



# United States Mission in Turkmenistan

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## Ambassador Kennedy Delivers Aid to the Turkmen Blind and Deaf Society

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U.S. Ambassador to Turkmenistan Laura E. Kennedy officially dispersed humanitarian aid supplied by the U.S.-funded Counterpart Community and Humanitarian Assistance Program (CHAP) to the Turkmen Blind and Deaf Society at the Society's headquarters in Ashgabat, June 25, 2002. CHAP, a part of Counterpart Consortium, distributes humanitarian aid throughout Turkmenistan via various state and non-governmental organizations. This shipment, consisting of rice casserole mixes, was worth approximately \$40,000.

Ambassador Kennedy told representatives of CHAP and the Turkmen Blind and Deaf Society, "The work that you do here is crucial. The assistance that you distribute will allow the disabled to conserve their pensions for other necessary household items."

The Turkmen Blind and Deaf Society will distribute the donation to more than two thousand of its blind and deaf constituents. CHAP will monitor the distribution and will carry out door-to-door deliveries as well. This is the second aid shipment consigned to the Turkmen Blind and Deaf Society from the United States. CHAP delivered a shipment of clothing worth \$166,700 to this organization last October.



*Director of the Society Ovezov thanks Ambassador Kennedy and CHAP Country Director Murad Yelliyev (left) for humanitarian aid from the U.S.*

CHAP has supported local organizations engaged in the social protection, rehabilitation and social integration of disadvantaged groups in Turkmenistan since August 1998. Since that time, CHAP has delivered \$14 million worth of humanitarian aid to the people of Turkmenistan via various state and non-governmental organizations.

The Turkmen Blind and Deaf Society is a non-governmental organization that has twelve training and production enterprises throughout the country and one supply base in Ashgabat. Over one thousand disabled people are employed by these enterprises. The Blind and Deaf Society organizes various sports and cultural events, provides free medical services to the disabled people of Turkmenistan and has special libraries for visually impaired people.

The U.S. Embassy has supported the blind and deaf community in other ways as well. In September 2001, the U.S. Embassy funded a modest resource center for the deaf and blind at the Society's headquarters. In June, the Embassy gave a grant to the State Library for the Blind to purchase recording equipment to produce books-on-tape.



*Director Ovezov and Deputy Director Meredov telling Ambassador Kennedy about activities of their Society*

## Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia William Taylor Visits Turkmenistan

Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia in the Department of State William B. Taylor Jr. visited Ashgabat August 25-27, 2002. Ambassador William Taylor met with President of Turkmenistan Sapamurat Niyazov to discuss U.S. assistance programs for Turkmenistan.



Ambassador Taylor (left), Director of the National Library Maral Jumayeva and British Ambassador Paul Brummel at the IATP public site official opening ceremony.

As part of his program in Turkmenistan, Ambassador Taylor visited some of the activities undertaken by the implementing partners of USAID and the U.S. Embassy in Ashgabat. USAID Central Asian Mission Director George Deikun, USAID Turkmenistan Country Representative Bradford Camp, and Public Affairs staff accompanied him. Within the framework of his stay, Ambassador Taylor had the opportunity to meet with local NGOs and alumni of U.S. Government-sponsored exchange programs. Together with Ambassador of Great Britain in Turkmenistan Paul Brummel, Ambassador Taylor officially opened the first Internet Access and Training Program (IATP) public site at the National Library. After his meeting with President Niyazov, Ambassador Taylor gave a press conference at the U.S. Embassy in Ashgabat.

Ambassador Taylor oversees the bilateral economic, security, democracy, and humanitarian assistance of U.S. Government agencies providing assistance to 27 states of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. U.S. assistance to Turkmenistan reached \$16.4 million in fiscal year 2002, compared to \$12.2 million in fiscal year 2001.

## Ambassador Kennedy Visits the Society of Petroleum Engineers Student Chapter

United States Ambassador to Turkmenistan Laura Kennedy visited the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) Student Chapter Resource Center at the Turkmen Polytechnic Institute on September 10, 2002. Ambassador Kennedy learned about activities of the SPE Student Chapter and materials available at its resource center.

The visit began with a tour of the resource center given by the head of the SPE Student Chapter Yakub Karryev. Ambassador Kennedy and member students engaged in a lively discussion about the new educational reform in Turkmenistan. Students also reported that SPE in Ashgabat provides many opportunities for direct contact with SPE members in other parts of the world. This worldwide communication is ensured by its Internet connection, which also enables SPE Student Chapter members to exchange experiences, participate in international oil and gas engineering conferences and enrich their knowledge of new technology. Yakub Karryev told Ambassador Kennedy about SPE's current activities, including joint projects with local and foreign oil and gas companies operating in Turkmenistan.

USAID/CAR Energy Specialist Ted Streit, USAID/CAR Country Representative Bradford Camp, Rector of the Turkmen Polytechnic Institute Hydyr Sappariev, Deputy Rector of the Institute, Dean of the Oil and Gas Department and other faculty members participated at this event along with active members of the Student Chapter.

USAID's Central Asia Natural Resources Management Program and the Government of Turkmenistan took an active part in creating the SPE Student Chapter Office and

its resource center at the Turkmen Polytechnic Institute. The Student Chapter and its resource center started functioning in 2001 in the framework of technical assistance provided by USAID/NRMP as a partnership program. The resource center now has a large collection of books on oil and gas industry by leading specialists, magazines issued in different countries, various newspapers on technical and management issues, which are available for all students and faculty members as well as participating engineers.

USAID/NRMP also assists the SPE Student Chapter by conducting various trainings. PA Consulting, which administers the USAID/NRMP program in Turkmenistan, conducted a one-week training on Web Page Designing for Student Chapter members on August 5-9, 2002. Twelve members of the Student Chapter learned the basics of the Internet and website designing, and upon completion of the course each received a certificate on successful completion of the Basic Course of Web-Design.



Ambassador Kennedy with officials of the Turkmen Polytechnic Institute and SPE Student Chapter members.

## U.S. Embassy Honors Victims and Heroes of September 11 Attacks and Renews Commitment to Defeat Terrorism

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On September 11, 2002, the U.S. Embassy in Ashgabat held a commemorative ceremony at the Embassy to honor victims and heroes of September 11, 2001. Ambassador Laura Kennedy and Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov gave speeches before an audience of American guests, government officials, the diplomatic corps and the religious community in Turkmenistan.

"On this day, as we remember those individuals lost and those families shattered on September 11, let us renew our commitment to defeat terrorism and to build a better future for the civilized community", said Ambassador Kennedy concluding her speech, in which she emphasized the need to continue to combat global terrorism. Minister Meredov spoke about Turkmenistan's condemnation of the attacks, emphasizing Turkmenistan's support for continued international efforts within the framework of the U.N.

After the commemorative ceremony, Ambassador Kennedy invited all guests to a public photograph exhibit and a concert of classical music held at the Mollanepes Theater. The exhibit featured 47 photographs of the sites of the attacks, sympathy and support from



*Representatives of the Turkmen Government and diplomatic and religious community attended the ceremony*



*Ambassador Kennedy opens the September 11 Commemoration Ceremony. Next to Ambassador Kennedy is Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov*

around the world, the war on terrorism and humanitarian aid efforts to Afghanistan. At the exhibit, the Embassy gave away publications related to September 11.

A packed house of 700 attended the public concert, which opened with Mozart's "Requiem" which was also being performed simultaneously around the world. The "Saz" Orchestra performed other compositions by a variety of international and Turkmen composers. The premiere of an original piece by noted Turkmen composer Rejep Allayarov commemorating September 11 was the highlight of the concert.

Expressions of sympathy and support from the public and the Government of Turkmenistan and members of the international community arrived at the Embassy over several days. Many Turkmen citizens signed the Embassy's Condolence Book, including Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers Mukhammet Khudaykuliyeu who wrote words of sympathy on behalf of the Turkmen Government. Turkmen people laid numerous bouquets in front of the Embassy.

## Embassy Announces 2003-2004 Academic Exchange Programs

The U.S. Embassy Ashgabat held a press conference at the American Center in Ashgabat on September 18, 2002, to officially announce the opening of recruitment season for eight academic exchange programs for citizens of Turkmenistan in the 2003-2004 academic year. Representatives of higher educational institutions and the National Library of Turkmenistan attended the presentation along with journalists.

Opening the presentation, Acting Public Affairs Officer of the U.S. Embassy Jennifer Hall Godfrey said, "The U.S. Government considers the development of educational cooperation with Turkmenistan a very high priority and the U.S. Embassy in Turkmenistan is glad to contribute educational opportunities for the citizens of Turkmenistan."

Country Director Brendan Dallas and other staff members of the American Councils for International Education (ACCELS) introduced four programs administered by their office in Turkmenistan. They are the Edmund Muskie Graduate Program, the Future Leaders Exchange Program for high school students, the Teaching Excellence Awards Program for English language

teachers of Turkmen schools, and the Junior Faculty Development Program for young university teachers. Bahar Atayeva and Kaia Benson introduced two programs administered by the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX): the Undergraduate Program for university students and the Contemporary Issues Fellowship Program for professionals and specialists. Anjela Begjanova of the U.S. Embassy familiarized participants with the Hubert Humphrey Fellowship program for mid-level professionals in leadership positions, and the Fulbright Program, which provides opportunities for academic research.

These educational and research exchange programs are designed to build better understanding between students, teachers and scholars of Turkmenistan and the U.S. Since 1992, these programs have helped Turkmenistan's citizens explore American society, culture and traditions. During the past nine years, more than 700 Turkmen citizens have successfully completed their studies via these programs in the United States. Now they are successfully working or continuing their education in many industries such as business, law, government and public policy.

## English Teachers of Turkmenistan Gather for a Conference in Gokdere

English language teachers from all over Turkmenistan gathered for the Fourth English Teachers' Conference in Gokdere August 20-25, 2002. Thirty-five teachers from all five welayats of Turkmenistan had five days of learning and fun in a small resort settlement outside of Ashgabat.

The program of the conference included workshops, seminars, discussions with guest speakers, and



*English teachers from all over Turkmenistan gathered for a conference in Gokdere resort settlement.*

evening activities, which were conducted in an English-only environment. Teachers learned about being effective in teaching, using movies and songs in their classes, and taking TOEFL tests. Speakers who visited the conference, including Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy in Ashgabat Mr. Robert Tansey and ACCELS Country Director Mr. Brendan Dallas, talked about education, teachers' needs in Turkmenistan, conflict resolution, and ethnic diversity and held lively discussions with participants.

Teachers were encouraged to bring their children to the conference. Young boys and girls participated in special activities for kids, which focused on developing their self-expression and creativity, and fostering their identity and aspiration for friendship through constructive games and crafts. All participants found the conference very useful for their professional development and went back to their hometowns full of energy and enthusiasm to teach English in a new academic year.

## National Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan Distributes Aid from U.S.

Another humanitarian assistance shipment arrived in Ashgabat on August 26, 2002, as part of U.S. Department of State initiative to support the population of Turkmenistan. Counterpart International Community and Humanitarian Assistance Program (CHAP) supplied the shipment valued at \$166,000, which consists of daily rations and medical, kitchen and office supplies and equipment. CHAP's distribution partner - the National Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan (TRCS) received the shipment and will distribute it to the elderly, orphans, the disabled, and large

families, as well as to organizations which support them. Moreover, the TRCS will supply its charity houses in Ashgabat and all welayats of Turkmenistan, where needy people are served a hot meal every day, with kitchen accessories received from CHAP.

CHAP has been working with the National Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan for almost four years. Since 1998, the TRCS has received from CHAP and distributed throughout the country \$ 4.1 million worth of assistance.

## Students Conduct a Street Law Seminar in School #12 in Turkmenabat

Through funds provided by a U.S. Embassy Democracy grant to the Student Law Club "Adalat" (the Turkmen word for "Justice"), students from the Law Department of Turkmen State University (TSU) conduct "Street Law" seminars to school students and teachers throughout Turkmenistan. The Street Law Program and the student law club are supported by the American Bar Association's Central European and Eurasian Law Initiative (ABA/CEELI). The seminars are designed to inform and educate participants about their basic human rights and other legal concepts through interactive methods, including role-playing, debates, and mock trials.

On September 8, in School #12 in the City of Turkmenabat, Bahar Tekaeva, Maral Sapargeldieva,



*Law students conduct seminar on the "right to life" and its implications to the citizens of Turkmenistan.*

and Selbi Annalievna, all active members of the student law club "Adalat", trained teachers and pupils in the right to life and the right to education. Thirty-two school students from the 7th to 9th grades and four teachers participated in the seminar. Other observers included the Director of School #12, Elena Georgiyevna Yaskina, and the Head of the Welayat Children and Youth Center, Shakir Zairovich Turayev. All participants were required to take positions and support their decisions on issues such as the death penalty and mercy killing. The lessons include relevant international treaties of which Turkmenistan is a signatory, and other Turkmen laws. The lesson concluded with a mock trial, with different groups of students acting as prosecutors, defense attorneys, and judges.

Other Street Law seminars delivered to Turkmen students include lessons on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the role of law in Turkmen society, and gender equality in Turkmenistan. More than 200 students and educators have participated in the program initiated earlier this year. Additional student/trainers from the law department of TSU, as well as teachers from schools throughout Turkmenistan, will be trained by ABA/CEELI and Street Law, Inc., in November on delivering Street Law lessons in an effort to further expand the program's reach.

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