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U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld meets with President of Turkmenistan Saparmurat Niyazov

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U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld met with President of Turkmenistan Saparmurat Niyazov on Sunday, April 28, 2002, to discuss Afghanistan, regional stability issues, and a range of bilateral and multilateral security issues. The meeting was held in the Caspian Sea city of Turkmenbashi.

Secretary Rumsfeld thanked President Niyazov for his strong support of humanitarian aid to neighboring Afghanistan. "This country has been cooperative on the global war on terrorism, for which we're grateful and appreciative," Rumsfeld said at a brief mid-day press conference in Turkmenbashi city. Over one third of all food aid reaching Afghanistan since September 11 transited Turkmenistan, helping to avert a humanitarian disaster. He said Turkmenistan's significant contribution to the humanitarian effort in Afghanistan "has undoubtedly saved the lives of Afghan people". The Secretary noted that Turkmenistan could also play a positive role in the rebuilding of Afghanistan, which will require strong international cooperation.

Secretary Rumsfeld also stressed the importance of NATO's Partnership for Peace and urged President Niyazov to expand Turkmenistan's participation in this program.

In addition to the multilateral Partnership for Peace Program, the United States and Turkmenistan cooperate on several bilateral military-to-military programs. This includes the Foreign Military Financing (FMF) Program, by which the U.S. Department of Defense provides foreign militaries with training and basic equipment. Last year, the U.S. Coast Guard donated an unarmed



U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld (at left) during the press conference

coast guard cutter to help Turkmenistan patrol its waters in the Caspian Sea as part of this program.

Under the Export Control and Related Border Security Assistance Program (EXBS) program, the U.S. Government can provide Turkmenistan with border security assessments, inspection and communication equipment, and training program. This was created by Congress to help prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Government of Turkmenistan signed a letter of agreement on this program in January 2002.

In addition, the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program has sent about twenty military officers from Turkmenistan to the U.S. since its inception four years ago.

The Secretary met briefly with U.S. and local reporters after his meeting with Niyazov. Rumsfeld took questions from reporters on the trans-Afghan pipeline, talks between Russia and the U.S., and America's military-to-military ties with Turkmenistan. (Please click [here](#) for full transcript.)

Peace Corps Volunteers Return to Three Velayats of Turkmenistan

The Peace Corps in Turkmenistan was again inaugurated on April 17, 2002, when seven Peace Corps Volunteers were sworn in to resume their volunteer work here. They will serve one more year in Turkmenistan, and will be joined by 45 new volunteers in September. Peace Corps Director Stanley Maleski swore in the volunteers in a ceremony at Peace Corps, and Ambassador Laura Kennedy presented each volunteer with an official letter of congratulations. All seven returned to regions outside of Ashgabat. Dan Stanley, business education volunteer, is now working at a farmers' association organizing and conducting business trainings for local farmers in Goek-Depe.

Three volunteers were placed in Mary Velayat. Ryan Watson, an English teaching volunteer, is working now at School # 4 in Bairam-Ali. He also works closely with the English teaching methodologists of the velayat as well as other English teachers of Bairam-ali. Two health volunteers, Heather Gregory and Julia Harrison, are working at Houses of Health. Julia Harrison is working at the Murgap Etrap Hospital in Mary. Heather Gregory is at the Central Etrap Hospital of Iolotan. They are working with family doctors and nurses on public health education. Their focus is anemia prevention and promoting breast-feeding, a healthy lifestyle, and nutrition.

Amy Lash, a health volunteer in Lebap Velayat, is working at the National Society of Red Cross and Red Crescent on a first aid project. Nate Truitt, an English teaching volunteer, is placed at School # 2 in Turkmenabat. He teaches spoken English to the students as well as works with English teachers on teaching methodology. Anthony Provenzano, a business volunteer in Turkmenabat, is working with the entrepreneurs of Lebap Velayat on business education.

Peace Corps Volunteers are already thinking about summer projects, including a summer camp for English teachers.



Ambassador Kennedy and Stanley Maleski, Peace Corps Director, swear in the returning Peace Corps Volunteers

U.S. Embassy in Ashgabat Marks Earth Day

The U.S. Embassy in Ashgabat celebrated Earth Day, April 22, this year with several events. In Dashoguz, Ambassador Kennedy and other representatives of the Embassy participated in a clean-up of the historical site Yzmykshir-kala which was organized by the representatives of the Dashoguz Ecological Club. She and about 30 others, mostly students, cleared broken beer bottles and other debris from the grounds of the ancient site. Ambassador Kennedy also participated in a tree planting ceremony at the Counterpart Consortium NGO Resource Center and Winrock International offices in Dashoguz.



Ambassador Kennedy with students during the clean-up activity

On April 20, alumni of USG-sponsored exchange programs planted greenery at the School for Visually Impaired Children in Ashgabat. They worked together with the students of the school, teaching the children the value of protecting the environment. On April 22, Shokhrat Orazov, alumnus of the Muskie program, conducted a seminar on soil recycling based on the Natural Resources Management Program in Turkmenistan for a group of alumni. Other alumni, together with ecological NGOs and high school students, traveled to Chuli to gather litter and clean up the mountain areas.



Alumni during tree planting activity at the School for Visually Impaired Children

Pragma unveils New Regional Trade Promotion Program

USAID, with the technical support of the Pragma Corporation, launched a new regional trade promotion service last month aimed at expanding ways that businesses in Central Asia find new customers and suppliers. On April 10, 2002, U.S. Ambassador Laura Kennedy, USAID Country Representative John Kropf, and Pragma Corporation Country Director Robert Morris unveiled Regional Trade Promotion to the representatives of various small and medium enterprises in Turkmenistan.

The presentation took place at the Pragma office. As the presenters explained, this program aims to increase trade within Central Asia and between Central Asia and other parts of the world through the wide use of a new website, SMETRADECENTER.NET. Through this interactive website, Central Asian companies will have regional and international exposure for their products; opportunities to compete for business with international buyers requesting products and services; access to a broader, more competitive supply base; and links to general information related to trade in the regions served. All Central Asian companies can register to be a part of this exciting new program. Once registered, they will be listed for business on the internationally accessible website and can search for business opportunities themselves through the same website: www.smetradecenter.net.

For further information, please contact the Pragma Corporation office at 2 Pushkina, tel: (99312) 354517, fax (99312) 390152.



Local entrepreneurs at the presentation of the new Regional Trade Promotion Program

American performers complete Jazz Tour in Ashgabat

The American Embassy sponsored "American Voices" artists CoCo York and Mike Del Ferro for a week of concerts and masterclasses April 15-18, 2002. Prior to arriving to Turkmenistan they took part in a two week Jazz Festival in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The highlight of their visit to Ashgabat was a large public concert for a packed house at the Mollanepes Theater April 17, 2002. The artists gave master-classes for students of the National Conservatory as well as students of the Musical School of Ashgabat. They also worked with professional musicians at the National Cultural Center. CoCo York also led a workshop for local independent bands and Mike enjoyed jamming with musicians in the local pubs.

Both artists commented on the high skill level of Ashgabat jazz musicians and expressed a desire to return to continue their work in Turkmenistan.

American Voices is an independent non-profit American NGO based in Amsterdam, whose members bring American music to audiences around the world. CoCo York is currently a professor of jazz studies at the Rotterdam Conservatory of Music. Mike del Ferro is a pianist, composer and arranger, who has performed, recorded and toured all over the world with musicians like Toots Thielemans, Scott Hamilton, Benny Bailey and many others.



Mike del Ferro at the master-class with the musicians

Alumni Career Fair

On April 27-28, 2002, alumni of USG-sponsored exchange programs from across Turkmenistan gathered in Ashgabat for a Career Fair organized by ACCELS. More than 40 alumni and 20 companies participated in the Career Fair. Alumni had a chance to find out more about those companies, leave their resumes and meet more people from the business community in Turkmenistan.

In addition, alumni of the Muskie and Undergraduate programs conducted seminars for younger alumni on job hunting skills, resume writing, Internet-related job opportunities, professionalism and ethics. Those alumni who work in regional alumni resource centers obtained information to share with other alumni and reach out to the local community upon the return to their sites.

American Bar Association Conference

On April 26, 2002, the American Bar Association (ABA) held its second and third commercial seminars devoted to private property law. The seminars, organized as one-day events, addressed the practical aspects of registering movable and immovable property. The first seminar had been held on March 26 and covered constitutional aspects of private property.

The recent seminars paid special attention to the concepts of so-called public registries and land cadastres, which are lists of all land property, its ownership and characteristics. These lists are stored in a public office and any interested person may use them to look up information. The commercial attorney for ABA delivered a detailed presentation on the experience of establishing public registries in Western and Eastern Europe. The participants had further debates regarding the importance of introducing a computerized and centralized public registry system in Turkmenistan.

Another point of discussion was the registration of movable property (for example, cars) and bank loans to buy the above-mentioned movable property. A government bank lawyer as well as a private bank lawyer made these presentations.

Information Resource Center Highlight: Educational Video Series: America in Perspective

America in Perspective is a series of videotapes focusing on the development of the United States since 1877. The series chronologically analyzes the people, events and forces in US history and politics over the past century and a half. The series combines historical films and photographs with interviews and talks by eyewitnesses. The videotapes are translated into Russian and can be used for classroom teaching as well as personal and group viewing. Below is the list of the series titles available at our Information Resource Center:

- The American dream deferred
- The Populist Challenge
- Labor's struggle
- The Huddled Masses
- War and Empire
- The Progressive Impulse
- The Progressive Presidents
- The Big Stick
- The Great War
- Transition and Tension
- Looking Backward-Looking Forward
- The Cold War Begins
- The Age of Conformity
- Toward the American Dream
- Expanding the American Dream
- The Limits of Power
- The Limits of Politics
- Conservative Resurgence
- An Era of Excess

To obtain the American Perspective video-series visit the US Embassy Information Resource Center at 78 Magtymguly Street. Please contact Azat Myradov at 350045 for further information about the series and other resources.

**The U.S. Embassy in Turkmenistan announces an open competition for the
Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program**

Deadline: June 1, 2002

The Hubert H. Humphrey Program provides opportunities for outstanding Turkmen mid-career professionals in leadership positions to take part in a program of independent study at a leading U.S. university in the 2003-2004 academic year.

Fellowships are granted competitively in the public or private sectors in the following fields:

- Natural resources and environmental management;
- Public policy analysis and public administration;
- Economic development;
- Agriculture development/agricultural economics;
- Finance and banking;
- Human resources management;
- Urban and regional planning;
- Drug abuse epidemiology, prevention, education, treatment;
- Public health policy and management;
- Technology policy and management;
- Educational planning;
- Law;
- Communication/journalism.

To be eligible for the program, applicants must have:

- University degree;
- Five years of substantial professional experience;
- Demonstrated leadership qualities and strong commitment to public service;
- Fluency in English (TOEFL scores not lower than 575).

Interested applicants must apply to the Public Affairs Section, the American Center, 78 Magtymguly Street, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, Please contact Anjela Begjanova for more information: begjanovaak@state.gov, or 35 00 45