive Buddhist monuments that guard natural thresholds or commemorate significant events, in the Upper Mustang region of Nepal;
- Preservation of the archaeological remains of the hamam in Aghmat, a unique 11th-century pre-Almoravid hamam in southern Morocco;
- Conservation of an important side altar in the 16th-century cathedral of Santo Domingo, a World Heritage city and capital of the Dominican Republic;
- Documentation of the Dolan Muqam, one of four music and dance traditions in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Regions of China;
- Conservation and display of 40 rarely exhibited icons in the Ukraine dating from the 16th to the 19th centuries; and
- Restoration of the Kizimkazi Mosque on the island of Zanzibar, Tanzania, one of the oldest Islamic buildings on the east African coast.

The Cultural Heritage Center supports the foreign affairs functions of the Department that relate to the preservation of cultural heritage. In addition to the Ambassadors Fund, the Center administers U.S. responsibilities relating to the 1970 UNESCO convention to reduce pillage and illicit trafficking in cultural property. Information on the Fund is available online at <http://exchanges.state.gov/culprop/afcp/>.

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