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# Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-05-323](#), a report to the Chairman, Subcommittee on Science, State, Justice, and Commerce, and Related Agencies, House Appropriations Committee

## Why GAO Did This Study

The war on terrorism has focused attention on the important role U.S. public diplomacy plays in improving the nation's image. The United States has undertaken efforts to "win hearts and minds" by better engaging, informing, and influencing foreign audiences; however, recent polling data show that anti-Americanism is spreading and deepening around the world. GAO was asked to examine (1) to what extent U.S. public diplomacy efforts have been coordinated and (2) whether the private sector has been significantly engaged in such efforts.

## What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that (1) the Director of the Office of Global Communications fully implement the role mandated for the office in the President's executive order, including facilitating the development of a national communications strategy, and (2) the Secretary of State develop a strategy to guide department efforts to engage the private sector in pursuit of common public diplomacy objectives. The State Department, Broadcasting Board of Governors, and U.S. Agency for International Development generally concurred with the report's conclusions and recommendations.

[www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-05-323](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-05-323).

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Jess T. Ford at (202) 512-4128 or [fordj@gao.gov](mailto:fordj@gao.gov).

# U.S. PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

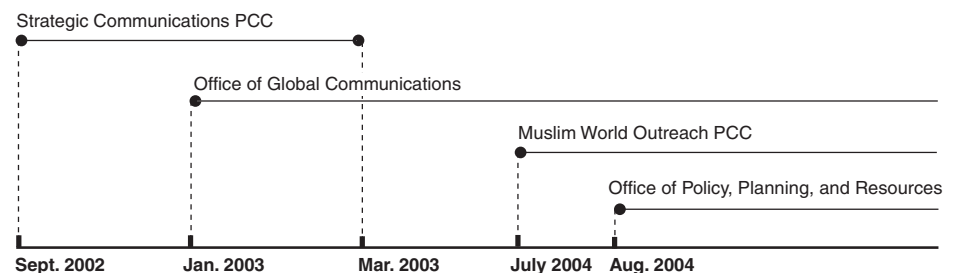
## Interagency Coordination Efforts Hampered by the Lack of a National Communication Strategy

### What GAO Found

The White House has launched several recent initiatives designed to promote the coordination of U.S. public diplomacy efforts, but the government does not yet have a public diplomacy communications strategy. In 2002, a Strategic Communications Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) was created to help provide central direction to communication efforts. The committee drafted a national communication strategy, but the committee was disbanded in 2003 and no strategy was issued. In 2003, an Office of Global Communications was created to facilitate White House and interagency efforts to communicate with foreign audiences. According to a recent report by the Defense Science Board and comments by agency officials, the office has not implemented this role. Although a national communications strategy has not yet been developed, the White House established the Muslim World Outreach Policy Coordinating Committee in 2004 to coordinate public diplomacy efforts focused on Muslim audiences. The group is in the early phases of drafting strategic and tactical communications plans. In addition to White House efforts, the State Department created an Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources in 2004 to help coordinate and direct the department's wide-ranging public diplomacy operations. Further, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of Defense are redefining their public diplomacy roles and operations in response to the increased attention given to U.S. outreach efforts.

The State Department has had some success involving the private sector in the area of international exchanges. However, other efforts to engage the private sector have met with limited success. For example, in 2003 State formed a panel of outside advisors to recommend areas where the department and the private sector could coordinate their efforts. The panel's July 2003 report suggested a number of possibilities; however, none of these suggestions was acted upon due to a lack of resources, bureaucratic resistance, and limited management commitment.

### Key White House and State Initiatives Launched to Improve Public Diplomacy Coordination



Source: GAO, based on White House and State Department data.