

12. International Public Diplomacy

A. Information and Exchange Activities

The United States Information Agency, and its U.S. Information Service posts abroad, are actively engaged in public diplomacy to create understanding and support among government officials, opinion makers and publics around the world for the President's International Crime Control Strategy. USIS officials overseas, in cooperation with Embassy country teams, draw from USIA's wide array of globally available information and cultural resources to define country-specific information and exchange programs on topics such as the rule of law, the culture of lawfulness, administration of justice, enforcement, and the harmful effects unchecked corruption and crime can have on a country's economy and institutions. These programs create a context and a more receptive environment for the international efforts against crime, including diplomatic efforts, operational activities by U.S. Government law enforcement, intelligence and national security institutions, financial and development policy advocacy and assistance activities intended to reduce corruption throughout the world.

USIA resources and program tools employed in these efforts include a large number of language-qualified officers posted at U.S. missions abroad who are in daily contact and promote U.S. policy goals with foreign elites in government, the media, academic life, the private sector and with the public at large. These officers are supported with a wide range of program tools including: electronic and printed materials available through world wide web and gopher sites, an information service in five languages; speakers and specialists programs; foreign press centers; its book program; exchange programs; international broadcasting employing Worldnet, VOA TV/Radio; and its research and media reaction capabilities.

In 1998, USIA advanced several new program initiatives specifically designed to support the International Crime Control Strategy. These were designed in consultation with USIS officers abroad, taking into account their assessments of public diplomacy priorities in the areas of administration of justice and fighting crime and corruption in each individual country.

A televised Worldnet Administration of Justice series was broadcast in 1998 in Latin America. It consisted of six programs featuring United States legal and government authorities exploring salient aspects and issues regarding the administration of justice. The programs examine: "Public and Career Laws," "Judicial Schools and Training," "Combating Judicial Corruption," "Office of Public Defender," "Criminal Procedures Reforms in Latin America," and "Information Technology in the Judicial System." The series reached audiences in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela.

In November 1998, USIA published an electronic journal entitled "Corruption: An Impediment to Development." This electronic publication is available through USIA's Website, and is capable of being downloaded and printed by USIS posts for

wider distribution abroad. It includes a variety of policy statements by senior United States officials, pieces by academic and other non-government experts, and lists of resources for additional information. The articles emphasize how nations can create a climate hospitable to investment and economic growth by combating corruption through the adoption of the rule of law and the development of accountable democratic institutions. The journal is available in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese and Arabic, online at <http://www.usia.gov/journals/journals.htm>.

A new USIA International Visitor Program on International Crime Issues brought 17 foreign officials involved in law enforcement, judicial, intelligence and immigration activities of their governments for discussions and exchanges with United States counterparts in Federal, state and local governments on how to foster greater cooperation to deter international crime. The program was designed to provide an understanding of the U.S. criminal justice system and examine how the U.S. is dealing with criminal activities such as drug trafficking and international terrorism. The visitors had opportunity to meet with officials from, among others, the U.S. Departments of Justice and Treasury, the U.S. Customs Service, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, INTERPOL, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, Congressional officials, and other experts in Oklahoma City, Chicago, Memphis, San Diego and Salt Lake City. The visitors came from Austria, the Bahamas, Egypt, Finland, Iceland, Jamaica, Latvia, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Northern Ireland, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, Taiwan, Ukraine and Zambia.

In 1999, USIA is mounting a major international public diplomacy effort in direct support of the Vice President's Global Forum on Fighting Corruption. This included active pre-conference placements with foreign media; briefings and services through foreign press centers; and facilitating foreign media access and activities at the meeting site in Washington. USIA placed all plenary sessions of the Global Forum on direct Web TV accessible to posts and others abroad. It opened and operated a Web site in direct support of the Global Forum, on which all materials relating to or presented at the Forum will be posted, as will the final report, when complete. It provided strong Worldnet support through the meeting, and in follow-up to it. Continuing to provide international public diplomacy support to diplomatic and other follow-on activities resulting from the Vice President's Global Forum will constitute a continuing significant element of USIA's international public diplomacy activities in support of the International Crime Control Strategy during the balance of 1999.

During 1999, similar activities will be continued and expanded to provide an active and growing public diplomacy support to the international strategy against corruption.

B. Encouraging a Civic Culture of Lawfulness

Democracies based on the rule of law require an apparatus, and the skills to manage it, to deal with the twin scourges of crime and corruption. This "apparatus"

includes both the “technical” institutions of the rule of law: courts, police and public prosecutors, and the civic skills, knowledge and understanding, both on the part of the governors and the governed, that form the values and attitudes that are known as the “culture” of democracy.

A critical element of this culture is a sense of lawfulness. In societies where this sense of lawfulness flourishes, governments are held accountable to their citizens and efforts to combat crime and corruption receive strong support. Citizens look upon law enforcement as a protective and positive role for government. Conversely, when government is seen as preying on society rather than protecting it, cynicism abounds. Government is seen as a necessary evil and bribery is a way of life. Crime is rampant. Courts are tainted, law enforcement is arbitrary, and a vicious cycle is fueled as the general population feed the corruption to get basic services. An environment where people grow up with the expectation of corruption can have a profound effect on a commonly held sense of right and wrong. Changing such attitudes is as important as police work or a competent judiciary.

No amount of law enforcement, even with an effective judicial system, can stamp out a climate of corruption unless the population respects the enforcer and supports the effort. Gaining a sense of legitimacy in a democracy requires changes in public attitudes possible only with support from educators, community leaders, prominent and popular national figures and indigenous media. A connection of trust must be built between authorities and citizenry.

In a lawful society, citizens must understand both their rights and their responsibilities. In the new as well as the older democracies, this requires a continuous labor of civic education. USIA helps sustain relationships between American educators and their counterparts abroad. The CIVITAS network, which USIA helped establish, is stimulating international cooperation in civic education. USIA also makes available information on the institutions of democracy, including its culture, through its full range of media, from radio and TV, through the Internet and other satellite based data transmissions. Through Fulbright study grants and other exchange programs, USIA encourages the personal relationships that enhance the insight and understanding of democracy and the rule of law. USIA officers around the world apply their expertise at cross-cultural communication to implement programs and face-to-face communication grounded in the recognition that democracy involves values and attitudes that have to naturally evolve in any particular nation’s native soil and cannot be imposed or transferred from the United States or any other culture. More information on country-specific activities relating to civic education and building resistance to crime is available from the Public Affairs Officers at U.S. Embassies abroad. Additional information on USIA anticorruption products and services is also available online at www.usia.gov/usis.html under the Policy heading in Economic issues.

C. CIVITAS International and the CIVITAS Palermo World Conference