



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

FRONTLINES

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Zeleni Venac displays fresh cherries for sale in Belgrade, Serbia. Eastern Europe and Eurasia countries are joining forces to recover from the global recession. See page 6.



Photo by Steve Eastham, USAID

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Obama Calls for Development on Trip to Russia, G-8, Ghana

By Angela Rucker

President Barack Obama in July visited Russia and the G-8 summit of industrial powers before making his first visit to Africa as president, where he spoke in support of Ghana's democracy and highlighted comprehensive care for women and their babies at a local hospital.

In Russia, his first stop, Obama met with President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin as well as representatives of civil society organizations.

At the G-8 summit in L'Aquila, Italy—the second stop on the trip—Obama announced that countries represented at the summit plan to invest \$20 billion in agricultural development in poor countries during the next three years to help them feed their own people without relying on food aid.



Photo by Sui Loeb, AFP

President Barack Obama meets a mother and her infant at La General Hospital in Accra, Ghana, July 11. USAID provides support to several programs at the hospital, including its maternal and child health programs.

At Obama's final stop in Ghana, enthusiastic crowds lined his travel route trying to catch a glimpse of the first African-American U.S. president and his family. And Obama returned the admiration, telling Ghanaians that, "you show us a face of Africa that

is too often overlooked by a world that sees only tragedy or a need for charity."

"The 21st century will be shaped by what happens not just in Rome or Moscow or

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Clinton Announces Development, Diplomacy Strategic Review

By John Waggoner

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton hosted town hall meetings at the State Department and USAID on July 10 and 13, announcing the first of a series of strategic reviews of U.S. diplomacy and development to be held every four years.

The first Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) will be led by the deputy secretary of state for management and resources with the USAID administrator and State's director of policy planning as co-chairs. The QDDR team, consisting of senior representation from both agencies, will engage with other Cabinet

agencies, as well as non-government experts, to craft a diplomacy and development blueprint that represents a "whole of government" approach.

Clinton received a rousing welcome at USAID's town hall and told employees that, over the six months since the Obama administration took office, she has worked to make development equal to diplomacy and defense in national security. She said the administration sees "development as one of the most powerful tools we have for advancing global progress, peace, and prosperity."

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Senior UN Policy Aide Predicts Growing Humanitarian Need

By Ben Barber

Rising global humanitarian problems are "stretching resources that are already stretched," said a senior U.N. policy chief at the annual conference of the British-based coalition of NGOs, Aid & Trade, held in Washington July 9-10.

"Population growth, urbanization, and migration will create new human caseloads," said Hansjoerg Strohmeyer, chief of the policy and development branch of the U.N. Office of the Commissioner of Humanitarian Affairs.

"Civilians continue to be displaced and need aid," he said in his keynote address.

And the blue U.N. flag does not provide protection in the

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Photo by USAID

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton reacts to a question from the audience during a USAID town hall meeting July 13.

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Q and A with Pakistan Ambassador Husain Haqqani

This spring, more than 2 million Pakistanis fled fighting in northwest Pakistan and the United States government authorized USAID to spend \$300 million to assist them. By July 28, some 30 percent of the displaced people had returned to parts of Buner, Swat, Lower Dir, and Bajaur Agency, which are again under government control. But the majority of the displaced remained with relatives and friends or in camps, awaiting the end of conflict so they can return home and begin rebuilding. To discuss this issue, FrontLines Editorial Director Ben Barber sat down for an interview with Pakistan's Ambassador to Washington Husain Haqqani June 17 at the Pakistan Embassy. Excerpts follow:



Pakistan Ambassador
Husain Haqqani

Q: What is the current condition of the displaced from Swat and other regions and when can they look to return to their homes?

HAQQANI: There are more than 2 million people who have been displaced as a result of the actions of the Taliban and the military operation to fight the Taliban back in

the Malakand Agency, which is Swat and the areas adjoining it.

Basic services—food, very basic shelter, and health care—are being provided by the UNHCR [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees] and the Pakistani government and the government of the Pashtun province—the Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan.

There has been no major outbreak of epidemics or infections in the area; no one has complained that they are starving. Most of the people are not out on the streets under the sky, but have either tented villages or extended families and relatives who are providing them shelter.

The second stage is rehabilitation—enabling these people to go back to their homes once those areas are cleared of the terrorists. In some parts, the terrorists booby-trapped the region.

The third stage is critical—reconstruction. Most of the

towns in the area have been totally destroyed, partly because of the fierce fighting, partly because the Taliban took shelter in buildings that had to be destroyed to be able to destroy the Taliban command and control centers.

Estimates of reconstruction costs range between \$1.3 billion to \$2.5 billion.

Q: Is U.S. assistance reaching the displaced?

HAQQANI: U.S. assistance has started reaching the Pakistanis. The first \$110 million [has] gone. But the next \$200 million [was] committed and [awaits] congressional approval through the supplemental budget. Now that that has happened, I think that, too, will be dispersed.

Private U.S. assistance from American non-governmental organizations and philanthropies has also been mobilized and there is some presence of American support organizations in the relief camps.

Q: What could be done to improve delivery of relief?

HAQQANI: In the case of the [relief after the 2005] earthquake, there was no immediate security threat to any

of the relief workers, or for that matter, to the displaced persons.

In this case, there are some pockets of the Taliban in the mountains around the area. The potential for booby traps exists. And so any relief effort would have to be coordinated with the Pakistani military.

But we will need trucks; we will need Chinook helicopters down the road; and, above all, we will need relief materials. And in the rehabilitation phase, we will need basic services like water purifying equipment, basic medical care; a lot of the women in the camps are pregnant—they will need help.

These are mountain people used to a cooler climate. When they come down into the plains or the plateau as displaced persons there's an immense need for them to have things like desert coolers.

Many displaced people are living with extended family. So they may actually not need direct assistance but only compensation that will enable their extended families to continue to support them.

We will need \$125 million for displacement cash compensation; \$600 million for relief operation and camp management; restoration of livelihoods is another \$175 million; and reconstruction and rehabilitation is about \$1.1 billion.

Q: Will prompt delivery of humanitarian aid affect public support for the Pakistan government?

HAQQANI: It would be crucial for the government of Pakistan to demonstrate that when the people rise up to oppose the Taliban, the government will be able to provide for them and look after them—and that the international community stands behind the people of Pakistan in opposing the Taliban.

The Taliban have, in the past, used a mixture of religious extremist rhetoric and rhetoric about dispossession and poverty. If people feel that the state and the international community [were] unable to give them significant help, they would be less likely to sustain their resistance to the Taliban. Popular support has been crucial in the success of the military operations. But we all know that popular support waxes and wanes.

Q: In the Northwest Frontier Province, and also the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, how can civilian aid workers assist people when there's such a security risk to the aid workers?

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Poll Shows Global Images of Obama and America at Odds

While President Barack Obama is viewed positively by most people around the world, attitudes toward America generally are not improving much, if at all, in most countries, according to a new poll taken in 20 countries and released June 29.

“Most people around the world seem to have a positive view of the young new captain at the helm of the American ship of state, though many people see this huge ship as still carrying forward domineering policies,” said Steven Kull, director of World Public Opinion, the research consortium that conducted the poll.

The findings were released at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington on the six-month anniversary of the new adminis-

tration and compared with similar polling a year earlier.

Sixty one percent of those surveyed around the world say they have some or a lot of confidence in Obama to “do the right thing regarding world affairs,” making him the most trusted world political leader.

This positive view of the president comes from people living in France, Britain, South Korea, and other traditional U.S. allies, who had been alienated by the policies of the Bush administration; and also among citizens of Muslim countries in the Middle East where the opinion of the United States remains quite low.

Among non-Muslim countries in Asia, citizens in South Korea, Taiwan, and India view America's role quite favorably.

Somewhat surprisingly perhaps, given talk about a “strategic rivalry” with the United States, the Chinese hold only slightly unfavorable views.

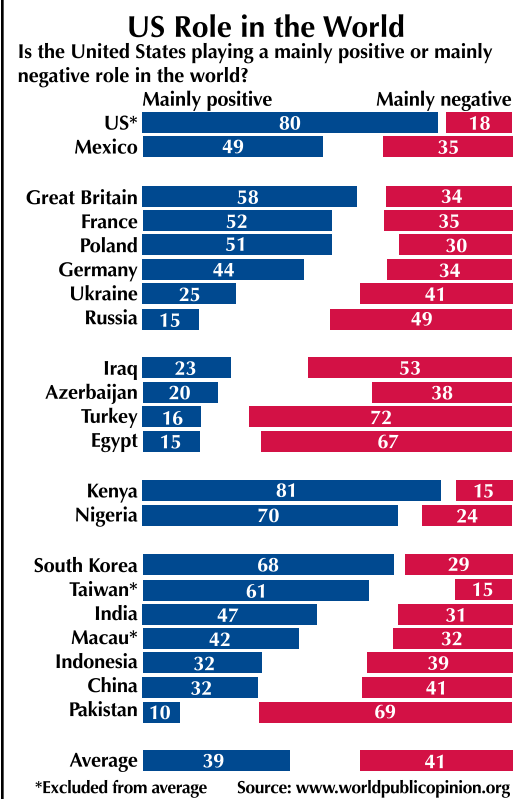
Kull said “even Machiavelli” would admit that the foreign policy dividends of cultivating sympathetic publics around the world are substantial. The favorable perceptions of Obama open political space for leaders of allied nations to accommodate themselves to the administration's foreign policy initiatives.

Randa Slim, an expert on the Middle East at the Rockefeller Brothers Fund who commented on the poll's findings, said America currently owns two brands—the “Obama brand” and a “USA brand”—which is the product of

a checkered U.S. history in the Middle East.

Obama's compelling life story, even his middle name Hussein, resonates in the region. His measured tone, respect, and humility on display in his Al Arabiya interview and in his speeches in Turkey and Cairo have all contributed to his standing there.

But this has only widened the dissonance with perceptions of



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MISSION OF THE MONTH



Primary school students wear T-shirts with the USAID logo received following a football match victory in Kufce, a village in Kosovo's Gjilan/Gnjilane municipality.

Photo by Dina Cenobregi, USAID

K O S O V O



self-sustaining television stations, and a television transmission network that reaches 70 percent of the population.

"If we didn't have USAID, the media sector in Kosovo would have been much poorer," said Leke Zherka, executive director of Kohavision TV in the capital Pristina. "I consider the establishment of the Kosovo Terrestrial Transmission Network, support to the development of two private national TV stations—Kohavizion and RTV 21—among the most important projects that were implemented by the USAID in Kosovo."

Investments in the country total about \$58 million over the last four years as part of a USAID project that supported businesses. Client sales have increased by \$140 million over that time and 6,700 jobs have been created.

Basic government functions—such as tax collection—have been beefed up and collection rates have more than doubled in the last few years.

USAID's work is now entering a new phase, helping the government reduce school shifts from four to two. USAID is renovating schools to reduce overcrowding, including the Iliria Primary School annex in Pristina.

Vice President Joe Biden, who addressed the Assembly of Kosovo during his May 21 visit to the country, said the U.S. government remains committed to helping Kosovo. He said that the United States has three essential policy objectives in Kosovo: to ensure that Kosovo independence is irreversible, to ensure that its territorial integrity is inviolable, and to promote the creation of a multiethnic society. ★

the private sector to develop. July marked the 10th anniversary of USAID's mission to Kosovo.

"Kosovars often refer to USAID as 'a hand of a friend,'" said Patricia Rader, director of the USAID office in Kosovo. "USAID has a special relationship with our Kosovar partners, which provides unique opportunities and imposes special responsibilities."

"We strive to provide carefully considered assistance and guidance to help the world's newest country move forward on its path to a stable and prosperous multiethnic democracy."

Results

Kosovo, a country about the size of Connecticut with approximately 2 million people, declared its independence on Feb. 17, 2008. Two months later, on April 9, its new constitution was born. And, in May and June of 2009, Kosovo became a member of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

Kosovo is recognized by 60 countries, and is working to strengthen its economy and democratic institutions.

The country has established the Advocacy and Resource Center for civil society organizations. There are now two national, independent and

10 Years After: Kosovo Is Its Own Country

Challenge

Before it became the world's newest country last year, Kosovo was under U.N. administration for 10 years, since 1999, when nearly a million people or about half the country's population fled from their homes because of Slobodan Milosevic's Serbian regime.

That led to a 78-day bombing campaign by NATO to stop the violence—one of the last battles of the breakup of Yugoslavia into the independent countries of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Serbia.

During and immediately after the 1999 conflict, Kosovo needed urgent humanitarian assistance to house, feed, and tend to the basic needs of an enormous number of displaced people. That was followed by programs to restore civil and economic life in Kosovo and assistance to create governing institutions.

Innovative Response

Since 1999, \$1.2 billion in U.S. assistance has been committed to the reconstruction of Kosovo and to building self-governing institutions and a viable economy.

USAID has helped the country reach its 10-year milestone, including helping

INSIGHTS

FROM ACTING ADMINISTRATOR ALONZO FULGHAM



I was pleased to welcome Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton back to USAID on July 13th for a town hall meeting in which she announced the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR). Modeled in part on the Defense Department's Quadrennial Defense Review, the QDDR will provide a strategic review of the nation's approach to diplomacy and development at four-year intervals. It will serve as the blueprint that guides the combined efforts of diplomacy and development in achieving common goals. As a co-chair of the review, USAID will play an instrumental role in the outcome of the QDDR.

It is in that spirit that I am soliciting input from the Agency on how we can participate most effectively so that the QDDR provides us with the strategic guidance to help allocate our resources more efficiently and deploy people where they will have the most impact, while maintaining a focus on long-term development goals. Throughout this process, we will be reaching out to USAID staff in Washington and the field as well as to USAID alumni, implementing partners, think tanks, universities, and congressional colleagues for suggestions on key personnel to contribute to this important effort and also for innovative ideas, state-of-the-art approaches, and fresh thinking.

The QDDR is among a number of initiatives we are undertaking to raise the profile of development and assure that USAID's voice is heard at the highest levels of the policymaking process.

In this regard, I recently announced the creation of a senior advisor for national security affairs within the Office of the Chief Operating Officer to increase the Agency's capacity to address a broad range of national security priorities and improve the effectiveness of our participation in the interagency context. This position will provide support to the administrator as co-chair of the Interagency Policy Committee on Development and support all senior Agency officials representing USAID in National Security Council meetings.

I am also proud to report that USAID is bringing onboard this month a White House fellow to focus on public-private partnerships and coordination efforts with emerging donors. Thirty departments, agencies, and offices throughout the executive branch interviewed 15 extraordinarily talented fellows, making this a very competitive process.

In the meantime, we are moving forward with the important work of this Agency, providing development and humanitarian assistance in over 84 countries around the world, making a difference in the lives of millions of people. Agency staff are continuing to support and shape key initiatives of interest to the president and to the secretary of state, including food security, climate change, and our efforts to secure peace in Pakistan and Afghanistan. As I write this, I am preparing to depart for a visit to our Haiti mission to see first-hand the critical work we are doing in hurricane reconstruction, education, health, and job creation that improves the lives of the Haitian people.

In concluding, I am pleased to announce that the Mission Directors Conference will be held from Nov. 30 to Dec. 3. This conference will be an opportunity for us to discuss what is working well and what is not, and how we can better implement the administration's development priorities. We will organize our sessions around critical priorities such as food security, global climate change, and global engagement, as well as devote time to critical management and operational issues. To help prepare, each bureau and independent office has assigned one senior member to serve on our conference planning committee. Once we finalize the draft agenda, we will distribute it widely for your review and input.

I appreciate your professionalism and continued input and suggestions as we move forward. ★

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS

BRIEFS

280,000 Displaced Sri Lankans Get US Aid

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka—Some 280,000 Sri Lankans in government-run camps are receiving U.S. assistance for health, shelter, settlements, water, and sanitation nearly two months after the conclusion of the country's 26-year conflict.

Sri Lanka's North was the last holdout of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) separatist group, which was defeated by government forces in May 2009.

Looking ahead, USAID will support legal and policy reform to ensure more effective, decentralized, and accountable governance.

USAID has provided more than \$54 million in 2008 and 2009 to assist Sri Lankans affected by the conflict. This assistance includes more than 50,000 metric tons of emergency food aid, which helps feed more than 280,000 Sri Lankans in need.

In addition, the U.S. Department of State has provided \$15 million for demining so people can return to their homes.

Jordan Sentences Killer of USAID's Foley

AMMAN, Jordan—A military tribunal on July 13 sentenced a Jordanian linked to Al-Qaeda for the 2002 murder of USAID officer Laurence Foley in front of his house in Amman, AFP reported.

Jordan's state security court condemned Moamar al-Jaghbir to death after a third re-trial for his role in the assassination of Foley, a Jordanian official told AFP.

Jaghbir was already on death row for bombing Jordan's embassy in Baghdad in August 2003, killing 14 people.

He was arrested in Iraq by U.S. forces and handed over to Jordan in 2004 where he was first sentenced for Foley's murder, along with seven others

including slain Al-Qaeda in Iraq leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. A Jordanian and a Libyan convicted with him were executed in March 2006.

Sudan Groups Seize Two Aid Workers

KHARTOUM, Sudan—Two foreign aid workers kidnapped by gunmen in Sudan's restive Darfur region are in good health and have been allowed to speak to their relatives, a government official said July 12.

Gunmen snatched the two women—one from Ireland, the other from Uganda—in early July in Darfur. They worked for the Irish aid group GOAL.

The kidnapers are seeking a ransom and do not appear to have political motives, said the official. It was the third kidnapping of foreign humanitarian workers in Sudan's remote western region since March, when an international court issued a warrant for the country's president on charges of orchestrating war crimes there.

Somalia Gunmen Loot UN Compounds

MOGADISHU, Somalia—Gunmen from Somalia's al Shabaab group looted two U.N. compounds July 20 after the al Qaeda-linked militants said they would shut down three U.N. agencies operating in the Horn of Africa nation, Reuters reported.

Al Shabaab, which controls much of southern Somalia and parts of the capital Mogadishu, said the U.N. Development Program, U.N. Department of Safety and Security, and U.N. Political Office for Somalia were working against Somali Muslims and the establishment of an Islamic state.

The compounds targeted were in Baidoa, the seat of Somalia's parliament before insurgents seized the town, and the World Food Program compound in Wajid in the Bakool region.

Expatriate staff in Baidoa were being evacuated to Kenya. Al Shabaab said other NGOs and foreign agencies operating in Somalia should contact the

administration in their area and they would be informed of the conditions and restrictions on their work.

Philippines Bombings Leads UN to Cut Food Aid

MANILA, Philippines—Bombings have led the United Nations to suspend food distribution to hundreds of thousands of people displaced by fighting in the southern Philippines, a U.N. official said July 8.

The military blamed Muslim separatists for bombings in Cotabato City that killed six people and wounded dozens, and in Iligan City that wounded three soldiers and about 10 civilians.

Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels, who have been fighting for Muslim self-rule for decades, have denied the charges. The World Food Program acting director for the Philippines, Alhassim Wurie, said the decision to suspend food distribution was made out of concern for the safety of its workers.

Behavioral Changes Kept Haiti AIDS Rate Low

Despite fears in the early 1980s that HIV/AIDS would spread across wide portions of Haiti and possibly kill one-third of the population, Haiti's HIV infection rate stayed in the single digits, then plummeted, the Associated Press reported July 21.

The infection rate was initially lessened by closing private blood banks and affected by high mortality rates, said a report by UNAIDS, cited by the AP. It noted that untreated people with AIDS in Haiti die about eight years sooner than an untreated American, reducing the number of people with AIDS.

However, the real blow to AIDS was dealt by well-coordinated use of drugs, education, and behavioral changes that kept the disease from surging back, the U.N. report said.

Haiti now has a 2.2 percent infection rate among people ages 15 to 49, according to UNAIDS, the United Nations program addressing the disease. While the rate is higher than in the developed world, it's lower

than the Bahamas, Guyana, and Suriname, and much lower than sub-Saharan Africa.

Pope Calls for Ethical World Financial Order

VATICAN CITY—Pope Benedict XVI called on July 7 for a new world financial order guided by ethics and the search for the common good, denouncing the profit-at-all-cost mentality blamed for bringing about the global financial meltdown.

In the third encyclical of his pontificate, Benedict pressed for reform of the United Nations and international economic and financial institutions to give poorer countries more of a say in international policy.

"There is urgent need [for] a true world political authority" that can manage the global economy, guarantee the environment is protected, ensure world peace, and bring about food security for the poor, he wrote.

The document, "Charity in Truth," was released a day before leaders of the Group of Eight industrialized nations met to coordinate efforts to deal with the global meltdown.

"The economy needs ethics in order to function correctly—not any ethics, but an ethics which is people centered," Benedict wrote.

Clinton Visits Haiti Aid Sites

Former President Bill Clinton, in a new U.N. role supporting aid for Haiti, on July 7 visited the battered seaside city of Gonaives that was hit by a series of tropical storms, finding a mud-caked maze of partially rebuilt homes and shops, the Associated Press reported.

He also viewed river control projects and visited a hospital that served as an emergency shelter during the two storms that ravaged the town.

While Clinton praised reconstruction efforts, he said much more work needed to be done and that Haiti needs more money and better coordination among aid groups and the government to rebuild and spur development.

Clinton noted that the Haitian government and its international backers hope to create 150,000 to 200,000 jobs over the next

two years, many from projects to rebuild roads and shore up erosion-prone hillsides.

Congo Civilians Decry Military Operations

KINSHASA, Congo—Most civilians in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo disapprove of the current military strategy being used to try and pacify their region, according to a survey by aid group Oxfam, Reuters reported July 14.

Some 85 percent of those interviewed said security conditions had become worse, not better, during U.N.-backed military operations this year to defeat Rwandan, Ugandan, and local gunmen in Congo's east.

As in Congo's previous conflicts, civilians rather than soldiers are bearing the brunt of the killings, rapes, and abuses, which analysts and aid groups say are committed by government soldiers as well as those they are attacking.

Oxfam undertook the survey in May and canvassed 764 people in 27 communities across Congo's eastern provinces, where 1 million people have fled their homes this year.

Pilot Program in South Africa Seeks to Treat TB at Home

The *New York Times* reported July 29 that drug-resistant tuberculosis is a mounting global health threat and "a particularly virulent problem in Africa."

In South Africa, World Health Organization researchers say, the number of new patients will grow faster than the country can add hospital beds.

South African physicians typically recommend that people diagnosed with TB be isolated from the public in a hospital for a regimen of treatments with drugs that can last for months. However, such treatment, reports the *Times*, "may drive those with the disease underground."

Now, a pilot program run by Doctors Without Borders and supported by both the city of Cape Town and Western Cape Province seeks to show that such patients can be successfully treated in impoverished communities even while they are still

NSC Official Reaffirms Obama Pledge to Double Foreign Aid

The Obama administration intends to honor a campaign pledge to double foreign assistance and has asked for money to hire more USAID Foreign Service Officers, said Gayle Smith of the National Security Council (NSC) in a speech to the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA).

“AID is being asked to do more with less and that is something that needs to be rectified very quickly,” said Smith, special assistant to the president on international development issues at the NSC.

“The president, both as president and during the campaign,” said Smith, “singles out development, as distinct from diplomacy and defense [as an area] that we

need to give much more weight and authority to.”

Smith spoke June 9 at a meeting of ACVFA, an advisory body of 30 private citizens with extensive knowledge of international development—many of whom lead organizations that carry out USAID programs.

She noted that during the Bush administration, the military got “the lion’s share of the increase in foreign assistance,” but eventually defense leaders “recognized in Iraq and Afghanistan that military means alone would not be sufficient to its task, that it needed to use civilian development tools.”

And as globalization took root, other U.S. government agencies also got involved

in development such as the Departments of Treasury, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Education, and Energy.

“This can lead to a great deal of confusion when there are multiple U.S. representatives in the field at the same time,” she said.

She also noted there is now “a new focus on measurements,” which was the main topic at the ACVFA meeting: the current status of monitoring and evaluation at USAID.

“When the government, NGOs, and the United Nations can show that for dollars spent there are quantifiable returns, this counters the perception that all aid falls in the path of corruption or is misspent,” said Smith, who worked as a journalist in

Africa for 20 years for the BBC, Associated Press, Reuters, and several newspapers.

But even if quantifiable elements can be measured, it does not necessarily mean that a developing country’s health systems have been built up enough to deal with the next major health crisis it will face, she said.

She called for:

- ▶ the development community to become more flexible, saying that Congress and the executive branch need to loosen their bureaucratic restrictions and give “greater freedom from those things and greater agility without sacrificing accountability.”

- ▶ development professionals to

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infectious. Cheryl McDermid, a Canadian doctor with Doctors Without Borders, noted that one in six of those who started treatment dropped out but most of the patients have stayed with the treatment and are now no longer infectious.

WHO Says ‘H1N1 Unstoppable’

WASHINGTON—Saying the new H1N1 virus is “unstoppable,” the World Health Organization on July 13 gave drug makers a full go-ahead to manufacture vaccines against the pandemic influenza strain and said healthcare workers should be the first to get one, Reuters reported.

Every country will need to vaccinate citizens against the H1N1 virus, commonly called swine flu, and must choose who else would get priority after nurses, doctors, and technicians, said Dr. Marie-Paule Kieny, WHO director of the Initiative for Vaccine Research.

“The committee recognized that the H1N1 pandemic... is unstoppable and therefore that all countries need access to vaccine,” Kieny said.

Large-Scale Food Aid to Begin in Zimbabwe

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa—Large-scale food assistance to Zimbabweans could start in the next few weeks, according to a USAID situation report released July 16.

Zimbabwe’s April 2009 harvest, although considerably better than in previous seasons, was still 680,000 tons short of the national requirement. Initial estimates in a crop report by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization and World Food Program are that about 2.8 million people will need food assistance in 2009-2010, according to a report by IRIN, the U.N. news service.

Approximately 600,000 people currently receive food aid, according to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance.

From news reports and other sources. ★

Bangladesh Democracy Firm Since Vote

Seven months since Bangladesh held its first general election in seven years, the country seems well on the road to restoration of routine democratic government.

Turnout was over 86 percent in the Dec. 29 election. The election was deemed well-organized, peaceful, free, and fair. Election experts and the Bangladeshi electorate itself declared that, with the exception of the 1991 election that marked the return of Bangladesh to democratic rule, no other election has been so instrumental in advancing democratic development in this populous Muslim-majority country.

For a country battling serious environmental, economic, and social challenges, the election results were widely seen as a resounding endorsement of democratic governance and as a strong expression of faith in the peaceful transfer of power.

The Awami League alliance—Mohajot or “grand alliance”—led by Sheikh Hasina Wajed (prime minister from 1996 to 2001) won in a landslide. The coalition won 263 seats of the 300 directly elected seats of Bangladesh’s unicameral parliament.

The 2008 election restored democracy to the South Asian country after two years of governance by a military-backed care-



Women voted in record numbers during Bangladesh’s landmark parliamentary elections. Here, they line up to vote at a polling center in Dhaka Dec. 28, 2008.

taker government, which took over during massive pre-election civil unrest in January 2007. The elections fulfilled an early commitment of the caretaker government to conduct parliamentary elections before the end of 2008.

USAID led international efforts to monitor and encourage election preparations in accordance with the caretaker government’s roadmap for democratic transition. The effort came after years of support for the country’s political and electoral processes.

USAID sponsored an additional 15 long-term and 25 short-term observers, augmenting bilateral funding and bringing the total of USAID-funded international observers to 132. The Agency also coordinated election observation efforts of 16 diplo-

matic missions in Bangladesh, including 18 employees of the U.S. mission in Dhaka.

All told, there were more than 300 international election observers and tens of thousands of domestic poll monitors.

The election came after major reforms in the areas of candidate selection and scrutiny, financial disclosure, and campaigning. A reconstituted election commission oversaw a massive army-led effort to register eligible voters in computerized rolls with photographs.

At the beginning of the voter registration process, there were fears that women might not go to the registration centers, have their photographs taken, or be able to understand the new voting procedures. Yet, in the end, slightly more women than men

registered as voters. On Election Day, women turned out in record numbers and stood patiently in long lines to cast their votes.

U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh James F. Moriarty made this prediction a few weeks before the election: “In my view...there will be no more transformational election in the world this year than the parliamentary elections scheduled for Dec. 29 in Bangladesh.”

USAID has sponsored orientation programs for the newly-elected parliamentarians, including special sessions for the 64 women legislators. The Agency has also developed long-term programs to strengthen the electoral process and democratic governance in Bangladesh. ★

THE REGIONS

EUROPE & EURASIA

Eastern Europe and Eurasian Countries Collaborate to Recover from Recession

By Yang Yang Zhou

KYIV, Ukraine—The 2008 global recession hit Eastern Europe and Eurasian countries particularly hard, but more than 200 representatives from private industry, government, non-profits, international donor groups, and USAID offices in 17 countries met here recently to find ways to recover.

The 4th annual Europe and Eurasian Regional Competitiveness Conference was held June 16–18 by USAID.

First the bad news: The countries in Europe and Eurasia are all experiencing severe gross domestic product declines, with some losses in the double digits. One recent analysis forecasts that the region's recovery will take the longest.

But the countries hope to shorten that time period by working together and strategizing at the Kyiv conference about best practices and lessons learned.

Participants listened to first-hand testimonies on the consequences of the economic downturn, ranging from the sharp decline of remittances in some countries to the collapse of financial markets in others.

Experts also offered their views on development trends in light of globalization and the financial crisis.

Paul Marer, professor of international business at Central European University in Budapest and former chairman of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Economic Transition in Hungary, said that Eastern Europe's growth model was largely externally generated from Western Europe through credit access, capital inflows, and trade—all of which dried up during the crisis.

"In the future," Marer said, "Eastern Europe must rely more on internally generated sources of productivity and competitiveness."

Natalie Jaresko of the Western New Independent States Enterprise Fund, a USAID-funded investment company operating in Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus,



A vegetable market in Kyiv, Ukraine, is just one of the types of small businesses in Eastern Europe feeling the impact of the global recession.

described how investment motivations will need to change in the future. She said that future investment decisions will return to the basics and be driven principally by profitability, unlike the recent past when speculation was often

see **EUROPE** on page 14 ▶

ASIA

Mongolian Tax Reforms Promote Business Growth

ULAANBAATAR,

Mongolia—"Before the tax reforms, I never considered expanding my business because I knew I could not afford to pay the taxes," said Battogtokh Khuvit, the owner of a small company that imports, iodizes, packages, and distributes salt to retailers in Mongolia.

In the past, Mongolia's tax laws discouraged entrepreneurs from expanding their businesses. Now, however, tax reform is promoting business growth and revenues.

In 2005, Battogtokh's business was doing well, but an expansion would have pushed him from the 15 percent tax bracket to the 30 percent bracket. (Like most Mongolians, Battogtokh is known by his first name.)

In the 1990s, the Mongolian government set a low threshold for the higher tax bracket, resulting in the collection of higher taxes from a larger base. Over time, the high rates led to tax evasion and the low thresholds discouraged entrepreneurs like Battogtokh from investing in business expansion. They also forced larger companies to split



Tax reform has allowed Battogtokh Khuvit to expand his salt distribution company.

up into smaller entities to skirt higher taxes.

Things changed in 2005, when the government undertook a two-year tax reform program with USAID assistance.

USAID worked with the Office of the Prime Minister, members of parliament, the General Department of Taxation (GDT), and the Ministry of Finance to examine tax reform proposals. The Agency recruited

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AFRICA

Sierra Leone Fights Hunger with Cassava and Science

FREETOWN, Sierra

Leone—Cassava—a staple and versatile crop rich in carbohydrates and protein which is also known as tapioca and yucca—is getting a production boost in Sierra Leone to help address basic nutritional needs.

USAID is working with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) based in Ibadan, Nigeria, to introduce new agricultural technologies to Sierra Leone that will produce food at stable and affordable prices.

The project, Unleashing the Power of Cassava in Africa (UPoCA), involves farmers across 12 districts of the country.

UPoCA aims to develop improved cassava varieties that can be stored longer after being

harvested and are more pest and disease resistant than conventional varieties. The project has the potential to increase cassava production by 50 percent or more. That would significantly enhance the food security of subsistence farmers, especially women.

"The project will equip farmers with the knowledge they need to grow and process enough cassava for their families, to store it in the off season, and to sell it to generate household income," said U.S. Ambassador June Carter Perry.

Genetic research has created a new generation of cassava that is resistant to the devastating cassava mosaic disease, which has blighted crop production in parts of East and Central Africa. The project will also help farmers to expand the crop through processed products such as dried chips and

animal feed, and for industrial applications. These new uses are expected to increase cassava value to farmers as a cash crop.

In Sierra Leone, crop failures over the past few years caused in part by poor farming techniques and rising fertilizer costs have heightened the threat of hunger and malnutrition.

In addition to filling empty stomachs, the UPoCA project will boost the income of farmers.

"Our past support to Sierra Leonean farmers has more than doubled agricultural production among beneficiaries," said Perry. "Our current activities will continue to assist subsistence farmers, but we will also help more productive farmers modernize their agricultural practices to enable them to export their products internationally." ★



USAID's initiative is helping cassava farmers like these women increase production and generate greater household incomes.

LATIN AMERICA

Play Teaches Children About Colombia's Justice System

By German Acevedo

BOGOTA, Colombia

—Colombian children are learning about an effective justice system through a play that stresses fair and impartial justice for all Colombians.

About 40,000 elementary schoolchildren from Bogota and smaller municipalities of the surrounding Department of Cundinamarca have seen the play *Pataplin Rataplan, Children for Justice*. Surveys show that the students are not too young for what may seem like grown-up lessons about fairness and integrity.

A 2007 poll of Colombian boys and girls ages 6 to 11 found that from a very early age they acquire a negative image of justice institutions.

Over 60 percent of children mistrust these institutions. Some of them have said: "I don't like them because they are corrupt,"

or "Innocent people go to jail," or "The guilty go free." These are perceptions that the children likely absorb from the mass media or from comments made by adults in their homes and communities.

Contributing to this negative perception is the virtual non-existence of civic education on the Colombian justice system. Many believe the lack of education perpetuates widely held notions of ineffective and corrupt justice institutions.

To combat the children's poor image of the justice system, USAID's justice program in Colombia supported the *Fundación Teatro de la Carrera*—Foundation for Career Theater—to develop the play to teach young children about the positive role that justice institutions play in the country.

One of the program's key strategies is to include young people in initiatives that promote concepts of justice and peaceful conflict resolution given the country's experiences with conflict in past decades.

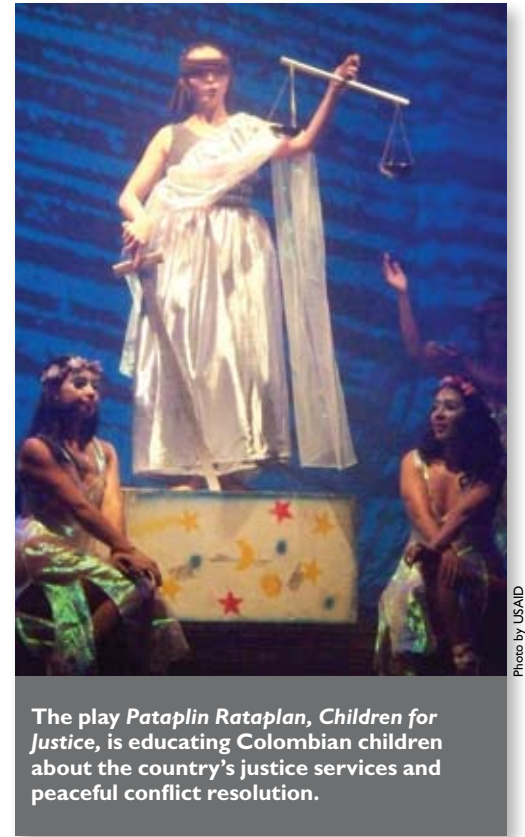
"Through this play, children are taught basic concepts of justice while learning about justice houses and the services they provide and how people can resolve their differences peacefully," said Stephen Pelliccia, a democracy and governance senior advisor in USAID's Colombia office.

The play has proved popular with youngsters, and post-play surveys of children ages 6 to 11 show that confidence and credibility in justice institutions increased as a result of the program.

"We noticed that children attending this play became

very engaged and interested in the justice concepts it conveyed," said Orlando Muñoz, USAID's justice program manager in Colombia.

USAID's initial contribution for the project was \$32,000. Due to its popularity and its positive educational message, the Bogota City government, Bogota Philharmonic, and various private sector contributors have raised an additional \$180,000 to stage the play for 40,000 more schoolchildren over the coming months. ★



The play *Pataplin Rataplan, Children for Justice*, is educating Colombian children about the country's justice services and peaceful conflict resolution.

MIDDLE EAST

Lebanese Guesthouses Get Upgrade to Attract Tourists

By Elias Alhaddad

BASKINTA, Lebanon

—In the hilly town of Baskinta, northeast of Beirut, stands a 100-year-old mansion, the Khoury Hanna Guesthouse. This family-owned business has become a major tourist stop, attracting local and foreign visitors especially during the spring season. Business is flourishing, as the full booking during June attests.

Over 1.5 million tourists are expected to visit Lebanon in 2009. Revenues—and the number of visitors—are projected to increase more than four times by 2014 in rural areas along the Lebanon Mountain Trail (LMT), a 440-kilometer national eco-tourism hiking trail running north-south through the country.

In anticipation of increased visitors, and in order to prepare for demand for increased tourist services, the historic guesthouse received assistance from USAID under a rural tourism program in October 2007. One year later, it had become an important lodging site along the LMT.

Khoury is one of 11 local guesthouses in rural towns along the trail that received support from USAID. With \$29,000, Khoury's owner remodeled the kitchen and guestrooms, built a new bathroom, installed a safety handrail on the exterior stone stairs, and glazed windows.

The makeover helped the guesthouse enhance the hospitality services it offers and attract more national and foreign tourists to the region.

"Without this assistance, we would not have been able to operate in this manner and attract so many people here," said Michelle Khoury, 30, the guesthouse owner. "This assistance brought back value to my grandfather's house."

USAID's office in Lebanon led the LMT project, convening four regional workshops for trailside communities, nature tour operators, and others to nail down the details. The entire 440 kilometers were delineated, test-walked, and mapped; 37

volunteers were trained on trail development; 132 kilometers were cleared and marked with local partners; and six trail diversions were documented.

ECODIT, a U.S. small business organization, implemented the project and helped establish and equip 11 guesthouses, one campsite, and three rest areas. Many town squares in towns along the trail were upgraded and a cultural park was built.

The project also generated promotional materials—including brochures, maps, a guidebook, and the Web site www.lebanon-trail.org. An LMT association will be responsible for protecting and promoting the trail.

In addition, USAID provided hospitality management training and technical assistance workshops to staff at 50 guesthouses throughout Lebanon. Owners of these guesthouses were trained to better manage their family businesses and provide quality services to their customers. ANERA, a U.S. NGO, and



U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Michele Sison (right) hikes the Lebanon Mountain Trail with a small group from the U.S. Embassy in Beirut.

Al-KAFAAT, a local NGO, carried out the training.

Foreign tourists in the region have given the scenery along the trail rave reviews. In her native language, Sister Monic, an 85-year-old French tourist, said, "You have such a beautiful country." She had walked the 20-kilometer Baskinta trail guided by the guesthouse owner and was amazed by the beauty of the countryside.

Lebanese citizens are equally impressed: "There are some

places where you just stand in inarticulate wonder and say, 'Wow...this exists here!'" said Hana Hibri, a Lebanese woman who hiked the entire trail in 30 days.

USAID recently launched a new tourism campaign and Web site—www.beyondbeirut.com—which is expected to go online this September to provide tourists with information about rural sites and activities within Lebanon, helping to bring in additional sources of revenue to the guesthouses. ★

FOCUS ON PERU

In Peru's Mountains, Indigenous People Turn from Coca to Legal Crops

By Marcela Cardenas

PONGO DE CAYNARACHI, Peru—The highway is amazingly smooth and modern and we are making good time. Then suddenly, we round a bend on the mountain road and come upon a small landslide that happened just moments before, and our four-truck caravan comes to a halt.

The road, which is part of a key network that will eventu-

ally connect the Atlantic to the Pacific through Peru and Brazil, is vulnerable to the harsh geographic and weather conditions of the northeastern Amazon rain forest. This section was recently completed by private builders who won the right to manage and maintain it through a Peruvian government concession process supported by USAID.

Luckily, we are rescued by the private sector cavalry: a

maintenance crew in a bulldozer removes the rocks, trees, and red mud from the road. In 15 minutes we're on our way.

We are traveling with Office Director Paul Weisenfeld to Sangamayoc, one of 924 communities working with the USAID Alternative Development (AD) program.

When a community decides to join the AD program, it commits to a coca-free lifestyle, and calls

in the Peruvian government to eradicate the illegal coca grown in the community. In the case of Sangamayoc, the community discovered a short time ago that 25 acres of coca had been planted in their area, but they didn't want to wait for the government agency to get rid of it.

A community assembly discussed the situation and decided to eradicate the coca themselves, and to do it immediately, before narcotraffickers could harvest it. Taking advantage of the Holy Thursday holiday, a group of about 50 men, women, and young people brandishing machetes set out for the coca-riddled area.

Decio Angulo, mayor of Sangamayoc, had some uncompromising words to say on the occasion:

"Today we have undertaken a fight against drugs with a protest march for the welfare of the population and particularly the children.

"People from outside the community have come to taint the image of the community. They only came here to sow and harvest the coca for their dirty business. Coca cultivation is like bacteria that must be eradicated out of the community. Today we will get rid of the coca crops that were trying to creep on us like bacteria.



A Chirikyacu woman

CHIRIKYACU COMMUNITY QUECHUA-LAMITA CULTURE HIGHLIGHTS

Pandilla: typical carnival season dance undertaken by the whole community in celebration and thanks to the forest and the earth for its products and protection. At the start of the seven-day feast, they dance during a whole day and night to the sounds of indigenous horns and drums (dinin).

Choba-choba: community work undertaken by groups of four or five farmers who perform necessary agricultural labors in each of the farms until they have completed all of them. The owner of the farm provides lunch for all and corn liquor at the end of the day's work. This type of labor is not remunerated.

Chumbes: long, colorful, woven cotton belts that are worn around the forehead to carry baskets of fire wood or harvested fruits and grains. The lamita women weave them into beautiful intricate patterns by hand.



Sangamayoc residents undertake the eradication of 25 acres of illicit coca in their community.

FOCUS ON PERU



Paul Weisenfeld, USAID's director in Peru, right, is greeted by Sangamayoc Mayor Decio Angulo.



Jenny Vernooy of USAID's Alternative Development Program in Peru breaks a ceremonial pottery vase containing corn liquor in Chirikyacu during the inauguration of an electrification project.

"This is a historic day in which we will remove things that are a serious problem for the population. We are all marching together: men, women, and children, and we are eradicating that vermin from our society.

"We have chosen the licit life because with illicit crops, people are never happy. There can be no progress for the people because although they can get money in no time at all, it is money which is ill-obtained. It is money that does not bring peace and which leads your children by your example, even as infants, through a very dangerous path."

Seven hours later, the job was done. Hundreds of fully grown coca plants were slashed and ripped out of the ground in a joint community activity known as minka in the Quechua native language. Sangamayoc was once again coca-free.

Upon arrival, we are greeted with fresh coconuts from which we sip while taking part in a community assembly that is celebrating the recent joint action. Several speakers reaffirm their commitment to a licit lifestyle and wax poetic about their bountiful cacao crops which USAID has helped to plant and improve. One after the other, their remarks make it plain: Sangamayoc is finished with coca and the violence it brought to this community. *Nunca mas coca.*

After the assembly and visiting some community highlights, we are regaled with lively indigenous music and dancing provided by a band and a group

of women and children in bijao fronds Amazonian attire. These are the wonderful perks of our job.

We travel on to Yurimaguas, which is gearing up to be the key Amazon basin port for commerce between Brazil and Peru. The next day begins before daylight as we depart for Chirikyacu, another AD-supported community located at a higher elevation.

The excellent highway again allows us to make good time, but after a couple of hours we have to take the dirt road leading to our destination. The recent tropical downpours have turned the road into a sea of mud, forcing the drivers to make the most of their skills and the rest of us to hold on tight and stare out in utter disbelief throughout the two-hour drive.

We arrive at the community, where we are to take part in the inauguration of an electrification project that will bring power to the indigenous communities of Chunchiwi, Aviacion, and Chirikyacu. With USAID providing the investment and the community the labor, we have been able to bring modernity to a very remote area.

The native Quechua-lamita culture is evident in everything in sight. The women are dressed in their colorful best, with ample skirts, dozens of ribbons and necklaces, and an almost stern attitude, which is typical of these people, while the men wear their head and neck kerchiefs with utmost dignity.

Children shyly sing a welcome song for us in Quechua and

the ceremony gets started with the words of the Apus of each of the three communities. Apu in Quechua means mountain, but it is also, fittingly, the title of the leader of the community. They all acknowledge the importance of having left behind the days of violence and uncertainty when illegal coca was grown in their territories, and thank USAID for its assistance, which includes profitable cacao and coffee crops in addition to the electrification.

Weisenfeld speaks about true development depending upon community participation and close collaboration with local authorities and, above all, the efforts of families and individuals who seize the future in their own hands. He tells the attentive

audience to keep their eyes on the prize, which in the context of development is a safer, healthier, and more prosperous future.

The actual inauguration includes the unveiling of a plaque, the breaking of a corn liquor pottery container, and, finally, the climax is reached when Weisenfeld and the three Apus turn on three ceremonial light bulbs which are hanging in the center of the town square amid tropical flowers. The electrically charged moment is followed by much cheering and clapping.

Afterwards, we visit a carpentry shop which can now use electricity for sawing timber, and one of the homes that owns a TV set. The USAID-supported

health post now has a computer holding all the community records. The possibilities seem endless.

The time to leave Chirikyacu has come. We have to catch the plane to Lima and the road is now blocked by a couple of trucks stuck up to their axles in mud. We'll have to take another road, one which crosses a river with no bridge, which is rapidly rising with the last copious days of rain. But that's another story... ★

Marcela Cardenas is a program management specialist in USAID's Peru office. She traveled to program sites in April with Peru Office Director Paul Weisenfeld and Alternative Development Program chiefs Mike Greene and Jenny Vernooy.



Sangamayoc community members sing the Peruvian national anthem.

WHERE IN THE WORLD...

APRIL 26, 2009 – JUNE 20, 2009

PROMOTED

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Raven L. Austin
Management Analyst

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JO (Education)

Sarah Jean Berry
JO (Democracy & Governance)

Patrick D. Bowers
JO (Democracy & Governance)

Elizabeth A. Callender
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Christine Obester
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Phillip Palmer
JO (Private Enterprise)

Moncel E. Petitto
Contract Specialist

Allyson Phelps
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Gwendolyn Ruffin
Supervisory Contract Specialist

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JO (Democracy & Governance)

Andrea G. Sawka
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Attorney Advisor General

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Travis W. White
Program Specialist

Lee Wilbur
JO (Education)

Lisa L. Witte
Senior Country Coordinator

Brandy Witthoft
JO (Program/Project Development)

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REXO

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Iraq/PRT to USAID Rep/Yemen

Sharlene M.K. Bagga
COMP/NE/OJT to El Salvador/
SO3

Cynthia D. Barzey
M/OAA/EGAT to M/OAA/GH

Jacqueline Bell
OIG/A/PA to RIG/Cairo

Sarah Jean Berry
COMP/NE/OJT to DROC

Lily Beshawred
Jamaica-CAR/OPDM to East
Africa/PDPS

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OED

Jayne Carbone
Sudan/CO to COMP/FS

Angela O. Cardenas
COMP/NE/OJT to Nicaragua/TAO

James C. Charlifue
OIG/A/PA to OIG/AIG/MCC

Elbert N. Cruz
RIG/Baghdad to RIG/San Salvador

Mohamed S. Dansoko
COMP/NE/OJT to DROC

Dianna L. Darsney
COMP/NE/OJT to Peru/OFA

Charles Egu
COMP/NE/OJT to Indonesia/FM

Susan Fenno
COMP/NE/OJT to El Salvador/
CONT

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COMP/NE/OJT to Brazil

Joseph T. Foltz
COMP/NE/OJT to Rwanda

Anne C. Gaven
SA/JOPA to Kenya/JOPA

Kerrin Lyle Goodspeed
DCHA/PPM to DCHA/
PVCASHA/ASHA

Luann Gronhovd
COMP/NE/OJT to Liberia

Shirley E. Hendley
M/CIO/BCCS to M/CIO/ICIO

Erin E. Holleran
Iraq/PO to Colombia

William Cullen Hughes
COMP/NE/OJT to Macedonia

Amy Michelle Hunt
COMP/NE/OJT to Mali/D

Bonita A. Jones
E&E/PO to Africa/AMS

Roopa H. Karia
COMP/NE/OJT to Philippines/OGP

Cheryl L. Kim
Africa/WA to COMP/LWOP

Earell E. Kissinger
COMP/FS to HR/FSP/SP

Mary Hughes Knox
EGAT/WID to EGAT/PAICO/CKM

Aviva Kutnick
COMP/NE/OJT to CA/PS

Kent A. Larson
Iraq/PFPN to E&E/ECA

Amanda K. Levenson
RDMA/OFM to Liberia

Andrew Levin
COMP/FS to E&E/DGST

Alan A. Lewter
Indonesia/PFPN to Pakistan/EXO

David A. Lieberman
Pakistan/OD to Bosnia-Herzegovina

Steven M. Majors
COMP/NE/OJT to CA/PS

Daryl Martyris
COMP/NE/OJT to SA/RHAP

Bruce F. McFarland
East Africa/CON to Uganda

Mary Lynn McKeon
Cambodia/JOPA to COMP/FS

Michael Metzler
EGAT/PR/MD to EGAT/DC

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PCS

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Katherine Ann Reniers
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SO1

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Mali/PROG to O/S LANG TRNG

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COMP/NE/OJT to Uganda/PPD

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COMP/NE/OJT to Ethiopia/FHA

Walter E. Shepherd
Bangladesh/EG to Bangladesh/
FDHA

Izetta Y. Simmons
West Africa/HO to Senegal/
JOPA

Ritu W. Singh
GH/PRH/PEC to GH/OHA/
SPER

Suzette A. Smikle
COMP/NE/OJT to Peru/D

Jason Smith
COMP/NE/OJT to Mali/PROG

Olutokunbo L. Smoak
EGAT/PAICO/PI to E&E/PO/
PPPD

Krista J. Stewart
GH/PRH/PEC to GH/OHA/
SPER

Shannon L. Stone
COMP/NE/OJT to Philippines/
EXO

Alexis Taylor
COMP/NE/OJT to El
Salvador/D

Tracy C. Thoman
COMP/FS to COMP/LWOP

Rhonda L. Turnbow
M/CIO/ICIO to M/CIO/CISO

WHERE IN THE WORLD...

Jarrett, Fulgham Address DC Islamic Convention

By Jan Cartwright

Valerie Jarrett, senior advisor and assistant to the president for intergovernmental affairs and public engagement, and Acting Administrator Alonzo Fulgham told American Muslims gathered in Washington for a convention over the July 4 weekend that the Obama administration is seeking a new beginning in its relations with Muslims around the world.

More than 30,000 Muslims from the United States and Canada attended the 46th Annual Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) Convention. The theme was “Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.” This was the first time that a senior White House representative and a USAID administrator had addressed an ISNA convention. Both Jarrett and Fulgham emphasized themes from the president’s June 4 Cairo speech.

After acknowledging Fulgham and the ISNA leadership, Jarrett, the keynote speaker at the convention’s inaugural session, quoted the president in emphasizing the many contributions of American Muslims to the United States:

“Since our founding, American Muslims have enriched the United States. They have fought in our wars, served in government, stood for civil rights, started businesses, taught at our universities, excelled in our sports arenas, won Nobel prizes, built our tallest building, and lit the Olympic torch... And they are known for their talents and character—not simply their religion. This is a great thing. It is a reflection of the American dream, which is ultimately rooted in these values that we all share—values that are common to all of humanity. And just as we share common values, we also share common dreams—for security, progress, and opportunity.”

Fulgham said that American Muslims are a significant voice in international development. “We meet at a time when the United States and the global com-



Nadeem Shah, right, a Foreign Service Officer hired under the Development Leadership Initiative, discusses careers at USAID and provides information about Agency programs to a convention attendee.

munity are facing new, complex challenges—the global financial crisis, diseases that cross borders, global climate change, and our common food security... Our success in meeting these challenges must build on our best practices of open dialogue and community empowerment, beginning here at home with our outreach to Muslim Americans and other communities of interest.”

Fulgham described USAID’s work in Muslim-majority countries around the world, noting that USAID has a presence in 35 such countries, spending over \$6 billion there in fiscal year 2008.

USAID’s David Hunsicker of the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, served on a U.S. government outreach panel session, along with representatives from other agencies. Hunsicker, Afeefa Syeed of the Asia and Middle East Bureau, and Ishrat Husain of the Africa Bureau, participated in a government breakfast meeting with community leaders. USAID also manned an information booth at the convention throughout the weekend.

Convention participants expressed interest in USAID and asked about its programs, as

well as employment and grant opportunities.

ISNA maintains that it is the largest Muslim American organization in the United States. Its annual convention is intended as “a meeting place for people and ideas.”

Other prominent speakers at the conference included Dalia Mogahed, who serves on the President’s Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Community Partnerships; Rick Warren, the evangelical pastor of Saddleback Church; and Yusuf Islam, the philanthropist and musician whose former stage name was Cat Stevens. ★

RETIREMENT

Carol Kling planned to retire three times. And three times she put off her plans at the request of her bosses in the Office of the General Counsel (GC). But 2009 marks the year Kling, who has worked at the Agency for 40 years and in federal government for 42 years, retires. July 2 was her last official day on the staff. Kling started in the GC’s office in 1969. She also worked in the Asia and Africa bureaus, receiving promotions along the way, but eventually returned to GC. As administrative assistant and officer, she has often gone over and beyond the call of duty to ensure a comfortable work environment, and has provided sage advice to many, said Alan R. Swendiman, former USAID general counsel.



Carol Kling with Acting General Counsel Arnold Haiman

Allyson Wainer
COMP/NE/OJT to Ethiopia/JOPA

Katharine Antonia Weber
COMP/NE/OJT to Russia/PPD

Anya Wingert
COMP/NE/OJT to SA/RPPDO

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Your Voice

By Willy Hardin

Your Voice, a continuing **FRONTLINES** feature, offers personal observations from USAID employees. Willy Hardin is the first vice president of the American Federation of Government Employees, Local 1534, the union that represents Civil Service employees at USAID, and works in the Management Bureau's Office of Travel and Transportation. Views and opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of USAID or the U.S. government.

An Open Letter to the New Administration Team

The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) represents Civil Service employees at USAID. Civil servants make up 44 percent of the direct hire workforce at the Agency with 1,145 employees. The Agency also employs 1,405 Foreign Service staff and 68 political appointees. The rest of the workforce is made up of approximately 1,100 contractors hired through various mechanisms.

The Civil Service workforce here is playing a valuable role during this ongoing political transition. During the change in administrations this year, it is largely our civil servants who have provided the continuity that ensures programs go on, money flows, and staff keeps moving—all in support of the foreign assistance we provide to approximately 100 countries.

Great changes are happening in our country, things that I never thought I'd see. I cannot express all that President Barack Obama's election has meant to me. But, I can say that as the first vice president of the bargaining unit, USAID's AFGE members are looking forward to working with this new administration.

May you please come quickly!

As I write, we still have management officials and political appointees from the previous administration making critical

decisions behind closed doors without appropriate clearances. We are looking forward to a return to an inclusive protocol in decision making.

I served 26 years in the U.S. Navy before coming to USAID 20 years ago, so permit me to speak frankly: AFGE would like a new relationship with USAID management, one in which the union and civil servants are full partners, one in which our issues are heard and considered.

We see a great opportunity for dialogue with the election of President Obama, the selection of Hillary Rodham Clinton as secretary of state, and the expected arrival of a new team of leaders. Word is that the Obama administration is making serious moves to create labor-management partnership councils within the federal government. These councils would be an excellent place to start that new dialogue.

We want to talk about new areas of opportunity because we see opportunity as the key to raising morale, improving employee skill sets, and helping the Civil Service continue to make improvements as the productive force we need to be if USAID is to remain the premier foreign assistance agency in the world.

We want to talk about relevant training so employees have a



Willy Hardin

chance to move up in their careers. Training that would have helped direct hires advance virtually disappeared during the past few years—and this must change.

AFGE also wants to ensure that performance appraisals are completed on time and are fair, and that civil servants are seriously considered for merit promotions. We want the growing number of discrimination cases resolved.

And diversity continues to be a key concern. It's no secret there are few senior USAID jobs held by Hispanic or Asian Americans, or that African Americans are still largely concentrated in the lower ranks. As for Native Americans, we have hardly a one.

In diversity, in job training, and in many other areas, our Agency can do better. AFGE stands ready to help make that happen. ★

Employees to Get Help Advancing to Executive Ranks

USAID will begin a new program to help GS-15 employees rise to the Senior Executive Service (SES) ranks.

Modeled after similar programs already in use in the federal government, the Agency program aims to help motivated people with strong executive potential reach the upper echelons of the Civil Service.

The program grew out of discussions by the Executive Diversity Council and the Office of Human Resources.

"USAID has a diverse pool of talented Civil Service employees who have the potential to serve in senior level positions," said Agency Counselor Lisa Chiles, who chairs the diversity council. "However, to be selected for Senior Executive Service positions in USAID, employees must be certified as eligible by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)."

The program's formal name is the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program. Participants will spend between 12 and 18 months in structured classes and hands-on training. And there will be two rotational assignments to different positions either within the Agency or outside to other organizations where the SES trainees will be asked to put their skills to use, said Ruth Derr, a human resources specialist who runs many of the Agency's training programs.

Only people who are at the GS-15 level can apply and just five or six candidates will be selected for the first class, which is scheduled to begin later this year.

The first preparatory sessions for people interested in the program were to begin in August. They will include a primer on the SES program and details about how to apply.

The program is rigorous and competitive by design, said Sandra Wiggins, deputy director of the Office of Human Resources. Think of it as having a full-time job and attending night school at the same time, she said.

"As anyone who has been through the process can tell you, it is not easy to meet all of OPM's eligibility requirements," Chiles added.

People who successfully complete the program and become certified by OPM's SES Qualifications Review Board can be selected for SES positions when they become available, Chiles said.

"We want to develop a strong pool of candidates who will be prepared for other positions," Wiggins said. "We also want to ensure that we have a diverse pool of candidates."

Right now there are just 30 USAID SES employees—13 white men, six white women, six black women, two black men, two Hispanic men, and one Asian-American woman.

There are far more people—203—at the GS-15 level, but the percentage by ethnicity skews heavily to white men, who hold 47 percent of those jobs. The next closest category is white women, who make up slightly fewer than 30 percent of GS-15s. No other ethnic category makes it into the double digit percentage mark, with black women GS-15 employees coming the closest at 9.9 percent of the total.

In addition to expanding diversity in the upper ranks, the Agency says the program is an investment that will help it with succession planning as the mass of baby boomers reaches retirement age over the next several years.

And, Wiggins said she hopes there will be a "ripple effect" as GS-15 employees move to higher positions and people from lower grades take their place.

For further information, contact Ruth Derr of the USAID Office of Human Resources at (202) 712-5564 ★—A.R.

INDONESIAN NEWS AGENCY WINS INTERNATIONAL AWARD

A radio news agency in Indonesia supported in its early years by USAID has won the King Baudouin International Development Prize. KBR68H Radio News Agency was selected from 250 nominations to receive the prize, which is awarded by Belgium every two years.

"This award is a big honor, to see that our work for the past 10 years is appreciated,"

said Managing Director Isaac Santoso at a June 2 meeting at USAID headquarters in the Ronald Reagan Building. "It gives us new energy to continue our programs in Indonesia."

KBR68H was founded in the late 1990s by a group of journalists dedicated to freedom of speech and freedom of the press. It was a dramatic period in Indonesian history, as the country was emerging from the

Suharto dictatorship and transitioning to democracy.

KBR68H stands for Kantor Berita Radio 68H, which can be translated as "Radio News Agency 68H." The number 68H derives from the street address of the radio station in Jakarta.

Today, KBR68H has a network of more than 650 radio stations, and its programs can be heard throughout Indonesia

see **AWARD** on page 15 ▶



Isaac Santoso of KBR68H holds a certificate of appreciation from USAID.

Photo by Embassy of Belgium

RICHARDS, ISA WIN FIRST JOHN L. WITHERS AWARD

Two women who have spent decades working on USAID programs in Guatemala and Indonesia are winners of the first John L. Withers Memorial Award, considered among the highest awards the Agency can bestow.

Julia Becker Richards and Gartina Isa, who were informed of their awards in June, will be formally recognized during USAID's annual awards ceremony later this year.

The award is named after John L. Withers, a Foreign Service Officer who was among the first African-American officers hired by the Agency. He

died in 2007 at age 91 after a storied career marked by overcoming barriers.

Withers was considered a magnetic leader, and served USAID in Laos, Burma, South Korea, Ethiopia, Kenya, and India. His heroism during World War II also received widespread attention.

As a lieutenant in the U.S. Army, he ordered his all-black unit to secretly shelter two teenage Jewish concentration camp survivors at a time when not following orders could destroy a black man's military career. Decades later, Withers had an emotional reunion with the only

living survivor.

The Withers award "is presented to an individual who has promoted human rights by demonstrating an unwavering professional or personal commitment to universal human rights; pursuing policies and objectives related to protection of minorities; performing an individual act of courage or extraordinary effort in difficult, demanding or hardship situations; or providing leadership of pursuit of human rights by foresight, decisiveness, persistence and persuasiveness."

Here's more about each winner. ★—A.R.

Gartini Isa

By Jan Cartwright

Gartini Isa championed human rights and democratic freedoms over the course of her 30-plus-year career as a program development specialist with USAID in Indonesia.

Due, in part, to her efforts and like-minded political champions, in 1998, Indonesia emerged from the Suharto dictatorship and July 8 this year held fresh presidential elections.

At USAID's office in Indonesia, Gartini (who is known by her first name) managed programs supporting civil society, good governance, democracy, and human rights, including women's rights. She was involved in securing USAID's support for KBR68H Radio News Agency through an Asia Foundation grant, and worked on projects related to Islam and civil society. (See related story on page 12.)

Gartini has deep personal involvement in the issues she championed. During the darkest days of the authoritarian regime, she attended demonstrations after working hours, on weekends, and on her lunch breaks. At opposition hotspots like the Legal Aid Foundation in Jakarta, she



Gartini Isa

Photo by Jan Cartwright, USAID

NGO community and served as a vital conduit of information with these prisoners. She provided encouragement and moral support, and acquired supplies such as mattresses for prisoners.

Although she was aware that Indonesian authorities might target her for her actions—she knew her phone was being tapped—she said she was never afraid. Her friends in the democracy and human rights movements went out of their way to protect her. "Anyway," she said, "I had many lawyer friends. They would get me out of trouble."

Her proudest legacy is the creation of the Legal Aid Foundation for Women (BH-APIK). In the mid-1990s her involvement with women's groups convinced her of the need for such an organization, and she successfully advocated for seed money from USAID. Today, the organization is thriving and has been credited for its work drafting important anti-domestic violence legislation.

Gartini retired from USAID in 2008 and now lives in Washington. Despite the distance, she remains in touch with her vast network of friends and activists in Indonesia and she avidly follows the progress of her country's burgeoning democracy. ★

befriended activists struggling for the free flow of information, women's rights, and other causes.

She formed close friendships with human rights defenders such as Munir Said Thalib and Xanana Gusmao, who would later become president of Timor-Leste. Many of the young activists she befriended in the 1990s are today active leaders in Indonesia's political parties.

"It is the trust that is very important," she said. Soft-spoken but with an ebullient personality, Gartini radiates authenticity and has a natural gift for building and maintaining relationships.

From 1997 to 1999, Gartini visited political prisoners at a time when few, if no, foreigners were allowed into the jails. She gained access through her broad network of friends in the

Julia Becker Richards

By Wende Dufflon

When Julia Becker Richards first set foot in Guatemala in 1974, a maya ajq'ij, a traditional community leader, called her a person of the wind. The hope was that Richards would bring winds of change to the country beset with poverty and discrimination against its indigenous citizens.

As it turned out, the label proved accurate.

She has been recognized for 34 years of efforts to promote human rights for the disadvantaged indigenous people in Guatemala.

She has worked with colleagues and friends from different cultures to gain access to quality education and health care for historically disenfranchised people—particularly indigenous girls and young women and at times when it was very controversial, even dangerous, to do so in Guatemala.

Richards arrived in the country as a graduate student in 1974 to work on nutritional and educational limitations of indigenous populations of the Guatemalan Highlands. Struck by the inequality she found in classrooms, Richards set out to promote bilingual, intercultural education.

"I saw the structural dimensions of an economy that perpetuated poverty and the discriminatory attitudes towards indigenous people," said Richards. "This was intensely evident in classrooms where Ladino teachers dictated to the assembled indigenous students in Spanish, which was poorly comprehended by almost everyone in the community."

She returned after graduate school to work on a dissertation on the same subjects at the height of Guatemala's civil war. She was detained on separate occasions by both the leftist guerrillas and the Army. Richards also learned Spanish and three Mayan languages, which very few non-Mayans do.



Julia Becker Richards

Photo by USAID

Before she joined the USAID team, Richards worked on two Agency-funded projects. She designed the first bilingual education project in the country's history and she produced the National Bilingual Education Program, which created the first-ever dictionaries and grammar books for the four major Mayan languages. Richards also co-produced, with her husband Michael Richards, the only comprehensive sociolinguistic map of the country and the *Atlas Lingüístico de Guatemala*.

After many years as a professor at leading Guatemalan universities, a consultant with international organizations, and a mentor and thesis advisor to university students, Richards joined USAID's Guatemala team as a full-time education officer.

In 2004, USAID's Guatemala office shifted its focus to policy-oriented interventions with the Guatemalan Ministry of Education. Richards knew that reform at the central level of government was essential to provide quality education and health service delivery to all Guatemalans. Her extensive experience in the field helped to win support from government, international donors, and civil society leaders.

In 2005, Richards became the director of USAID's Guatemala Health and Education Office, managing a 14-member in-house team and more than 20 projects. And then, on July 20, 2009, she was sworn in as a Foreign Service Officer. ★

CONTINUED...

OBAMA from page 1

Washington, but by what happens in Accra as well," Obama said in remarks he delivered to the Ghanaian parliament.

While declaring that Ghana and the entire African continent has a prominent role to play in world affairs, he also took some African countries to task for corruption and cronyism that has stalled economic and social progress.

"Development depends on good governance," Obama said to a round of applause from Ghanaian officials whose country is considered a role model for good governance. "This is the ingredient which has been missing in far too many places, for far too long. That's the change that can unlock Africa's potential. And that is a responsibility that can only be met by Africans."

In Accra, Obama and first lady Michelle Obama toured La General Hospital, where USAID is working with the government to reduce maternal and infant deaths. These and other interventions appear to be working: Ghana's infant mortality rate has dropped almost 30 percent in the past decade.

Robert Hellyer, USAID's director in Ghana, greeted the Obamas at the hospital where they met 25 women waiting for prenatal care checkups, chatted with several new mothers and staff members, and cooed over babies and young children dressed to impress.

The Obamas observed USAID support for improved labor and delivery services; post-partum care of new mothers and infants; nutritional counseling for mothers with older infants; and family planning counseling and services. The president also spoke with USAID staffers about malaria programs in Ghana.

Susan Wright, the acting health officer at USAID's Ghana office, said the visit "allowed us to demonstrate our joint focus on preventive measures to help mothers and infants stay healthy."

Added Dr. Elias Sory, director general of the Ghana Health Service: "This visit was a great way to show the excellent collaboration between the U.S. and Ghana to improve maternal and child health. This has been a strong partnership for many years and is becoming ever stronger."

Obama said that infant mortality rates were still too high in many parts of Africa and that

U.S. development assistance on the continent will strengthen public health as well as support democratic governments, trade and investment, and conflict resolution.

Closing the G-8 summit in Italy, Obama said the move to invest in agricultural development was long overdue and represented "a commitment to reform the way the international community approaches food security."

While some of the details are still being worked out, Obama signaled his intention to ask Congress to double U.S. agricultural development assistance to more than \$1 billion a year by 2010.

In Russia, Obama held talks with Medvedev and Putin in an effort to repair strained relations between the United States and Russia.

First lady Michelle Obama conducted a bit of diplomacy as well, charming nursing students and children on a visit to the St. Dmitriy Sisters of Mercy Nursing College and Primary School.

USAID supports courses at the college that prepare nurses to care for HIV/AIDS patients. More than 760 nurses have graduated from the nursing school, and 240 students are attending courses this year.

"Before I became first lady, I worked in a hospital and one of my jobs was to work to develop volunteerism in the hospital and bring it out to the communities," Michelle Obama said to the nurses, according to the *Washington Post*. "One of the most important things I learned while working in the hospital is nurses are critical to the health-care system in the United States." ★

Laura Ashbaugh contributed to this article.

EUROPE from page 6

the basis for investment decisions.

Conference participants agreed that although Eastern Europe and Eurasia have made significant strides towards developing market economies, the transformation is not complete. Integration into the world economy in the past was built on unstable foundations. The crisis revealed that those underlying weaknesses—which had been masked by temporary, unsustainable growth—remain unsolved.

The event was organized by the Office of Economic Growth in USAID's Europe and Eurasia Bureau. ★

CLINTON from page 1

USAID and the State Department reinforce each other and achieve "a multiplier effect" that "significantly increases the scope and the impact of our programs and policies," she said.

The QDDR is inspired by the Pentagon's Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), which served "to improve effectiveness and to establish a long-term vision," Clinton said.

"Diplomacy and development deserve the same rigorous evaluation and strategic thinking," she noted. What is needed is a "new narrative" that can help diplomacy and development compete effectively for scarce resources with the Pentagon on national security grounds.

Increased spending on diplomacy and development has to be made convincing to Congress as well as the person losing his or her job in today's economy, she said.

To demonstrate concrete results, USAID must restore technical expertise that it has lost over the years and end the outsourcing of programming that could be done more cheaply and effectively in-house.

Clinton said the QDDR will provide an assessment of "where we are" and "where we want to be," and would be part of wider reforms to establish USAID as the world's "premiere" development agency. Clinton envisions "a new way of doing business" to keep up with the "accelerating rate of change."

The secretary closed her remarks by thanking USAID employees for their hard work and saying that she looked forward "to continuing to work with you to build a USAID that is fully prepared to take on the challenges of the 21st century." She noted that "we're going to rebuild USAID, we're going to revitalize the mission, and we're going to convince not only the Congress but the American people that this is the best investment they can make."

In response to questions from USAID employees, Clinton said that, on budget issues and coordination, "I will expect the administrator to work with Deputy Secretary [of State Jacob] Lew. We believe that it will enhance the results that [US]AID will see in terms of budget support."

Responding to another question, Clinton said that "we have contracted out too much of the core mission of USAID. It doesn't

mean that the contractors are bad people or doing a bad job; it just means that we're not getting the kind of resources into the delivery of services abroad that we should. Too much of the money stays right here in Washington."

Clinton noted: "Your senior leadership—[Acting Administrator] Alonzo [Fulgham], [Counselor] Lisa [Chiles] and others—they are at the table every day at the State Department—and you are well represented at every leadership level, every meeting that we have." ★

Q AND A from page 2

HAQQANI:

Security and aid work go together in such areas. Only in areas where security has been provided can aid follow. At the same time, I think that we have to be innovative in enrolling more local people into the aid effort. Local people are always more willing to take risks than foreign aid workers.

That said, USAID and many other aid agencies have been very great; they have many committed and dedicated people. When it comes to food assistance and providing relief, I think that there's a greater degree of ability of aid workers to go in.

For bigger projects that involve building of an infrastructure, I think that it would be prudent for the U.S. Congress also to consider changing some of the rules for such areas so that we do not always require American contractors and large numbers of Americans. The aid workers can be supervisors of a local workforce that understands how to work around the security problem in their neighborhoods and their towns.

In conflict areas, it's never convenient to have large numbers of foreigners because they're targets for hostage-taking and stuff like that. It's always better to have more local people—then you also generate jobs in the process. And, in a tribal structure, when a person of a tribe is employed by, say, for example, USAID, that tribe then develops an interest in protecting the aid project.

Q: How could Pakistan develop and become the next China, the next Brazil?

HAQQANI:

I think Pakistan needs to bridge the gap in its education and literacy sphere; develop infrastructure;

POLL from page 2

American foreign policy. "The region is waiting to see deeds," Slim said, or the favorable window that has opened will close and moods will sour.

In Africa, both brands track favorably. Obama is viewed as a native son of the continent, while foreign assistance was "undoubtedly" the reason for the favorable image of the United States, both commentators agreed.

In all, 19,914 responded to the survey, which was conducted between April 4 and June 12 and had a margin of error of between 3 percent and 4 percent. ★ —J.W.

energize our agriculture sector; enhance productivity; conserve water; make sure we have a whole value chain—seed improvement, marketing of commodities, horticulture—things that have been ignored.

Pakistan's agricultural growth used to be around 5 percent in the 1950s. It is just around 1 percent per annum now. There is a need for investment and better inputs so that 45 percent of the population that is engaged in agriculture [can] improve their lives.

Second, Pakistan cannot industrialize without fulfilling its energy needs in renewable energy, oil and gas exploration, development of our significant coal reserves—so clean-coal technology would be required for that.

The third is to develop the higher education sector so that we have more engineers and more scientists and trained teachers.

Then we also need to invest in our people's health, make sure that everyone gets clean drinking water. We also need assistance in institution building, governance, judiciary. Pakistan has become a democracy now after a long time. And we need to make sure that our law enforcement, our criminal justice system at the district level, our subordinate judiciary are all effective.

We also need to provide a social safety net for poverty reduction.

Our manufacturing sector will be more competitive only if we have greater market access to the European Union and the United States. It would have minimal impact on the overall volume of American trade or European trade, but it would mean a lot for the people of Pakistan.

We are still a big textile manufacturer but our textile products need market access. ★

ASIA from page 6

international tax experts and economists to provide feedback on the proposals and to expose Mongolian policymakers to international tax policy.

“The most significant assistance during the tax reform process was to build consensus among policymakers,” said Ariunsan Baldanjav, former deputy director of the GDT.

In preparation for the passage of the laws in June 2006, USAID helped the government organize a national education campaign to encourage people to join the formal economy by becoming taxpayers.

“Public participation in policy making was a new concept for Mongolians,” said Zorig Luvsandash, former director of the GDT.

The campaign featured newspaper articles, brochures, and television programs to create awareness about the new tax laws and encourage public debate.

“By involving the public in the reform process, they had realistic expectations and did not put forth resistance when the new laws were put into effect,” said former Member of Parliament Tserenbaljir Bataa.

Battogtokh was convinced. “After the tax reform, I made the courageous decision to expand my business, and I am thinking of applying for a bank loan for the first time to buy equipment to enter into the bottling and beverage distribution business,” he said.

With more disposable income on hand, he started to renovate his warehouse and expects to hire 10 additional full-time employees to handle the new beverage line.

In 2008, with support from USAID, GDT assessed the impact of the tax reforms for 2007, the first year of the reform. The assessment revealed a 41 percent increase in reported corporate revenues over 2006 collections, prior to tax reforms. A large portion of such a significant increase was attributable to general economic growth in Mongolia, however, the tax reform was a contributing factor.

Although tax reform in Mongolia is still a work in progress, the new laws have fostered economic growth and a competitive business environment. USAID intends to provide support again in 2009 to assess the impact of tax reform on 2008 tax collections. ★

NEED from page 1

field any longer—the number of aid workers killed or captured has increased around 350 percent in the past few years, he added.

The U.N. policy chief said that by 2025, the world population will rise from 6.7 billion to 8 billion; and the percentage of people living in cities will rise from 45 percent to 59 percent, creating nine new megacities where providing water, sewage, food, jobs, power, education, health care and security will be a challenge.

He also said that the number of natural disasters has doubled to 400 per year in the past 20 years, due in part to migration to risky coastal areas, as well as possible climate change.

“A dramatic change of rainfall in Africa will leave 250 million people in stress by 2020,” he said, noting rising extreme poverty with no way out.

The global humanitarian scene is also affected by the downturn in the global economy, with the International Labor Organization reporting 51 million jobs lost in the official economy and many more

NSC from page 5

stop using technical jargon that lets development be seen as “a boring, bureaucratic activity that isn’t about what we all know it is about, which is changing people’s lives.”

► educating NGOs, private-sector investors, social entrepreneurs, and others about what development really entails.

During the session, Stephen Moseley, president of the Academy for Educational Development, asked how development aid, if used to meet security needs, could avoid being subordinated to the needs of defense.

Smith said diplomacy defense and development are intertwined. If an elected government replaces an authoritarian regime, for example, the U.S. government may need to provide aid quickly. Other times aid may be provided as an incentive in a diplomatic negotiation.

She said that sustainable development is a long-term policy imperative.

“Until governments can provide social services, people see a tangible peace or a democracy dividend, there are pathways to jobs and a future, and jobs are more available than guns... we are not going to see stability or security,” she concluded. ★

lost in the informal economy.

Speaking at a separate panel, Strohmeyer said that last year’s world food crisis “is not over,” and food prices will remain “way above” those of 2005 and before.

By 2050, demand for food will double, and “one third of the world population by then will be food insecure.”

The 2009 International Aid & Trade conference was held in conjunction with the 25th anniversary celebration of InterAction, a coalition of more than 180 U.S.-based NGOs.

Aid & Trade focused its meeting on procurement and logistics, with displays by manufacturers of emergency shelter, rough-terrain vehicles, portable power systems, communications and other tools for operating in humanitarian crises. ★

AWARD from page 12

and in 10 countries in Asia. As Indonesia’s sole independent news agency, it continues to play a vital role in providing trustworthy information to citizens, fostering a national political dialogue, and serving as a governmental watchdog.

KBR68H was initially supported by a USAID grant to the Asia Foundation. The first grant ended in 2002, but other USAID programs have continued to support KBR68H in conducting talk shows on tolerance and pluralism.

“I feel really proud about KBR68H winning the award, not only for KBR68H but also for USAID/Indonesia and its grantee, the Asia Foundation,” said Gartini Isa, a now-retired USAID employee who managed the initial grant in the late 1990s. (See related story on page 13.)

In the announcement of the award, KBR68H was recognized “for its contribution to a sustainable development based on the strengthening of democracy, tolerance and citizen participation, by producing and disseminating qualitative information through a network of local radio stations and by promoting professional ethics in the media world.”

In Jakarta, KBR68H’s headquarters has become a hotbed of free speech. Sipping tea or coffee in KBR68H’s café, activists, students, journalists, and others engage in spirited debates on current domestic and international policy issues.

In addition to the international recognition that the prize brings, winners receive a 150,000 Euro cash award from the Belgian government. ★ —J.C.

FRONTLINES

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“I realize that there are among us those who are weary of sustaining this continual effort to help other nations. But I would ask them to look at a map and recognize that many of those whom we help live on the ‘front lines’ of the long twilight struggle for freedom—that others are new nations posed between order and chaos—and the rest are older nations now undergoing a turbulent transition of new expectations. Our efforts to help them help themselves, to demonstrate and to strengthen the vitality of free institutions, are small in cost compared to our military outlays for the defense of freedom.”

—John F. Kennedy, Special Message to the Congress on Foreign Aid, March 13, 1962

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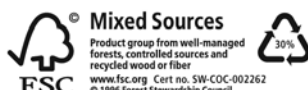
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Asian Actors Lend Voices to Human Trafficking Film

By Hal Lipper

USAID-MTV Awareness Campaign Brings 'Intersection' to China

BEIJING—Film stars Zhang Hanyu, Yuan Quan, and Su You Peng said their concern about young people being duped by human traffickers compelled them to record the Mandarin version of "Intersection," an animated film about trafficking and sexual exploitation. Produced by the MTV Foundation with support from USAID, the film premiered in June on MTV China.

Celebrities, artists, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and a contingent from the international press attended the screening at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, in Beijing's 798 Art District. The event was part of the Asia-wide MTV EXIT (End Exploitation and Trafficking) campaign.

"I hope this animated film stirs meaningful discussions among young people about how we can fight this form of modern-day slavery," said Zhang,

named best actor for "The Assembly" at the 2008 Golden Horse Awards.

The acting trio told a packed house at the premier that young people must become more aware about the dangers of human trafficking.

"We're using a different medium, animation, to alert young people about the risks of human trafficking," said Olivier Carduner, who heads USAID's regional office for Asia in Bangkok. "It adds to the body of work—documentaries, music videos, film shorts, concert specials, and public service announcements—that MTV and USAID have produced to reach potential victims and to promote law enforcement and victim outreach efforts."

"Intersection" is told from the perspectives of five people who are part of the trafficking chain. Actors from throughout Asia

are recording different versions of "Intersection" in their native languages.

In the new release, Zhang plays Dulok, a trafficker; Yuan is cast as a young trafficking victim forced to work in a brothel; and Su portrays a young man who pays for sex.

"I hope a lot of young people, especially women, watch this program and understand that anyone can be a victim of sex trafficking," said Yuan, whose films include "Like a Dream" and "Shanghai Rumba."

Projects like "Intersection" are a novel way to raise young people's awareness and prevent human trafficking and exploitation, said MTV EXIT Campaign Director Simon Goff. "The broadcast of 'Intersection' on MTV channels and other broadcasters across Asia will help young people avoid the dangers of human trafficking," he said. ★ 🎬



Dulok, a trafficker from the animated film "Intersection"



A trafficking victim forced to work in a brothel

MTV EXIT has reached tens of millions of people since its documentaries "Traffic" and "Sold" were launched in Asia in 2007 with USAID support. The campaign is on air, online, and on the ground. MTV EXIT has partnered with more than 100 local and international NGOs across the Asia Pacific region to raise awareness about human trafficking. Get more information and download the latest film, "Intersection," in Mandarin and English for free at www.mtvexit.org.



Zhang Hanyu, Yuan Quan, and Su You Peng lent their voices to the Mandarin version of "Intersection," a USAID-supported animated film about human trafficking.

Photo by Hal Lipper/USAID