



DID YOU KNOW?

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AT HOME AND IN EUROPE

PRESIDENT BUSH COMMEMORATES THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ISLAMIC CENTER

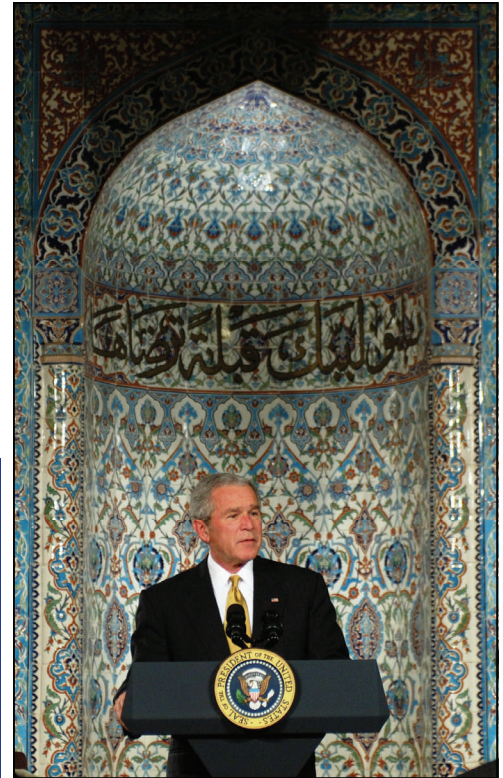
President George W. Bush was an honored guest on June 27 at the fiftieth anniversary of the dedication of the Islamic Center in Washington, D.C. He addressed the assembled gathering of diplomats, members of the Washington, D.C. community, and clergy of many faiths. He stressed that the United States is a diverse, inclusive society that welcomes people of all faiths, and greatly respects Islam. The President emphasized the United States is not at war with Islam and has strongly defended the rights and freedoms of Muslims in the United States as well as the world at large.

For President Bush's speech at Rededication of Islamic Center, please go [here](#).

SPECIAL ENVOY TO THE OIC

President Bush announced his intention to appoint a Special Envoy to the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) to symbolize the United States' respect for Islam and its desire to engage with the Muslim community at a high level. The OIC is an intergovernmental organization of 57 states whose goals include strengthening political, economic, social, cultural, and scientific cooperation among the member states and resolving disputes among them.

For more information please visit their website, www.oic-oci.org
OIC Press Release [here](#)



Above: President Bush at 50th Anniversary of Islamic Center, June 27, 2007. [White House photo]

Below Left: President and Mrs. Eisenhower at 1957 dedication ceremony, June 28, 1957. [State Department Archive photo]



BUSH FOLLOWS IN EISENHOWER'S FOOTSTEPS IN DEDICATION

President Dwight D. Eisenhower was present at the original dedication of the Islamic Center June 28, 1957. It was there he said, "As I stand beneath these graceful arches, surrounded on every side by friends from far and near, I am convinced that our common goals are both right and promising. Faithful to the demands of justice and of brotherhood, each working according to the lights of his own conscience, our world must advance along the paths of peace."

Please view Eisenhower's speech at Islamic Center, [here](#).

PRESIDENT BUSH: FIRST U.S. PRESIDENT TO PLACE A COPY OF THE QUR'AN IN THE WHITE HOUSE LIBRARY

“To promote greater understanding between our cultures, I have encouraged American families to travel abroad, to visit with Muslim families. And I have encouraged American families to host exchange students from the Muslim world. I have asked young Americans to study the language and customs of the broader Middle East. And for the first time in our nation's history, we have added a Koran to the White House Library,” said President Bush.

President Bush's [speech](#) at Iftaar Dinner October, 17 2005



President Bush at Iftaar Dinner, October 17, 2005. [White House photo by Paul Morse]

DENMARK: HIP-HOP AND BASKETBALL A WINNING COMBINATION



Jamal Sampson of the Denver Nuggets makes a big impression with Danish immigrant children, June 4-8, 2007. [Tom Leary, U.S. Embassy Copenhagen]

What levels the playing field more than sports? The U.S. Embassy in Copenhagen joined forces with a Danish non-governmental organization (GAM3) that dedicates itself to integrating immigrant youths, predominantly Muslims, into the main stream of society or into Danish club basketball through participation in organized team sports in inner-city neighborhoods. The U.S. Embassy brought over NBA and WNBA stars Jamal Sampson (Denver Nuggets) and Andrea Stinson (Charlotte Sting), as well as Hip Hop dancers Isaac Barron and Rose Bichon, to join GAM3, by reaching out to immigrant neighborhoods in Denmark's three largest cities, June 4-8. The NBA and WNBA presence has helped GAM3 increase participation by 35% to more than 4,000 young people, 70% of them from immigrant families. The integration impact is clear: 13% of all young players in Danish club basketball got their start with GAM3.

SLOVAKIA: EMBASSY FUNDS AFGHAN PROJECTS

U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia Rodolphe Vallee announced the award of two grants to Slovak NGOs working in Afghanistan building civil society. The first grant of \$20,000 was awarded to the organization, People in Peril, to enhance capacities of the Advocacy Unit at the Afghan Women's Resource Center. The second grant of \$18,800 was awarded to Handlova Television and the *Na Vashe Strane* (“On Your Side”) organization to send Slovak broadcast journalists to the Kunduz region of Afghanistan to work closely with Afghan radio and TV broadcasters.



Ambassador Vallee exchanges views with Ministry of Foreign Affairs State Secretary Olga Algayerova, May 2007. [U.S. Embassy Bratislava]

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: MADRASSA STUDENTS GRADUATE FROM ENGLISH-ACCESS PROGRAM

The U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo co-organized a graduation ceremony for 76 students from Bosnia's six state-funded madrassas who completed an English Access Micro-scholarship Program, a program funded by the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and administered in-country by the American Councils for International Education. U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina Douglas McElhaney along with a number of local dignitaries, including the Head of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Islamic Community, Reis-l-ulema Dr. Mustafa Ceric, the Grand Mufti Kavazovic and Head Imam Karic of Tuzla Canton, attended the graduation held at the Tuzla madrassa, the largest in the country. The Reis praised the cooperation between the U.S. Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Islamic Community in organizing English-language teaching programs for Bosnian Muslims studying at madrassas. In his remarks, Ambassador McElhaney recognized the critical role the program plays in encouraging the sharing of ideas, enhancing employment prospects, and building bridges among communities.



Ambassador McElhaney (far right) flanked by Dr. Mustafa Ceric with the six different madrassas' graduating students, June 30, 2007. [Mostar Madrassa, Access program]

U.K.: AMBASSADOR VISITS NEW ISLAMIC CENTER AND MADINA MOSQUE

The U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom Robert Tuttle and his wife visited a new Islamic Center in Sheffield, England's 4th largest city. They met with over 50 representatives of the local Muslim community. The group went out of its way to thank the Ambassador for U.S. assistance during humanitarian crises, especially the 2005 Pakistan earthquake and the air support provided by the U.S. The group appreciated the visit and noted that this was the first Ambassador or high level official to visit the new Islamic Center.

Right: Ambassador and Mrs. Tuttle with representatives of Sheffield Muslim community, March 22, 2007. [U.S. Embassy London]



CYPRUS: EMBASSY INTRODUCES FOOTBALL TO MUSLIM ORPHANS

A contingent of 20 volunteers and their families from the U.S. Embassy in Nicosia, led by Deputy Chief of Mission Jane Zimmerman, taught orphans how to play American football. The Americans were honoring a request made back in December by the SOS Orphanage Director and students to come and teach them how to play. Head coaches and football stars Tony Carter and SSGT Vie Melendez and his crew of Marines, assisted by



Turkish speakers Arda Kuran, Tom Miller, and Kurt Hallberg, taught the kids the basics, culminating in a rough-and-tumble match of flag football. Needless to say a good time was had by all, and the kids asked, "Can you come back tomorrow?"

Orphans learn the fun of American football! April 15, 2007. [John Zimmerman, U.S. Embassy Nicosia]

SENIOR ADVISOR FARAH PANDITH DISCUSSES MUSLIM ENGAGEMENT IN EUROPE

During her visit to Barcelona, Senior Advisor for Muslim Engagement Farah Pandith saw a wide range of experts and government officials and came away with a well-rounded understanding of the issues surrounding integration and immigration in Catalunya, Spain. A highlight of her visit was a spirited breakfast hosted by the Consulate for Muslim immigrant women.

Ms. Pandith concluded her four-country European tour in Italy, where she met with Muslim community leaders and youth and with Italian and Vatican government officials in Milan, Florence and Rome. At Rome's Center for American Studies, Ms. Pandith delivered the keynote speech before an audience of over 100 at a seminar on intercultural dialogue featuring Muslim American authors Samina Ali ("Madras on Rainy Days") and Reza Aslan ("No God But God"), and Muslim Italian authors Amara Lakhous and Younes Tawfik. Ms. Pandith emphasized the points that the U.S. is not at war with Islam and that democracy and Islam are compatible. She also spoke about Islam in America from a personal point of view as a Muslim American growing up in New England.



Above: (R-L) Huma Jamshed, Director of the Cultural and Educational Association of Pakistani Women (ACESOP); Farah Pandith; Consul General Todd D. Robinson, April 19, 2007. [Eva Ollé, U.S. Consulate Barcelona]

Left: (L-R) Younes Tawfik, Iraqi-Italian author; Farah Pandith; Karim Mesran, Director of the American Studies Center in Rome; Samina Ali, Indian-American author of *Rainy Days in Madras*; Reza Aslan, Iranian-American author of *No God But God*; Amara Lakhous, Algerian-Italian Author, May 2007. [Monique Quesada, U.S. Embassy Rome]



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