



| AFRICA



A

decade ago single-party states and military dictatorships were the norm in sub-Saharan Africa. The 2003 Freedom House report, using its stringent criteria, lists 18 African countries as free. Many more countries have made significant strides toward free and fair elections, effective governance and respect for internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms. Some long-term civil wars have concluded or may be near resolution.

Nonetheless, democracy efforts and human rights in Africa face severe challenges. These result from continuing conflict in some countries and regions, weak institutions and leadership, disunity among racial, linguistic, religious, and tribal groups, corruption, and poor governance. The amazing change that has occurred in Kenya in recent months, however, underscores the thirst and the determination of all people for good government. The same can be said of the brave people of Zimbabwe, who struggle under the heel of a despotic regime.

Many African leaders recognize the challenge; one promising initiative is the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). To be effective, both NEPAD and the African Union must demonstrate their credibility by holding each participating state to high standards of democracy and human rights and imposing consequences for those African nations that fail to uphold them. Sub-regional bodies like the Southern African Development Community and Economic Community of West African States also have important roles to play.

The United States is buttressing African efforts through election support and corporate responsibility programs. We have focused on efforts to resolve conflicts, defuse religious tensions, and strengthen rule of law, free media, and civil society. We continue to seek ways to expand capacity building and to professionalize African militaries. The African Growth and Opportunity Act encourages reform efforts. The Millennium Challenge Account, President Bush's landmark initiative to produce new accountability and results in foreign aid, also stands to benefit Africa in an enormous way.

"In our desire to be safe from brutal and bullying oppression, human beings are the same. In our desire to care for our children and give them a better life, we are the same. For these fundamental reasons, freedom and democracy will always and everywhere have greater appeal than the slogans of hatred and the tactics of terror."

President Bush
Speech at American
Enterprise Institute
February 26, 2003

PROVIDING ANGOLANS WITH ACCESS TO INDEPENDENT RADIO

In Angola we are using the Human Rights and Democracy Fund to expand access to independent radio to 85% of the population by providing for the installation of studios and transmitters for Angola's only independent radio station, Radio Ecclesia. Radio Ecclesia is making a difference by informing its audience of what is happening in the country. Members of Angola's civil society have called the radio a key player to bringing democracy to the country. We expect the Radio to play an especially important role as Angola prepares for elections.



ANGOLA

Angola, with the exception of Cabinda province, is slowly emerging from 27 years of civil war. Corrupt and dysfunctional government institutions, limited access to independent information, and a weak civil society inhibit rapid progress toward genuine democracy and respect for human rights. Moreover, as Angola prepares for only its second national elections, the country lacks adequate procedures and capacity to ensure a free and fair electoral process. With the spread of HIV/AIDS and the large population movements following the war, provisions against discrimination and protection of education, housing, and land access rights are limited.

The U.S. has focused on building civil society's capacity to advocate human and constitutional rights, as a means of pressing the Government to address violations and limits on freedom. The Ambassador chairs a multi-agency Democracy Committee that develops and implements democracy and human rights promotion activities, in consultation with Angolan and international non-governmental organization (NGO) partners.

The Ambassador established the Democracy Small Grants program to provide flexible funding to grassroots NGOs. Through USAID and programs such as the Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) small grants and the Ambassador's Self-Help Fund, the Embassy supported local NGOs in promoting human rights, including awareness of prisoner's rights, legal advocacy, and the establishment of a civil rights information center.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2002 the Embassy provided \$200,000 to local groups to hold forums, town meetings, and seminars aimed at increasing public contributions to Angola's constitutional revision process. As part of this activity, 1,350 radio programs on constitutional and human rights were broadcast in Portuguese and in five local languages, reaching more than 1.3 million people.

Given the importance of free and fair elections in the development of accountability and the protection of human rights, the Embassy allocated \$2.5 million of its Economic Support Funds (ESF) to support the National Democratic Institute, International Republican Institute, and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems in creating viable political and electoral structures. In FY 2002, these Consortium for Elections and Political Party Strengthening (CEPPS) partners published a comprehensive report outlining the tasks and schedule for establishing a legal framework for elections, initiating campaign and election monitor training, and promoting election transparency that would meet international standards. The report was well received by the Government, opposition political parties, and civil society as blueprint for achieving free and fair elections.

As elections approach, the U.S. is providing \$300,000 for independent broadcaster Radio Ecclesia to expand its broadcasting capabilities to provinces outside Luanda in time for the next election cycle. Funds are being used to support the installation of up to 16 FM repeater stations that will expand Radio Ecclesia's ability to broadcast programs nationwide



and bring the FM signal to over 85 percent of the Angolan population. The broadcasts provide wider access to information related to human rights, civic education and good governance. Members of Angola's civil society have called Radio Ecclesia a key player in a bringing democracy to the country. The Embassy also provided \$500,000 to Voice of America's Linha Directa service, which provides an important alternative source to the government-controlled radio broadcast news. The U.S. is also providing \$300,000 to media outlets so they may purchase newsprint for independent weekly newspapers. The Public Diplomacy section of the Embassy assisted media through the international visitor program, U.S. speakers, and information dissemination.

In addition, the Embassy provided technical assistance, training, and grants to improve citizens' capacity to advocate effectively for children's right to education, rights to housing for internally displaced women, and rights to confidentiality and employment for people living with HIV/AIDS. Civil society coalitions organized 225 advocacy campaigns, seminars, and workshops that reached 104,000 people in FY 2002. Since the campaigns began, the Government adopted the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Regional Code on HIV/AIDS as a basis to protect the rights of workers living with AIDS, paid customs duties for 68 tons of primary school books that were held in port for over two years, and distributed land and building materials to 4,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Land tenure is a vital component of Angola's future stability as millions of ex-combatants, IDPs, and refugees return home. In FY 2002 the Embassy supported the work of a local civil society-based land tenure coalition to raise awareness and increase public input in the draft land tenure law. The coalition successfully pressured the Government to consult with NGOs and Angolans about the draft law and to extend the public comment period. Following a recent coalition-sponsored conference on the law, participants said the Government increasingly understands that it must work with others to develop an acceptable law.

BURKINA FASO

President Blaise Compaore and his party, the Congress for Democracy and Progress, continued to dominate the Government of the Fourth Republic despite gains made by the opposition in May 5, 2002, legislative elections, which were considered substantially free and fair by international election officials. In 1998 President Compaore was reelected to a second seven-year term. The Government's human rights record remained poor, and although the Government continued attempts to improve its human rights performance, it continued to commit abuses. The security forces were responsible for numerous extrajudicial killings and continued to abuse detainees; a general climate of impunity for members of the security forces continued to be a problem. During the year, there were credible reports that security forces summarily executed suspected criminals, and prison conditions remained harsh. Arbitrary arrest and detention were problems, and authorities

did not provide detainees with due process. Courts were subject to executive influence, and authorities did not ensure fair trials.

To address those human rights problems, the U.S. Government has used a combination of advocacy and program support to draw attention to international human rights norms, to emphasize accountability and transparency in government, and to nurture a large and active but under-financed community of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) engaged in the promotion of human rights and democracy.

The Embassy's pro-active application of diplomatic pressure on the Government, along with criticism and publicity campaigns by human rights associations, resulted in a sharp decline in the extrajudicial killings of criminal suspects by the country's police in 2002. To improve prison conditions in the country, the Mission used \$10,000 in Democracy and Human Rights Funds (DHRF) and Public Diplomacy (PD) funds to sponsor a workshop raising awareness of the country's harsh prison conditions. Following that workshop, the country's minister of justice committed himself to addressing this problem through a number of initiatives. To aid the administration of justice, the Mission used a \$3,000 DHRF grant to help equip a number of local tribunals in the interior of the country with photocopiers and typewriters.

To foster freedom of the press, Embassy-funded programs over the past several years have involved the training of journalists in investigative reporting and coverage of political campaigns and elec-

tions. In addition, the Mission used a \$3,500 DHRF grant to sponsor awards for journalists who have published articles involving investigative journalism.

Focusing on democracy promotion through electoral reform, Embassy programs have brought together political parties to foster consideration of necessary electoral reforms and the financing of the National Independent Electoral Commission. To support political reform, the Ambassador met with opposition parties to encourage them to fully participate in the ongoing political reform process and to cease their ongoing election boycotts. Those efforts paid off handsomely during the 2002 legislative elections. Both international and national observers stated that the elections were free and fair, with no serious fraud or harassment reported. In addition, all opposition parties participated in the 2002 legislative elections and quadrupled their representation, taking 49 percent of the seats. For the first time since multiparty politics were restored in 1992, the country has a genuinely pluralist legislature.

To educate citizens on human rights and bolster civil society, the Embassy used the DHRF and PD grant funds to produce radio programs on human rights, democracy and the electoral process. It supported local associations that promote human rights, the development of the judicial system, and the rights of women. The Embassy also funded programs focusing on the rights of handicapped persons. In 2002, as part of the International Visitor Program, the Embassy sent to the U.S. for training a number of professionals in the areas of democracy, good governance, conflict resolution, HIV/AIDS, civic edu-

cation, and journalism. A number of military and civilian persons have attended programs sponsored by the African Center for Strategic Studies, permitting them to gain insight into the workings of the military in a democratic society.

Through DHRF funding, the Embassy sponsored programs on female genital mutilation, forced marriage, women's and children's rights, the rights of persons with HIV/AIDS, and the problem of social exclusion. In addition to sponsoring these events with program funding, the Ambassador and Embassy personnel have supported the events with their active participation.

To promote religious freedom, the Embassy has sponsored a number of workshops and discussions exploring different religions and the importance of tolerance. The Mission also sent three participants on an International Visitor Program about Islam in a democracy, and participants reported that the visit positively influenced their attitudes. The Mission also regularly meets with the country's Muslim community for discussions and exchanges.

Through Department of Labor funds, the International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor and the country's anti-trafficking in children project (IPEC/LUTRENA) funded a workshop on drafting anti-child trafficking legislation in late 2002. The National Assembly is expected to pass the law by mid-2003.

BURUNDI

The Government of Burundi's human rights record remained poor in 2002 and early 2003, and it continued to commit numerous serious abuses. Security forces continued to commit numerous arbitrary and unlawful killings with impunity. The armed forces killed armed rebels and unarmed civilians, including women, children, and the elderly. The security forces continued to torture, beat, rape, and otherwise abuse persons. Despite some improvements, prison conditions remained very poor in general and sometimes life threatening.

To end the cycle of violence and human rights abuses that gripped the country for more than a decade, the Embassy promoted the Burundian peace process begun in 1997 by regional leaders. From negotiation through ratification to implementation, the Embassy publicly and privately supported the Arusha peace accord. In addition, throughout the implementation process, the Embassy called for non-signatory Arusha combatants to immediately adopt a cease-fire and begin peace negotiations without preconditions. The largest Burundian rebel group, the CNDD-FDD, signed a cease-fire; but another rebel group, the Palipehutu-FNL, still has not.

Notwithstanding the July 2001 agreement to begin a three-year transition period on November 1, 2001, civil war has continued to plague the country. Under the agreement and the October 2001 Transition Constitution, President Pierre Buyoya served as transition president for 18 months, and Domitien Ndayizeye, the secretary general of the

predominantly ethnic Hutu opposition party FRODEBU, was sworn in on April 30, 2003, and will serve 18 months as president.

The Embassy has worked to improve respect for the freedom of movement within the country and other human rights of internally displaced persons. In May of 2002, when the Burundian Army forced civilians in Ruyigi Province to live in temporary camps, away from their homes and livelihoods, in order to expose and combat rebel infiltrations of the civilian population, the Embassy expressed its concern to the Minister of Reinstallation, Reintegration, and Repatriation. Six weeks after the Embassy's protest, the Government ended the forced relocation of civilians in Ruyigi.

In September 2002, after receiving reports stating that the army massacred over 178 civilians at Itaba, the Embassy publicly condemned the massacre. In addition, the Ambassador visited Itaba and delivered demarches to the most senior members of the Government. Two officers and one non-commissioned officer were eventually arrested in connection with the Itaba massacre.

To help build capacity and expertise in the areas of conflict resolution, judicial reform and prison reform, the Embassy has sent Burundians to conferences using the International Visitors Program. For Example, Eric Shima, President of the Center for Conflict Resolution, a Burundian non-governmental organization (NGO), attended a Young African Leadership Program conference on conflict resolution, and Deo Suzuguye,

Director General of the Burundian Prison System, attended a law and prison reform program in Rwanda.

USAID programs in 2002 and 2003 promoted non-violent conflict resolution, the rule of law, prison reform and media broadcasting that encouraged peace and reconciliation among members of different ethnic groups. In addition, USAID programs have raised citizens' awareness of their legal and human rights, promoted the Arusha peace process and the importance of ethnic reconciliation, and deepened the advocacy role of the country's civil society in public issues.

To heighten citizens' awareness of and involvement in the justice system, the International Human Rights Law Group (HRLG) used \$124,000 worth of USAID grants to conduct legal seminars with local associations and private radio stations. The seminars solicited input on pending legislation regarding issues such



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as political parties, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, criminal courts, and provisional immunity. HRLG has also conducted legal clinics for citizens in the provinces to help them understand their legal rights and responsibilities within the country's justice system.

Through a \$1.17 million USAID grant implemented by Search for Common Ground (SFCG), Studio Ijambo has produced programs for use on private radio stations and the state media on the meaning of the Arusha peace process to citizens and on such themes as human rights and ethnic reconciliation. Plays and soap operas conveyed these messages powerfully, and special programs have been aimed at ex-combatants, child soldiers and victims and perpetrators of violence. About 90 percent of Studio Ijambo's programs are in local languages. Furthermore, Radio Isanganiro used USAID funding to broadcast 15 hours of programs a day nationally and regionally, reaching audiences in Bukavu, Kigali and western Tanzania in three local languages.

To prevent violence against women and children and promote civil society, the Women's Peace Center (WPC) used a \$724,000 USAID grant to support over 300 local women's organizations in three provinces and the capital city. The WPC fostered inter-communal and inter-ethnic dialogue and developed assistance mechanisms for female victims of war and violence. The WPC offered these groups training in conflict-resolution skills, post-crisis trauma healing and advocacy on behalf of women. As a result, a total of 2,234 women are now trained as peacemakers in their communities; 34 women

have been trained as trauma counselors, and 347 citizens have participated in workshops on violence against women and children. This support helped advance the creation of a network of women's associations that will become nationwide once peace comes to the entire country.

To promote worker rights, the U.S. Department of Labor helped fund a two-year regional initiative by the International Labor Organization's International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor with the goal of demobilizing and rehabilitating child soldiers and reintegrating them into their former communities.

CAMEROON

The United States funded several major human rights and democracy projects in 2002 and early 2003 including film screenings on the importance of free and fair elections, book discussions on participation in public decisions, the printing of election observation materials and the shooting of documentaries promoting women's rights. The national television station, CRTV, has broadcast the documentaries, which have also been made available to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that deal with gender issues.

The U.S. regularly engaged the Presidency and National Assembly on how to improve Cameroon's democracy. These interventions, along with the public diplomacy efforts cited above, have decreased Cameroon's human rights violations. The Embassy has continued to engage the host government and use pub-

lic diplomacy funds through such series as the International Visitor Program (IVP) to insist that the government fight corruption and effect respect for and promotion of rule of law and good governance.

In compliance with the Leahy Amendment, the Defense Attache Office worked closely with the Ministry of Defense to vet military units for U.S. training and checked candidates with other embassy offices.

Embassy staff monitored June 2002 municipal and legislative elections throughout the country, contributing to what has been touted as one of the freest and fairest elections in Cameroon's history. Embassy staff met with opposition parties, regional officials and National Election Observatory (NEO) representatives within Cameroon's ten provinces. In their capacity as election observers, Embassy staff visited polling stations, surveyed election procedures and conversed with both the local officials and voting populace. The Embassy compiled its observations and proffered recommendations directly to the Presidency.

The U.S. used public diplomacy funds to administer election observation workshops for journalists, political parties, civil society and local observers. Workshop topics included free and fair election strategies, monitoring rules and techniques, election reporting and citizen participation. On Election Day, the Embassy set up a center for electoral data collection. Post provided journalists with calling cards in a program dubbed, "Operation Cell Phones for Democracy." Participants throughout the election

training said the workshops and resource center significantly contributed toward detecting and containing election fraud.

To promote U.S. efforts to contain radical Islam, the U.S. involved young Muslim leaders in the IVP that provided training in religious freedom, democracy and human rights. The Embassy also held meetings with various Muslim leaders in the community to offer guidance where possible and ensure an understanding of their perspective.

An innovative public awareness campaign using a nationally famous soccer star during the African Nations Soccer Cup final showed the sportsman handing out a "Red Card" to employers of children.

Due in part to deliberations with the U.S., the Government of Cameroon has begun to channel more resources toward the amelioration of trafficking in persons. Working with International Labor Organization, the U.S. has put forward an ambitious four-part plan to encourage legislation, train enforcement personnel, educate parents, and assist victims. Cameroon also benefits from a U.S.-sponsored project to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in commercial agriculture, especially cocoa production.



PHOTO: IFES

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Until a March 15, 2003, seizure of power, the Central African Republic (C.A.R.) was a constitutional democracy with a multi-party legislature. General Francois Bozize, who took over the presidency, ousted President Ange-Felix Patasse, dissolved the National Assembly, and suspended the constitution. General Bozize also established a 63-member National Transitional Council on March 31 to serve as an advisory and transitional law-making organ, which he said was intended to reestablish the rule of law, assist the presidency in drafting a new constitution, and prepare the country for general elections.

The seizure of power replaced a government whose human rights record, some limited improvements aside, remained poor in 2002 and early 2003. Security forces continued to commit arbitrary and unlawful killings, and police continued to torture, beat, and otherwise abuse sus-

pects and prisoners. Other human rights abuses included harsh prison conditions, arbitrary arrest, prolonged detention without trial, and limits on judicial independence.

The Embassy, which has been forced to suspend operations since November 2002, funded several programs to educate government officials and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) about human rights, promote the rule of law, and defend freedom of the press; it also highlighted human rights abuses and queried government officials about individuals in detention. To help advance this agenda, the Ambassador engaged government officials directly at the highest levels to discuss human rights issues and abuses that required further attention.

During and following an October 25, 2002, attempted coup d'etat, the Embassy strenuously protested the widespread human rights abuses committed by Congolese rebel MLC soldiers brought into the country to support President Patasse's government.

The professionalism and respect for the integrity of the person among the country's armed forces (FACA) has great bearing upon the status of human rights in the country, given the military's history of mutinies and coup attempts. In April 2002, the Embassy sent four defense officials, including the Minister of Defense, to an African Center for Strategic Studies seminar in Washington; the seminar incorporated human rights issues in its training. The Embassy also made a significant contribution toward improving the conduct and professionalism of the

FACA by sending five FACA officers for human rights training in the United States through International Military Education and Training (IMET).

To educate legislators and opinion leaders about torture as a human rights abuse, the Embassy used the Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) to fund an NGO seminar. Over 120 National Assembly deputies, magistrates, government officials, and civil society members were invited. In July 2002, the National Assembly ratified the UN Convention against Torture. In addition, the Mission held discussions with the Minister of Justice concerning prison conditions and human rights abuses committed by government security forces.

To promote the rule of law, the Embassy worked with civil society groups, the Government, and NGOs to strengthen the legal system in the country. Through the DHRF, the Embassy funded a law library at the Cassation Court, providing money for the purchase of legal texts and references, subscriptions to periodicals, computers, and furniture. This law library, the only one in the country, will serve as a resource for the entire legal community in the country.

To promote freedom of the press, the Embassy has built a strong consultative relationship with the C.A.R. Journalists Association. During 2002, the Ambassador visited its offices for consultations and donated books to the Association's library.

Under the International Visitor Program, the Embassy sent a National Assembly deputy to a month-long program on con-

flict resolution, and a law professor from the University of Bangui to a program on the rule of law. The Embassy also hosted two speakers on anti-corruption and the rule of law.

In efforts to strengthen civil society, the Embassy engaged in a wide-ranging dialogue with various civil society organizations including the Journalists' Association, the Women's Legal Association, and the principal labor unions. Topics of particular interest were press freedom, the participation of women in the political process, and the issue of salary arrears owed to government workers.

CHAD

President Idriss Deby has ruled Chad since taking power in a 1990 rebellion. He was reelected President in May 2001; however, fraud, widespread vote rigging, and local irregularities marred the 2001 presidential election and the April legislative elections.

The Government's human rights record remained poor, and it committed serious human rights abuses. Security forces committed extrajudicial killings, abductions, and continued to torture, beat, rape, and abuse persons. The judiciary remained subject to executive interference. Violence and societal discrimination against women were common, and female genital mutilation (FGM) was widespread.



PHOTO: Sally Buikema

To strengthen respect by the military for the integrity of the person, the U.S. Government continued to fund programs aimed at professionalizing the military and making it more responsive to command and control procedures through the training of eight Chadian officers under the Department of Defense training programs, such as the International Military Education and Training (IMET) and Foreign Military Financing (FMF) programs at U.S. military facilities, where basic notions of human rights are incorporated into the courses. All training candidates were vetted through the Embassy's screening system to ensure compliance with the Leahy Amendment.

There are six active human rights associations that the U.S. Government supported intermittently since the early 1990s with small grants from the Bureau of African Affairs' Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF). During 2002, one of these local human rights associations established, with a \$23,000 DHRF grant, six legal clinics in the capital where legal counsel and assistance are provided to individuals who ordinarily would not have access to the country's formal judicial system. The clinics continue to provide this service without continued U.S. assistance.

Recognizing the importance of a free and vigorous press, the Embassy used its International Visitor Program to send a reporter from one of the more critical opposition newspapers to the U.S. for training in investigative journalism. The Public Diplomacy section also provided a small grant to a private radio station.

Since the promotion of human rights and civil liberties begins during citizens' formative years, the Embassy used a DHRF grant to fund a pilot project in six schools to test the suitability of a previously-developed civics education course outline for grades 1-12. In addition, the Education for Democracy and Development Initiative helped 3,363 girls and women gain access to primary, secondary and technical schools.

The U.S. Government also promoted human rights through its support for the development of certain legislation, particularly that which would improve the protection of women's rights and those of rural Chadians, who constitute 80 percent of the population.

The U.S. funded a local non-governmental organization's efforts that resulted in the drafting and enactment in April 2002 of legislation criminalizing FGM. Also included in this \$25,000 DHRF grant were an education component to change local attitudes toward FGM and a survey of its prevalence in two high-risk zones.

Another piece of legislation that would protect individual rights and that aimed to reduce inter-ethnic violence was drafted and debated with funds from a DHRF grant. If enacted, the law would govern the movement of nomadic herds, while defining rights and responsibilities of both nomadic and sedentary populations whose lives and property are impacted by these annual migrations. An effort is underway by the Embassy, working with key ministers and the National Mediator, to achieve consensus on the contentious provisions so that Parliament will pass the legislation.

The National Mediator's Office has not only taken the lead in getting the nomad legislation drafted and debated but has also played an important role in mediating other conflicts in Chad. This office benefited in 2002 from the training of one of its staff members through the International Visitor Program. The public diplomacy program also supported two guest speaker programs that featured an American specialist in conflict prevention and mediation.

To foster good economic governance during 2002, the Embassy secured the services of a technical advisor from the U.S. Department of Treasury who worked with the country's Finance Ministry and the Oil Revenue Management College in developing a set of procedures designed to ensure oil-revenue allocation to Chad's four priority development sectors. This technical oversight will continue into 2003 when oil revenues come on line.

In efforts to strengthen civil society and thus counterbalance the power of the country's executive branch, the Embassy helped 12 community-based development groups as they exercised the recently-discovered power that has stemmed from a de facto decentralization of decision-making in rural areas.

THE UNION OF COMOROS

The Union of Comoros is an emerging democracy that was ruled by President Azali Assoumani, who took power in a coup in April 1999, and subsequently was elected democratically in April presidential elections described by international observers as free and fair. The Government generally respected the human rights of its citizens; however, there were problems in some areas. Prison conditions remained poor. Security forces and the separatist authorities on Anjouan used arbitrary arrest and detention. The Government limited freedom of religion, and security forces reportedly continued to threaten Christians. Societal discrimination against women and Christians continued to be serious problems. There were some instances of forced child labor.

The United States relied on a combination of modest financial assistance and vigorous diplomacy to achieve its human rights objectives in the Comoros, which remained subject to U.S. sanctions. The

Embassy's efforts have focused on assisting attempts to develop a stable government. Accordingly, the Embassy in Port Louis, Mauritius, although lacking in substantive financial tools, mounted an aggressive campaign to send Mission personnel on a monthly basis to the country to work directly with the Government and to encourage stability and the development of a democratic framework. The Ambassador has discussed professionalization of security forces and division of responsibilities between the internal and external security forces at the highest levels of the national and regional governments. In addition, the Embassy has worked in close cooperation with government representatives and neighboring Embassies to help stabilize the country through technical assistance in immigration techniques, customs practices and drug interdiction efforts.

In 2002, the Embassy administered Self-Help and Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) projects totaling \$33,100. Through DHRF, and in partnership with a local NGO, the Embassy organized a highly interactive and informative three-day seminar on the rights of women. The success of the three-day event was manifest evidence of both the hunger for information on human rights issues in the country, as well as the future role the U.S. Government can play in educating the population. In addition, the Embassy funded a Self-Help project to prevent gender discrimination.



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

The Democratic Republic of the Congo remained divided into territory controlled by the Government and territories controlled by several rebel factions, foreign troops, ethnic militias, and other armed groups. President Joseph Kabila, who came to power in January 2001 after the assassination of his father Laurent Desire Kabila, ruled by decree in the territory under government control.

The Government's human rights record remained poor; although there were improvements in some areas, serious problems remained. The security forces were responsible for unlawful killings, torture, beatings, rape, extortion, and the arbitrary arrest and detention of citizens. Prison conditions in hundreds of small or regional detention facilities remained harsh and life threatening, and the judiciary continued to be underfunded, inefficient, and corrupt.

The Ambassador worked with the Ambassadors from other UN Security Council Permanent Member (P-5) countries, Belgium, and South Africa to keep constant pressure on the Government and the rebel factions to make peace. The Ambassadors intervened on numerous occasions to ensure that the Congolese parties attended meetings, negotiated seriously, and avoided actions that could have derailed the peace process. On December 17, 2002, in Pretoria, the parties signed a Global and Inclusive Accord for the Transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. If implemented, the accord will establish a national transitional government that will prepare for elections within two years.

The Ambassador and Embassy personnel approached President Kabila and leaders of rebel movements to seek the release of people arrested on political grounds. Embassy staff also intervened with rebel groups on behalf of international human rights organizations to obtain permission to travel for or end harassment of their personnel.

The Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD) played an important role in the march toward the Global Accord in 2002. USAID funded programs in the amount of \$1 million implemented by the International Human Rights Law Group (IHLRG), the International Foundation for Election Systems, Development Alternatives, Inc., and the National Democratic Institute to prepare civil society and political parties to play a positive role in the ICD. Accordingly, this program enabled participants from civil society to draft a proposed post-transition constitution for consideration by the Senate and to draft laws on nationality, federalism, the protection of human rights, and presidential authority. This program also supported efforts by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to organize a Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a Human Rights Commission called for in the Global Accord.

IHLRG implemented USAID's Access to Justice program, with a 2002 budget of \$250,000, and provided training for defense attorneys, funded a local human rights institute, and helped attorneys develop briefs on human rights violations. Attorneys working under this program met prison detainees to ensure that they were not being held illegally and to give

them access to a lawyer. At the end of June 2002, these attorneys had met with 1,279 detainees, of whom 237 were released and 172 had court hearings.

The human rights program funded by USAID in the amount of \$100,000 had two additional components. USAID continued to fund IHRLG to train and support local organizations that have human rights programs designed to end sexual violence against women and protect the rights of indigenous people and children. This component built local capacity by educating NGOs about human rights, teaching them strategies to address human rights problems and training them to identify donors to fund their work. In addition, USAID granted \$500,000 to the International Rescue Committee (IRC) for a program to counsel and deal with the consequences of rape in North and South Kivu.

To promote worker rights, the U.S. Department of Labor helped fund a two-year regional initiative by the International Labor Organization's International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor with the goal of demobilizing and rehabilitating child soldiers and reintegrating them into their former communities.

Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) projects implemented during 2002 were funded at a level of \$80,000 and included consciousness-raising campaigns on non-violence, human rights, the culture of peace in multi-ethnic societies and in wartime, and conflict resolution. With DHRF funding, several NGOs carried out the campaigns via radio interviews and discussions, workshops, and seminars. One project in Kindu trained human rights activists and produced plays, radio broadcasts, and video ses-



PHOTO:IFES

sions on conflict resolution and civic responsibilities. A human rights organization in Kikwit used its DHRF grant to produce a primary school textbook on human rights and is training teachers to use the 1,000 text that will be distributed. Another organization conducted a workshop on the country's penitentiary system and international documents ratified by the Government on detainee rights. The workshop produced a pamphlet on detainee rights, 2,000 copies of which the organization has distributed to detainees and correction officials in prisons and commune lockups.

USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives funded programs in the amount of \$90,000 through Radio Okapi, the country's only nationwide radio station, urging members of militias and others to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate into society.

The Embassy gave public diplomacy funds in the amount of \$70,000 to local human rights organizations (Voice for the Voiceless, Journalists in Danger, Info Plus, and Committee for Democracy and Human Rights) to support their workshops and conferences on human rights abuses.

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

The Republic of the Congo is ruled by a government in which most of the power is vested directly in the President. Denis Sassou-Nguesso was elected President in March 2002, and in May and June legislative elections were held for the Senate and the House of Delegates in most jurisdictions. Both the presidential and legislative elections were determined to be generally free and fair.

The Government's human rights record remained poor in 2002 and early 2003, and it continued to commit serious abuses. Security forces were responsible for extrajudicial killings, summary executions, rapes, beatings, physical abuse of detainees and citizens, arbitrary arrest and detention, and theft. Prison conditions were poor, and the judiciary was unable to ensure fair and expeditious trials. Rebel militias also committed serious human rights abuses, and actions by both the army and the rebel militias have caused the flow of approximately 65,000 internally displaced persons from the Pool region.

From promoting respect for the rights of indigenous people to improving civil-military relations, human rights were a subset of almost every contact the U.S. Mission had with the Government.

Through dialogue and seminars sponsored by the Department of Defense (DOD), the U.S. Government encouraged greater military discipline, professionalism, and respect for human rights. As a result, a high commission has been established for the re-insertion of former rebel militia members into the military and

society and President Sassou's announcement that former militia would receive amnesty if they laid down their arms. In addition, the Embassy recently launched an English-language training program intended to facilitate other types of training.

To foster better civil-military relations, the U.S. Government funded a seminar on disaster management in which military personnel and representatives from non-governmental organizations discussed issues of importance concerning disaster management and civil-military cooperation.

In order to build general awareness of human rights among the population, the Embassy focused its efforts on youth, women, and minorities. Since 2000, the Embassy has used the Democracy and Human Rights Funds to educate women and girls about their rights under international conventions. In addition, the Mission provided a variety of materials such as pamphlets to assist teachers and local NGOs in teaching lessons on human rights, the participation of women in a nascent democracy, the right to vote, the legal rights of women and children in marriage inheritance. The Embassy also provided educational materials to assist with the basic human rights training and education of the country's indigenous minority.

The training funds have amounted to approximately \$150,000 over three years and have been invested in the development of local human rights groups, some of which have reconnected with international human rights organizations. Results from these investments include

the formation of additional human rights groups and a greater awareness of and respect for human rights among the general population.

To promote worker rights, the U.S. Department of Labor helped fund a two-year regional initiative by the International Labor Organization's International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor with the goal of demobilizing and rehabilitating child soldiers and reintegrating them into their former communities.

To promote good governance, the Mission used demarches, workshops, and a public diplomacy conference to stress the need for the Government to increase transparency in accounting for oil revenues and other funds. As a result, President Sassou stressed in August that transparency efforts would be given high priority in his administration and established a state organ to fight corruption.

COTE D'IVOIRE

The stability of Cote d'Ivoire has deteriorated since the death of President Felix Houphouet-Boigny in 1993. The Ivoirian political leadership has been unable to transition effectively to democratic processes or to manage ethnic and regional differences. Issues of citizenship, eligibility to hold office, and land ownership have been manipulated to favor core southern ethnic groups to the disadvantage of largely Muslim and animist northerners and foreigners, who make up over 25 percent of the population. This has aggravated perceptions of difference and disadvantage.

Prior to the September 19, 2002, coup attempt that divided the country between north and south, the U.S. human rights and democracy strategy focused on national reconciliation, election assistance, strengthening civil society, promoting women's and children's human rights, and combating child labor. Since then, the U.S. and the international community have focused on restoring peace and demanding accountability for human rights abuses by the Government, its supporters, and rebels. The U.S. has devoted significant resources to issues identified in the 2001 National Reconciliation Forum.

The U.S. endorses the January 2003 Linas-Marcoussis peace agreement and has supported its implementation. We have urged the Government in the strongest terms to take steps to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators of human rights abuses and have insisted on measures to prevent a climate of impunity for human rights abuses in Cote d'Ivoire. Since the signing of accord, the United States has pushed the Government and all political parties to implement the accord that entails significant power sharing by the presidency. Ambassador Render is a key member (representing the G-8 countries) of the UN Monitoring Committee for the Marcoussis accord and regularly pushes President Gbagbo, rebel New Forces leaders, and other Ivoirian leaders to complete the all-parties government, share presidential powers more broadly, and take the many steps necessary to prepare for elections scheduled for 2005.

To enhance conflict prevention capabilities and to identify potential areas of col-

laboration, the Embassy's Public Affairs Section (PAS) is leading weekly meetings with a working group of Ministry of National Reconciliation officials and political party members in preparation for a five-day workshop on "Compromise and Consensus Building For Sustainable Political Stability."

The promotion of respect for human rights and democratization in Cote d'Ivoire remains a top mission goal. Our objective is to help Cote d'Ivoire consolidate a democratic multiparty system in which all Ivoirians have a voice and which is characterized by good governance, respect for fundamental human rights, an independent judiciary, and a strong civil society. Most non-humanitarian bilateral assistance to Cote d'Ivoire has, however, been suspended since the fundamentally flawed 2000 presidential election. The U.S. has supported the efforts of the United Nations, France, and the Economic Community of West African States to maintain peace and to get national reconciliation efforts back on track.

The U.S. continues to work with the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) to facilitate democracy-building programs. In July 2002, the Mission used the Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) to support observers for the Departmental Elections in 14 key areas around the country. The funds went to a consortium of local non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The Mission continues to use Economic Support Funds, DHRF, and the International Visitors Program to

strengthen democracy and human rights. In 2002 and 2003, the Mission sent Ivoirians to programs on “Administration of Courts,” “Good Governance and the Private Sector,” “International Security Issues,” “Grassroots Democracy,” and “Trafficking in Women and Children.” In March 2003, PAS sponsored the performance of a play titled “The Hope of the People: The Life and Death of Martin Luther King, Jr.” The play proved an effective means of promoting the ideals of democracy, social justice and non-violence. Also in March, PAS organized a conference for 150 high school students titled: “Civic Education: The Role and Responsibility of Youth in Peace.” The conference emphasized that civic education is the essential foundation for a sustainable democracy, while providing a forum for the students to learn more about their country’s laws. DHRF grants supported an NGO law education program in Abidjan’s politically volatile working-class Port Bouet section and purchased much needed office equipment for another NGO promoting the rule of law and legal education for citizens. The Embassy aided a women’s NGO in reopening a shelter for battered women. The Mission also supported the national Junior Chamber of Commerce’s anti-corruption campaign with a DHRF grant.

Cote d’Ivoire is a destination country for trafficked children. The United States Department of Labor has made a three-year grant to the International Labor Organization’s International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor totaling \$6,000,000 to strengthen the capacity of public and private agencies to:

- take actions to combat child labor;
- increase awareness and social mobilization on related issues;
- integrate labor inspection with child labor monitoring; and
- design a child labor in agriculture database to be maintained at the national and sub-regional levels.

In May 2003, PAS held a successful Interactive Dialogue with a live television hookup from the U.S. on trafficking in persons.

DJIBOUTI

Djibouti is a republic with a strong presidency and a weak but evolving legislature. The ruling People’s Rally for Progress (RPP), which has been in power since independence in 1977, continued to control the political system and to suppress organized opposition. However, the country held its first multi-party legislative elections ever in 2003, the first legislative elections to be held since 1997. The judiciary was not independent of the executive and did not provide citizens’ due process. Women generally have been excluded from senior positions in government and in the political parties even though they legally were entitled to participate in the political process, and no women served in the legislature.

In 2002 the Embassy focused on providing support and training for key decision-makers and for Djibouti’s first-ever multi-party legislative election in early 2003. The U.S. provided \$500,000 in Economic Support Funds (ESF) in support of the election. In addition, the Embassy funded three related projects from its Democracy and Human Rights Fund.

Using ESF funds, the Embassy worked with the Ministry of the Interior to ensure a smooth, relatively transparent election. The U.S. funded the purchase of ballots, ballot boxes, computers to tabulate results, an intranet within the ministry, and vehicles to transport materials. While independent election observers commented that actual balloting proceeded efficiently, the election was marred by opposition party claims of voting irregularities. The Embassy also organized a well received single country International Visitors Program for the members of the newly-created Independent National Election Commission and sent two opposition leaders on other International Visitors Programs to the U.S.

Despite 2002 legislation mandating 10 percent female representation in Parliament, the number of highly educated, politically informed women in Djibouti is very low. In an effort to support the new legislation, the Embassy collaborated with the Ministry for the Promotion of the Rights of Women in an educational campaign to inform women voters of the legislative changes. Additionally, the assistance supported a conference to target key women leaders who might run for election and educate them on the role of a legislator.

The Embassy also partnered with the Djiboutian League of Human Rights to sponsor a seminar for members of various local political parties. The seminar concentrated on the Constitution and its role in ensuring universal human rights, including the role of the judiciary, in elections. In an indication of increased public awareness of the constitutional system, opposition parties who disputed the

legislative election results took their complaints to the courts rather than to the streets.

The Ministry of Justice and the newly created government commission on Human Rights participated in a program funded by Embassy Democracy and Human Rights Fund that encouraged thorough examination of the Penal Code. As a result, the commission called for the adoption of several international conventions on Human Rights.

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Equatorial Guinea nominally is a multi-party constitutional republic; however, in practice President Teodoro Obiang Nguema and the small Mongomo subclan of the majority Fang tribe, which has ruled since the country's independence in 1968, dominate the Government. President Obiang, who has ruled since seizing power in a military coup d'état in 1979, was re-elected in a December 2002 election marred by extensive fraud and intimidation.

The Government's human rights record remained poor in several areas: security forces committed numerous abuses, including torture, beating, and other physical abuse of prisoners and suspects, which at times resulted in deaths. They also used arbitrary arrest, detention, and incommunicado detention. The judicial system repeatedly failed to ensure due process and remained subject to executive pressures. The Government severely restricted freedom of speech and of the press; however, freedom of speech

improved marginally during the year. There were no effective domestic human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Efforts to promote human rights and reinforce democratic development in Equatorial Guinea were complicated by the fact that there was no U.S. Embassy located in the country in 2002. However, the U.S. Mission in Cameroon, which is responsible for all U.S. Government representation, promoted respect for human rights and reinforced the democratic development process in 2002 and early 2003 by engaging the Government, opposition groups, and NGOs at a number of levels. The Embassy held top-level ministerial discussions focused on promoting the respect for human rights, monitored the 2002 elections, aided the development of civil society, and has encouraged U.S. companies' cooperative involvement in development projects.

To foster improvements in the judicial system, the Mission regularly engaged the President and the Ministry of Justice and Religion in an open, frank, and ongoing dialogue on respect for justice and human rights. The Ambassador raised concerns with the President and high-level ministers over fair trial practices and continued to condemn torture and harsh prison sentences. With Embassy persuasion, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was admitted into the country for the first time in years to conduct prison inspections. This exercise has allowed the ICRC and the Government to identify problems and solutions in partnership. In addition, the Embassy used the International Visitors Program to host noted speaker Professor Edward Errante of the University of Paris II, who spoke to citizens in Malabo in September about the rule of law and combating corruption.



To promote respect for political rights, the Ambassador raised concerns with the President and high-level ministers over election transparency and governance and used public diplomacy funds to administer workshops on the conduct of free and fair elections, with an emphasis on the role of civil society, political parties and local election observers.

Embassy officers traveled extensively throughout the country to observe the degree of transparency of the December 2002 presidential electoral campaign and election. Prior to the election, the Mission engaged both local and national governments to express our expectation of a clean election, which we believe added to the efficiency of its conduct. Embassy personnel visited polling stations, surveyed election procedures and conversed with local officials and the voting populace. Although the election suffered from irregularities, the opposition was allowed to campaign, voters were registered, and ballot materials reached their destinations.

During the election, the Embassy held meetings with opposition parties, regional officials, election observers from the African Union and the International Organization of the Francophonie, and members of the press. The Embassy compiled its observations and proffered recommendations on the conduct of future elections directly to the President.

In 2002, the Mission continued efforts to actively encourage effective and transparent management of the country's oil

wealth for social and economic development. Accordingly, the Embassy has stressed the necessity of budgetary reforms.

Finally, in order to promote respect for human rights and democracy more vigorously, the Embassy received Congressional approval for the opening of a diplomatic mission in Equatorial Guinea in 2002. Assuming all logistical preparations can be expeditiously completed, in-country operations will commence in 2003.

ERITREA

Progress in Eritrea towards democracy suffered a serious setback in 2001 when the Government arrested prominent persons who voiced opposition to government policy, shut down the nascent free press, and postponed national elections indefinitely. In October 2001, two Foreign Service National (FSN) employees of the Embassy were also arrested and are still being held without charge. In the past year, the Government has also barred so-called non-traditional religious denominations from holding services. The constitution has not been implemented and the ruling People's Front for Democracy and Justice is the only legal political party.

The U.S. maintained an active dialogue with Eritrea on human rights and democracy. The Embassy's engagement aimed at encouraging a return to the path of democratization, implementation of the constitution, a genuinely free press, true religious freedom, a multi-party political system, and free elections. The Embassy has made clear to the Government that

increased cooperation with the U.S. depends on demonstrated improvement with respect to democracy and human rights.

To build support for democratic reform and human rights among opinion leaders, the Embassy held regular functions for alumni of USG exchange programs to facilitate interactions among these influential Eritreans. The Embassy also promoted discussions of democracy and its principles through speaking engagements featuring Embassy staff, the U.S. Speakers Program, information outreach, the “Africa Journal,” the International Visitors and Voluntary Visitors Programs, and direct contacts with government officials. Embassy staff also conducted informational outreach to promote U.S. policies and values, introduce Eritreans to the U.S. experience of democratic governance, foster familiarity with American culture, and enhance mutual understanding between the countries.

Embassy staff also promoted increased use of the Information Resource Center at the Embassy as a source of information about U.S. policies, values, and culture. The Embassy established the first of several planned “American Corners” in partnership with local libraries and conducted information outreach to libraries and educational institutions.

One of the Embassy’s goals is to provide greater access to information throughout the country to promote democracy and appreciation of human rights. In the absence of a free, independent press, the Internet has become one of the few means for a small but growing number of Eritreans to have access to independent

views and information. USAID, which was instrumental in bringing the Internet to Eritrea, the last country in Africa to have it, administers a \$500,000 program to provide technical assistance to expand the availability of cheap, efficient, reliable Internet access. The Embassy’s Public Affairs Section conducted Internet training classes to support these efforts.

Embassy staff worked to strengthen civil society by supporting activities that devolve political power and economic resources by providing resources and expertise to promote the development of community-based organizations. USAID provided \$370,000 in funding to create community-based savings and credit associations that helped mostly women rebuild or start businesses after the war with Ethiopia. Citizen participation was expanded by three USG-funded NGOs that have started humanitarian assistance and community development programs that extended opportunities for grassroots participation by working with parent-teacher associations, water associations, and local health committees.

ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia continued its transition from a unitary to a federal system of government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. Highly centralized authority, poverty, civil conflict, and unfamiliarity with democratic concepts combined to complicate the implementation of federalism. The weak, overburdened judiciary continued to show signs of independence. Numerous internally displaced persons (IDPs) from internal ethnic conflicts remained in temporary quarters. Violence and societal discrimination against women remained problems.

The U.S. collaborated closely with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government officials to advance human rights. The Embassy demarched the Government on several occasions about its obligations under the Geneva Conventions to release all remaining Eritrean prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian internees from the Ethiopia-Eritrea war. Following these demarches, along with those of other western embassies, the Ethiopian Government released all remaining POWs and internees in November 2002.

The Embassy promoted the rule of law through a USAID funded judicial training program conducted by the Federal Supreme Court, in which 1,344 judges received training, of whom 90 were women. A total of 71 percent of Federal High Court and Supreme Court judges and 73 percent of district-level judges have completed this training. Eighty-two percent of judges in Ethiopia have now been trained through USAID-sponsored

programs. USAID funding provided for the printing of 5,387 copies of various legal codes and documents to expand the quantity of legal information available to judges and enhance the quality of judicial decision-making.

The Embassy's Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) provided financial support totaling \$70,000 to three organizations during Fiscal Year (FY) 2002, promoting women's rights and civic education for the pastoralist Karayu people in southern Ethiopia and a workshop on conflict resolution for warring Muslim tribesmen in the Afar region. Another \$70,000 was allocated to fund six DHRF projects during FYs 2002 and 2003, ranging from establishing a pro-bono legal clinic in Addis Ababa, to conducting workshops in several regions promoting popular participation in local government, to training instructors to educate their peers on the harmful effects of traditional practices like female genital mutilation.



PHOTO: USAID/Ron Sibley

The Embassy's Public Affairs Section sponsored two journalism training sessions during the year, in which 37 journalists participated. The Embassy also sent five people to the U.S. on International Visitor Programs that focused on such issues as foreign policy and human rights, the U.S. judicial system, trafficking of women and children, and organized labor. The Public Affairs Section brought in a speaker to address conflict resolution.

The Embassy oversaw a \$383,000 grant from the Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to educate secondary school students in Addis Ababa and other localities about the dangers of trafficking in persons to the Middle East. Complementing these efforts is a \$136,000 USAID-funded "Be Informed" campaign, also being conducted by IOM. This project aims to empower potential migrants by providing information about the realities of irregular migration, particularly the risks for women.

The Mission also oversaw a local rape crisis intervention project in Addis Ababa, funded by the Department's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Bureau. The center has trained 29 first responders in sexual assault intervention techniques since July 2001, and has developed guidelines for treating sexual assault victims that are presently in use in area hospitals.

GABON

Gabon is a republic dominated by a strong presidency. Although opposition parties have been legal since 1990, a single party, the Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG), has remained in power since 1968. PDG leader El Hadj Omar Bongo, President since 1967, was reelected for another 7-year term in 1998 in an election marred by irregularities.

The Government's human rights record remained poor; and it continued to commit serious abuses. The security forces beat and tortured prisoners and detainees; arbitrary arrest and detention were problems; and the judiciary remained subject to government influence. Forced labor remained a problem, and trafficking in children was a serious problem. No law specifically prohibited trafficking in persons, and the Government neither actively investigated cases of trafficking nor prosecuted any cases against traffickers.

To promote the development of a free and independent press, the Mission provided \$9,000 through the Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) to a local non-governmental organization (NGO) to sponsor a seminar on the use of publicity in media development. In addition, the Mission gave \$11,000 to a local NGO for an information campaign to combat discrimination against HIV/AIDS patients.

To address the country's difficulty with trafficking in children, the Ambassador and Mission personnel approached presidential, ministerial and working-level officials of the Government and parlia-

mentary leaders to engage them on the need for concrete measures to stop trafficking. The Embassy also coordinated efforts with the NGO community to keep the trafficking issue at the top of the Government's agenda.

The Mission secured \$60,000 to provide training and equipment for a special police unit to prevent child trafficking. The Embassy then used the availability of the funds as leverage to push the Government toward passing a law that would criminalize child trafficking. In March 2003, the National Assembly President introduced a bill that would criminalize child trafficking in the country. The Assembly President chose an Embassy-sponsored anti-trafficking seminar to announce the introduction of the bill.

In May, the International Labor Organization's International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor (ILO/IPEC) launched a 3-year, \$200,000 project funded by the U.S. Department of Labor focused on prevention, institutional capacity-building and strategies to fight trafficking. The Embassy subsequently worked with ILO/IPEC regional personnel and the project manager to provide guidance on strategy development and local contacts.

The Embassy gave \$12,000 to a collective of local NGOs to undertake a multimedia campaign to increase public awareness of child trafficking. The Mission also provided \$10,000 from the DHRF to a local NGO to organize a March 2003 conference to improve coordination among anti-trafficking NGOs.

Over the last two years, the Secretary of State and other senior Department officials raised the issue of child trafficking with President Omar Bongo and other senior officials during meetings in both Libreville and Washington. A senior U.S. official also visited Gabon in 2002 to discuss the country's role in the UN Commission on Human Rights.

THE GAMBIA

In public and private, the United States' human rights strategy promotes three core values: democratic freedoms, the rule of law, and human dignity. The Embassy emphasizes the connection between the restoration of democratic rule and the respect for human rights, on the one hand, with the benefits of improved relations with the U.S., on the other, e.g., African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) eligibility, renewed military assistance, and the return of visible USAID programming.

Using the opening provided by the surprisingly successful presidential election in October 2001, as well as the legislative and local elections in 2002, the U.S. has established a frank and constructive dialogue with the Gambian government on human rights. The U.S. also maintains contacts with the opposition and civil society. The Embassy also coordinates with other diplomatic missions when addressing specific human rights concerns.

The lifting of Section 508 sanctions and achieving AGOA eligibility served as highly effective "carrots" in U. S. Government human rights strategy over recent years. The U. S. resumed non-lethal military assistance to The Gambia immediately

after Section 508 sanctions were lifted. The U. S. renewed the tradition (interrupted since 1994) of sending Gambian military officers on International Military Education and Training (IMET) and Expanded IMET programs. Gambian officers have recently attended training seminars focusing on civil-military relations and the proper role of the military in a democracy.

The USG continues to sponsor Democracy and Human Rights Fund projects, working with civil society and local NGOs to develop Gambian awareness of human and civil rights.

Embassy Banjul uses its small, yet effective public diplomacy program to underscore the need to consolidate the recent gains in democracy and human rights.

GHANA

U.S. human rights activities in 2002 and early 2003 were multifaceted and included efforts through the Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DRHF), Embassy Public Affairs Section (PAS), USAID/Ghana, and Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs-funded projects designed to increase awareness of, and respect for, human rights. These activities were well received and highly successful, actively contributing to the improved human rights environment seen in Ghana in 2002.

The U.S. used DHRF funds in 2002 to support four non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are working to diminish incidents of human rights abuses and improve the quality of life for the most

vulnerable segments of Ghanaian society. With DHRF funding, the Muslim Family Counseling Centre conducted workshops to campaign against violence against women and children in four slum areas of Accra. Their focus was on sexual violence, female genital mutilation and forced child marriages. The Rural Women's Association conducted an awareness-raising campaign against abuse of women, focusing on the need for girl-child education. The African Women Lawyer's Association held a forum to review a nationwide questionnaire on sexual harassment in the workplace. Victims were interviewed, and a memorandum was created that will form the basis for new legislation against sexual harassment in the workplace. The Centre for Sustainable Development Initiatives provided legal rights training to 215 female micro-entrepreneurs to raise awareness about women's legal rights.

In 2002 USAID/Ghana used the Education for Development and Democracy Initiative (EDDI) to support organizations that advance the cause of human rights. Through EDDI, USAID supplied the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) with computers and Internet communications equipment for its headquarters and 10 regional offices. Better data management will enable CHRAJ to effectively monitor, report, catalogue and track human rights abuses, especially those perpetrated against society's more vulnerable women and children. Through their enhanced access to information and communications, CHRAJ regional offices will also serve as resource centers on human rights and anti-cor-

ruption education and provide a valuable link to the numerous civil society organizations involved with human rights education at the local level. The U.S also supports the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Ghana to address the human rights abuses experienced in Ghana since independence in 1957, as well as judicial exchanges through the State Department to address corruption issues in the Ghanaian judiciary.

In 2002 Embassy Accra used INL funds to implement a highly successful eight-week Community Policing Program with the Ghanaian Police Service (GPS). An ICITAP Technical Advisor taught two iterations of a one-week Community Policing Course at the GPS Training College near Accra, and traveled throughout the country lecturing on the philosophy behind Community Policing to police, religious, and community leaders. ICITAP instructors also trained 20 GPS members in bicycle patrol techniques. The bicycle patrol program has been well received by the Ghanaian public and is

having a significant remedial impact on the GPS's relationship with the public. The Ghanaian public views the bicycle patrols as the GPS taking a more active interest in protecting and serving them.

During 2002 the PAS held workshops on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) for the legal and judicial communities, co-sponsored with the Center for African Peace and Conflict Resolution at California State University, Sacramento. It held seminars on fighting corruption and encouraging transparency in government co-sponsored with the Ghana Integrity Initiative; made a grant to the Ghana Association of Chartered Mediators and Arbitrators for ADR training of leaders in Buduburum refugee camp; and issued various grants to train mediators, counselors and community leaders in the following organizations: Gender Violence Survivor Support Network, Women's Initiative for Self-Empowerment, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, and Leadership for Advocacy for Women in Africa.



PHOTO: IFES

GUINEA

The United States consistently holds up human rights and democracy as a cornerstone of U.S. policy in Guinea, emphasizing the need for progress on these issues in every speech. The Embassy consistently reminds Guinean interlocutors of their obligation under multiple international treaties and agreements concerning refugees, and praises them for hosting up to 700,000 refugees over last 13 years. In addition, the Embassy retains close ties and meets regularly with opposition parties, political dissidents, and local and international human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

In 2002, the Mission provided military training to an 800-man battalion from the Guinean Armed Forces (GAF). One

full week of the training was devoted to human rights, treatment of refugees and other non-combatants, and the role of a military in a democracy; these themes were constantly reinforced throughout the training. The Defense Attache Office also provides annual seminars to the GAF and civil society leaders on subjects including the military's legal obligations.

Public Affairs Section (PAS) resources are devoted to democracy-related activities, and the PAS provides multiple events specifically targeting democracy and human rights. In addition, at each of its many activities and for a, PAS encourages open discussion on all topics relating to democracy and human rights.

The USAID democracy and governance program influences the democratic process from the bottom-up through training of citizens, locally elected officials and representatives of government technical services, and top-down through the facilitation of dialogue and building capacity to respond to citizen demands at the national level. Assistance targets three areas: increased citizen participation in local governance, support for improved political processes, and capacity-building for civil society organizations to provide civic education and advocate for citizen interests with the administration.

The Embassy supports TOSTAN, an American non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Africa and funded primarily by UNICEF, to promote religious freedom as well as other education projects, with a \$650,000 grant.



The Embassy annually receives more than \$70,000 from the Democracy and Human Rights Fund, which has over the past year gone to projects promoting the rights of women, students and teachers and victims of HIV/AIDS, combating female genital mutilation, and providing training in conflict resolution and responsible media. The program has also funded projects researching the role of the press in local elections and providing Internet access to legal documents.

Furthermore, Guinea is one of five cocoa-producing countries participating in the U.S.-funded, three-year International Labor Organization's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor to eliminate the worst forms of child labor from commercial agriculture.

GUINEA BISSAU

Currently, officers from the U.S. Embassy in Dakar, Senegal, cover Guinea Bissau with regular trips. On each visit, embassy officers meet with senior Government officials, the political opposition, human rights observers and members of civil society. United States Government human rights concerns are always a priority item during discussions, whether the topic is arbitrary arrest, prisoners held incommunicado, harassment of journalists or opposition politicians, or basic political governance issues such as the failure of the Presidency to promulgate a new constitution, or actions of the Presidency that undermine the independence of the judiciary.

In 2001, the Embassy Dakar channeled \$250,000 in Economic Support Funds (ESF) through the United Nations

Development Program in Bissau to support activities promoting the rule of law. These resources funded a series of well attended and well received seminars for the judiciary, legislature and civil society focusing on the rule of law, separation of powers and the administration of justice.

In 2002 the Defense Attache's Office sponsored two members of the military for International Military Education and Training (IMET) in the U.S. In promoting professionalization of the military, IMET training has a key role to play in support of human rights.

Given our very limited presence in Guinea Bissau, Embassy Dakar has coordinated very closely on human rights and other priority issues with members of the international community working on Guinea Bissau. These include the office of the resident Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Bissau, and donor missions based in Bissau and in Dakar. Legislative elections are now scheduled for July 6, but are likely to be postponed, and Embassy Dakar has energetically advocated a unified international donor position linking election and post-election assistance to the resolution of the outstanding basic political governance issues — the lack of a definitive constitution, lack of an independent Supreme Court and continuing legal harassment of the political opposition.

While there are no systematic and massive human rights violations in Guinea Bissau, lack of a clear constitutional framework and the systematic use of the law as an instrument of repression have created an environment conducive to fundamental rights violations.

The Department of State provided \$99,000, channeled through a non-governmental organization, to support demining activities in Guinea Bissau, and in 2003 provided an additional \$225,000 for the same purpose.

KENYA

Kenya held successful multiparty general elections on December 27, 2002; election observers concluded the polling broadly reflected the popular will and was free and fair. For the first time since independence in 1963, the Kenya African National Union (KANU) lost the presidency and the majority of seats in Parliament. The National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), a grouping of opposition political parties and former KANU leaders, swept the presidential and parliamentary results.

Torture continues to be a problem in Kenya. While the Constitution prohibits such acts, security forces continued during recent years to use torture and physical violence during interrogation and to punish both pretrial detainees and convicted prisoners. The Embassy provided a \$1.4 million three-year grant to the U.S. International University to develop a training program and a comprehensive service-support system program for trauma and torture victims. USAID also awarded a grant to a local NGO to document, counsel, and treat torture survivors and their families.

A key component of the Embassy's strategy was support for competent, transparent electoral administration, which included \$1.6 million in Economic Support Funds (ESF) since March 2001

in assistance to the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK) through the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES). In the past, electoral administration was plagued by low voter registration, lack of access to voter registration lists, poorly trained election officials, and unacceptable delays in voting and counting. The Embassy's assistance focused on improving the ECK's capacity to administer the elections, through technical support and improved internal communication capabilities to ensure public security and provide secure transit of ballots and electoral results. Following the 2002 elections, the ECK was generally acknowledged to have provided better electoral administration than in the past.

U.S. strategy also entailed working with political parties, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the media to expand the dissemination of accurate political, economic, and electoral information. This effort included USAID funding of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) to help political parties participate more effectively in the political process. USAID provided \$210,000 in Economic Support Funds (ESF) for a local organization, the Agency for Development Education and Communication (ADEC), to train political party agents. In addition, the International Republican Institute (IRI), with a \$320,000 USAID ESF grant, conducted a campaign to promote voter registration. IRI's program also included a component to strengthen public opinion polling and included a series of presidential preference polls that closely mirrored the final presidential results. The Institute for Education in Democracy (IED), Muslim Civic Education Trust

(MCET) and the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) implemented a \$395,000 USAID ESF program utilizing radio, television, and print media to provide fora for political parties to debate each other and communicate their platforms to the voting public. Human Rights and Democracy Funds (HRDF) were also used to facilitate face-to-face media debates between the various candidates.

The Department and the Embassy collaborated on election monitoring. The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) obligated \$300,000 of its Fiscal Year (FY) 2002 Human Rights and Democracy Fund (HRDF) to USAID to support election monitoring in Kenya. The program included mechanisms to create an explicit relationship between the media monitoring group and the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK) and broader domestic monitoring and observation. The Embassy supported domestic election observation efforts during the election, focusing on funding critical activities not covered by other donors and providing international election observers to complement domestic observation efforts. More than 100 individuals volunteered for the effort, and mission observers were deployed to all provinces.

In the second year of a 3-year \$200,061 grant for labor law reform funded by International Labor Affairs Bureau (ILAB), the International Labor Organization (ILO) continued the assessment and revision of Kenya's labor law to bring it into full conformity with ILO principles and to address issues such as child labor, discrimination, and civil service reform.

In 2002, Kenya was also in the second year of a 3-year \$4,743,658 East Africa regional project with ILO's International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC) to identify, withdraw, and rehabilitate approximately 7,500 children working under hazardous conditions in selected plantations and to provide families with viable alternatives to child labor. The project promotes adoption of effective legislation to prevent hazardous child labor and seeks to prevent some 15,000 at-risk children from entering the labor market prematurely. The International Labor Rights Fund also implemented an ESF-funded anti-sweatshop program through USAID.

The Embassy sought to prevent a recurrence of ethnic and political violence that escalated around previous elections. With assistance from USAID, the Central Depository Unit (a consortium of local NGOs) monitored and reported on electoral violence, providing valuable information to the media, the ECK, the political parties, and the general public. Election violence was markedly lower in the 2002 election period than in previous general election periods.

Some ethnic conflicts in Kenya spill over from neighboring countries, and there is significant internal conflict among various ethnic groups and political factions. USAID funded more than a dozen regional conflict-resolution programs, most with a cross-border focus. Many of the grantees were based in Kenya, especially groups working along Kenya's borders with Ethiopia and Somalia. The National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK) received a \$300,000 grant from ESF funds to strengthen communities' capacity

to prevent and resolve conflicts through peace-building at the community level. Through the establishment of village peace committees, this project has reduced inter-ethnic conflicts in Western Kenya, the North Rift, Nyanza, and Central Provinces and resulted in the voluntary resettlement of displaced families.

Finally, the ALVA consortium organized training and related activities for women politicians seeking higher office. The training was carried out in collaboration with Egerton University in Rift Valley Province.

LESOTHO

In the May 2002 election, the ruling Lesotho Congress for Democracy was returned to office winning 79 of the 80 constituency based seats (as it did in 1998). However, the 40 added proportional seats were divided among nine opposition parties. As a direct result of the engagement of the United States and other donor countries, Lesotho held a free and fair election. This is the first election since the restoration of democracy in 1993 that has not been marred by post-election violence by losing parties seeking to destabilize the country. A U.S. supported program of political party training run by the National Democratic Institute played an important role in decreasing tensions among Lesotho's political parties, particularly at the grassroots level. USAID-funded South African Development Community Parliamentary Forum missions also came to Lesotho during both the voter registration and election periods, providing important reassurance that both processes were transparent and lawful. Likewise,

Embassy Maseru, with temporary assistance from Embassy Pretoria, fielded five observer teams on election day as part of a UN-coordinated election observation process. This process provided international legitimacy and was also crucial in deflating extravagant opposition claims that the election was stolen.

Embassy Maseru has creatively used Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) monies to strengthen Lesotho's courts during the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) trials, the largest anti-corruption case ever prosecuted in Africa, involving bribery in connection with a multi-billion dollar dam and watershed development project. In the course of the bribery trial of the former head of the LHDA, the Embassy learned that the presiding judge was having difficulty properly researching questions raised by defense motions due to the lack of a proper law library at Lesotho's high court. Embassy Maseru responded by using DHRF funds to purchase for the High Court a computer with an Internet connection and a subscription to the LEXIS/NEXIS service. Utilizing these resources, the High Court was able to do the legal research necessary to properly decide various motions made in the case and to write a 244-page opinion supporting the conviction of the defendant and his sentence to 18 years in prison. This was the stiffest sentence ever given for a bribery conviction in the southern Africa region and an important vindication of the rule of law in Lesotho.

The United States has also constructed its International Military Education and Training (IMET) program to advance democracy in Lesotho. The focus of the

IMET program has been to provide professional management and technical training to as wide a segment of Lesotho's military as possible, while always stressing the message that the military in a democracy should remain an apolitical and professional institution. War-fighting has not been part of Lesotho's IMET program in recent years.

The military remained completely out of the political process during the 2002 elections, in contrast to 1998 where segments of the military were actively involved in trying to overthrow the democratically elected government.

The U.S. has also worked with the Lesotho to strengthen Lesotho's justice system. Especially important in this regard was the opening of the regional International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in Botswana in 2001. The Lesotho Government is enthusiastic about the possibilities that ILEA offers to professionalize Lesotho's police force and has filled every ILEA slot offered. Lesotho's Home Affairs Minister welcomes USG assistance in all areas of law enforcement, including immigration control and counter-terrorism.

The U.S. has actively promoted the concept of worker's rights in Lesotho. The Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) has been an important aid in this regard. The Lesotho Government has been very willing to work closely with the Embassy to make sure that the local labor code conformed to international standards and that local manufacturers got the message that anti-union actions and unsafe workplaces would not be tolerated. The Embassy has used DHRF and

public diplomacy International Visitor Programs to provide training to labor unions in the workers' rights area. The Embassy has also fostered communication among all stakeholders, including U.S. customers, regarding to necessity for strict adherence to AGOA requirements on workers' rights.

The Embassy has also deployed DHRF funds to strengthen local human rights non-governmental organizations. The Media Institute of Lesotho has received funds to promote ethical practices in the media and to strengthen human rights reporting. The Lesotho Law Reform Commission has received funding to aid its work on a bill to abolish traditional restrictions imposed by marital status and to equalize the status of women in Lesotho. The Lesotho National Association of the Physically Disabled received money to raise public awareness of the rights of people with physical disabilities.

LIBERIA

Embassy Monrovia has created and continued programs to address human rights abuses and has consistently maintained a dialogue on these matters with the Government of Liberia (GOL). Embassy officials regularly meet with both GOL officials and human rights organizations to urge the curtailment of human rights abuses in Liberia. The U.S. has made strong public statements denouncing abuses. On January 2, for instance, at his monthly press conference, the Ambassador highlighted the plight of political prisoners in Liberia, often held incommunicado and tortured.

Since the GOL does not have a formal human rights office or a mechanism to promote human rights, the USG Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) is an important means of promoting democracy and human rights through Liberian advocacy groups. The Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL), Liberia Women Initiative and the Movement for Democratic Elections in Liberia have all benefited from the DHRF program to promote democracy, human rights and good governance through workshops, civic education, drama and awareness campaigns. Currently, there is a bill before the Liberian legislature sponsored by AFELL to promote women's rights in Liberia.

The Embassy is the most visible foreign organization protecting and promoting human rights and democracy in Liberia. Through its Public Affairs Office, the Embassy has promoted and held workshops for journalists and local human rights advocates. Additionally, Embassy Monrovia has collaborated with the Liberia Democracy Resource Center and sponsored civic education activities in high schools around the country.

The treatment of political prisoners in Liberia is particularly important to the U.S. The release of journalist Hassan Bility is one noteworthy example of Embassy efforts. Bility was accused of aiding a rebel group and was jailed in June 2002. The Embassy objected to Bility's incarceration because he was not given access to lawyers, was not tried in a civilian court and was tortured. After an extensive campaign by the Embassy along with local and international groups, Bility was released in December 2002.

The Ambassador and senior Embassy officers have personally intervened and brought pressure on the GOL through meetings with senior government officials. In recent meetings, for example, the Embassy has raised government harassment of Mandingo Muslims and urged the Liberian government to ensure humanitarian treatment of refugees that have streamed across the border from Cote d'Ivoire. In large part because of persistent lobbying by Embassy officers, the GOL ratified during 2002 the International Labor Organization Convention to Eliminate Child Labor.

MADAGASCAR

The December 2001 presidential elections and ensuing political crisis colored much of the Embassy's democracy and human rights work. There was widespread, politically motivated conflict that led to approximately 100 deaths. In May 2002, Marc Ravalomanana was declared President, and by June the Ravalomanana Government gained control of the country. The December 15 legislative elections were judged by international observers as generally free and fair.

The Embassy promotes key democratic values through Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) grants, especially in provincial regions. In 2002, DHRF grants of approximately \$50,000 supported good governance, rule of law, and respect for human rights and funded projects to improve prison conditions for minors, expedite extreme cases of preventive detention, make the Legal Code more accessible to laymen, and establish a nationwide human rights register.



PHOTO:IFES

Eight Embassy personnel observed the December 15 legislative elections, traveling to all provincial capitals and other regions to witness election organization, voting, and counting and reporting of votes. An Economic Support Fund (ESF) allocation of \$400,000 supported local election observation, voter education programs, training of local government election administrators, and transportation of election officials and ballots. The elections were, on the whole, well organized, transparent, and credible.

During the political crisis, the Embassy's Public Affairs Section invited Dr. Joyce Neu, Director of the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, University of San Diego, to meet with Ministers, legislators, political and civil society leaders, media and human rights groups, and minority group representatives. Discussions focused on peace, justice, tolerance, and political reconciliation in post-conflict situations.

The Embassy coordinates and the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) chairs the monthly Madagascar Human Rights Working Group (HRWG). The HRWG includes local and international human

rights groups, representatives from several ministries, and a wide range of individual activists, and sessions include presentations, question-and-answer periods, and a review of the past month's human rights-related developments in Madagascar. The HRWG provides a vehicle for advancing U.S. human rights objectives and a regular forum for official and civil society to discuss and debate contentious issues.

MAURITANIA

Mauritania is a highly centralized Islamic Republic dominated by a strong presidency. The Government's human rights record remained poor; although there were some improvements in a few areas, serious problems remained. Child labor in the informal sector was common. There continued to be reports that slavery in the form of forced and involuntary servitude persisted in some isolated areas; that unofficial, voluntary servitude persisted; and that former slaves continued to work for former masters or others.

Following a November 2002 Amnesty International report calling for the Government to take more direct action to

reverse the vestiges of slavery, which was banned in 1981, Embassy officials met with human rights advocates and government officials to discuss ways that the U.S. Government could best support government and civil society efforts to address social inequalities and prejudices. The May 2002 visit of a Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff member and the December 2002 visit of an official from the Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor provided opportunities to reinforce civil society efforts to address the vestiges of slavery and reinforce the nascent independent press. These visits also led to discussions with a wide range of citizens on ways in which the U.S. Government could help strengthen democratic institutions and further the development of political party structures.

Using International Military Education Training (IMET) funding, in January 2002 the Embassy sponsored a week-long seminar on civil-military relations. Seminar moderators challenged participants, including senior military leaders, members of the National Assembly and Senate, and various government officials, to understand each other's perspectives and roles in a developing democracy. The program was very well received and publicized, and many participants acknowledged it was the first time they had the opportunity for substantive discussions with such a broad range of civilian and military colleagues.

In coordination with Department offices, the Embassy reviewed human rights records of members of military and security forces who participated in training conducted by U.S. Government civilian or

military personnel. U.S. Defense Attache Office personnel based in Dakar and Nouakchott Embassy officials used the opportunity of these Leahy Amendment reviews to discuss with senior security and military officials the importance of protecting human rights in the conduct of law enforcement or military activities and of requiring human rights training for security and military personnel.

A Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) grant allowed the Embassy to work closely with the free press association to sponsor a series of seminars on the role of the press in a developing democracy and in election coverage and monitoring. The Embassy sponsored the participation of the editor of an independent Mauritanian newspaper in a September 2002 International Visitors Program (IVP) on "Investigative journalism" conducted by the Department's Education and Cultural Affairs bureau.

Embassy officials and various U.S. Government visitors on several occasions discussed religious freedom and tolerance with senior government officials and religious leaders. The Embassy engaged religious leaders in the fight against HIV/AIDS, developing a close working relationship that also provided opportunities to discuss and promote religious tolerance.

During the August 2002 visit of a U.S. Department of Labor official, Embassy officials discussed collective bargaining practices and basic wage and working conditions issues with government officials and labor leaders. These discussions contributed to the current review of Mauritania's labor laws.

Throughout the year, Embassy officials encouraged the Government to adopt and implement key international agreements on trafficking of persons. In 2002, Mauritania ratified the Sale of Children and Child Soldiers protocols to the UN Convention on Children's Rights.

MOZAMBIQUE

Mozambique's constitutional Government, headed by President Joaquim Chissano, held its second general multiparty elections in 1999. President Chissano was reelected in generally free and fair elections. The Government's human rights record remained poor; although there were some improvements in a few areas, serious problems remained. Police continued to commit numerous abuses, including unlawful killings, excessive use of force, and other abuses. Police officers continued to use arbitrary arrest and detention, beat persons in custody, and abused prostitutes and street children. Prison conditions remained extremely harsh and life threatening. Fair and expeditious trials were problematic due to an inefficient, understaffed, and underfunded judiciary, which was dominated by the executive and subject to corruption. The abuse and criminal exploitation of street children, including child prostitution, increased in urban areas, and child labor remained a problem.

Because many of the human rights abuses occurred within the justice system, the Embassy focused its human rights and democracy-promotion efforts in that sector; however, the Embassy addressed other human rights issues in areas such as political party development and the

education of the public on human rights.

To foster a more professional police force and reduce human rights abuses, the Embassy used a \$300,000 grant to support the training of key police officials and officials from the Attorney General's Office at the regional International Law Enforcement Academy in Botswana.

To improve the country's judicial system, the Mission invested \$100,000 of USAID and other U.S. Government funding to strongly emphasize anti-corruption efforts at the national level. In addition to supporting the Government's Anti-Corruption Unit, the Embassy invited experts from the U.S. Department of Justice and other U.S. Government agencies to meet with local prosecutors and draft an assessment and strategic plan. Embassy funds also sent the six members of the anti-corruption unit to the U.S. to meet with counterparts and observe the judicial process. The Mission worked closely with a local non-governmental organization (NGO) to strengthen civil society efforts on corruption and to support a survey on corruption.

The Mission has encouraged the Attorney General's Office to pursue cases that involve corruption, particularly in the Government. An indirect result of this pressure was the prosecution of those involved in the 2000 murder of the well-known journalist, Carlos Cardoso, and the investigation into the Ministry of Interior after one of the accused escaped from a maximum security prison. The trial was broadcast on radio and television and resulted in maximum sentences for six defendants. Since then, investigations of the President's son (named by the defen-

dants as a conspirator) and of various bank and Ministry officials have been opened.

Especially relevant due to upcoming 2003 municipal elections and 2004 national elections, U.S. Government efforts in promoting democracy continued to be quite strong. USAID has funded the National Democratic Institute's (NDI's) activities in political party development. NDI carried out several training sessions in 2002 with political parties, focusing on the elements of running a campaign and political party organization. The Mission also supported civic education to inform the public about the electoral process and the significance of voting. The Embassy used both Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) and USAID funds to support seminars for civil society on civic education in 2002.

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) funded Embassy efforts to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic by sponsoring workplace education programs to promote prevention and combat discrimination. Another DOL grant targeted industrial relations for improvement.

Using DHRF grants, the Embassy has funded various programs to educate the public on human rights. As a result of those grants, a local media organization started developing a supplement on human rights issues to be circulated throughout the country. In addition, an NGO has started a campaign on women's rights in coordination with the local government and will be organizing a seminar for local leaders and women. DHRF funds have also supported a radio sta-

tion's production and broadcast of programming related to human rights issues.

The Mission worked to publicize a Human Rights Day event and coordinated a Children's Day that involved children doing art projects related to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. The Embassy also participated in a radio program to discuss human rights and the significance of the Universal Declaration.

The Mission has also sent various community members and Mozambican government employees on International Visitor Programs in 2002, on topics such as democracy, investigative journalism, and civic education.

NIGER

The United States is now funneling approximately \$2,000,000 into multiple human rights and democracy programs in Niger. Through International Military Education and Training (IMET), the Embassy has sponsored successful civil-military training seminars stressing respect for human rights (\$100,000). In 2002, the USG invested \$80,000 in six new activities, including a study and workshop on religious fundamentalism, increased access to legal counsel for women and children, the collection and publication of international human rights treaties signed by Niger, support to women candidates in upcoming local elections, civic education in rural areas, and workshops on discrimination.

For the past several years, USAID has funded a limited number of activities to promote democracy and governance in Niger. One such activity included train-

ing for parliamentarians in legislative roles, responsibilities and implementation techniques. The National Democratic Institute implemented this activity and worked closely with the national legislature. \$400,000 in Economic Support Funds were secured to assist the Government and local partners in the conduct of the local elections. In 2001, the U.S. funded four local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) implementing Democracy and Human Rights Fund activities, including activities to improve legal counsel in rural areas, workshops to discuss democratic issues, and sessions in local schools to promote increased understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each citizen in the democratic process, and the role of women in local government.

Africare and Helen Keller International will have installed a total of 25 solar-powered rural radio stations (\$1,188,865) in three regions of Niger by the end of Fiscal Year 2003. Developmental messages, including messages on decentralization, voter education, agriculture, literacy and

health are being broadcast locally, and all radio stations are linked to two-way radios to exchange information and news.

The U.S. is developing and implementing a \$300,000 effort funded under the Leland Initiative to improve public access to the Internet, an essential element to increase information sharing, promote development and empower civil society. USAID has funded assessment and development trips to plan how to increase the number and improve the service of private Internet service providers.

NIGERIA

Nigeria's return to elected civilian governance in 1999 after almost two decades of military misrule represented an important political and economic opportunity for the country and West Africa as a whole.

Despite significant improvements in basic civil liberties under civilian government, Nigeria continues to face serious violence and instability. Governmental, administrative and regulatory institutions remain weak and poorly coordinated. The period



PHOTO:IFES

since the 1999 election has been among the most violent in Nigerian history since independence, as numerous ethnic and religious disputes have flared. There is serious friction between the federal government and state and local governments over resources. Law enforcement is insufficiently trained and equipped to deal with outbreaks of ethnic and religious violence and the Government has been forced to call on the army to restore order on numerous occasions.

INL started a train-the-trainers program on police reform in August to improve the professionalism, responsibility and performance of the Nigerian police. A major portion of the program focused on respect for human rights, covering such topics as excessive use of force and extrajudicial killings. The USG has for the last

three years assisted the Nigerian military to restructure itself to be more responsive to civil control and respect for human rights. The Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC) sponsored two International Military Education and Training (IMET) seminars by the Center for Civil Military Relations and the Defense Institute of International Legal Studies. All the IMET students who attended training in the United States were exposed to rule of law and human rights issues as a part of their training curriculum. The U.S. Mission operated several programs addressing the institutional and legal shortcomings that lead to abuse of human rights in Nigeria. This U.S. assistance contributed to a significant decline in reports of military extrajudicial killings of civilians while performing policing roles in 2002.



PHOTO:IFES

U.S.-based non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local civil society groups worked with state and national legislatures to improve legislative processes and increase opportunities for citizen input. Extensive investment was also made in training and technical assistance to improve the capacity of election administration authorities to carry out upcoming local and national elections, and to enhance political parties' abilities to compete on issue-based platforms, promote women's participation and build better communications with their grassroots affiliates. The USG provided \$10.5 million in 2001 and 2002 to support the 2003 elections. Another \$1.2 million in Economic Support Funds (ESF) and \$575,000 in development assistance were made available in March 2003. Assistance focussed on support for international monitors, technical assistance

and training for domestic monitors, Independent National Election Commission (INEC) poll workers, party agents, and INEC officials, and funding for electoral material security safeguards.

Nigeria's recently completed presidential, legislative, gubernatorial, and state assembly elections were more peaceful than anticipated, but were marred by serious irregularities in parts of the country. Due to these flaws, the outcomes of numerous races are disputed and these disputes have heightened political tension in some areas; however, most Nigerians hope that these elections will produce Nigeria's first successful and sustained transition from one civilian administration to another. Most of the major parties were guilty of electoral misconduct to some degree. The net result of vote tampering may have favored the PDP, contributing to the People's Democratic Party (PDP) domination of gubernatorial and legislative races. The PDP holds 28 of 36 governorships and will control over 65 percent of the National Assembly. President Obasanjo won nearly 62 percent of the popular vote; ten percentage points less than he received in 1999; nevertheless electoral malpractices may have increased to his overall margin of victory in the 2003 elections. Electoral tribunals have been empanelled to hear complaints. This will be a monumental test for the Nigerian judiciary: whether it will act in a sufficiently independent and non-partisan manner by adjudicating the proper remedy where material misconduct has been proven.

The Embassy funded Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) projects for the reduction of corruption in the govern-

ment. The Embassy funded a DHRF project to support the eradication of female genital mutilation. In addition, PAS, with a vigorous International Visitors Program, with input from several different sections of the Mission, included representatives from NGOs, the host government and civil society in a wide range of programs, notably conflict resolution, NGO management, empowerment of women, trafficking issues, and Islam in America. USAID programs also worked with a wide range of civil society organizations, including advocacy training for women's groups and assistance for other groups to address the numerous communal and religious conflicts that have continued to occur.

The State Department has committed \$2.3 million to combat trafficking in persons in Nigeria. A \$350,000 program for Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is designed to harmonize regional anti-trafficking legislation and law enforcement responses to trafficking in persons. The Department of Justice has provided \$350,000 from its International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) and Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training (OPDAT) program to train prosecutors, law enforcement, and judicial officials. An additional \$500,000 from ESF supports two rehabilitation shelters (one in Edo and one in Lagos) that are critical links in the victim-rehabilitation pipeline. The Department of Labor is providing financial backing for the International Labor Organization's Program to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor. USAID is also committing development assistance funds to antitrafficking programs. The Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration is

funding an HIV/AIDS component to the rehabilitation program for trafficking victims. USG officials traveled to Nigeria in 2002 to help raise public awareness, meet with government officials, law enforcement, and NGOs. Public Affairs (PAS) held a workshop on trafficking on International Women's Day.

RWANDA

The largely Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) took power in 1994 and declared a government of National Unity that has functioned during the transition period following the civil war and 1994 genocide. The RPF remained the principal political force that controlled the government. President Paul Kagame was sworn in on April 22, 2000, in the first nonviolent presidential change in the country's history. Rwandans overwhelmingly approved a new constitution in June, and national elections are scheduled for late 2003.

The Government's human rights record remained poor. The majority of human rights abuses committed by security forces were in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Security forces beat suspects, and arbitrary arrest, detention, and prolonged pretrial detention remained serious problems. The judiciary was subject to executive influence and did not always ensure due process or expeditious trials. The Government continued to conduct genocide trials at a slow pace, and the first "Gacaca" courts, which represent the rural justice system put in place to try genocide suspects, began operation in July.

Embassy efforts to build democratic insti-

tutions and create a climate favorable to human rights were carried out through USAID, public affairs programs and the Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF). Furthermore, the Embassy made every effort to highlight the importance of democracy and human rights in speeches and in interaction with Government authorities and civil society representatives.

USAID provided funding for programs related to the implementation of the Gacaca system, including funding to develop a case-management database system for the rural courts and vehicles to transport Gacaca officials and data to and from provinces. USAID also funded a Johns Hopkins University community sensitization campaign that encouraged participation in the Gacaca process. It supported U.S.-based private voluntary organization (PVO) Internews, which disseminated information in rural areas about the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Arusha via mobile screenings of videos produced at the tribunal.

Mission personnel conducted province-level conferences focusing on law reform and human and civil rights. The Embassy sponsored a number of law and governance seminars, including the March 2002 Law Reform and Law Revision Conference. The conference brought in regional experts and followed up on an August 2001 conference on the constitution. Among the conference's outcomes was the recommendation to form a financially independent judiciary, a provision included in the new constitution.

Throughout the year, the Mission delivered demarches emphasizing the promotion of democracy and the human rights of refugees to high-level officials in the Government. The Mission used demarches to support the position of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on the involuntary refoulement of Congolese refugees from Rwanda and the mistreatment of refugees while in camps in Rwanda. The Embassy has avidly followed the case of the repatriation of Rwandan ex-combatants cantoned at Kamina and reminded the Government of the need to respect their rights. In April 2002, the Embassy coordinated efforts with the European Union for a joint demarche on the arrest of former President Pasteur Bizimungu, a key issue in the struggle to attain political transparency in Rwanda.

USAID continued to fund a number of democracy and governance activities through the Government and local international non-governmental organizations. It assisted in the compilation of an accurate voter database and the manufacture of ballots in preparation for the constitutional referendum and the presidential and legislative elections scheduled for 2003. USAID also continued to provide technical assistance and training support to government officials in support of the Government's decentralization program and to the National Assembly.

To promote worker rights, the U.S. Department of Labor funded the Regional Program on the Prevention and Reintegration of Children Involved in Armed Conflicts in Central Africa as a part of its International Child Labor Technical Assistance.

USAID funded CARE International's Civil Society Strengthening Project and the International Rescue Committee's (IRC) Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) project, both of which have significant components aimed at furthering awareness of and respect for human rights. The CARE Program aims to build the assessment, implementation, and monitoring capacity of a number of civil society networks, including one focused on human rights promotion. One component of IRC's program is human rights training for judicial police.

The Mission continued to use the International Visitor Program (IVP) to promote awareness of democracy and human rights principles. The Embassy sponsored participation in numerous IVPs, including topics such as conflict resolution, good governance and grassroots democracy.

The Embassy launched three DHRF grants in 2002. The first grant project examined the rights of children in Kigali; the second published a manual about women's and children's rights; and the third conducted seminars on basic human rights and the Gacaca system in Gitarama Province.

The Ambassador took advantage of numerous speaking engagements to reinforce the importance of and U.S. commitment to respect for human rights and democracy. For example, in her December 10 speech commemorating Human Rights Day, the Ambassador highlighted the need to respect human rights and emphasized that a human rights-based response to HIV/AIDS should be a priority in the struggle to attain universal human rights.

SIERRA LEONE

The primary U.S. interest in Sierra Leone is the consolidation of the peace, which has been established principally due to massive intervention by the international community, in a sub-region marked by increasing instability. Preventing a relapse into civil conflict and promoting the current tremendously improved human rights climate is the aim of all USG efforts in Sierra Leone. This requires stable, democratic governance marked by significantly greater probity and transparency and broader effective participation than has been the case for most of Sierra Leone's independent history. None of these is achievable without a continuing, long-term commitment of very substantial outside oversight and resources.

Past human rights abuses were directly related to extreme insecurity in the country. Consequently, much of our effort to address the immediate source of human rights abuses is directed at strengthening the ability of the Government to provide for the security of its citizens. Several incidents of human rights abuses in 2002 were attributed to belligerents in the conflict in neighboring Liberia. Both sides in that conflict sent armed foraging parties into Sierra Leone to loot border communities and abduct Sierra Leone citizens to serve against their will as porters and possibly in other capacities. Our provision of helicopter services, paid for by peacekeeping funds, to the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces and the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) have assisted in strengthening border security.

Through the application of \$15 million in Economic Support Funds (ESF) over three years, the USG is the largest financial contributor to the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), which has a mandate from the UN Security Council (UNSC) to try those with the greatest responsibility for violations of international humanitarian and human rights law committed in Sierra Leone since 1996. The USG also gives the SCSL strong political backing in the UNSC and on the UN management committee. The Ambassador and members of his country team are in regular contact with senior SCSL officials to determine how the USG can most effectively support the Court. Successful implementation of the SCSL's mandate will send a strong message throughout Africa that the culture of impunity is fast ending.

The U.S. contributed \$500,000 in ESF to Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) through the United Nations' Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. We have closely followed the establishment of the TRC and the Ambassador has weighed in with key players to assure effective management of USG resources in support of the TRC's mandate.

The U.S. participates in the UK-led effort to remake the armed forces and police into effective forces responsive to civilian authority. Three American military personnel embedded in the International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT) and U.S.-funded helicopter support have contributed substantially to IMATT's capabilities and burnished its international credentials. Our Defense Attache Office organized a conference to

promote improved civil-military relations. Exceptionally poor civil-military relations have been a chronic impediment to democratic governance in this society. During 2002 we secured and filled two training slots for qualified SLP officers at the FBI training academy at Quantico.

All elements of the U.S. Mission make democratic practice an element of their dialogue with key contacts in civil society, including religious leaders, women, politicians in government and opposition, and the media. We also underline the significance of improved democratic practice to sustaining U.S. engagement in Sierra Leone. Our Mission focuses our enhanced Public Diplomacy capability on issues of democratic practice with all relevant audiences. Through USAID, the Democracy and Human Rights Fund and other resources, we support the activities of the National Democratic Institute and other relevant non-governmental organizations that promote human rights and good governance.

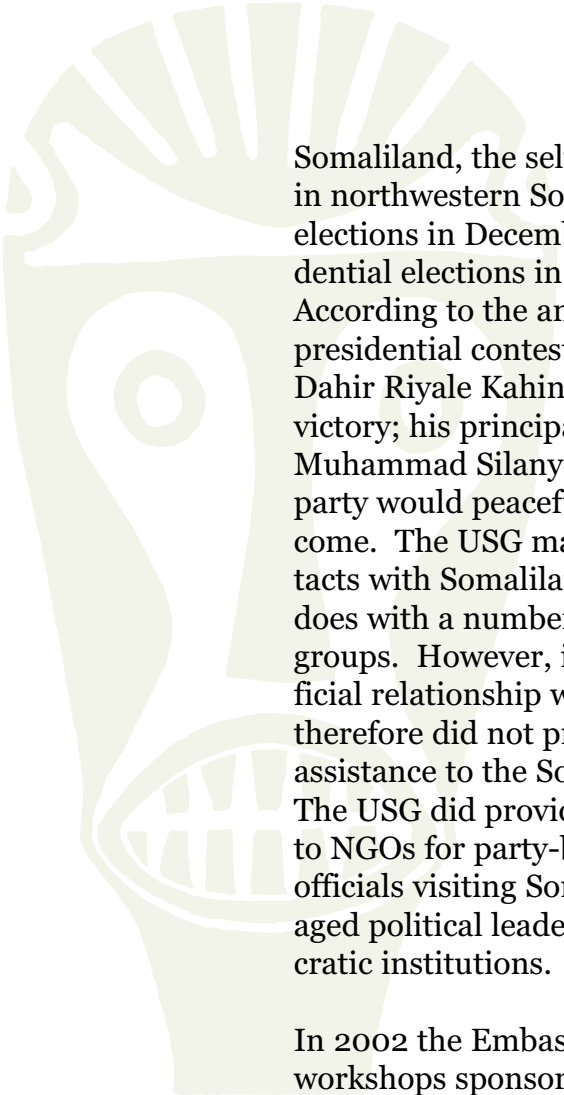
SOMALIA

Somalia has been without a central government since its last president, dictator Mohamed Siad Barre, fled the country in 1991. In May 2000, in Arta, Djibouti, delegates representing all clans and a wide spectrum of Somali society participated in a “Conference for National Peace and Reconciliation in Somalia.” The Conference adopted a charter for a three-year Transitional National Government (TNG) and selected a 245-member Transitional National Assembly (TNA). Administrations in the northwest (Somaliland) and northeast (Puntland) do not recognize the results of the Djibouti

Conference, nor do several Mogadishu-based factional leaders. Serious inter-clan and intra-clan fighting continues in parts of the country.

Since there is no U.S. Embassy in Somalia, Embassy Nairobi is responsible for covering Somalia. During visits to Somalia, the Embassy has encouraged participation in Somali reconciliation to develop countrywide democratic institutions and also addressed human rights violations on an individual basis when aware of them. In August, two Somali non-governmental organizations (NGOs) used the Democracy and Human Rights Fund to host a five-day training workshop in Hargeisa, Somaliland, in which various human rights groups discussed general human rights issues, investigation of human rights violations, reporting techniques, and advocacy mechanisms. They also established a seven-member committee to coordinate activities throughout the country. In July and August in the Puntland region, Puntland leader Abdullahi Yusuf arrested a number of civil rights activists to prevent them from traveling to the conference in Hargeisa. The Embassy intervened with Yusuf and the detainees were released.

The USG has financially supported the current Somalia reconciliation process, led by Kenya on behalf of the regional Intergovernmental Authority on Development, which began in October 2002 and is ongoing. The Embassy’s “Somalia Watcher” has been an active observer at the talks, which have as their goal the establishment of governance in Somalia acceptable to all Somalis.



Somaliland, the self-proclaimed republic in northwestern Somalia, held municipal elections in December 2002 and presidential elections in April 2003. According to the announced results in the presidential contest, the incumbent, Dahir Riyale Kahin, won a very narrow victory; his principal challenger, Ahmad Muhammad Silanyo, announced that his party would peacefully protest the outcome. The USG maintains informal contacts with Somaliland authorities, as it does with a number of other Somali groups. However, it does not have an official relationship with Somaliland and therefore did not provide direct electoral assistance to the Somaliland authorities. The USG did provide financial assistance to NGOs for party-building, and USG officials visiting Somaliland have encouraged political leaders to develop democratic institutions.

In 2002 the Embassy funded a series of workshops sponsored by the Somali NGO Save Somali Women and Children that focused on women's rights. The NGO brought together over 150 women in Mogadishu and helped form the Somali Women's Caucus to perpetuate education on human rights issues in Mogadishu, focusing on the relationship between human rights and Shari'a law.

The Embassy also funded projects in the Gedo region of southwestern Somalia that concentrated on conflict resolution. In Gedo, a local NGO conducted a two-month training program for traditional elders, civil society groups, and representatives from the local authority on good governance and conflict avoidance. In Mogadishu, a traditional elder held an 11-

day workshop, funded by the Embassy, on conflict resolution for traditional elders, civil society members, and clan leaders.

SUDAN

The current regime, led by President Omar Hassan al-Bashir, suspended the 1985 Constitution, abrogated press freedom, and only recently allowed token opposition parties to function. In 1991, Shari'a law was established, and punishment for minor crimes has been harsh in the past. Civil liberties are restricted despite a new constitution in 1998. Members of the security forces are accused of torture and brutality. During the ongoing civil war in the south, there have been extrajudicial killings, abductions, forced conscription, and slavery. In addition, other areas of Sudan, particularly the oil-rich center, experience a high level of civil unrest and turmoil, leading to human rights abuses.

In 2002, the United States worked to stop terrorism, assure free access of humanitarian aid to all areas of Sudan, and end the civil war in the south. The Embassy maintained regular contacts with both government human rights groups as well as with human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Since September 2001, the United States has engaged both parties to the civil war in an effort to reach peace. The effort was initiated by Special Envoy John Danforth in the form of tests the parties could undertake in order to demonstrate their will to seek peace. These tests included a period of tranquility for health treatment, a cessation of hostilities in the Nuba Mountains area, a halt to attacks on civilians, and the

institution of a U.S.-led international eminent persons group to investigate slavery abductions and forced servitude. That effort spurred the engagement of the parties to participate in the peace talks, ongoing since June 2002.

Among Embassy efforts that focused on encouraging respect for human rights were its involvement in various activities associated with the peace process, specifically those focused on the guarantee of fundamental human rights in a post-conflict Sudan. In July 2002, the historic Machakos Protocol was signed in which the role of religion and the state and the right of self-determination for the south were addressed. This protocol provides a blueprint for the encouragement of human rights and democracy in the Sudan and its enforcement is a Mission goal. The United States with its Troika partners the United Kingdom and Norway remain actively engaged in the ongoing peace process by supporting the efforts of the peace talks mediator, retired Kenyan General Lazaro Sumbeiywo.

The U.S. provided assistance and support to the civilian protection monitoring team (CPMT) that began to function during 2002. The CPMT seeks to objectively document intentional military attacks against civilians occurring in the warring areas and to bring them to the attention of both the Government and the Sudanese Popular Liberation Movement (SPLM). In addition, since April 2002 \$12.5 million in Economic Support Funds (ESF) and Peacekeeping Operation (PKO) funds have been provided to the Joint Military Commission monitoring the cease-fire in the troubled Nuba Mountains region. A distinct improve-

ment in the humanitarian and human rights situation in the region has occurred as a result of the ceasefire.

The Embassy actively promoted a just interpretation of “the rule of law.” For example, Embassy officials monitored laws that infringed on human rights and engaged directly. Specifically, Embassy staff were able to investigate and engage the Government of Sudan concerning a case of alleged forced conversion and marriage of a Coptic Christian. The Embassy was able to meet the woman personally and intervened with the Ministry of Justice and the local mayor’s office on several occasions.

To encourage democracy, Embassy officials have met with members of the ruling party as well as with the opposition parties. Human rights were a primary focus. The Embassy has protested the arbitrary arrest and detention of members of the political opposition.

The Embassy also promoted freedom of the press by holding open press conferences in which local journalists asked questions that were not pre-screened of the CPMT monitors. This allowed for official responsibility and discussion of both sides’ human rights abuses in a neutral space.

To encourage religious freedom, the Embassy has cultivated wide contacts among different religious organizations and invited both Christian and Muslim Sudanese religious leaders to official Embassy functions.

SWAZILAND

Swaziland is an absolute monarchy and political parties are banned. The Government's respect for the rule of law regressed noticeably during 2002 as it announced its intention to disregard several court decisions that it deemed politically threatening. The Government continued to ignore certain foreign direct investors' violations of international labor standards and domestic labor laws. There were widespread allegations that some garment manufacturers did not comply with the labor laws and that the Government did not enforce the law effectively within this sector. The U.S. focused its human rights strategy on improving public understanding of constitutional principles and democracy, promoting respect for the rule of law, and fostering a healthy industrial relations environment in which workers' rights and unions are respected.

Although the Constitution has been suspended since 1973, in early 2002, the Government began a constitutional drafting exercise. The Embassy supported this project by developing a civic education program, in conjunction with the International Development Law Organization, aimed at improving public understanding of constitutional protections and the importance of political participation. Through this program, the Embassy works with civic groups, parliamentarians, judicial system representatives, and other government officials to increase understanding of constitutional systems and how various stakeholders can effectively participate in a constitutional government.

The Embassy used the Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) and public diplomacy (PD) programs to support the judiciary and civic groups striving to draw public attention to the need to respect an independent judiciary and the rule of law. In particular, the Embassy used the International Visitors Program (IVP) to expose members of the judiciary to the U.S. court system, and build an awareness of the need for transparency and accountability within the judiciary. DHRF funds facilitated communication among civic groups, including the law society, as they worked to pressure the Government to respect the rule of law.

Increasing government and business commitment to upholding internationally recognized workers' rights has been another focal point of U.S. human rights strategy. By sponsoring African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) educational workshops, the Embassy worked with the business community, government officials, and labor unions to ensure that these groups understand their obligations under AGOA and the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) to uphold workers' rights. By drawing attention to alleged problems in this respect and to union discrimination within the garment sector in particular, the Embassy gained both government acknowledgment that problems exist and a commitment to increasing efforts to enforce existing laws prohibiting union discrimination. The Embassy has also used the PD speaker program to bring a labor expert to Swaziland to strengthen local understanding of the role labor unions can play in building a healthy industrial environment.

TANZANIA

While there have been improvements in respect for human rights in recent years, the Government's overall record remains poor. Police were more disciplined during the year; however, members of the police and security forces committed unlawful killings and mistreated suspected criminals. The most serious violations of human rights resulted from election-related violence in Zanzibar in 2001 that left approximately 30 persons dead, 300 seriously injured, and more than 2,000 refugees. The Embassy consistently engaged the Government on a range of human rights issues and has a coordinated strategy with all USG agencies at the Embassy to best affect change.

With \$265,000 in funding from Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA), the Regional Security Office provided practical training and equipment to enable police to better safeguard security while upholding standards of human rights and democracy. The Civil Disorder Management Training, which was completed in April, gave police the skills to manage large demonstrations, protect demonstrators' rights against ill-treatment, and build the Government's confidence in its ability to manage demonstrations so that more rallies may be authorized rather than being banned outright. INL has also provided approximately \$300,000 in multi-year funding for a forensic laboratory to improve police investigation skills, speed up investiga-

tions (during which the accused is often locked up in remand), and reduce the number of wrongful arrests and convictions.

The Embassy's Democracy Assistance programs and USAID's civil society strengthening program focus on long-term efforts to build the capacity of grassroots organizations and strengthen parliament to become a more dynamic representative, lawmaking, and oversight institution. During the recent tabling of a non-governmental organizations (NGOs) bill, USAID-funded NGOs launched an advocacy campaign to seek changes to the bill, which many considered fundamentally flawed. The Embassy's Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) focused on increasing awareness of civil, political, and human rights through grassroots and national campaigns. DHRF projects have supported expanded legal rights education, grassroots education about women and inheritance laws, human rights training for journalists, and the establishment of legal aid clinics.

The Public Affairs Section sponsors experts and exchange programs about human rights, democracy, and good governance to increase awareness of these issues. In January 2003, the Embassy sent two Muslim journalists, a Zanzibari and a mainlander, on an International Visitor Program on Human Rights in U.S. Foreign Policy.

The Embassy has been active in raising awareness about trafficking in persons and is a member of a working group that includes persons from the Ministries of Women and Children, Labor, and Education, and the Police Department's

Criminal Investigation Division, as well as international and local NGOs. This initiative corresponds with the Department of Labor-funded “Time Bound Program for Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor,” which seeks to decrease the number of children working in the most exploitative sectors of mining, commercial agriculture and fishing, domestic labor, and prostitution. One DHRF project funds a community-based counseling center for victims of abuse and trafficking in Dar es Salaam. The Embassy also participated in a meeting with a rural traveling theater group lobbying locally for an end to Female Genital Mutilation.

With an HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in excess of 12 percent and growing, the rights of people affected by the disease is becoming an issue of national dialogue. USAID support helped create the Tanzanian Parliamentarians AIDS Coalition (TAPAC), an NGO of Members of Parliament who seek to use their positions to advocate against discrimination against people with HIV/AIDS, minimize stigma, protect orphans and vulnerable groups, and ensure proper accounting for the public funds designated to fight HIV/AIDS. With USAID health sector and democracy and governance support, the Tanzania Association of Women Lawyers (TAWLA) and the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs are examining existing laws to protect people living with AIDS against all forms of discrimination, including in housing, employment, access to education, and health care.

TOGO

The U.S. Government (USG) worked through its Embassy and U.S. and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to educate Togolese voters, improve political party organization and skills and push all parties to participate in credible, transparent elections.

In 2002, the USG spent \$15,000 to sponsor U.S. speakers in Togo focusing on corruption in government, professionalism in journalism on HIV/AIDS, and American studies. The USG in 2002 also spent \$88,000 to send 11 Togolese to the United States on International Visitor Programs, focusing on government, human rights, civic education and women’s empowerment. The U.S. sponsored programs and debates on good governance, promoting human rights and the rights of children, and making women aware of their rights.

With security assistance funding, the Mission sponsored several programs to engage the Togolese Armed Forces (FAT), a key player in Togo’s democratic transition. The funding provided training for FAT personnel, contributing to their professionalism, helping them work constructively with the civilian population, and improving their efforts to fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In April 2002, the U.S. co-sponsored the second of two Africa-wide conferences to adopt a uniform military Code of Conduct for sub-Saharan African Armed Forces. The language hammered out in Lome is under consideration by the African Union to become a continent-wide primer on civil-military relations and respect for human rights by military forces. In August

2002, the U.S. used security assistance funds to host a seminar for Togolese military personnel and representatives of Togo's civil society to promote discussions between the two groups.

In compliance with the Leahy Amendment, the Mission worked closely with the Togolese Armed Forces to vet military units for training and entered the accumulated data into a database for the country team to review on a quarterly basis. Similarly, the Mission also vetted Togolese troops deploying to regional peacekeeping duties in Cote d'Ivoire aboard U.S. Government-supplied transport.

Mission officers have engaged the Togolese Government and Armed Forces at all levels to promote democracy and human rights. Meeting regularly with government officials, opposition leaders, human rights groups, journalists and civil society leaders, Embassy staff stress the importance of democratic elections and human rights. In spite of the setbacks — opposition boycotts, the ruling party's unilateral changes to the electoral code and Constitution — this moral suasion is still an effective strategy for promoting U.S. values.

Using \$40,000 in Economic Support Funds, the USG supported a three-month National Democratic Institute evaluation and training project in Togo to work with all political parties. The project had been designed to run for six months, but did not do so because in March 2003, on the eve of the June presidential election, the Togolese government refused to allow further political party training.

Humanitarian assistance from the U.S. European Command totaling \$80,000 went to supporting the human rights of two groups in Togo: victims of trafficking and people living with HIV/AIDS. This funding paid to renovate a center for repatriated children and furnish the center for people diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.

UGANDA

President Yoweri Museveni continued to dominate the Government after he was reelected to a second five-year term in March 2001. His de-facto political party, the Movement, dominated the political process and limited the right of citizens to change their government. Since the 2001 presidential elections, opposition supporters have complained of arrests, detention without warrants, and utilization of so-called "safe-houses" where torture allegedly occurs. Security forces regularly beat suspects to obtain confessions and at times tortured detainees. Members of the security forces arbitrarily arrested and detained civilians, including opposition politicians and their supporters.

The USG actively participates in the Donor Democracy and Governance Group (DDGG), which established benchmarks on specific steps the Government needed to take to pursue democracy building and human rights goals. Utilizing Public Affairs programs and the Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF), the Embassy engaged Ugandans at the grassroots to promote human rights concerns. USAID programming, primarily through its Democracy, Governance and Conflict Team, is at the center of our human rights efforts.

The Embassy engaged government officials directly at the presidential and Cabinet levels and supported private human rights institutions. In response to opposition supporters' complaints following the 2001 elections, Embassy personnel encouraged human rights groups to solicit details from victims and locations of safe-houses.

The Embassy also has worked to address the deprivations of northern Ugandans who have suffered during almost 16 years of war with Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels. USAID provided funding for former rebels granted amnesty seeking to return from Sudan and Kenya. It also provided funds through a consortium of international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for community peace building and community support for formerly abducted and other war-affected children and victims of torture.

Embassy staff encouraged aggrieved political contenders following the 2001 and 2002 elections to challenge questionable election results in the courts. Although results have been mixed, the generally competent handling of these cases has reaffirmed faith in judicial independence.

The 2002 local elections had logistical delays, irregularities in distribution of electoral material and voting, confusion over electoral laws, lack of civic education, and electoral violence. Embassy personnel monitored many of the most contentious election locales. In response to a 2002 survey co-sponsored by the USG that showed only 21 percent of the electorate trusted the Electoral Commission (EC), Embassy staff met

with newly appointed EC Commissioners to lend donor confidence in their appointments and offered technical assistance to rebuild the institution. USAID programming assisted an election-monitoring group to prepare a critique of 2001-2002 election failures and concrete suggestions for corrective legislation. Another USAID program assisted an election-monitoring NGO with strategic planning to become a watch-dog organization that would monitor democratization in the lead up to 2006 elections. The U.S. Department of Treasury's Office of Technical Assistance held numerous meetings on money laundering for many government officials.

The Ambassador met frequently with opposition political leaders and the Public Affairs Section of the Embassy offered International Visitors Programs (IVPs) to political and community leaders from a broad spectrum of society, providing visitors with hands-on experience of American systems and experiences.

The Embassy also promoted freedom of speech and the press. When the Government closed the independent daily newspaper for a week in October 2002, Embassy staff engaged President Museveni and appeared on the front page of the government-sponsored daily newspaper, strongly arguing for free speech.

In support of religious freedom, the Embassy used DHRF funds to sponsor a successful series of seminars promoting inter-religious (Christian-Muslim) harmony among Ugandans. Embassy officials spoke to Muslim groups and attended various programs. IVPs allowed influential Muslim leaders to travel to the

U.S., where they shared their experiences with fellow Muslims.

To supplement and broaden empowerment of women, three DHRF workshop projects brought rural women increased awareness of their constitutional rights, improved handling of domestic violence, and enhanced knowledge of local legislation that impacted their daily lives.

Fiscal Year 2002 was the third year of a four-year country program to eliminate child labor in Uganda. The program is funded by the Department of Labor through the International Labor Organization's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (ILO/IPEC). It targets children engaged in commercial sexual exploitation, street work, domestic work, and commercial agriculture. The program funds the efforts of a number of NGOs at the community level. The Department of Labor also funded a four year-regional program to Protect the Basic Rights of Workers, in which Uganda participated and a three-year ILO/IPEC initiative to remove children from the worst forms of child labor in commercial agriculture.

On March 28, 2003, the U.S. Department of Labor issued a solicitation for bidders to implement a 4-year \$3 million Child Labor Education Initiative project that seeks to improve the accessibility and quality of basic education for children who either have been involved in the worst forms of child labor or are at risk of becoming involved.

ZAMBIA

The U.S. Government's effort to strengthen Zambia's poor human rights record has focused on promoting good governance and combating child labor. In addition, the Embassy has supported refugees, provided human rights training to police and members of the military, worked to promote equality for women, helped to strengthen labor institutions, funded projects aimed at protecting women and children from sexual abuse, and promoted effective dialogue between civil society and the Government.

To strengthen respect for the integrity of the person, the U.S. has supported human rights training for the country's police and members of the military. Over 70 law enforcement officials have received training at the International Law Enforcement Academy in Gaborone, Botswana. The Mission sent two members of the country's armed forces to the U.S. for a year's training and at least 40 hours of human rights instruction. Another five individuals from the military received human rights training while attending four- to eight-week courses in the U.S.

To build the media's ability to promote transparency in government and bolster freedom of the press, the Mission sent a reporter from an independent newspaper to participate in an International Visitor Program on investigative journalism.

To promote respect for political rights, the Mission has engaged the Government on two main fronts. First, to foster institutional reform in 2002, the Embassy chaired the donor coordination committee for parliamentary reform, and contributed

\$350,000 to execute reforms. It signed an agreement with the National Assembly that set out a road map for creating an effective, independent legislature that can act as an equal partner in the governance of the country, rather than a rubber stamp for the executive branch. The second area of engagement concerned electoral reform. After closely contested elections in December 2001 revealed weaknesses in the electoral system, the Mission's efforts in 2002 focused on convincing the Government, civil society, and others of the need to work together to reach agreement on the electoral reform agenda. The Embassy used the Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF) to support seminars on voters' rights and responsibilities, and workshops in four provinces aimed at fostering the participation of youth in democratic issues. In addition, the Embassy helped civil society research the U.S. Constitution; human rights advocacy groups continued to use the U.S. Constitution as a benchmark for drafting amendments to Zambia's constitution.

A number of Mission activities helped protect the rights of women and children. The Mission used the DHRF to support training for a paralegal program serving women and children who are victims of abuse and violence, as well as seminars to combat the traditional practice of "sexual cleansing", under which a widow is forced to have sexual relations with her late husband's relatives.

To combat child labor, the Mission supported and helped to launch several U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) programs. The U.S. Government invested \$2 million in the International Labor Organization's

(ILO's) International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC), a four-year program targeting the worst forms of child labor such as commercial sexual exploitation. The U.S. also funded Education for Children in Vulnerable Situations, a new project under the Child Labor Education Initiative. USAID used \$5.5 million to complement those programs by supporting the Government's Basic Education Sub-Sector Investment Program, which assured that children who might have otherwise been engaged in labor had an opportunity to go to school. The U.S. also supported a three-year \$5.3 million project called "Building the Foundations for Eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Anglophone Africa," which aimed to develop the ability of Government, workers and employers to safeguard worker rights.

The Embassy's efforts to foster a democratic, transparent and fair government included support for legal and institutional reform and practical assistance for the Government's campaign to combat corruption. The Embassy's Democracy and Governance Working Group mobilized \$650,000 in funding for the anti-corruption campaign in 2003. The U.S. Government has supported the Director of Public Prosecutions, a key player on the task force set up to combat corruption. In addition, the Embassy invited a team from the U.S. Departments of Treasury and Justice to visit the country to determine how the U.S. can best help build the country's capacity to investigate and prosecute crimes involving complicated international money trails.

Disease, including HIV/AIDS, had a disproportionate impact on women and children. The Centers for Disease Control were active in combating HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases in the country, and health was the major focus of USAID's program. USAID's strategy included gender as a cross-cutting issue, and USAID's programs aimed to strengthen the ability of women and children to defend their rights. The Embassy implemented projects aimed at helping children, including the construction of a school and an orphanage.

With funds totaling \$7.8 million, the U.S. Government was the largest donor to the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and to local and international NGOs working with refugees in the country. The Mission regularly consulted with UNHCR and the Government over programs to protect refugees and seek durable solutions for their futures.

ZIMBABWE

In March 2002, President Mugabe was declared the winner of a presidential election widely viewed as flawed by international observers and preceded and followed by a government-sanctioned campaign of violence directed towards supporters and potential supporters of the opposition. Resolution of the underlying political crisis in Zimbabwe is necessary for real progress on improving human rights.

The U.S. Government has funded an organization that comprehensively documents and disseminates case information of human rights abuses. Embassy officials have also personally interviewed vic-

tims of political violence during extensive travels throughout Zimbabwe, maintained a visible presence at significant political events, and facilitated access for U.S. journalists. Although access to senior government officials has been quite limited, the Ambassador and other Embassy officers took advantage of available meetings with government officials to push for an end to political violence and restoration of the rule of law. The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor supported these efforts with the issuance of a pamphlet, "Zimbabwe's Man-made Crisis."

USAID has also assisted victims of political violence, including funding documentation of atrocities, provision of legal assistance, and the establishment of centers for victims of torture and political violence in twelve cities and towns throughout Zimbabwe. The centers provide medical services, including psychological counseling, to victims as well as baskets of food and other essential commodities.

After the Government refused to accredit the delegation leader of a large mission from the European Union (EU) to observe the presidential election, the Embassy mounted its own observation effort and sent employees to all parts of the country. Embassy officers were also informal observers in subsequent parliamentary by-elections and rural district council elections.

USAID provided a range of assistance intended to strengthen legislative committees, one of the last venues where political discourse between the ruling and opposition parties still occurs openly. The

program provided outside expertise for committee work on bills and legislative oversight, technical assistance to committees for more effective public participation, support to the liaison committee on monitoring and evaluation of parliamentary reforms, mentoring and skills development of committee clerks, committee chairmen consultation and exchange program to South Africa, technical assistance to the research department to better support members and committee operations, and improved coordination between departments and the public relations office.

The Embassy used Democracy and Human Rights Funds (DHRF) to fund workshops for youths to develop radio dramas on political reconciliation, and to fund games events for urban youth to promote political tolerance. The radio dramas were produced, aired, and heard by thousands of Zimbabweans. Using the same funds, the Embassy helped print a civic awareness manual to educate rural women on their voting and other civic rights and organized workshops to present the manual. The Embassy also used DHRF funds to help a local organization hold workshops to educate rural farm workers on their voting rights.

With Economic Support Funds (ESF), a USAID grant, and Public Affairs Section (PAS) facilitation, Voice of America has begun a broadcast devoted to Zimbabwe five days a week. The program features interviews by Zimbabwean announcers with U.S. policymakers and Zimbabwean opinion makers on a range of key political, economic, and cultural topics. The program is the only broadcast of its kind

that targets citizens who have limited access to independent media. USAID also funded the establishment of centers that will allow citizens access to independent media sources. In addition, PAS awarded grants for a series of media training workshops on political reporting, responsibilities of journalists in conflict management, and court and legal reporting.

USAID has funded initiatives for trade unions to assist them to become more accountable and responsive to their memberships and more effective at representing their constituents' interests.

The Department of Labor is funding HIV/AIDS Workplace Education programs. Extended over a four-year period, these programs focus on preventing the spread of HIV and on ending discrimination against its victims in the workplace.

The Embassy Public Affairs section has sponsored speakers, events, and exchange programs on human rights and democracy and good governance to increase awareness of these issues, including four visits to the U.S. in the International Visitors Program focused on human rights themes and a grant to churches in Manicaland for training workshops on conflict intervention and management.

