



European Washington File

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Excerpt: United States Urges International Commitment to Rebuilding Iraq

(U.S., Iraqi officials seek funds for electrical and water sectors)

Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage has invited international donors to raise their commitment to Iraqi reconstruction, particularly in the humanitarian sectors of electricity and water infrastructure, following the United States' decision to shift \$3.46 billion in funds away from these areas and into programs aimed at strengthening Iraq's security forces.

"I have no doubt that many of those who pledged monies at Madrid a year ago are looking for sectors in which to put those pledges and I think the electrical and water area are two areas which will find great favor internationally," Armitage told reporters, following the October 13 Iraqi Donors' Conference in Tokyo.

The deputy secretary thanked Japan for its leadership in sponsoring the conference as well as its continued commitment of troops for humanitarian activities in Samawah, Iraq. He said that the Japanese involvement in Iraq serves as "a sort of a signal or a landmark to other countries who want to involve themselves in humanitarian activities."

Armitage said that U.S. disbursements from the \$18.4 billion supplemental appropriation for Iraqi reconstruction now amount to \$1.4 billion, and that U.S. officials aim to step up disbursements to a rate of \$400 million per month.

The deputy secretary was unable to say exactly how much of Iraq's \$125 billion in external debt has been forgiven following former Secretary of State James Baker's meetings with Iraq's international lenders, but he affirmed, "It is our view, shared by some in the international community, that the way to go is to forgive the majority of the debt."

He said, "Eliminating that debt won't guarantee the success of Iraq, but without it, there is no ability for Iraq to be successful."

In response to concerns that countries would be reticent to disburse funds to Iraq for fear that it would be lost to corruption and mismanagement, Armitage said that the Iraqis are addressing this problem through inspector generals in each of the ministries. "They're serious about rooting it out, and that's a pretty good basis on which to start," he said.

**Full transcript is available at
<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/300/index.htm>**

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Transcript: Romania a Strategic Partner, Ally Against Terror, Rumsfeld Says

(Defense secretary's statement with Romanian President Ion Iliescu)

In his first visit to Romania since 1971, U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld thanked that country October 12 for being a "strategic partner and ally" in the global war on terrorism.

"I want to publicly acknowledge our appreciation for your support in Afghanistan, your support in Iraq, and your consistent efforts to help win in the struggle against extremism," said Rumsfeld during an appearance with Romanian President Ion Iliescu in Bucharest.

Rumsfeld called the transformation in Romania over the past three decades "impressive."

"Your vibrant, democratic society, and your robust economy, the fact that Romania is now a member of NATO are all signs of positive changes that have occurred the last decades," he said.

The secretary is attending a NATO defense ministers meeting in Poiana Brasov, Romania, October 13-14.

Following is a Defense Department transcript of his statement:

(begin transcript)

U.S. Department of Defense News Briefing
Tuesday, October 12, 2004

SECRETARY RUMSFELD STATEMENT AT
PRESIDENTIAL PALACE WITH ROMANIAN
PRESIDENT ION ILIESCU

Bucharest, Romania

Mr. President, thank you so much for those gracious and important words. As you know, my last visit to Romania was a long time ago - back in 1971.

I was very pleased to accept your invitation to return after all those years.

The differences between Romania some 3 decades ago and what we have seen in the past period here is impressive. Your vibrant, democratic society, and your robust economy; the fact that Romania is now a member of NATO are all signs of positive changes that have occurred the last decades.

It was a proud moment last March when we stood on the White House lawn with the leaders of seven new members and President Bush presided over the NATO Accession Ceremony. In our discussions today, I had the opportunity to tell the President how much we value the stalwart support of our strategic partner and ally in our global war on terror efforts.

The Romanian people and the president and his government have provided generous and reliable and stalwart support in all aspects of the current global war on terror. I want to publicly acknowledge our appreciation for your support in Afghanistan, your support in Iraq, and your consistent efforts to help win in the struggle against extremism.

I also want to commend the president and Romania today as they commemorate their first Holocaust Remembrance Day. The holocaust was a tragedy that must not be forgotten.

So Mr. President, I thank you. You are a stalwart friend and ally, a strategic partner. And I look forward to your hospitality today and tomorrow for this important NATO meeting that you have agreed to host. Thank you, sir.

(end transcript)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State.
Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Transcript: Rumsfeld Praises Romania's Contributions in Iraq, Afghanistan

(Speaks with Defense Minister Pescu in Bucharest, thanks Romanian soldiers)

U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said it was a privilege to meet with Romanian veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts October 12 in Bucharest, and he predicted that years from now they would "look back and be so proud of what they've done to help 50 million people -- about 25 million in each of those two countries -- live better lives and be freer and be safer and be more prosperous."

Speaking at a joint press briefing with Romanian Defense Minister Ioan Pescu, Rumsfeld said the United States is not trying to establish an American style of democracy in Iraq. Iraqis "will very likely end up with a system that is distinctly unique to Iraq and suits their circumstances," he said.

Just as the United States' political system and circumstances have evolved over many years, "Iraq's circumstances will evolve as well," he said.

Asked about changes in U.S. military force structures in the world, Rumsfeld said the United States has not yet made final decisions and "we will make them probably sequentially, but it won't be one big announcement." It will take several years to complete the restructuring, he said.

Full transcript is available at
<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/300/index.htm>

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Bill Would Speed Certain Weapons Export Licenses to Two Allies

(But U.K., Australia would not get licensing waivers as per agreements)

By Bruce Odessey
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Congress has passed legislation that would accelerate arms export licensing for the United Kingdom and Australia but not waive the license requirements as mandated under bilateral agreements with the United States.

The provision is part of the final defense authorization bill for the fiscal year that began October 1. The measure was passed by the House of Representatives and Senate October 9 just before both chambers recessed until after the November elections.

President Bush is expected to sign the 995-page bill into law.

The original Senate-passed bill would have simply waived license requirements for certain arms exports to the two important U.S. allies, but House members opposed that measure. The final House-Senate compromise would not waive licensing but would instead expedite the license-approval process.

The final version leaves members of Congress divided. Representative Henry Hyde, Republican chairman of the House International Relations Committee, praised the compromise for giving preferential treatment in the licensing process to what he called the two closest U.S. allies in the war on terrorism.

"By requiring regulations to accelerate export licenses for these countries -- rather than eliminating licenses as some had proposed -- this provision establishes exactly the right balance," Hyde said in House debate.

"We will wisely maintain control and supervision over weapons shipped through commercial channels while the war on terrorism continues," Hyde said. "But we require the State Department to do it rapidly and ensure that longstanding allies who fight alongside our armed forces are always at the head of the line."

Senator Richard Lugar, Republican chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, however, viewed the compromise provision as containing "failings," including violation of the bilateral agreements. Those failings need to be corrected by Congress, he said.

"This may well harm our bilateral relationship with the United Kingdom," Lugar said in Senate debate.

The bilateral agreements negotiated with Australia and the United Kingdom, not yet approved by Congress, would waive U.S. export license requirements for certain exports only to a finite group of U.S.-approved end users.

The compromise provision would apply to all arms exports requiring a license to all end users in the United Kingdom and Australia.

It would expedite license processing in part by preventing agencies other than the Department of State, such as the Homeland Security and Justice departments, from reviewing license applications except for instances when the export contains classified information or where other "exceptional circumstances" apply. The State Department

would make the licensing decision in consultation with only the Defense Department. Lugar objected to this part of the provision as well.

"This language could do great harm to our government's ability to provide necessary and complete interagency review of munitions license applications," Lugar said.

Dropped from the final defense authorization bill were a number of controversial provisions passed by the House:

-- A denial of Defense Department procurement contracts to foreign companies that sell to China weapons for which the United States requires export licenses;

-- A requirement that the Defense Department to initiate official exchanges with Taiwan to improve Taiwan's defense against China;

-- Tightened export controls on weapons technology to China; and

-- A prohibition of the president ever exempting export licensing requirements on significant military equipment.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Transcript: United States Supports Libyan Weapons Plant Conversion Plan

(Libya says plant would manufacture low-cost pharmaceuticals)

The United States supports Libya's request to convert a former chemical weapons plant into a pharmaceutical plant, a U.S. ambassador says.

Libya has asked the international chemical weapons organization if it can convert a former weapons plant at Rabta into a plant to manufacture low-cost pharmaceuticals to treat some of the most serious diseases facing the African continent and the developing world. Libya wants to produce drugs to treat HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

"The United States supports Libya's proposal," U.S. Ambassador Eric Javits said October 12 during the opening session of the executive council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Javits said that Libya's request to convert its Rabta facility is the most important issue facing the group.

The Libyan request is in line with existing provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention that allow the destruction of weapons and facilities after deadlines have expired. If approved, he said, Libya's proposed solution would also be available to any future government joining the convention.

United States considers Libya's proposal of great importance, both for its immediate benefits and also as an inducement toward universal adherence to the CWC, he said.

Javits also addressed the need for CWC members to implement their obligations under the convention and noted the unanimous passage in April of a U.N. Security Council resolution requiring U.N. members to have effective export and transshipment controls, to criminalize the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and to secure all related materials under their control. He said the fact that some states have not designated a national authority to implement the convention is "scandalous."

In other CWC matters, Javits said the United States is:

-- Encouraged that progress is being made toward CWC universality by 2007; and

-- Concerned that the verification plan for the U.S. chemical weapons destruction facility at Aberdeen, Maryland, has remained under consideration without being approved for over a year.

Following is the transcript of Javits' remarks:

(begin transcript)

Thirty-eighth Regular Session of the Executive Council
of the Organization for the Prohibition of
Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

Ambassador Eric M. Javits, Head of the U.S.
Delegation
Opening statement to the Executive Council of the
OPCW
The Hague, The Netherlands
October 12, 2004

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Director-General,
Distinguished Delegates,

Our meeting this week is an especially important one. Our agenda addresses key issues that will shape the future of this organization. Because of their importance, these issues are not always easy. But we have demonstrated in our deliberations and decisions of the last two years a collegial spirit. I am confident that with continued goodwill and cooperation, this week we will be able to take the decisions we must to advance the goals of the Chemical Weapons Convention. I pledge the full cooperation and support of the United States delegation to that effort.

The most important question before the Council is the proposal by Libya, with the support of 17 other States Parties, for a technical change to the Convention to allow conversion of the facility at Rabta. Libya desires to convert the Rabta chemical weapons production facility to produce low-cost pharmaceuticals to treat AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis throughout the African continent and the developing world. The United States supports Libya's proposal. As the Director-General has previously reminded us, under Article XV of the Convention this Council has an

obligation to make a clear, unambiguous recommendation to the States Parties to either accept or reject Libya's proposal: this is not a matter we can defer.

The proposed technical change is fully consistent with the Convention and transparent to all States Parties. It would allow the Executive Council to set the deadline for submission of a request to convert a chemical weapons production facility, and the Conference to establish the earliest practicable deadline for completion of the conversion.

This approach is based, in part, on similar Convention provisions for destruction of chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities when deadlines have expired for an acceding State. The proposal will work not just for Libya, but for any future acceding State that may possess a chemical weapons production facility and legitimately wish to convert it for purposes not prohibited by the Convention. The United States is committed to the principle of "equal treatment;" what applies to Libya shall also apply to future acceding States. The adoption of this technical change will correct a disincentive for non-member states to accede to the Convention. In short, the United States places great importance on adoption of this technical change by the Council, not only for the immediate benefit which will accrue to people in Africa and developing nations, but for the contribution it will make toward achieving universal adherence to the Convention.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to discuss the action plan for implementation of Article VII obligations. The United States believes that full implementation of Article VII is a crucial challenge for this organization.

Every delegation here is aware of the unanimous adoption last April of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540. This was, in our view, an appropriate response to a very clear and present threat to global peace and security. The fundamental objective of this important resolution is to keep weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery out of the hands of terrorists and rogue regimes.

The resolution requires states to enact effective export and transshipment controls, criminalize the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and secure all related materials within their borders. By requiring all U.N. member states to adopt and enforce effective legal and regulatory standards to prevent proliferation, Resolution 1540 sharply underscored the need for full implementation of Article VII.

The status report before us is much clearer and more focused than previous reports. That has made even more apparent the substantial amount of work needed before the Tenth Conference of the States Parties next year. We are encouraged by the information that many State Parties are working on legislation and other measures to fulfill their Article VII obligations. We are, however, concerned by the relatively meager results to date. It is scandalous that some States Parties have not even designated a National Authority.

We note States Parties' active engagement in the numerous national implementation and national authority conferences that have been held around the world, and in active bilateral efforts involving the Technical Secretariat or States Parties that have offered assistance. The United States continues to pursue bilateral contacts, coordinate efforts with the Technical Secretariat, respond to inquiries from States Parties, and participate in regional workshops. We believe that such efforts, by both States Parties and the Secretariat, must continue and even be intensified. As always, the United States stands ready to help nations seeking to fulfill their Article VII obligations.

We need to robustly coordinate and monitor these activities and State Party efforts to meet Action Plan requirements over the coming year. This includes compiling information on requests for assistance and the types of assistance States Parties require, identifying member states that can provide such assistance, and, most importantly, tracking the progress of individual States Parties in meeting their obligations. This will provide us with a transparent, factual basis for our

deliberations at the culmination of the Action Plan.

In the end, though, each State Party is responsible for meeting its own commitments. We are confident that the large majority of member states will follow through and be in compliance by the time of CSP-10 a year from now. At that point, member states will need to consider how to deal with those who still have not fulfilled their Article VII obligations.

We are encouraged that real progress is being made toward achieving universality by 2007, as indicated by the historic decision of Libya to join, and by the recent accessions of the Solomon Islands and Sierra Leone. We look forward to welcoming others as States Parties, including Iraq once its duly elected government is in place. The United States must reiterate, however, the importance of improving coordination within the Technical Secretariat and between the TS and member states in efforts to encourage States not Party to join the CWC [Chemical Weapons Convention].

Mr. Chairman, as everyone here is aware, we are engaged in extensive work to prepare the organization's budget for 2005. This budget is particularly significant, as it will be the first one completed in a results-based budgeting format. That format is something of a work in progress, and needs to be further refined, but we are moving toward a document that defines in a more measurable way what we expect the Technical Secretariat to accomplish, and why. If we are to make effective use of limited resources, and achieve real, lasting results, then this is a reform that is greatly needed.

Let me make clear that the United States supports the overall increase requested by the Director-General and the broad outlines of the budget and programme that he has put forward. We believe that it meets the requirements of the organization to carry out the various tasks assigned by the Conference of the States Parties or required by the Convention.

We appreciate the exhaustive efforts of the co-facilitators, Gordon Eckersley of Australia and Ian Mundell of Canada to ensure full transparency for both member states and the Technical Secretariat. We also appreciate the information provided by the TS in response to requests from delegations. We understand that during the course of this Council session, there will continue to be in-depth discussion on the 2005 budget and programme. I must emphasize the importance of reaching at least an informal, tentative agreement on the budget before the Conference of States Parties meets. Resolving our differences in that much larger, very busy setting, with only a few days and a crowded agenda, will only be more difficult.

I am pleased to note that since our last session, as we reported during Monday's informal meeting on CW [chemical weapons] destruction, the U.S. has recently started up a fourth continuously operating CW destruction facility, located in Umatilla, Oregon. Two other facilities are already constructed and, if all goes as planned, will commence operations during 2005.

As we all know, the Technical Secretariat, with the endorsement of both the Conference of States Parties and the Review Conference, has been actively exploring means of "optimizing" the use of verification resources -- finding ways to verify destruction more efficiently, without sacrificing effectiveness. The TS has already implemented such measures in India and Russia.

As the State Party that currently has the largest number of operating CW destruction facilities, it is important for us to work closely with the TS in developing acceptable and feasible approaches for each U.S. facility. Important progress has been made, as those of you who attended yesterday's informal consultations will have heard in some detail. The Technical Secretariat is currently testing some of these ideas and approaches at a U.S. CW destruction facility to assess their feasibility and verification effectiveness.

I want to emphasize our commitment to an open and transparent process working cooperatively with the TS on "optimizing" verification resources and informing member states of the outcomes. We

want the Council to understand what is being done at our facilities and to feel confident in its effectiveness.

With regard to industry issues, we are disappointed that there are no items ready for a decision at this Council session. Numerous important issues need to be addressed, and it is necessary for the OPCW to come to grips with them. For example, a recent TS report indicates that only 22 percent of States Parties submitted their 2003 Annual Declarations on Past Activities within the Convention timeline. We request the Technical Secretariat to continue issuing these reports to ensure that States Parties remain aware of the problem and urge that delegations and the Technical Secretariat vigorously pursue a solution to the problem of late submission of declarations. This will become increasingly critical as we move the organization toward electronic submissions.

There are other long-standing issues, as well, that need political attention. For example, we are concerned that the verification plan for the U.S. chemical weapons destruction facility at Aberdeen, Maryland, has remained under consideration without being approved for over a year. During this period, the facility has been conducting destruction operations. We are fully aware of the importance of this issue to certain delegations and the sensitivities involved, and we are committed to finding a mutually acceptable resolution. I want to emphasize, however, that failure to reach a decision undercuts not only the authority of the Council but also the verification provisions of the Convention. As such, it can no longer be considered a bilateral issue, but one that affects all member states.

Mr. Chairman, let me conclude by reiterating the commitment of the United States to working with you, the Director-General and other States Parties to move ahead on the important work that is before us. Thank you.

(end transcript)

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*U.S. Will Maintain Military Strength in Asia,
Armitage Says*

(Reconfiguration of U.S. forces aimed at achieving more mobility)

The United States' plans to reconfigure its military presence in Asia are aimed at developing forces that are mobile, agile and "more formidable in terms of the military clout," says Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage.

During an October 13 press conference in Tokyo, where he was attending an international conference to raise funds for the reconstruction of Iraq, Armitage said the United States will "always have sufficient force to live up to our security responsibilities under our mutual security treaty with Japan. That's, first and foremost, enough forces for the defense of Japan.

"We will also be able to protect our interests when we find our interests are threatened or violated," he said.

U.S.-Japan discussions about American troop presence on Japanese soil "began in the wrong spot," Armitage said. "We started talking about individual items or individual locations ... rather than starting from a philosophical discussion of how we, that is Japan and the U.S., saw our alliance, in say, in 15 years or 20 years. If we started there, then I think we could work back and the individual elements of the transformation, both our transformation and the Japanese transformation, would become clearer."

When Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and President Bush met in New York earlier in 2004, they agreed that discussions regarding the "transformation" of the U.S. military presence in Japan would be accelerated and that this "had to be done in a way that enhanced our deterrents and

that lessened the burden on the people of Japan," Armitage said.

Armitage acknowledged that, in Okinawa, the concentrated civilian development around the air base at Futenma had created potentially dangerous conditions, as was illustrated by the crash of a U.S. CH-53 helicopter August 13. Even though no lives were lost in that accident, a joint committee was set up to work on better procedures to prevent a similar occurrence, Armitage said, adding, "We want to relocate out of Futenma" and find a safer alternative site.

On North Korea, Armitage said, "[T]he most effective way to deal with North Korea is a continuation of what we've been doing. That is, make sure that we do our best, Japan and the United States, to keep China well in the game -- and I believe China is keen for continuing her efforts. Number two, to make sure that the North Koreans will not see us get impatient or nervous; we're steady in the long run; we'll prevail on this and they'll come to know it. Third of all, to make sure that we are very true to our allies in the Republic of Korea and make sure we share fully and completely with them all our thoughts on this."

Armitage acknowledged that recently there has been "some movement of Chinese forces up around the border with North Korea" but said, "[I]t looks like it may be part of an exercise." He added: "There has been an increased activity by North Korean army units to keep refugees from crossing into China, and I think [by] Chinese security personnel to keep refugees out as well." Armitage said that although the number of North Korean refugees has increased in recent years, it has not as yet "turned into a flood."

Armitage expressed U.S. appreciation for the Japanese presence in Iraq and reiterated that U.S. forces will not remain in Iraq "one day longer than is necessary.

"I think that most Iraqis, including the Iraqi leadership," he said, "don't want us to stay any longer than is necessary. They want to provide for

their own security, and our job is to give them every opportunity to do it."

A transcript of the press conference is available at: <http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/37049.htm>

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Transcript: Armitage Optimistic About "Blueprint" for U.S. Troops in Japan

(Deputy secretary hopes to have outline for transformation by end of 2004)

Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage expressed optimism about prospects for discussions on the transformation of U.S. forces in Japan in remarks to reporters in Tokyo October 13.

"I'm quite satisfied that together we'll be able to find a very amiable solution that does three things," Armitage said. "As Prime Minister Koizumi wanted, it will accelerate the process of transformation. With the agreement of President Bush, it will enhance deterrence, as well as will reduce the burden on the people of Japan."

Armitage was in Japan for periodic strategic policy discussions with Japanese officials, and to attend the third meeting of the Donors' Committee of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq, which handles donations to the United Nations and World Bank trust funds for Iraq.

The deputy secretary said that it was "quite possible" for the U.S. and Japan to reach agreement on a blueprint for reconfiguration of U.S. forces by the end of 2004, as proposed by Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura.

"I don't know if we will make that," he cautioned, "but that's a good goal to have."

Armitage refused to speculate on details of the negotiations, which he said would be handled by the U.S. military. He recommended acceleration of activities conducted by the Special Action Committee for Okinawa (SACO), a body established by joint agreement of the U.S. and Japanese governments in 1995 to consolidate the U.S. military presence in Okinawa.

Following is a transcript of Armitage's remarks to reporters, as provided by the State Department:

(begin transcript)

U.S. Department of State
Richard L. Armitage, Deputy Secretary of State
U.S. Embassy-Tokyo Press Office
Tokyo, Japan
October 13, 2004

[Armitage Remarks to the Press Following Meetings]

QUESTION: Thank you for your time. After the series of talks with the Japanese ruling parties, are you optimistic about getting a concrete blueprint about U.S. military forces in Japan?

DEPUTY SECRETARY ARMITAGE: I found that both our Japanese colleagues here, as well as my American colleagues, are very well informed on the results of the discussions between Prime Minister Koizumi and President Bush in New York. As I have said, both sides have been given their marching orders and I'm quite satisfied that together we'll be able to find a very amiable solution that does three things. As Prime Minister Koizumi wanted, it will accelerate the process of transformation. With the agreement of President Bush, it will enhance deterrence, as well as will reduce the burden on the people of Japan. Those are our orders, and we'll follow them and I have found a good spirit here.

QUESTION: Foreign Minister Machimura said he wants to have some kind of blueprint by the end of this year. Do you think it is possible?

DEPUTY SECRETARY ARMITAGE: Oh, it's quite possible. I don't know if we will make that, but that's a good goal to have. I'll be speaking to the foreign minister later this evening and I'm sure he will repeat that to me and I'll carry the message back to Washington very faithfully.

QUESTION: At the present moment, as for U.S. Marine Forces in Okinawa, which is the stronger possibility -- staying somewhere in Japan or going abroad?

DEPUTY SECRETARY ARMITAGE: That's a discussion you will have to ask my military colleagues. That's something that they are going to want to first talk about with the representatives of the Government of Japan. I think the last thing we want to do is talk about that in front of the mass media. It's something we need to talk about with our colleagues here.

QUESTION: As for SACO, Special Action Committee for Okinawa, I have to say that the activities are a little bit slow. How do you push it forward?

DEPUTY SECRETARY ARMITAGE: I spoke earlier today at a press conference at the U.S. Embassy and was asked a question by Mr. Suzuki of NHK [TV Asahi] and I expressed that -- my own view is -- he said some people say the SACO process is not doing what it was supposed to do. I reminded him that, years ago, when we had the SACO process originally, many of the mass media saluted it and said how wonderful it was. My own view is we ought to accelerate it.

QUESTION: Thank you. Part of training sessions of U.S. Marine Forces in Okinawa is now training in Australia, I understand.

DEPUTY SECRETARY ARMITAGE: Yes, Australia and other places.

QUESTION: Do you have any plans to enlarge the volume of training sessions over there?

DEPUTY SECRETARY ARMITAGE: Well, I can't say that. I'll tell you we don't have, as far as I

understand, any desire to increase the volume of training in Japan. So, thank you very much.

(end transcript)

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Text: "Backsliding" Alleged on Freedom of Assembly in Some OSCE States

(U.S. delegation's Fitzpatrick speaks at OSCE's Human Dimension meeting)

More than a decade after the fall of communism, some participating states of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) still deny freedom of peaceful assembly and association to their citizens, "with chilling effects on democratic development," said a member of the U.S. delegation to the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw, Poland.

Catherine Fitzpatrick said October 13 that there has been "backsliding in some OSCE participating States, whose records with respect to freedom of assembly and association were more positive ten years ago than they are today." She cited concerns about the situations in Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Armenia.

The annual Human Dimension Implementation meeting reviews the implementation of commitments in the areas of human rights and democracy by OSCE participating states.

Following is her prepared statement:

(begin text)

United States Mission to the OSCE

**STATEMENT ON FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY
AND ASSOCIATION**

As delivered by Ms. Catherine Fitzpatrick,
Delegation Member,
to the Human Dimension Implementation
Meeting, Warsaw

October 13, 2004

The rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association are the bedrock of democracy. By definition, one simply cannot have civil society and democratic development without the ability for individuals to come together. Without these rights, political parties, non-governmental organizations and labor unions simply cannot function in any meaningful way. The United States finds this issue especially timely and is pleased that it has been assigned as a special topic for discussion at this meeting.

Participating States agreed in Copenhagen in 1990 to "ensure that individuals are permitted to exercise the right to association, including the right to form, join and participate effectively in non-governmental organizations which seek the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including trade unions and human rights monitoring groups." Yet more than a decade after the fall of communism, some participating States continue to deny these rights to their citizens, with chilling effects on democratic development.

When the freedoms of association and assembly are absent, the quality of democracy itself is placed at risk. In Ukraine, for example, the lack of these freedoms, for example, threatens to affect the outcome of the critically important, upcoming elections. Ukrainian authorities are thwarting the ability of opposition candidates to campaign effectively by blocking opposition candidates from addressing voters, preventing citizens from attending opposition rallies, and threatening students who attend such rallies. These actions will have serious and negative repercussions for citizens' ability to choose their own government. Other examples of violations of the freedom of assembly in Ukraine have included the systematic

denial of requests by opposition groups seeking to reserve assembly halls, and the closure of rally sites on short notice for so-called "urgent repair." The most egregious violation occurred on August 6, when militia attacked and beat a group of students peacefully marching from the city of Sumy to Kiev to protest a merger of local universities.

In Belarus, obstacles to freedom of assembly and association are part and parcel of the ongoing, growing repression of civil society. This includes the closure of academic institutions such as the European Humanities Institute, a respected private institution, in July; persistent harassment of non-governmental organizations, the circumscribing of independent trade unions and the refusal to grant the Belarusian Congress of Free Trade Unions a permit for a peaceful demonstration, the violent dispersal of demonstrations of pro-democracy activists, such as the July 21 rally in Minsk, when dozens were arrested as they attempted to unfurl banners, and government pressure exerted on hotel managers not to host an award ceremony for independent journalists organized by Russian television station First Channel.

Mr. Chairman, we noted President Putin's remarks in his Address to the Federal Assembly in May that cast doubt on the legitimacy of some Russian NGOs that receive foreign funding.

These remarks were received with concern in both the Russian and U.S. NGO communities, as well as by the U.S. Government. The U.S. has and will continue to fund the activities of organizations that support Russian NGOs working to develop civil society and democracy in Russia, priorities that President Putin himself recognized in his address. We call attention to a continuing pattern of tax investigations, unreasonable registration requirements or other forms of harassment targeting some NGOs, such as the National Democratic Institute, that hinder their ability to operate freely.

In other OSCE States, too, the basic freedoms of assembly and association are routinely flouted. In Turkmenistan only one political party is registered, and efforts by others to stage

demonstrations are immediately broken up by police and participants suffer harsh reprisals, including incarceration. Uzbekistan has refused to register opposition parties, ignoring calls from OSCE participating States to honor democratic commitments in advance of December's parliamentary election. No opposition political activity has been permitted in Uzbekistan since 1992. Non-governmental organizations have difficulty operating in Uzbekistan. Demonstrations are occasionally dispersed.

Opposition parties are registered in all the Caucasus states. But in Azerbaijan, the authorities have refused to allow the opposition political parties to hold any demonstrations since the confrontations between law enforcement agencies and protesters after last October's presidential election. Armenian authorities have made it more difficult for opposition political groups to rally by limiting access to Yerevan, cracking down on protestors at a peaceful demonstration last April and sentencing several individuals to disproportionately long prison terms for minor offenses.

Almost a decade and a half has passed since the fall of the repressive communist regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. It is worth noting that it was the CSCE process that inspired human rights activists in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to organize, to demand the freedoms of association and assembly, and to challenge the totalitarian regimes under which they lived. Since then, a great deal of progress has been made toward upholding these fundamental freedoms and consolidating the institutions that protect them. Yet, tragically, we have witnessed backsliding in some OSCE participating States, whose records with respect to freedom of assembly and association were more positive ten years ago than they are today. The fact that in some participating States the right to these most basic of freedoms remains problematic is simply unacceptable.

(end text)

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Text: U.S. Raises Concerns about Turkmenistan's Human Rights Record

(Amb. Napper speaks at OSCE Human Dimension meeting in Warsaw)

The United States reiterated its concerns about the human rights situation in Turkmenistan and urged the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to remain focused on the problems cited in a report by a special fact-finding mission last year.

The situation in Turkmenistan "has not improved significantly" since the mission issued its report, and "the recommendations remain valid," said Ambassador Larry Napper, head of the U.S. delegation to the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting October 8 in Warsaw, Poland.

The fact-finding mission was sent to Turkmenistan under the so-called Moscow Mechanism, which can be invoked when the OSCE States are particularly concerned about human rights in a fellow member state.

Napper cited a number of ongoing human rights issues, including the fate of persons held in connection with the armed attack on the Turkmen president's motorcade in 2002. He noted Turkmenistan's unwillingness to invite the OSCE to observe its parliamentary elections, and reiterated concerns previously raised by the United States such as lack of religious freedom and lack of independent media.

"Sustained OSCE engagement on these matters is necessary to counter Turkmenistan's self-isolation," Napper said. He urged the head of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights to visit Turkmenistan and encourage the government to implement the Moscow Mechanism recommendations.

The Human Dimension Implementation Meeting is held annually to review the implementation of OSCE commitments in the fields of human rights and democracy by participating states.

Following is an OSCE press release:

(begin text)

United States Mission to the OSCE

STATEMENT ON TURKMENISTAN AND THE MOSCOW MECHANISM

As delivered by Ambassador Larry Napper, Head of Delegation
to the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, Warsaw
October 8, 2004

Mr. Moderator,

Although the United States has raised various concerns about human rights in Turkmenistan throughout the week, I would like to take this opportunity to express our ongoing concern about the situation there. We note that there has been some progress in Turkmenistan: exit visas were lifted, four religious minority groups registered, harassment of religious groups has decreased, four prisoners of conscience were released, and a dialogue has been started between Turkmen authorities and the ICRC [International Committee of the Red Cross] concerning prisoner access. We appreciate these initial steps, however, we remain concerned about the remaining violations of human rights in Turkmenistan.

As we have said in previous statements this week, although exit visas were lifted, the government maintains a "blacklist", which prevents some people from leaving the country. We urge Turkmen authorities to quickly give access by the International Committee of the Red Cross to visit prisons in Turkmenistan and to have access to all prisoners. In this regard, we remain concerned about the fate of those held in connection with the armed attack on the president's motorcade on November 25, 2002 and sentenced under the

"Betrayers of the Motherland Law." We again ask for information on and access to our former OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] colleague, Batyr Berdiev, as well as others who were arrested in connection with these events.

We have already raised concerns here about the situation in Turkmenistan including the lack of religious freedom, the lack of free movement of persons wishing to travel outside of Turkmenistan and the forced resettlement of some inside the country, the lack of any independent media, and the lack of fair trials. We also would like to note the importance of allowing civil society to work in Turkmenistan. Although the registration of 89 public organizations is an improvement, it is important that NGOs of various outlooks be allowed to register, and that criminal penalties be removed from the NGO law.

We also note that Turkmenistan apparently is not willing to invite the OSCE to observe the parliamentary elections, which will take place on December 19. Although Turkmenistan continues to have only a one-party system, undermining any credibility that the election could be free and fair, Turkmenistan nevertheless has an OSCE commitment to invite OSCE observers. As you all know, the United States has invited the OSCE to observe our upcoming elections, and we expect no less of Turkmenistan.

We regret that the Government of Turkmenistan did not renew the accreditation of the Head of the OSCE Office in Ashgabat, Parachiva Badescu, and hope that authorities will work constructively with her successor. We also urge that the Government of Turkmenistan work closely with OSCE CiO [Chairman-in-office] Personal Representative Ahtisaari, as well as invite OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Ekeus to visit Turkmenistan in the near future.

Mr. Chairman, last year, for the first time in ten years, OSCE participating States found the human rights situation there alarming enough to invoke the Moscow Mechanism. The decision to invoke the Mechanism was not taken lightly, but was warranted by the imposition of a widespread

human rights crackdown by Turkmenistan authorities. Last year at this meeting, the United States also made a statement under Any Other Business expressing our ongoing concern. As human rights violations remain in Turkmenistan, we believe it is important for the OSCE to maintain an ongoing focus on this issue.

Recalling that President Niyazov personally signed the Helsinki Final Act on July 8, 1992, we urge Ashgabat to implement fully Turkmenistan's OSCE commitments. It is important that the OSCE community remain focused on the concerns raised in the Moscow Mechanism report issued last year by Professor Decaux. While that report is now almost a year and half old, the situation in Turkmenistan sadly has not improved significantly and the recommendations remain valid. Indeed, sustained OSCE engagement on these matters is necessary to counter Turkmenistan's self-isolation. We urge ODIHR [OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights] to step up efforts to engage Turkmen authorities in working to implement the still-valid recommendations contained in the Moscow Mechanism Rapporteur's report, and believe a visit by ODIHR Director Strohal to Turkmenistan could be a useful catalyst to move forward -- particularly if he were granted access to the above-mentioned prisoners. Finally, we urge OSCE delegations to meet with Turkmenistan NGOs here and in other capitals where that opportunity may arise.

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(end text)

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Text: Italian-Built Space Station Cupola Arrives at NASA

(360-degree skylight will help control sophisticated space robots)

The world's ultimate observation deck, a control tower for robotics in space, has arrived at NASA's Kennedy Space Center (KSC) on its way to the International Space Station, according to an October 12 NASA press release.

Alenia Spazio, an Italian space company, built the cupola under contract with the European Space Agency (ESA). ESA provided the cupola as part of a barter agreement that covers the launch of external payloads on the shuttle for installation on the External Facility of the European Columbus research module.

The cupola is scheduled to launch in early 2009. Once installed, it will circle the Earth every 90 minutes, and crewmembers will peer through its 360-degree windows. It will serve as a skylight to control some of the most sophisticated robotics ever built.

Images of the cupola are available at <http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/gallery/images/station/cupola/ndxpage1.html> and <http://mediaarchive.ksc.nasa.gov/index.cfm>

Text of the NASA press release follows:

(begin text)

NASA
[Washington, D.C.]
Press release, October 12, 2004

Room With An Out-Of-This-World View Arrives At NASA

The world's ultimate observation deck, a control tower for robotics in space, and a sunroom like no other, has arrived at NASA's Kennedy Space Center (KSC). It is bound for the International Space Station.

Built in Italy for the United States segment of the Station, the Cupola traveled part way around the world to reach KSC. One day it will circle the Earth every 90 minutes, and crewmembers will peer through its 360-degree windows. It will serve

as a literal skylight to control some of the most sophisticated robotics ever built.

"The Cupola module will be a fascinating addition to the Space Station," said International Space Station Program Manager Bill Gerstenmaier. "The crew will have an improved view of critical activities outside the Station and breathtaking views of the Earth below."

The crew will use Cupola windows, six around the sides and one on the top, for line-of-sight monitoring of outside activities, including spacewalks, docking operations and exterior equipment surveys. The Cupola will be used specifically to monitor the approach and berthing of the Japanese H-2 supply craft and other visiting vehicles. The Cupola will serve as the primary location for controlling Canadarm2, the 60-foot Space Station robotic arm.

Space Station crews use two robotic control workstations in the Destiny laboratory to operate the arm. One of the robotic control stations will be placed inside the Cupola. The view from the Cupola will enhance an arm operator's situational awareness, supplementing television cameras and graphics.

Construction of the Cupola by Alenia Spazio, under a contract with the European Space Agency (ESA), is finished. It was delivered to KSC on Oct. 7, where it will undergo acceptance testing and launch preparations.

After initial inspections conducted in the Space Station Processing Facility, the Cupola was secured inside its transportation container for storage until launch preparations begin. Before launch, KSC and European Space Agency (ESA) engineers will conduct a joint inspection leading to the turnover of the Cupola to NASA.

The Cupola is scheduled to launch on Station assembly mission 14A (Shuttle mission STS-133) in early 2009. It will be installed on the forward port of Node 3, a connecting module to be installed in 2008. The Cupola was provided by ESA to NASA as part of a barter agreement. The agreement covers launch of external payloads on

the Shuttle for installation on the External Facility of the European Columbus research module.

Video of the Cupola arriving at KSC and background footage will air in the NASA TV Video File today. NASA TV is available in the continental U.S. on AMC-6, Transponder 9C, C-Band, at 72 degrees west longitude. The frequency is 3880.0 MHz. Polarization is vertical, and audio is monaural at 6.80 MHz. In Alaska and Hawaii, NASA TV is available on AMC-7, Transponder 18C, C-Band, at 137 degrees west longitude.

Frequency is 4060.0 MHz. Polarization is vertical, and audio is monaural at 6.80 MHz. NASA TV is available on the Internet at: <http://www.nasa.gov/ntv>

For images of the Cupola on the Internet, visit: <http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/gallery/images/station/cupola/ndxpage1.html>
<http://mediaarchive.ksc.nasa.gov/index.cfm>

For information about NASA and agency programs on the Internet, visit: <http://www.nasa.gov>

(end text)

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Text: U.S. Trade Representative Travels to Oman, United Arab Emirates

(Zoellick to promote trade expansion during October 13-15 meetings)

U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Robert Zoellick travels to the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) and Oman October 13-15 to promote expansion of bilateral, regional and global trade, according to a USTR press release October 13.

"In recent years, the Gulf region has become associated with economic reforms and trade liberalization, with the launching of the current World Trade Organization negotiations in Doha, Qatar, and our recent completion of an FTA (Free Trade Agreement) with Bahrain," Zoellick was quoted as saying in the press release.

"Both Oman and the U.A.E. have expressed interest in deepening their economic relationship with the United States, including with FTAs, and I look forward to discussing the challenges and opportunities involved in negotiating a comprehensive FTA with the United States," Zoellick added.

In 2003, President Bush announced an initiative to create a Middle East Free Trade Area by 2013. The initiative is designed to deepen U.S. trade relationships with all countries in the region through steps tailored to individual countries' levels of development.

After visiting Oman and the U.A.E., Zoellick travels to Israel to discuss bilateral trade issues, according to the press release.

Following is the text of the press release:

(begin text)

Office of the United States Trade Representative
Press Release

October 13, 2004

Zoellick to Visit United Arab Emirates and Oman
October 13 - 15

WASHINGTON - U.S. Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick will travel to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the Sultanate of Oman October 13-15 to discuss efforts to promote economic growth and opportunity by expanding bilateral, regional and global trade. Zoellick will then travel to Israel for meetings and discussions related to U.S.-Israeli bilateral trade issues.

"I look forward to meeting the senior political and economic leadership of the U.A.E. and Oman,

along with senior officials and representatives of the private sector when I visit Oman and the U.A.E." said Zoellick. "In recent years, the Gulf region has become associated with economic reforms and trade liberalization, with the launching of the current World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations in Doha, Qatar, and our recent completion of an FTA with Bahrain. I'm interested in learning more about the economic reforms and development plans in Oman and the U.A.E.

"U.S. FTAs are high quality, cutting-edge agreements that can play an important role in stimulating economic growth and development over time," said Zoellick. "Both Oman and the U.A.E. have expressed interest in deepening their economic relationship with the United States, including with FTAs, and I look forward to discussing the challenges and opportunities involved in negotiating a comprehensive FTA with the United States."

During his visit to the U.A.E., Zoellick will meet with American business leaders, participate in a roundtable discussion with U.A.E. opinion leaders and tour a port facility. In Oman, he will meet Minister of Commerce and Industry Maqbool Sultan and Minister of National Economy Ahmed bin Abdulnabi Macki. Zoellick will also participate in a roundtable with opinion leaders, and will conduct discussion groups with journalists and students.

The United States recently concluded a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Bahrain, and signed Trade and Investment Framework Agreements (TIFA) with both the UAE and Oman. The TIFAs provide a forum for the United States to examine ways to expand bilateral trade and investment and can be used as a forum to launch negotiations for an FTA.

"Last year, President Bush outlined a country-by-country plan to achieve a Middle East Free Trade Area. With the hand of U.S. economic partnership, the United States will embrace and encourage reformers across the region," said Zoellick. "The 9/11 Commission urged the United States to expand trade with the Middle East and highlighted

the recently concluded FTA with Bahrain, as well as our recently passed FTA with Morocco as examples of positive steps in this direction."

The President's Middle East Free Trade Agreement (MEFTA) initiative seeks to promote free trade throughout the region and between the region and the United States. The United States recognizes the differing levels of development across the region and is taking a graduated step-by-step approach to creating a free trade area with countries interested and willing to open their economies and liberalize their trade regimes.

U.S. goods exports to the UAE in 2003 were \$3.5 billion, including machinery, aircraft, vehicles, electrical machinery and optic and medical instruments. U.S. exports of agriculture products to the UAE totaled \$259 million in 2003, including live animals and tree nuts. U.S. goods imports from the UAE in 2003 totaled \$1.1 billion, including mineral fuel, woven apparel and knit apparel.

U.S. goods exports to Oman in 2003 were \$323 million, including machinery, aircraft, vehicles, and electrical machinery. U.S. exports of agricultural products to Oman were \$13 million, including sugars, sweeteners and beverage bases, and vegetable oils. U.S. goods imports from Oman in 2003 were \$695 million, including mineral fuel, woven apparel, repaired products, precious stones, and knit apparel. U.S. imports of agricultural products from Oman were \$2 million.

Background:

In May 2003, the President announced his initiative to create a Middle East Free Trade Area by 2013. The initiative is designed to deepen U.S. trade relationships with all countries of the region, through steps tailored to individual countries' level of development. Since that announcement, the United States has concluded FTA negotiations with Morocco and Bahrain, signed TIFAs with Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar and Yemen, and now with Oman. The U.S. already has TIFAs with Egypt, Algeria, and Tunisia. The United States recently held its first TIFA Council meetings with the UAE, Kuwait,

Qatar, and Oman. In addition, the U.S. has made progress with the WTO accessions of Saudi Arabia and Algeria, and in the case of Algeria, extended GSP benefits.

The United States is working to open markets globally in the Doha World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations; regionally through APEC and the Free Trade Area (FTAA) of the Americas negotiations; and bilaterally, with FTAs. The Bush Administration has completed FTAs with eleven countries - Chile, Singapore, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Australia, Morocco, and now Bahrain - in the last two years. Negotiations are under way or about to begin with ten more countries: Panama, Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Thailand, and the five nations of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU). New and pending FTA partners, taken together, would constitute America's third largest export market and the sixth largest economy in the world.

(end text)

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Text: New Project Gets AIDS Information to Those Who Most Need It

(New methods allow faster implementation of HIV-prevention programs)

New research suggests a better way to more rapidly disseminate and implement the best new ideas for prevention of HIV/AIDS, according to a press release from the National Institute of Mental Health, the U.S. government agency that funded the work.

Most of the innovative ideas for HIV-infection prevention are born in the United States and disseminated to the health care community

through scientific journals. Those journals rarely make it to the developing world, however, where health care providers are coping with the most serious AIDS problems.

The Center for AIDS Intervention Research at the Medical College of Wisconsin designed a project to address this problem by pairing U.S.-based consultants with health care providers in the developing world. The project provided information technology tools and expertise to the target groups, enabling them to more rapidly develop and implement programs for HIV-prevention.

Next, the researchers say they want to develop a more permanent system for delivering news of scientific advances to health care providers who need them.

The text of the press release follows:

(begin text)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH NIH
News

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/>

October 12, 2004

NEW LEARNING TECHNIQUES IMPROVE GLOBAL HIV/AIDS PREVENTION

Researchers funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), part of the National Institutes of Health, have found that advanced communication technologies -- including multimedia CDs -- can improve world-wide dissemination of new HIV/AIDS prevention models to providers of health services.

To combat the global spread of HIV, public health experts require quick and effective transmission of the latest behavioral intervention tools developed, primarily, in the United States. Ordinarily, scientific findings are disseminated via academic journals, read mostly by researchers. The new

study, by Dr. Jeffrey Kelly and his team at the Center for AIDS Intervention Research at the Medical College of Wisconsin, identifies an effective method to translate scientific advances to providers in the field. The findings are published in the September 24, 2004, "Science".

Ninety-six percent of the world's HIV infections are not in North America but in parts of the world with little access to the latest scientific journals. Researchers must be able to report findings to providers in ways that are easily adaptable and ready to use. A key element in the study was the pairing of each local service provider, or non-governmental organization (NGO), with U.S.-based consultants from their region to help adapt prevention models to each setting. The study also helped service providers identify issues most in need of research.

The researchers tested high tech dissemination methods to communicate a strategy that enlists popular opinion leaders in local communities to convey AIDS prevention messages. In the study of 86 leading AIDS NGOs in 78 countries, they found that NGOs which were provided comprehensive training via distance learning technologies, were better able to develop and modify programs than those given just basic materials.

All of the NGOs were given the basics: a computer, subsidized internet service, access to a study website where they could network with other NGOs, and various briefing materials. In addition, 42 NGOs in the experimental group also received more targeted materials in four languages, including CDs for the opinion leaders containing a self-paced curriculum (including video and animation segments) and printable copies of all materials needed to replicate the intervention. The Stateside consultants continued to coach them for 6 months.

At followup, 43 percent of the experimental group NGOs had developed a new HIV prevention program based on the opinion leader model, compared to only 17 percent of the control group NGOs. In addition, core elements of the opinion leader model were incorporated into existing

prevention programs by 55 percent of experimental group NGOs, compared to only 27 percent of control NGOs.

The next step, according to the researchers, is to develop a permanent communication infrastructure so that scientific advances reach providers more quickly.

Also participating in the research were: Drs. Karen Opgenorth, Anton Somlai, Eric Benotsch, Timothy McAuliffe, Yuri Amirkhanian, Kevin Brown, L. Yvonne Stevenson, Cheryl Sitzler, Cheryl Gore-Felton, Steven Pinkerton, and Lance Weinhardt, at the Medical College of Wisconsin; M. Isa Fernandez at the University of Miami, FL.

This NIH News Release is available online at: <<http://www.nih.gov/news/pr/oct2004/nimh-12.htm>>

(end text)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Text: Warming Arctic Might Accelerate Climate Change, Scientists Say

(Results affect Arctic tundra, possibly other global ecosystems)

NASA-funded researchers have found that, despite subzero temperatures, a warming Arctic may add more carbon to the atmosphere from soil, further accelerating climate warming, according to an October 12 NASA press release.

"The 3-to-7-degree Fahrenheit rise in temperature predicted by global climate computer models could cause the breakdown of the arctic tundra's vast store of soil carbon," said Michelle Mack, an ecologist at the University of Florida (UF) and a

lead researcher on a study published in last week's issue of the journal Nature.

The warming would release more of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide into the air than plants are capable of taking in. Study results suggest that climate warming in the arctic tundra may cause the release of much more carbon dioxide than previously expected, accelerating global climate change.

One-third of the Earth's soil carbon is locked in northern latitudes because low temperatures and water-saturated soil slow the decomposition of organic matter by bacteria, fungi and other organisms.

The results could also have implications for ecosystems in other regions of the world, said Edward Schuur, a UF ecologist who co-led the project. Places such as the northeastern United States and Europe, where acid rain has increased the amount of nitrogen deposited into the ecosystem from the atmosphere, could experience an increased loss of soil carbon in response to higher nitrogen inputs.

Text of the NASA press release follows:

(begin text)

NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center
Press release, October 12, 2004

Researchers find frozen north may accelerate climate change

NASA-funded researchers have found that despite their sub-zero temperatures, a warming north may add more carbon to the atmosphere from soil, accelerating climate warming further.

"The 3 to 7 degree Fahrenheit rise in temperature predicted by global climate computer models could cause the breakdown of the arctic tundra's vast store of soil carbon," said Michelle Mack, an ecologist at the University of Florida, Gainesville, Fla., and one of the lead researchers on a study published in last week's issue of Nature. It would

release more of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide into the air than plants are capable of taking in.

The study results suggest that climate warming in the arctic tundra may cause the release of much more carbon dioxide than previously expected. This type of positive feedback will make the Earth's climate change even more rapidly. The findings were collected in a 20-year experiment of the effects of fertilization on the arctic tundra at the Arctic Long-Term Ecological Research site near Toolik Lake, Alaska. The National Science Foundation and NASA provided funding for the research.

One-third of the Earth's soil carbon is locked in northern latitudes because low temperatures and water-saturated soil slow the decomposition of organic matter by bacteria, fungi and other organisms.

Scientists from UF, the University of Alaska and the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole, Mass., added nitrogen and phosphorous fertilizer to the soil to simulate the release of nutrients from decomposing soil organic matter.

The scientists hypothesized the fertilizer would stimulate plant growth, remove carbon from the atmosphere and eventually add it to the soil as plants shed dead leaves and roots over time. Thus, the whole ecosystem was thought to be gaining carbon after fertilization.

Mack and her colleagues found exactly the opposite. Even though plants grew more, and more carbon was stored in plants and in the surface of the soil, the whole ecosystem did not gain carbon. "Instead, it lost a tremendous amount from the deepest soil layers, probably because increased nitrogen accelerated the decomposition of organic matter by soil organisms, thereby releasing carbon dioxide."

The results could have implications for ecosystems in other regions of the world as well, said Edward Schuur, a UF ecologist who co-led the project. Places such as the northeastern U.S. and Europe, where acid rain has increased the amount of nitrogen deposited into the ecosystem

from the atmosphere, also could experience an increased loss of soil carbon in response to higher nitrogen inputs.

"It may be that not just arctic ecosystems, but those in other parts of the world will have a similar decomposition response to increased nitrogen," Schuur speculated. "Increased nitrogen levels are thought to have caused trees to grow more in many places. These places may experience the same kinds of effects below ground that we've noted."

Few previous studies have assessed fertilization effects on soil carbon pools because these effects are difficult to detect over short periods of time. The long-term nature of the experiment makes it unique among studies of arctic ecosystems, and makes the effects of fertilization large enough to detect.

It has long been thought that global warming would have two opposing effects on arctic soils. First, would increase the breakdown of soil organic matter, releasing carbon dioxide, the major cause of warming, into the atmosphere. Second, the breakdown of soil organic matter would liberate nutrients that would enhance rates of plant growth, thereby removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Peter Vitousek, a professor of biological sciences at Stanford University, said "This work demonstrated beautifully that there is another, even stronger effect, that an increase in nutrients also enhances the breakdown of soil organic matter." The overall effect of warming especially in the Arctic will be to release carbon dioxide to the atmosphere, enhancing the likelihood of further warming.

NASA sponsored research projects are selected through peer review and intended to improve the quality of life through the exploration and study of Earth's system, the solar system and the Universe.

(end text)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Text: Forensic Methods Help Trace Documents to Specific Printers

(Technique could be used to trace counterfeit currency, fake passports)

Researchers at Purdue University have developed a method that will allow authorities to trace documents to specific printers, a technique law-enforcement agencies could use to investigate counterfeiting, forgeries and homeland security matters.

The technique uses two methods to trace a document: analyzing a document to identify characteristics unique for each printer, and designing printers to purposely embed individualized characteristics in documents.

The technique focuses on laser printers but eventually will be expanded to inkjet printers, said Edward Delp, a professor of electrical and computer engineering at Purdue.

Counterfeiters often digitally scan currency and then use color laser and inkjet printers to produce bogus bills. Forgers use the same methods to make fake passports and other documents.

"Investigators want to be able to determine that a fake bill or document was created on a certain brand and model of printer," Delp said. So far, the researchers have been able to identify the model of printer used to create certain documents in 11 of 12 models tested, according to data scheduled to be released during the conference.

Officials also would be able to use the method to determine the authenticity of documents such as airline boarding passes and passports. Such information would enable investigators to

determine from what country or region of the world certain printed documents originated, information that could help trace the location of potential criminals or terrorists and their collaborators.

The Purdue researchers are working with the U.S. Secret Service to develop new methods for tracing documents and counterfeit bills.

Findings of the research, funded by the National Science Foundation, will be detailed in three papers scheduled for presentation November 5 during the International Conference on Digital Printing Technologies in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Full transcript is available at
<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/300/index.htm>

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Transcript: State Department Noon Briefing, October 13

(Sudan, Iraq, Radio Sawa, Department/Broadcasting Board of Governors, G8 meetings, Department/views of legislation creating an Office of Anti-Semitism, Afghanistan, Iran, United Nations, Lebanon/Syria, China)

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher briefed the media October 13.

Following is the transcript of the State Department briefing:

(begin transcript)

U.S. Department of State
Daily Press Briefing Index
Wednesday, October 13, 2004
12:45 p.m. EDT

Briefer: Richard Boucher, Spokesman

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DAILY PRESS BRIEFING

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2004
(ON THE RECORD UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)

12:45 p.m. EDT

MR. BOUCHER: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. It's a pleasure to be here. I don't have any statements or announcements, so I would be glad to take your questions.

QUESTION: Well, let's go to Sudan, for -- after a stretch of not getting involved with the situation.

There's a UN report now that things are getting worse, tougher to get aid through. You know, things were looking a little better for a while was the impression we were given. Is there a down turn now?

MR. BOUCHER: I don't have an overall characterization of the situation. I think we are -- we remain very concerned about the situation in Sudan. It remains a key focus of our efforts two ways. One is, the Naivasha talks have resumed and that Vice President Taha and Mr. -- Dr. Garang are both there, and we have senior officials out there. We have supported very much the work of the Kenyan mediator, General Sumbeiywo, on behalf of the IGAD, it's called. And we are working very hard out there to try to secure, try to help them finish up the final details of the agreements that they have previously reached. And in fact, over the weekend, the Secretary spoke both to Vice President Taha and Dr. Garang to encourage them to find solutions to the problems that they were facing out there. So that's one thing. And it's an important track and it could have a contributing benefit for the situation in Darfur if they get the overall governance of the Sudan and arrangements in Sudan worked out in those details.

Second of all, we're focused very much on the situation in Darfur. We have been working very closely with the African Union and others to help with their planning and support their planning. We have let the contracts for logistical support for the expanded force of African Union troops -- that's about 3500 troops. So we have contracted already for building camps, maintaining vehicles and radios, procuring office equipment, providing transport of equipment or personnel, and we're coordinating with the Nigerians, with the African Union, with other troop-committed, troop-donor countries to help the African Union get in there

quickly. And then, of course, we maintain a very high level of effort on humanitarian assistance to get humanitarian assistance into Darfur and help the people there.

Okay, thank you. Charlie.

**Full transcript is available at
<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/300/index.htm>**

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Text: Meghan O'Sullivan Assumes Southwest Asia Portfolio at NSC

(National Security appointment follows service with CPA, State Department)

Meghan O'Sullivan has been appointed as the National Security Council's (NSC) Special Advisor to the President and Senior Director for Strategic Planning and Southwest Asia, including Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, according to an October 13 White House press release.

O'Sullivan previously worked for the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq and with the State Department's Office of Policy Planning.

Following is the text of the White House press release:

(begin text)

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
(Phoenix, Arizona)
October 13, 2004

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice announced today the appointment of Meghan L. O'Sullivan as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Strategic Planning and

Southwest Asia, effective July 12, 2004. This portfolio includes Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan.

Dr. O'Sullivan came to the National Security Council from the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad, Iraq. Prior to her departure to the region in March of 2003, Dr. O'Sullivan served as a member of the Office of Policy Planning at the Department of State. In this capacity, she was the chief advisor to the presidential envoy to the peace process in Northern Ireland, and was also involved in efforts to promote reform in the Muslim world.

(end text)

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Text: OSCE Criticizes Verbal Attacks on Election Observers in Belarus

(Belarusian state media making unfounded negative, aggressive comments)

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has expressed concern that the Election Observation Mission to the October 17 parliamentary elections in Belarus has endured "sustained negative and aggressive comments in the Belarusian state media and from state officials."

OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) strongly rejected charges of political bias and lack of transparency on the part of the observers, saying that "the visibility and frequency of these baseless allegations are unprecedented from the side of a host State towards an OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission."

Following is an OSCE/ODIHR statement:

(begin text)

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

OSCE/ODIHR Expresses Concern over Unprecedented Verbal Attacks on Election Observation Mission in Belarus

WARSAW/MINSK, 11 October 2004 - The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) Election Observation Mission to the 17 October parliamentary elections in Belarus has recently been the object of sustained negative and aggressive comments in the Belarusian state media and from state officials.

The OSCE/ODIHR totally rejects any allegations of political bias and prejudiced conclusions. It is regrettable that, on the part of the Belarusian state media and others, there appear to be abundant unfounded preconceptions about the Mission.

The OSCE/ODIHR is also deeply concerned about repeated claims that the work of its long-term observers and core team analysts lacks transparency. The visibility and frequency of these baseless allegations are unprecedented from the side of a host State towards an OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission.

The core team in Minsk maintains regular working relations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Central Election Commission. Activities of the core team analysts have included attending all Central Election Commission sessions dealing with registration appeals -- to our knowledge, the only international observers to do so.

Eleven teams of long-term observers have already been working for a month in Minsk and eight other cities: Brest, Grodno, Vityebsk, Mogilyov, Gomel, Baranovichy, Novopolotsk and Mozyr. They have met the District Election Commissions, many Precinct Election Commissions, representatives of the administration, candidates, nominees, journalists and others.

The long-term observers work in a manner that is open and accessible to all interlocutors and consistent with the standard methodology of

OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Missions. The energy, professionalism and objectivity of all observers are indisputable. Short-term observers seconded by OSCE participating States will arrive later this week.

The OSCE/ODIHR is confident that the statement of preliminary conclusions and findings to be issued on Monday, 18 October, will represent an accurate and credible assessment of the parliamentary elections as measured against the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen commitments.

The OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission is deployed in the Republic of Belarus at the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and is financed from the core budget of the OSCE/ODIHR.

For further information, please visit the website of the Election Observation Mission at: http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/field_activities/?election=2004belarus

(end text)

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Text: OSCE Opens Observation Mission in Skopje for Referendum

(Referendum November 7 on Law on Territorial Organization)

The OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has deployed an observation mission to FYR Macedonia for the November 7 referendum on the Law on Territorial Organization. That law, which was passed by the Macedonian Parliament in August, sets out new municipal boundaries and strengthens the country's move to decentralization.

The mission includes 10 international staff in Skopje and 12 long-term observers deployed throughout the country. The OSCE/ODIHR has requested 200 short-term observers to be deployed shortly before voting day.

Following is the OSCE/ODIHR press release:

(begin text)

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

OSCE/ODIHR OPENS OBSERVATION MISSION IN SKOPJE FOR REFERENDUM

WARSAW, 12 October 2004 - The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights has deployed an observation mission to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the referendum called for 7 November 2004. The referendum is on the Law on Territorial Organization, which sets out new municipal boundaries in the country.

The Mission, headed by Ambassador Friedrich Bauer (Austria), includes 10 international staff based at an office in Skopje and 12 long-term observers deployed throughout the country. The OSCE/ODIHR has requested 200 short-term observers from the OSCE participating States, to be deployed shortly before voting day.

Operating independently from the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje, the ODIHR Election Observation Mission will assess the entire referendum process in terms of its compliance with international standards for democratic elections and national legislation. It will focus on the campaign period, the legislative framework and its implementation, the media situation, the work of the election administration and relevant government bodies, and the resolution of disputes.

On the day of the referendum, short-term observers will observe voting, counting and the tabulation of votes.

The day after voting day, the Mission will issue a statement of its preliminary findings and

conclusions. A comprehensive final report will be released about six weeks after the completion of the process.

The ODIHR has observed a number of elections in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, including the 2004 presidential election, the 2002 parliamentary elections, the 2000 municipal elections and the 1999 presidential election.

For further information, please visit the observation mission's special website at: http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/field_activities/index.php?election=2004mk

(end text)

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Humanitarian Aid a Growing Application for "Digital Diplomacy"

(Satellite imagery has key role in U.S. foreign policy)

By Cheryl Pellerin
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The State Department is using remote sensing technology on board satellites in an increasing number of nonmilitary applications to support U.S. foreign policy objectives, and humanitarian assistance may be one of the fastest-growing applications.

This is part two of a two-part article on the Department of State's use of satellite imagery in humanitarian efforts.

Satellites, the associated computing technology and software, and application of the data produced have evolved considerably since the age was launched with Sputnik 1 in 1957. The first generations were devoted to military and

intelligence purposes, but in 1972, Landsat 1 made satellite imagery of the Earth's surface available to the public for the first time.

Since then, satellite imagery has revolutionized the study of the natural environment and global hazards, agriculture, energy use, public health and international policy. A growing number of satellites hover above the planet, and an increasing number of commercial vendors sell satellite images for a variety of purposes.

But one of the greatest changes in the way satellite imagery is used has arisen from its declassification and its availability to the public.

Full transcript is available at
<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/300/index.htm>

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Lawmaker Says U.N. Peacekeeping in Africa Not Up to Task

(Rep. Royce suggests private military corporations might have role to play)

By Jim Fisher-Thompson
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- U.N. peacekeeping efforts in Africa have been very disappointing, despite receiving three-fourths of all U.N. peacekeeping funds, House Africa Subcommittee Chairman Ed Royce (Republican of California) told fellow lawmakers at an October 8 hearing.

"There is much room for improvement in U.N. peacekeeping operations, which have been plagued with many shortcomings," such as unqualified troops, inability to protect civilians and mission unsustainability, Royce said. He suggested that private military contractors (PMCs) might have a role to play in tackling "the world's most war-plagued continent."

Royce pointed to a substantial increase in U.N. peacekeeping operations in Africa, which are commanding \$2.9 billion of the institution's \$3.9 billion worldwide peacekeeping budget. "[Even though] U.N. peacekeeping mandates for these operations have increased in complexity," he said, "... the record of these operations is mixed."

In the past, he said, "Namibia and Mozambique were successes, [but] Somalia and Rwanda were dramatic failures. The mission in Sierra Leone was falling apart until British troops took aggressive action" to battle the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), a movement that targeted civilians for mutilation to attract international attention.

With "many parts of Africa in crisis," Royce said, "we need to stretch our thinking" to include alternative measures such as PMCs because "security is an essential foundation for Africa's development. We used PMCs in Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire to do logistics work ...[and] I know we have PMCs with the African Union peacekeepers in Darfur on the ground there doing logistics."

For several years, PMCs such as Military Professional Resources Incorporated (MPRI), Dynacorps and International Charter Incorporated (ICI) have provided logistics support, including aircraft, communications gear, vehicles, security personnel and training expertise, for U.N., NATO and U.S.-led peace operations in places like Bosnia, Sierra Leone and Iraq.

James Swigert, deputy assistant secretary of state for international organization affairs, told lawmakers, "One size most definitely does not fit all in finding the swiftest or most lasting end to an international conflict."

He assured them that the Bush administration approves U.N. peacekeeping missions "only when we judge them to be necessary, right-sized, and only if they have a viable exit strategy."

The Darfur crisis has highlighted the need to provide protection for civilians to bring stability, Swigert said. "Our view is that peace enforcement is at the high end of the spectrum of peace

operations," he said. In Sudan, he added, "the AU [African Union] mission to Darfur is absolutely critical, and private contractors are indeed playing a critical role" helping feed and protect civilians there.

Traditional U.N. peacekeepers are not equipped to fight a war, Swigert said. It is the administration's belief that such tasks are best handled by "coalitions of willing and able forces, with a militarily strong state in the lead," as was the case when the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) intervened "in a seriously destabilized Liberia in mid-2003," he said.

Swigert mentioned several U.S. military training initiatives that address this need by helping African armies enhance their ability to counter terrorism and enforce peace as part of regionally mandated efforts such as the African Union intervention in Sudan.

He cited the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program, a successor to the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI), which in 2004 will have trained nine battalions in various African countries in peace-enforcement operations. ACOTA will also be the centerpiece in Africa of the Bush administration's recently announced Global Peacekeeping Operations Initiative (GPOI), intended to train up to 75,000 troops for peace operations worldwide.

Doug Brooks, president of the International Peace Operations Association (IPOA), an advocacy group representing 14 PMCs, mentioned Liberia as a good example of how the private sector works with militaries on peace enforcement in Africa.

Brooks said: "Many of the West African troops used for the operation had been trained by private companies, were flown to Monrovia by private companies, and once in Liberia they were transported, based and supported logistically by private companies. It was a hybrid public-private operation that offers useful indications into how this concept can be built on in the future."

Subcommittee members Donald Payne (Democrat of New Jersey) and Barbara Lee (Democrat of

California) both voiced concerns about using PMCs in Africa, citing the continent's history of "mercenaries," a legacy that had echoes in the recent trial in Zimbabwe of a group accused of plotting the overthrow of the government of Equatorial Guinea.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)