



European Washington File

Public Affairs Section

Embassy of the United States, Stockholm, Sweden

Monday, October 18, 2004

Transcript: Afghan Election Results Will Reflect Popular Will, Says Powell (Secretary of state tells Chicago Tribune Iraqi people desire same experience).....	3
Excerpt: Powell Thanks Italy for Unwavering Support in Iraq, Afghanistan (Says Coalition, Iraqi forces will repeat success of Afghan election in Iraq).....	4
Fact Sheet: Bush Signs Bill to Increase Homeland Security Funding (Department will see a \$1.8 billion increase in FY 2005)	5
United States Appeals WTO Ruling on Cotton Subsidies (Letter to trade organization's appellate body cites "erroneous findings")	7
Text: Open Skies Aircraft Might Be Used for Environmental Protection (Parties to treaty discuss use of observation technology for environment).....	8
Text: EPA Head Reaffirms Commitment to Water Protection (Officials mark World Water Monitoring Day).....	9
Text: Scientists Prepare for Space Probe's Plunge into Titan Atmosphere (Ice mountains, liquid methane seas may form surface of Saturn moon).....	10
Text: New Propulsion System Could Allow 90-Day Round-trip to Mars (Plasma beam would propel craft's magnetic sail through solar system).....	11
Text: Scientists Report Success in Malaria Vaccine Trial (Mozambique trial described as breakthrough in search for vaccine)	12
Text: U.S.-funded Study Might Lead to New Volcano-Monitoring Tools (U.S., U.K., Australian scientists examined eruption-related chemistry).....	13
Transcript: White House Daily Briefing, October 18 (President's schedule, Iraq)	14
Transcript: State Department Noon Briefing, October 18 (Belarus, U.S. elections/OSCE observers, Powell's upcoming trip to Asia, North Korea, Taiwan, China, Sudan, Lebanon/Syria, Greece, Colombia, Iraq, A/S Burns's meeting in Cairo/Morocco/Europe, Israel/Palestinians, Guantanamo/Human Rights Watch Report, Venezuela)	17
Text: President Bush Signs North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (New law provides for special envoy to coordinate international dialogue)	18
Transcript: Powell: U.S. Diplomacy Creates "Expanding Circle of Liberty" (Multilateral initiatives, diplomatic successes often overlooked, secretary says)	19

Excerpt: U.S. Deeply Regrets "Seriously Flawed" Elections in Belarus (Belarusian voters were not given a fair chance to express their choice)	20
Excerpt: State's Armitage Comments on Russian Economic, Political Choices (Deputy secretary of state addresses U.S.-Russia Business Council)	21
Text: State Department Highlights Steps to Combat Anti-Semitism (Lists international actions in Oct. 15 fact sheet)	22
Text: U.S., EU Discuss Participation in Visa Waiver Program (U.S. officials meet with EU states on laws governing visa waivers)	23
Text: Agriculture's Veneman Pledges Reduction in Chronic World Hunger (Veneman also touts World Food Day theme of "Biodiversity for Food Security")	25
Text: Powell Marks Upcoming International Education Week, Nov. 15-19 (Commends exchanges as enriching cultures, strengthening cooperation)	26
Text: Powell Releases 2004-2005 U.S. Fulbright Exchange Student List (Program's purpose is to build mutual understanding between countries)	27
Text: Belarus Elections Fell Significantly Short of OSCE Commitments (International observers cite disregard for democratic principles)	28
Text: El Nino-Related Drought may have Caused Severe Moth Outbreak (Increasing El Nino events may alter forest species composition)	30
United Nations to Increase Number of Peacekeepers in Haiti (Several hundred new peacekeepers expected by end of October)	31
U.S. Dismantles Colombian-Based Drug Money Laundering Organization (Reach of drug conspiracy reportedly spanned the world)	32
Peace Corps Helping Others Better Understand U.S., Official Says (Volunteers highlight U.S. diversity, agency's Vasquez adds)	33

Transcript: Afghan Election Results Will Reflect Popular Will, Says Powell

(Secretary of state tells Chicago Tribune Iraqi people desire same experience)

Secretary of State Colin Powell said he believes the result of Afghanistan's October 9 presidential elections, despite reported difficulties, will reflect the will of those who voted.

Speaking with Chicago Tribune reporter Clarence Page in Washington October 14, Powell said that when the election officials count the votes and declare a winner, it "will be an adequate reflection of the will of all those people we saw standing in line, even after you discount whatever difficulty might have been associated with indelible ink, ballot boxes that didn't show up or whatnot, or some warlord intimidation."

Powell said the Afghan people are weary of being ruled by regional warlords and through force.

"I think that is the attitude that drove these 10 million people to register and these millions of people to vote last weekend," he said.

The secretary added that "it's clear the Iraqi people want the same experience," which he said is only being complicated by the insurgency in that country.

"If this insurgency wasn't under way, what would be going on in Iraq? We'd be cutting the size of our force; we'd be building up more and more Iraqi police; the government would be functioning without worrying about getting blown up every morning; the pipeline system and the petroleum system would be doing even better than it is, and it's doing quite well, because there wouldn't be concern about it blowing up every day," he said.

Turning to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, Powell said many in the Arab world either respect or resent the United States because of its position in the peace process. "The fact that the Middle East peace process is not moving the way all of us would like to see it move is often put at our doorstep," he said.

The United States is seen as the interlocutor between the two "and as a nation that has greatest relationship and influence with Israel," he said.

Powell said the road map for peace "is not in tatters" but it "needs two cars to get on the road, and we haven't been able to get it started."

The secretary condemned terrorism that is killing innocent Israelis and also said, "We've got to do something about the occupation that frustrates the hopes and dreams of the Palestinian people."

"[W]e need reformed, responsible Palestinian leadership, and we need Israel also to meet its obligations under the road map," he said.

The secretary acknowledged that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has a "unique position" among the Palestinian people, and that he "carries their hopes and their dreams and their aspirations."

However, "he hasn't done anything with it and his leadership has not brought the Palestinian people one step closer to a state in the last four years of the Intifada," he said.

On Sudan, Powell said the humanitarian situation in Darfur has improved in that more aid can reach the refugees with fewer restrictions and the number of humanitarian workers has "doubled, and maybe tripled by now."

However, he called for the African Union protection force monitors to accelerate their arrival to provide security in the countryside so the refugees can return home. The secretary pledged U.S. help to the refugees who, he said, cannot move themselves or sustain themselves once they have returned home.

"[W]e've got contractors in place. We've got planes being lined up. ... They need help and we're going to help them," he said.

Full transcript is available at
<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/100/index.htm>

----- ***** -----

Excerpt: Powell Thanks Italy for Unwavering Support in Iraq, Afghanistan*(Says Coalition, Iraqi forces will repeat success of Afghan election in Iraq)*

Secretary of State Colin Powell used the occasion of the National Italian American Foundation Dinner October 16 to thank Italy for its unwavering support in Afghanistan and Iraq.

"In all of these difficult months," Powell said, "never once has [Italian] Prime Minister Berlusconi or [Foreign Minister] Franco Frattini or anyone in the Italian Government blinked. Not once did they stand back and say maybe we better take another look. Not once. They've always been with us."

Powell called the recent election in Afghanistan "a triumph of the human spirit" and said it wouldn't have happened "had it not been for the leadership of the coalition, President Bush, Prime Minister Berlusconi, so many others."

The Secretary expressed confidence that coalition troops and Iraqi forces will be able to deal with the insurgency and make it possible for elections to take place next January. "The Iraqi people want the same choice for freedom, the same choice to pick their own leaders, that the Afghan people have, the Italian people have, the American people have, and we will not rest until they exercise that choice," he said.

Noting that a panel is studying the reorganization of the United Nations, including the expansion of the Security Council, Powell said that when the report is issued "and we see what it recommends and how large there might be in terms of an expansion of the Security Council, if any at all, you can be absolutely sure... that Italy will get every consideration. We don't forget our friends."

Following are excerpts from from Powell's remarks:

(begin excerpt)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman
October 18, 2004

REMARKS

SECRETARY OF STATE COLIN L. POWELL
AT THE NATIONAL ITALIAN AMERICAN
FOUNDATION DINNER

October 16, 2004
Hilton Washington and Towers
Washington, D.C.

(9:59 p.m. EDT)

SECRETARY POWELL:

[...]

Italians Americans have always had a deep sense of family, a deep sense of community, and NIAF [National Italian American Foundation] has done so much to extend your warm embrace beyond the Italian American community to the rest of the nation and to the rest of the world. Indeed, you have helped our nation extend its hand of friendship, its hand of hope, to people all across the globe.

And it is not surprising that one of the strongest, steadiest hands of friendship that has been extended right back to us belongs to Italy, our great NATO ally. We are so proud to be standing... We are so proud to be standing alongside Italy on the frontiers, the front lines, of freedom, whether it's the global war on terrorism and all the other places that you've heard about already this evening, where we are standing shoulder to shoulder: in the Balkans; in Iraq; in Afghanistan. Both of our nations have lost precious lives. Both of our nations have seen our citizens held hostage or killed by some of the world's most brutal terrorists. Through it all, we draw strength from one another. We draw strength from the shared conviction that our two countries are part of a noble mission. And in all of these difficult months, never once has Prime Minister [Silvio] Berlusconi or [Foreign Minister] Franco Frattini or anyone in the Italian Government blinked. Not once did they stand back and say maybe we better take another look. Not once. They've always been with us.

And I can assure Frank and I can assure the Minister, the Ambassador, that I am watching with

great interest the report that will be forthcoming from the panel studying the reorganization of the UN; and when that report comes forward and we see what it recommends and how large there might be in terms of an expansion of the Security Council, if any at all, you can be absolutely sure, as Frank said, that Italy will get every consideration. We don't forget our friends.

We are all part of this historic effort to help bring the blessings of liberty and prosperity and peace to peoples who so desperately want a better life for their children.

Just last weekend, we saw a remarkable thing. Millions of Afghans, men and women, voted in the first democratic election in Afghanistan's 5,000-year history. It was a triumph of the human spirit. People said it wouldn't happen. People said that the Taliban and al-Qaida would keep people from voting. People said that the Afghan people weren't ready for this. And yet, as I sat in my home last weekend receiving reports, the reports were so encouraging. People were lining up at 3 o'clock in the morning outside of polling stations. The Taliban blew up a bridge, and the people came to the bridge and walked along the river till they found a place where they could cross that cold water to get to a polling station. They came in burkas, the women in burkas, fully covered up except for their hand coming out from the burka with their ballot in it, to vote for the first time. They would not be denied.

It wouldn't have happened had it not been for the leadership of the coalition, President Bush, Prime Minister Berlusconi, so many others.

Now we face another challenge in Iraq, preparing to hold its own historic elections next January. We face a difficult challenge. There is a deadly insurgency that's raging, a deadly insurgency fueled by leftovers from the old regime, terrorists who have come to make trouble. We expected this kind of difficulty. But I have every confidence in our coalition troops and in the Iraqi forces who are rapidly being built up to deal with this. And the one thing I have absolute confidence in is that the Iraqi people want the same choice for freedom, the same choice to pick their own leaders, that the Afghan people have, the Italian people have, the American

people have, and we will not rest until they exercise that choice.

On behalf of President Bush, of course, on behalf of all of us here tonight, on behalf of all the American people, I want to express our heartfelt gratitude to Prime Minister Berlusconi, to the Italian people, to my colleague, Franco, for the service that they are performing around the world, for their sacrifice, and for being our steadfast partner in the cause of freedom. ...

(end excerpt)

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

----- ***** -----

Fact Sheet: Bush Signs Bill to Increase Homeland Security Funding

(Department will see a \$1.8 billion increase in FY 2005)

President Bush signed the fiscal year 2005 appropriations bill for the Department of Homeland Security October 18, providing a 6 percent increase over 2004 funding levels.

The department will receive \$40.7 billion in the fiscal year that began October 1 (including programs related to Project BioShield, which aims to improve medical countermeasures to protect Americans against a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear attack). This reflects a \$1.8 billion increase over the amount appropriated in fiscal year 2004.

The measure includes a \$60 million increase for the department's Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection Directorate to help protect key networks in cyberspace from disruption or destruction by terrorists.

It also allocates \$593 million to develop technologies designed to counter possible threats from chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological weapons as well as high-power explosives. Another \$61 million will be spent researching ways to protect

commercial airliners against shoulder-launched missiles.

The US-VISIT (U.S. Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology) program, designed to expedite the travel to and from the United States by legitimate travelers and hinder that of individuals who pose a national security threat, will benefit from a \$12 million increase from the fiscal 2004, for a total appropriation of \$340 million.

Following is the text of the White House fact sheet:

(begin fact sheet)

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
October 18, 2004

FACT SHEET: PROVIDING THE RESOURCES NECESSARY TO PROTECT AMERICA

Today's Presidential Action

-- Today, President Bush signed the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act of 2005 to provide much-needed funds for our nation's homeland security activities. This bill contains most of the federal government's investment in homeland security. With enactment of the remainder of the President's FY 2005 budget, President Bush will have nearly tripled funding for homeland security activities since taking office.

-- This bill reflects the President's commitment to defend America by making sure the federal government and state and local first responders have the resources they need to prevent terrorist attacks within the United States, reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism, and minimize damage from attacks that might occur.

Background on today's Presidential Action

-- The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Appropriations Act signed today provides \$28.9 billion in net discretionary spending, a \$1.8 billion increase (6.6 percent) over 2004, and a \$14.9 billion increase (106 percent) over 2001 levels.

-- Including Project BioShield, mandatory, and fee-funded programs, a total of \$40.7 billion will be available to DHS in fiscal year 2005.

-- The Act includes \$4 billion for State and local assistance programs -- a 765 percent (\$3.5 billion) increase over 2001 levels. This includes a 19 percent (\$135 million) increase for the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) over 2004.

- The UASI distributes terrorism preparedness grants to urban areas based on threat levels, instead of using arbitrary formulas.

- Other state and local assistance programs funded by the appropriations act include \$150 million for port security grants, \$150 million for rail/transit security grants, neither of which were funded in 2001; and \$715 million for grants to fire departments, a \$615 million increase over 2001.

-- In addition, the Act provides for other key programs and initiatives vital to protecting America and reducing our vulnerability to terrorist threats, including:

- \$8.5 billion for U.S. Customs and Border Protection and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, a 7 percent (\$556 million) increase over 2004. This spending level percent funds programs to help secure our nation's borders while facilitating the legitimate flow of commerce, including full funding for:

-- The Container Security Initiative to pre-screen cargo containers from 26 ports representing more than 80 percent of inbound cargo to the United States. With the legislation signed by the President today, spending on cargo security, screening, and inspections will total nearly \$2.9 billion, an 80 percent (\$1.3 billion) increase over pre-9/11 levels; and

-- The Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism, which facilitates partnerships between the federal government and American importers to improve security along the entire supply chain -- from the factory floor, to foreign vendors, to land borders and seaports.

- \$340 million for the United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology program (US-VISIT), an automated entry-exit system designed to expedite the arrival and departure of legitimate travelers, while making it more difficult for those intending to do us harm to enter our nation. This is a \$12 million increase over 2004.

- \$5.1 billion for the Transportation Security Administration, including aviation security fees, a \$679 million increase over 2004. This includes \$475 million for explosives detection system baggage screening equipment and installation, a 19 percent (\$75 million) increase over 2004.

- \$6.3 billion for the Coast Guard, an 8.6 percent (\$500 million) increase over 2004, and a 66 percent (\$2.5 billion) increase over 2001 levels. Among funding for other programs, the appropriations bill includes \$724 million for the deepwater multi-year acquisition program to replace Coast Guard ships, aircraft, and communications systems.

- \$3.1 billion for the Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate, a 7 percent (\$198 million) increase over 2004. This includes:

1) Funding for programs that support the nation's ability to prepare for, mitigate against, respond to, and recover from natural and man made disasters.

2) \$2 billion for the Disaster Relief Fund, a \$53 million increase over base 2004 funding. This fund allows DHS to provide support to states for response and recovery to unforeseen emergencies and natural disasters.

- \$894 million for the Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection Directorate (IAIP), \$60 million above the 2004 level.

-- The IAIP is the focal point of the Department's efforts to assess and protect the nation's critical infrastructures, including cyberspace, from terrorism.

-- The 2005 funding level will allow the IAIP to identify critical assets and send IAIP teams to conduct site visits to assist operators and owners in identifying and reducing vulnerabilities.

- \$1.1 billion for the Science and Technology Directorate, a \$203 million increase over 2004. This includes \$593 million to develop technologies that counter threats from chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological weapons, and high explosives; and \$61 million to continue the development of innovative counter-measures to protect commercial aircraft against man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS).

(end fact sheet)

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

----- ***** -----

United States Appeals WTO Ruling on Cotton Subsidies

(Letter to trade organization's appellate body cites "erroneous findings")

By Berta Gomez
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The United States is appealing a World Trade Organization (WTO) ruling that U.S. cotton subsidies violate international trading rules.

In an October 18 letter to the WTO appellate body, the U.S. Mission to the WTO said the organization's dispute settlement body (DSB) had based its ruling against the United States on "erroneous findings on issues of law and related legal interpretations."

Among the points that the United States plans to appeal is the DSB finding that U.S. subsidies have suppressed world-market prices for cotton. The letter lists a total of 14 points in the DSB ruling that the United States will challenge.

Under WTO rules, the appellate body has up to three months to study U.S. objections to the ruling in the case, which was originally brought by Brazil, and issue its determination.

After formal release of the ruling, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick on September 8 gave notice that the United States would appeal.

"We strongly disagree with some aspects of the panel report, which we will be appealing," Zoellick said in a news release. "The facts do not show that U.S. farm programs have distorted trade and caused low cotton prices."

Zoellick reiterated the U.S. position that some of the issues raised in the cotton-subsidy case should be resolved through ongoing WTO negotiations rather than dispute-settlement proceedings.

One part of the panel ruling concerned what is called the "peace clause" from the 1994 agreement creating the WTO, which generally prohibited challenges to domestic and export agriculture subsidies during the agreement's implementation period. The panel ruled that the peace clause did not cover U.S. domestic subsidies and export credit guarantees for cotton.

The panel also ruled that some U.S. domestic subsidies did depress world cotton prices, thus harming Brazilian competitors. Some of those subsidies go to marketing loans and counter-cyclical payments, which are made when commodity prices fall below a threshold. Other subsidies, called Step 2 payments, are made to domestic users and exporters when U.S. cotton prices exceed a threshold, thus promoting use of U.S. cotton even if it has a higher price than foreign cotton.

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

----- ***** -----

Text: Open Skies Aircraft Might Be Used for Environmental Protection

(Parties to treaty discuss use of observation technology for environment)

A military aerial observation system born of the Cold War could be turned to environmental protection, according to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Parties to the 1992 Open Skies Treaty met in Vienna, Austria, October 14-15 to discuss

environmental uses for unmanned aerial observation flights currently being used under the Open Skies regime to help monitor compliance with arms-control treaties and thus ensure mutual transparency of weapons arsenals.

An October 15 press release from OSCE says Open Skies aircraft have been used over the last few years to assess damage from storms, floods and oil spills. Experts at the Vienna meeting examined how aerial surveillance could be used in the environmental field, such as in the verification of international environmental conventions.

The text of the press release follows:

(begin text)

OSCE - Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

<http://www.osce.org/>

October 15, 2004

OPEN SKIES TREATY STATES DISCUSS
USAGE OF UNARMED OBSERVATION
FLIGHTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL
PURPOSES

VIENNA, 15 October 2004 - Experts from 31 states party to the Open Skies Treaty today discussed the possible use of the Treaty's tools for ecological purposes, such as cases of floods, tornadoes, air and soil pollution as well as urbanisation.

Some 80 participants, also including representatives of countries who are not parties to the Treaty, focused on aerial surveillance activities and the need to use them in the environmental field.

Participants in the two-day Seminar on the Environmental and Ecological Use of the Open Skies Regime compared different ways of environmental surveillance, especially between the ones made via satellite and Open Skies aircraft.

Military experts and scientists agreed that the Open Skies aircraft can be used for cross-border environmental emergencies and disasters, and the

verification of international environmental conventions.

Among the cases presented where the Open Skies assets were successfully used in disaster situations were:

- the Oder River flood in 1997, when a German Open Skies aircraft took images of the full river area from the river Neisse to the Baltic Sea within a 10-day period and shared them with the affected countries, i.e. Poland and the Czech Republic.

- the scheduled trial observation flight conducted in 2000 by Germany and the U.S. with a U.S. Open Skies aircraft to assess the forest areas damaged by Hurricane Lothar, which caused severe destruction in France and Germany.

- the use of Spanish Open Skies aircraft to detect the oil track after the tanker Prestige sank 130 miles off Spain's north-west coast on 20 November 2002 and spilled almost 20 million gallons of heavy fuel oil.

The meeting was held under the Polish Chairmanship of the Open Skies Consultative Commission.

Background: The origins of the idea of Open Skies date back to the early years of the arms race between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. In 1955, U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower suggested to the Soviet Union the use of aerial photography as a means to create mutual transparency of the weapons arsenals on both sides to deter and lift suspicions of surprise attacks. The bilateral proposal was turned down by the latter, but the idea was re-introduced in 1989. NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization member states started discussing the issue in 1990 and the Open Skies Treaty was signed on 24 March 1992 by 26 states.

During the trial implementation phase between 1992 and the Treaty's entry into force in 1 January 2002, almost 400 bilateral and multilateral test flights were performed. More than 150 unarmed observation flights between the states parties were conducted since the latter date. Each of the 55 OSCE participating States can apply to accede to the Treaty. Currently 31 of them are party to it.

(end text)

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

----- ***** -----

Text: EPA Head Reaffirms Commitment to Water Protection

(Officials mark World Water Monitoring Day)

U.S. environment officials joined their counterparts in many parts of the world October 18 in emphasizing the importance of clean, safe water supplies and the work required to keep them that way.

In a press release issued on World Water Monitoring Day, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Mike Leavitt said, "[L]et's remember and reaffirm our commitment to protect and restore watersheds, coasts and oceans."

A consortium of public and private organizations sponsor the event, culminating on October 18 after a month of activities in which citizens around the world have been monitoring water quality in their own communities. Using test kits provided by the sponsors, citizens have been testing water health by measuring dissolved oxygen, temperature, clarity and pH. Providing this information back to the sponsors creates a snapshot of current global water quality and will help build a broader pool of information to monitor long-term trends.

The press release says people in 35 countries have registered to participate in events.

The text of the EPA press release follows:

(begin text)

Monday, October 18, 2004

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

EPA Administrator Mike Leavitt Celebrates World Water Monitoring Day at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center

Today is World Water Monitoring Day, culminating a month of water quality monitoring activities in which educators, families, volunteer water monitoring organizations and government professionals have been taking water quality samples, sharing data, and educating their communities about water quality.

This is also the 32nd anniversary of the Clean Water Act. "Our national goal is clean and safe water for every American," said Administrator Mike Leavitt. "On the commemoration of landmark clean water legislation and a global effort to monitor water quality, let's remember and reaffirm our commitment to protect and restore watersheds, coasts and oceans."

Mike Leavitt joined officials from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of State and America's Clean Water Foundation, as one of the featured speakers at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center facility on the Chesapeake Bay, in Edgewater, Md. The speeches were followed by a cruise on the Rhode River on one of the Smithsonian's research vessels where the event participants collected water, fish and invertebrates samples.

World Water Monitoring Day affords youth and their families the opportunity to get involved and learn about the health of their local watersheds by participating in water monitoring activities. Between Sept. 18, and Oct. 18, 2004, citizens around the world visited their local streams, rivers, lakes or wetlands to test for a few basic indicators of health such as dissolved oxygen, temperature, clarity and pH. The results can be posted on America's Clean Water Foundation Website where they provide a snapshot of global water quality that may help to illustrate long-term water quality trends.

The first World Water Monitoring Day in 2003 included 4,800 sites in the United States and 433 sites in 23 other countries. This year, participants from all 50 states and 35 countries have registered to take part in various events. More information about World Water Monitoring Day is at:

<http://www.worldwatermonitoringday.org>.
Information about EPA's monitoring activities is at:
<http://www.epa.gov/owow/monitoring>.

(end text)

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

----- ***** -----

Text: Scientists Prepare for Space Probe's Plunge into Titan Atmosphere

(Ice mountains, liquid methane seas may form surface of Saturn moon)

On January 14, 2005, the Huygens probe will plow into the orange atmosphere of Saturn's moon, Titan, becoming the first spacecraft to attempt to land on a moon in the solar system since the Soviet Union's Luna 24 touched down on Earth's moon in 1976, according to an October 14 press release from the University of California (UC), Berkeley.

The probe, now aboard the Cassini spacecraft, will fly blindly through hydrocarbon haze and methane clouds to a surface that could consist of seven-kilometer-high ice mountains and liquid methane seas. That picture emerges from a series of articles published in the journal *Geophysical Research Letters* last month that detail what scientists know about Titan's surface, atmosphere and magnetic field.

"These [journal] papers really give a state-of-the-art picture of Titan, before Cassini goes into orbit around Saturn and the Huygens probe goes into Titan's atmosphere," said Imke de Pater, a professor of astronomy at UC Berkeley who wrote the introductory paper in the series and co-authored four of nine papers. The National Science Foundation funded her work.

Even though on-board infrared imaging cameras can pierce the cloud cover, the cameras can only reveal bright and dark spots on the surface, data that are difficult to interpret. "What Huygens will encounter at Titan's surface will remain a mystery

until the probe plops into an ocean or parachutes to solid ground," according to the release.

The Cassini/Huygens spacecraft, launched from Kennedy Space Center in 1997, is the product of an international collaboration between three space agencies -- the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the European Space Agency and the Italian Space Agency -- and involves contributions from 17 nations.

Cassini will release the Huygens probe on Christmas Day, December 25.

Full text is available at
<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/100/index.htm>

----- ***** -----

Text: New Propulsion System Could Allow 90-Day Round-trip to Mars

(Plasma beam would propel craft's magnetic sail through solar system)

NASA-funded researchers at the University of Washington are developing a new way to propel spacecraft that could cut the time for a 154-million-kilometer round-trip to Mars from 2.5 years to 90 days, according to an October 14 University of Washington (UW) press release.

With magnetized-beam plasma propulsion, called mag-beam, quick trips to distant parts of the solar system could become routine, said Robert Winglee, a UW Earth and space sciences professor who leads the project.

Under the mag-beam concept, a space-based station would generate a magnetized beam of superheated gas (plasma) that would propel a magnetic sail on a spacecraft through the solar system at speeds of 11.7 kilometers per second. That translates to more than 41,843 kilometers an hour or more than 1 million kilometers a day.

To make such high speeds practical, another plasma unit must be stationed on a platform at the other end of the trip to apply brakes to the spacecraft. Winglee envisions units being placed around the solar system by missions already planned by NASA.

A mag-beam test mission could be possible in five years with consistent financial support, he said. Mag-beam is one of 12 proposals that in October began receiving support from the NASA Institute for Advanced Concepts. Each gets \$75,000 for a six-month study to validate the concept and identify challenges in developing it. Projects that make it through that phase are eligible for as much as \$400,000 more over two years.

Information about advanced propulsion concepts is available at <http://www.ess.washington.edu/Space/propulsion.html>

Text of the press release follows:

(begin text)

University of Washington
 Press release, October 14, 2004

New propulsion concept could make 90-day Mars round trip possible

A new means of propelling spacecraft being developed at the University of Washington could dramatically cut the time needed for astronauts to travel to and from Mars and could make humans a permanent fixture in space.

In fact, with magnetized-beam plasma propulsion, or mag-beam, quick trips to distant parts of the solar system could become routine, said Robert Winglee, a UW Earth and space sciences professor who is leading the project.

Currently, using conventional technology and adjusting for the orbits of both the Earth and Mars around the sun, it would take astronauts about 2.5 years to travel to Mars, conduct their scientific mission and return.

"We're trying to get to Mars and back in 90 days," Winglee said. "Our philosophy is that, if it's going to take two-and-a-half years, the chances of a successful mission are pretty low."

Mag-beam is one of 12 proposals that this month began receiving support from the National

Aeronautics and Space Administration's Institute for Advanced Concepts. Each gets \$75,000 for a six-month study to validate the concept and identify challenges in developing it. Projects that make it through that phase are eligible for as much as \$400,000 more over two years.

Under the mag-beam concept, a space-based station would generate a stream of magnetized ions that would interact with a magnetic sail on a spacecraft and propel it through the solar system at high speeds that increase with the size of the plasma beam. Winglee estimates that a control nozzle 32 meters wide would generate a plasma beam capable of propelling a spacecraft at 11.7 kilometers per second. That translates to more than 26,000 miles an hour or more than 625,000 miles a day.

Mars is an average of 48 million miles from Earth, though the distance can vary greatly depending on where the two planets are in their orbits around the sun. At that distance, a spacecraft traveling 625,000 miles a day would take more than 76 days to get to the red planet. But Winglee is working on ways to devise even greater speeds so the round trip could be accomplished in three months. But to make such high speeds practical, another plasma unit must be stationed on a platform at the other end of the trip to apply brakes to the spacecraft.

"Rather than a spacecraft having to carry these big powerful propulsion units, you can have much smaller payloads," he said.

Winglee envisions units being placed around the solar system by missions already planned by NASA. One could be used as an integral part of a research mission to Jupiter, for instance, and then left in orbit there when the mission is completed. Units placed farther out in the solar system would use nuclear power to create the ionized plasma; those closer to the sun would be able to use electricity generated by solar panels.

The mag-beam concept grew out of an earlier effort Winglee led to develop a system called mini-magnetospheric plasma propulsion. In that system, a plasma bubble would be created around a spacecraft and sail on the solar wind. The mag-beam concept removes reliance on the solar wind, replacing it with

a plasma beam that can be controlled for strength and direction.

A mag-beam test mission could be possible within five years if financial support remains consistent, he said. The project will be among the topics during the sixth annual NASA Advanced Concepts Institute meeting Tuesday and Wednesday at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Seattle. The meeting is free and open to the public. Winglee acknowledges that it would take an initial investment of billions of dollars to place stations around the solar system. But once they are in place, their power sources should allow them to generate plasma indefinitely. The system ultimately would reduce spacecraft costs, since individual craft would no longer have to carry their own propulsion systems. They would get up to speed quickly with a strong push from a plasma station, then coast at high speed until they reach their destination, where they would be slowed by another plasma station.

"This would facilitate a permanent human presence in space," Winglee said. "That's what we are trying to get to."

More details on advanced propulsion concepts can be found at:
<http://www.ess.washington.edu/Space/propulsion.html>

(end text)

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

----- ***** -----

Text: Scientists Report Success in Malaria Vaccine Trial

(Mozambique trial described as breakthrough in search for vaccine)

Scientists report that a malaria vaccine trial under way in Mozambique yields effective protection of children from the mosquito-borne disease for up to six months. The findings were published October 16 in the medical journal *The Lancet*.

The vaccine used in the trial -- described as the largest ever conducted in Africa, involving more than 2,000 children -- was effective in preventing severe disease in almost 58 percent of the subjects. The candidate vaccine developed by Belgian company GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) Biologicals had a lesser degree of effectiveness with other forms of infection.

The Center for International Health of the Hospital Clinic at the University of Barcelona (CISM) conducted the trial in cooperation with the Mozambique Ministry of Health, with sponsorship from GSK and the Malaria Vaccine Initiative (MVI), a nonprofit organization.

Even though the 58 percent efficacy rate is less than that for commonly used childhood vaccines, the finding is significant because it is the first trial that has found any effectiveness at all for a candidate vaccine.

"These findings represent a breakthrough in the science of malaria vaccines," said Dr. Melinda Moree, director of MVI, a global program created to overcome barriers to malaria vaccine development. "They provide convincing evidence that a vaccine could become part of the world's efforts to spare children and families from the devastating effects of this disease. This brings us another step closer to a licensed vaccine."

Malaria infects 300-500 million people each year, causing more than 1 million deaths, many of them among children.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is the primary supporter of MVI, but the organization also receives funding from the U.S. government. MVI and the U.S. Agency for International Development are partners in another vaccine trial under way in Kenya.

Full text is available at
<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/100/index.htm>

----- ***** -----

Text: U.S.-funded Study Might Lead to New Volcano-Monitoring Tools

(U.S., U.K., Australian scientists examined eruption-related chemistry)

An international team of geoscientists has published a study on the Mount St. Helens volcano that may contribute to the development of new tools for monitoring volcanoes, according to an October 14 press release from the University of Oregon.

The study, published online this week in the journal *Science Express*, examined geochemical precursors to volcanic activity leading to the cataclysmic eruption of the southwestern Washington mountain in 1980. The work yields new insight into volcano behavior.

The U.S. National Science Foundation funded the work.

"We're looking at chemical signatures -- chemistry that's related to volatile, or gas, phases in the eruptive cycle," says University of Oregon volcanologist Katharine Cashman, a professor of geological sciences.

"We've learned that the magma that erupted on May 18, 1980, had probably begun degassing for a minimum of five years before the eruption," she explains. "Then, throughout the summer of 1980, what we see is evidence that gas from the deeper magma storage system had been interacting with the magma at a shallower level."

The study provides a detailed picture of magma and gas movement during 1980.

Text from the University of Oregon press release follows:

(begin text)

University of Oregon
Press release, October 14, 2004

Study provides fresh insight on volcanic eruptions

Chemical signatures provide picture of internal changes leading to the 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens

EUGENE, Ore. -- New tools for monitoring volcanoes may be developed with help from a study on Mount St. Helens published this week (Oct. 14) in *Science Express* by an international team of geoscientists, including University of Oregon volcanologist Katharine Cashman.

The study on geochemical precursors to volcanic activity leading to the cataclysmic eruption of the southwestern Washington mountain in 1980 yields new insight about volcano behavior.

"We're looking at chemical signatures--chemistry that's related to volatile, or gas, phases in the eruptive cycle," says Cashman, a professor of geological sciences.

"We've learned that the magma that erupted on May 18, 1980, had probably begun degassing for a minimum of five years before the eruption," she explains. "Then, throughout the summer of 1980, what we see is evidence that gas from the deeper magma storage system had been interacting with the magma at a shallower level."

The study provides a detailed picture of magma and gas movement during 1980. The data shows that ascending magma stalled and was stored at a depth of three to four kilometers beneath the surface.

Cashman's in-depth knowledge of Mount St. Helens began when she served as the U.S. Geological Survey spokesperson before, during and after the 1980 eruption. Since then, she's become an authority on volcanoes from Hawaii to Italy, where she had intended to spend the current academic year working with Italian volcanologists to compare eruptive styles at Etna, Stromboli and Vesuvius with those of the Cascades. She flew back from Italy last weekend to rejoin colleagues at Mount St. Helens where her role is to "be eyes and corporate memory from the '80s so we can make comparisons between then and now."

This week's *ScienceExpress* publication follows on the heels of a *Geology* magazine article (February 2004) by Cashman and Richard Hoblitt of the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory which reported that the ash Mount St. Helens spewed during the months before its huge 1980 eruption contains tiny crystals that show an explosive eruption was likely.

Cashman, whose research interests include volcanology, igneous petrology and crystallization kinetics, joined the UO faculty in 1991. Her work is funded by the National Science Foundation.

This research appears online in the journal *ScienceExpress*, www.sciencexpress.org.

Co-authors of the *ScienceExpress* paper are: First author Kim Berlo, Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, University of Bristol, United Kingdom; Jon Blundy, Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia; Chris Hawkesworth, Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, University of Bristol, United Kingdom; and Stuart Black, Department of Archaeology, University of Reading, United Kingdom.

(end text)

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

----- ***** -----

Transcript: White House Daily Briefing, October 18

(President's schedule, Iraq)

White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan briefed reporters on Air Force One October 18 as they accompanied President Bush on a campaign trip to Marlton, New Jersey.

Following is the transcript of the White House briefing:

(begin transcript)

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
(Marlton, New Jersey)
October 18, 2004

PRESS GAGGLE BY SCOTT McCLELLAN

Aboard Air Force One
En Route Wrightstown, New Jersey

12:33 P.M. EDT

MR. McCLELLAN: Let me give you the schedule update, and we'll continue later if we -- I know we're short on time, about to land here. But let me at least give you the schedule update for this week.

On Thursday, the 21st, the President will sign the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. Then he'll make remarks on medical liability reform and health care in Downingtown, Pennsylvania. And then he'll make remarks at a Hershey, Pennsylvania Victory 2004 rally. We'll be back at the White House that night.

On Friday, he'll make remarks at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania Victory 2004 rally. Then he'll participate in a Focus on Medical Liability Reform and Health Care with President Bush event, and then he attends a Victory 2004 dinner in St. Petersburg, Florida. And we overnight in St. Pete Beach, Florida.

And Saturday, we'll -- still working on finalizing those events. We will -- we will be --

QUESTION: Will it be Florida --

MR. McCLELLAN: Yes. On Friday. But Saturday and Sunday, we will be overnighing in Crawford.

Q: Saturday and Sunday?

MR. McCLELLAN: Yes, and we're still finalizing up the events for Saturday. Q But they'll be Florida?

MR. McCLELLAN: Well, we're finalizing up all the events. We'll let you know.

Q: Can you explain why the President rebuffed a proposal by the Saudis to have Muslim troops stationed in Iraq for the election?

MR. McCLELLAN: I'm not sure what you're -- what you're referring to.

Q: The Saudi offered to have several hundred troops --

MR. McCLELLAN: Are you referring to a specific article? I haven't seen it.

Q: Yes -- the LA Times, Newsweek -- I mean, Newsday.

MR. McCLELLAN: It's in Newsday today?

Q: It's in Newsday and the LA Times.

MR. McCLELLAN: No, I haven't seen -- I haven't seen the story. Let me take a look at it.

Q: It quotes the White House.

MR. McCLELLAN: Let me take a look at the story.

Q: How about a response to Sanchez?

MR. McCLELLAN: Well, look -- you're talking about the Washington Post article?

Q: Yes.

MR. McCLELLAN: The President is the one who supported and fought for the \$87 billion in funding for the necessary resources for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. His opponent opposed the \$87 billion to provide our troops with equipment and resources they needed to do the job.

Q: Scott, that's not the issue.

MR. McCLELLAN: No, it is the issue. And this is something that was -- a letter, I think you're referring to, from last December, worked its way up through the chain of command. And when those issues come to our attention, we address those issues and make sure that they're addressed.

Q: What about Sanchez, though, saying 10 months ago that he needed more troops?

MR. McCLELLAN: That's what I just said, that when those issues come -- come up through the chain of command --

Q: Did he --

MR. McCLELLAN: Wait -- more troops? I'm not sure what you're referring to in terms of more troops.

Q: Supplies?

MR. McCLELLAN: In terms of supplies?

Q: Supplies.

MR. McCLELLAN: I think you're mischaracterizing --

Q: I forget what word it was.

MR. McCLELLAN: That's what I said, when issues like that come to the attention of the commanders and work their way up through the chain of command, then we make sure that those issues are addressed. The President always makes sure that our troops have the resources they need to get the job done. Senator Kerry is the one who opposed giving our troops the equipment and resources they needed when he voted against the \$87 billion for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Q: What was the President's response back in December when he heard of Sanchez's concerns?

MR. McCLELLAN: Well, I think this is one that went -- again, this is one that went up through the Pentagon chain of command to leaders at the Pentagon.

Q: The President wasn't aware, back in December, that Sanchez had trouble getting body armor, had trouble getting spare parts for --

MR. McCLELLAN: Hold on a second -- hold on a second. I think you're mischaracterizing some of these issues. That's why I said, the President is committed to making sure that our troops have all the resources they need to complete their mission. And when issues like this come to -- come to the -- come to our attention, we make sure that they are addressed. And that's what's been done in this instance, as the Pentagon talked about in the article.

Q: Scott, are you saying that \$87 billion, when appropriated, dealt with all those issues?

MR. McCLELLAN: Well, the \$87 billion provided funding for body armor and other equipment and supplies.

Q: But you're saying that's why Sanchez wrote the letter in December, and the problem was --

MR. McCLELLAN: All right, we're landing. Sorry. Thanks. I'll continue later.

(Resumes briefing 1:15 P.M. EDT)

MR. McCLELLAN: I checked on that -- all right, we'll start back over. I checked on that one article you referred to, and this was something that came up weeks ago. I mean, the Iraqi interim government had some real concerns about having troops from a neighboring country inside Iraq. The multinational force commanders also had some concerns about forces operating outside the chain of command structure.

Q: But you're saying it's because of the Iraqi government.

MR. McCLELLAN: The government -- they had some real concerns, yes. And the multinational force commanders had some concerns.

Was there anything else you guys had?

Q: What was that bill that he's signing? I didn't hear you, when you said a bill he's signing, before we go out on --

MR. McCLELLAN: Oh, I'll get you that information -- on Thursday, you mean? Yes, I'll get you that information for Thursday. Let me get you that information on the bill.

Q: Why aren't we going to Ohio? The President hasn't been there in several weeks.

MR. McCLELLAN: I think I forgot to mention Ohio -- that one event on Thursday is Canton, Ohio, the -- Friday, in Canton, Ohio, that's the event where he participates in Focus On Medical Liability Reform and Health Care. That's Canton, Ohio. I think I forgot to mention the town earlier. Then on to St. Petersburg from there. So Pennsylvania, Ohio and Florida that day, on Friday.

Okay, thanks. Just wanted to finish up.

END 1:17 P.M. EDT

(end transcript)

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

----- ***** -----

Transcript: State Department Noon Briefing, October 18

(Belarus, U.S. elections/OSCE observers, Powell's upcoming trip to Asia, North Korea, Taiwan, China, Sudan, Lebanon/Syria, Greece, Colombia, Iraq, A/S Burns's meeting in Cairo/Morocco/Europe, Israel/Palestinians, Guantanamo/Human Rights Watch Report, Venezuela)

State Department Spokesman Richard Boucher briefed October 18.

Following is the transcript of the State Department briefing:

(begin transcript)

U.S. Department of State
Daily Press Briefing Index
Monday, October 18, 2004
12:53 p.m. EDT

Briefer: Richard Boucher, Spokesman

BELARUS

- Referendum and Parliamentary Elections/Results/OSCE Report/Government Electoral Misconduct/Reports of Journalist Arrested
- Election Observers
- Consequences for U.S. Policy

DEPARTMENT

- Query on when OSCE Observers will arrive in United States
- Secretary of State Colin L. Powell's Visit to Asia/Topics for Discussion/Agenda
- Impact of U.S. Elections on Secretary's Trip and Six Party Talks

- Issue of Human Rights in China During Secretary's Trip
- Dates of Secretary's Trip to Asia
- Query on whether Secretary will ask China to Contribute Troops to Iraq

NORTH KOREA

- Six Party Talks/Stalling by North Koreans
- Query on how to get North Korea back to the Negotiating Table

TAIWAN

- President Chen's Speech/U.S. Position

CHINA

- Visit by President of China's Supreme Court, Xiao Yang
- U.S. view on Chinese Justice System/Human Rights

SUDAN

- Query on Estimate of Number of Deaths in Darfur
- Reports Regarding Discussions between Libya, Chad, and Nigeria/Role of African Union Troops
- U.S. Efforts in Darfur

LEBANON/SYRIA

- Resolution 1559/UN Security Council Discussions

GREECE

- Comment on Election of Greece to Non-Permanent Seat on UN Security Council

COLOMBIA

- Query on Reports of an alleged deal between United States and Rodriguez Orejuela Brothers

IRAQ

- Query on Iranian Aid to al-Zarqawi/Iranian Support of Terrorist Groups
- Query on Reports of Saudi Arabia Proposal for a Muslim Force to Protect UN
- Query on Report that Argues Slow Pace of Reconstruction Fueling Insurgency

DEPARTMENT

- Assistant Secretary Ambassador Burns's Meetings in Cairo, Morocco, Europe

ISRAEL/PALESTINIANS

-- Gaza/Human Rights Watch Report/Demolition of Houses

DEPARTMENT

-- Human Rights Watch Report on Conditions in Guantanamo

VENEZUELA

-- Sumate Case/Proposed Law to Prohibit NGOs from receiving Domestic or Foreign Funding/Threat to Freedom of Expression

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DAILY PRESS BRIEFING

MONDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2004

(ON THE RECORD UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)

12:53 p.m. EDT

MR. BOUCHER: Okay. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. It's a pleasure to be here. I'd be glad to take your questions.

George. Thanks for the music.

QUESTION: Let's go straight to the jugular. What do you have on the Belarus elections? (Laughter.)

MR. BOUCHER: As you all know, we've repeatedly called on Belarus to meet international standards, to meet OSCE standards when it came to these -- to this referendum and parliamentary elections. The initial report from the OSCE's Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights elections observer mission indicates the election fell significantly short of Belarus' commitments to the organization.

We deeply regret that the Belarusian people were kept from freely and fairly expressing their will. International observers have noted a number of serious violations by the government in the campaign period, potentially biasing the election even before the votes were cast. Electoral misconduct continued throughout the voting and vote tabulation process. We're aware, for example, that exit poll results present a far different picture of

the voters' preferences than the results that have been announced by the Belarus Government.

We're also concerned by reports that a journalist was arrested and seriously beaten on election night, and we call on Belarus Government to promptly ensure the full facts of this alleged incident come out.

Full transcript is available at

<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/100/index.htm>

----- ***** -----

Text: President Bush Signs North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004

(New law provides for special envoy to coordinate international dialogue)

On October 18, President Bush signed into law H.R. 4011, the "North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004," according to a statement released by the White House on the same day.

The statement highlighted Section 107 of the legislation, a provision that calls for the president to appoint a special envoy within the Department of State for human rights in North Korea.

The envoy will be expected to coordinate efforts to improve respect for the fundamental human rights of the people of North Korea through discussions with North Korean officials, dialogue with multilateral organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union, and consultation with nongovernmental organizations concerned with relevant issues.

The envoy will also be expected to develop an action plan to support implementation of a resolution of censure passed by the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in April, which cited North Korea's human rights abuses and called for investigation by a special rapporteur.

"The executive branch shall implement Section 107 in a manner consistent with the Constitution's grant to the President of the authority to conduct the foreign affairs of the United States," the statement said.

The full text of the legislation can be found at:
<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/C?c108:./temp/~c108OGdHNR>

Following is the text of the White House statement:

(begin text)

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
(Marlton, New Jersey)
October 18, 2004

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 4011, the "North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004." The Act is intended to help promote human rights and freedom in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Section 107 of the Act purports to direct negotiations with foreign governments and international organizations. The executive branch shall implement Section 107 in a manner consistent with the Constitution's grant to the President of the authority to conduct the foreign affairs of the United States.

GEORGE W. BUSH

THE WHITE HOUSE,
October 18, 2004

(end text)

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

----- ***** -----

Transcript: Powell: U.S. Diplomacy Creates "Expanding Circle of Liberty"

(Multilateral initiatives, diplomatic successes often overlooked, secretary says)

From its global leadership position, the United States has an opportunity to help expand peace,

freedom and prosperity in the world --- and is doing so in multilateral and cooperative ways that often go unrecognized, according to Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Powell praised the skill and dedication of the State Department's diplomats and other employees in remarks October 14 to the U.S. Global Leadership Campaign, a coalition of more than 350 business and private-sector organizations who support a strong international affairs budget for the United States.

"We have an unprecedented opportunity to help millions of people throughout the world join in an expanding circle of liberty, an expanding circle of peace and an expanding circle of well-being," Powell said.

Powell acknowledged disagreements with European allies over Iraq, but said that the U.S. and Europe are, nonetheless, working effectively to rebuild Afghanistan and Iraq while "making sure that the values that hold us together always remain stronger than the disagreements and the differences that come along."

The United States is achieving "tremendous levels of cooperation" with such Asian allies as Japan, Australia, South Korea, and Thailand, according to Powell.

"We welcome a global role for China," Powell said. "We do not fear China. We see China as an emerging power ... [one] that we will treat as an emerging power and work with, as they develop their economy, as they develop their society, and as they find their political way forward."

"We have worked hard with our friends in Asia to put together a six-party arrangement to deal with the challenge of nuclear weapons in North Korea," Powell added.

Powell also cited South Asia as a region of successful U.S. engagement, and said that the United States is working closely with the United Nations on recent resolutions dealing with Sudan and the Syrian presence in Lebanon.

"This isn't unilateralism. This is multilateralism," Powell said. "But even the most effective multilateral arrangement or organization needs a leader, and more often than not that leader is the United States of America."

On the Middle East, Powell said that the United States is working with its partners in the Quartet -- the Russian Federation, the United Nations and the European Union --- to do whatever is necessary to move the peace process forward.

"A Palestinian state that is free and at peace with the state of Israel remains our goal and we will do everything we can to achieve that goal," Powell said.

According to Powell, the wish of the United States is to nurture relations with all nations --- and with countries that currently see themselves as adversaries -- to improve the possibility for friendship in the future.

Powell told the Global Leadership audience that the support of groups like themselves, with the Congress, helps "to ensure that the men and women of American diplomacy have the resources we need to advance the course and the cause of freedom and hope around the world. A healthy international affairs budget is a prerequisite for everything that we do in the Department."

**Full transcript is available at
<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/100/index.htm>**

----- ***** -----

Excerpt: U.S. Deeply Regrets "Seriously Flawed" Elections in Belarus

(Belarusian voters were not given a fair chance to express their choice)

The October 17 parliamentary elections in Belarus were "deeply flawed," said State Department Spokesman Richard Boucher in response to a question during the Daily Press Briefing October 18.

"We deeply regret that the Belarusian people were kept from freely and fairly expressing their will," Boucher said, noting that a team of international

observers sent by the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights has found that the elections fell significantly short of Belarus' OSCE commitments.

Asked what consequences the election might have on U.S. policy, Boucher responded, "We'll have to look and see. ... Our relations with Belarus are already pretty strained over the issue of democracy. And this, unfortunately, rather than making them better just continues in the same pattern."

Following are excerpts from the daily press briefing
(begin excerpt)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE DAILY PRESS BRIEFING

Briefer: Richard Boucher, Spokesman

Monday, October 18, 2004

(On the record unless otherwise noted)
12:53 p.m. EDT

QUESTION: What do you have on the Belarus elections?

MR. BOUCHER: As you all know, we've repeatedly called on Belarus to meet international standards, to meet OSCE standards when it came to these -- to this referendum and parliamentary elections. The initial report from the OSCE's Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights elections observer mission indicates the election fell significantly short of Belarus' commitments to the organization.

We deeply regret that the Belarusian people were kept from freely and fairly expressing their will. International observers have noted a number of serious violations by the government in the campaign period, potentially biasing the election even before the votes were cast. Electoral misconduct continued throughout the voting and vote tabulation process. We're aware, for example, that exit poll results present a far different picture of the voters' preferences than the results that have been announced by the Belarus Government.

We're also concerned by reports that a journalist was arrested and seriously beaten on election night, and we call on Belarus Government to promptly ensure the full facts of this alleged incident come out.

QUESTION: That's it?

MR. BOUCHER: That's it.

QUESTION: So you think it was a well-run election then. Can I --

MR. BOUCHER: Not exactly.

QUESTION: Isn't the fact that they allowed observers in a positive sign?

MR. BOUCHER: Isn't it what?

QUESTION: A positive -- some kind of a -- I mean, you wouldn't have these -- there are countries in the world that don't allow observers in.

MR. BOUCHER: There were something like 300 observers there. But allowing observers in doesn't make up for all the problems of the election. Is it better to have observers than not to have observers? Sure. But observing this --

QUESTION: I guess what I'm getting at is that you're unwilling to give Lukashenko's government any scintilla of credit for even allowing observers in, which you, normally is something that you first call for in an election.

MR. BOUCHER: We're glad that they allowed the observers in. Nonetheless, the election was seriously flawed. It didn't meet standards. It does not look like the voters of Belarus were given a fair choice.

QUESTION: And if --

MR. BOUCHER: Or a fair chance to express their choice may be a better way to put it.

QUESTION: And are there any consequences for that from your end?

MR. BOUCHER: We'll have to look and see. As you know, our policies -- our relations with Belarus are already pretty strained over the issue of democracy. And this, unfortunately, rather than making them better just continues in the same pattern.

[...]

(end excerpt)

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

----- ***** -----

Excerpt: State's Armitage Comments on Russian Economic, Political Choices

(Deputy secretary of state addresses U.S.-Russia Business Council)

The promising economic outlook for Russia is a testament to the Russian government's good decisions on economic policy, but recent events call into question Russia's ability to continue making the right choices, according to Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage.

Addressing the U.S.-Russia Business Council in Leesburg, Virginia, October 9, Armitage said the health of any economy is not just about good economic indicators. "For a steady rhythm of growth over time, the underlying political system also has to be sound and security has to be good," he said.

Armitage acknowledged Russia's "moral duty" to respond to terrorism "immediately and definitively," but he added that the "response must account for long-term results."

"In safeguarding the security of the nation, we simply cannot afford to compromise the very democratic institutions that make our economies succeed and our nations strong," he said, going on to clarify that by "we" he means the United States, Russia "and every other nation that enjoys the benefits of freedom."

The Deputy Secretary offered his comments about Russia in the context of remarks that were primarily about former U.S. Ambassador to Russia Robert Strauss, who is retiring after 12 years as chairman of the board at the U.S.-Russia Business Council.

Following are excerpts from Armitage's remarks:

(begin excerpt)

Department of State
Washington, D.C.
October 18, 2004

RICHARD L. ARMITAGE, DEPUTY
SECRETARY OF STATE
REMARKS TO THE U.S.-RUSSIA BUSINESS
COUNCIL

Landsdowne Resort
Leesburg Virginia
October 9, 2004

[...]

His [Ambassador Robert Strauss'] sage advice has also continued to benefit Russia and America both, and helped to bring our nations closer together. Indeed, starting with Bob's tenure at Spaso House, it has been the consistent policy of the United States to seek a strategic partnership with Russia, based on our shared democratic values.

And so today, we can say that the economic outlook for Russia is promising, as are the trade and investment ties between our two nations. I think that is a testament to the right choices the government of Russia has made when it comes to economic policy, not to mention the hard work of this organization. As Secretary Evans suggested, however, recent events call into question Russia's ability to continue making right choices, which is critical to sustaining the kind of growth the country has seen in recent years.

For that matter, we all know that the health of any economy is not just about good indicators. For a steady rhythm of growth over time, the underlying political system also has to be sound and security has to be good. I'm sure all of you are concerned on

this score. Certainly, President Bush has expressed concerns, and so has Secretary Powell.

Terrorism is hardly a new phenomenon. Even so, the siege at Beslan was a standout in savagery and depravity. There is no question that the Government of Russia has a moral duty to respond, immediately and definitively. But that response must account for long-term results. In safeguarding the security of the nation, we simply cannot afford to compromise the very democratic institutions that make our economies succeed and our nations strong. And when I say "we", yes, I mean the United States, but I also mean Russia and every other nation that enjoys the benefits of freedom. [...]

(end excerpt)

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

----- ***** -----

Text: State Department Highlights Steps to Combat Anti-Semitism

(Lists international actions in Oct. 15 fact sheet)

The State Department has undertaken a number of "specific and important actions" to fight the scourge of anti-Semitism, according to a fact sheet released on October 15.

The State Department fact sheet notes, among other actions, efforts to encourage two OSCE conferences on combating Anti-Semitism in Vienna and in Berlin. Secretary of State Colin Powell addressed the Berlin conference.

The United States also has chaired the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, "a group now comprising 18 countries that promotes understanding of the Holocaust as a means to prevent a recurrence of the hatred that resulted in that tragedy," according to the State Department.

Following is the text of the State Department fact sheet:

(begin text)

State Department
Fact Sheet
Office of the Spokesman
Washington, DC
October 15, 2004

Department of State Actions To Combat Anti-Semitism

The Department of State is committed to combating anti-Semitism throughout the world and is proud of its many accomplishments. In addition to the annual International Religious Freedom and Human Rights Reports, which detail patterns and incidents of anti-Semitism world-wide, we have undertaken a number of specific and important actions to fight this scourge:

The State Department's instructions to embassies for the 2004 Country Human Rights Report explicitly required them to describe acts of violence against Jewish people and Jewish community institutions.

The State Department took the lead in convincing the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to sponsor two conferences on combating anti-Semitism (Vienna in June 2003, Berlin in April 2004.) Secretary Powell led the U.S. delegation to the Berlin Conference and addressed its participants. As a result of those conferences, the OSCE is implementing a process to monitor and report on anti-Semitic incidents.

The United States urged the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to appoint a personal representative on combating anti-Semitism. Such a representative would engage with member states on specific and broader anti-Semitism issues.

The United States is strongly supporting a conference to be hosted by Spain to review the implementation of the mandates issued by the Berlin and Vienna conferences.

In 2003-2004, the United States chaired the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, a group

now comprising 18 countries that promotes understanding of the Holocaust as a means to prevent a recurrence of the hatred that resulted in that tragedy. The Task Force has encouraged, organized and supported the training of social studies teachers on teaching the Holocaust.

The State Department has been successful in including anti-Semitism language in several resolutions of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. We will continue to press for inclusion of such language at the Commission on Human Rights and elsewhere.

(end text)

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

----- ***** -----

Text: U.S., EU Discuss Participation in Visa Waiver Program

(U.S. officials meet with EU states on laws governing visa waivers)

U.S. officials met in Brussels, Belgium, October 18 with officials from the European Commission, the Dutch European Council Presidency, and the 10 EU member states that do not participate in the U.S. Visa Waiver Program (VWP).

A communiqué issued by the U.S. Mission to the European Union following the meeting cites the requirements a country must meet to qualify for the Visa Waiver Program.

While Greece and none of the new EU member nations meet all the criteria at this time (with the exception of Slovenia, which joined the VWP prior to EU accession), the U.S. officials said after the meeting that they would continue to review the situation in each country and make nominations for participation in the program if a country becomes eligible. The officials were from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs.

Travelers from Visa Waiver Program countries are allowed to enter the United States for up to 90 days for business or pleasure using only a passport. (Beginning October 26, it must be a machine-readable passport; otherwise, a valid U.S. visa is required).

As of September 30, VWP travelers are included under the US-VISIT program, which requires foreign travelers to be digitally fingerprinted and photographed to verify their identity as they pass through immigration checkpoints.

Following is the communiqué issued by the U.S. Mission to the EU:

(begin text)

U.S. Mission to the European Union
October 18, 2004

COMMUNIQUE ON THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

United States officials met with members of the European Union in Brussels on October 18 to discuss participation in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). They noted that U.S. visa policies and procedures are established in accordance with specific laws and legislatively mandated requirements. Legislation for the VWP requires the U.S. to review each country individually for purposes of determining compliance with requirements of the VWP. This should not be viewed as a reflection of the overall bilateral relationship with the U.S.; many countries not in the program are among the closest friends and partners of the United States.

The statutory requirements to qualify for the VWP are set forth in Section 217 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and cannot be waived. Countries must first meet a threshold requirement of an average non-immigrant visitor refusal rate of less than 3%. Once that threshold is met, the following criteria come into play:

- Issue a machine-readable passport that, after October 26, 2005, is biometrically enhanced according to ICAO standards;
- Offer visa free travel to American citizens;

- Certify that they report the loss or theft of blank passports to the U.S. Government;

- Have a low rate of immigration violations and refused admissions.

The Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State, must make a positive determination regarding the impact the country's potential VWP participation would have on U.S. national security and law enforcement interests. In the ongoing review of current VWP participants the factors considered include:

- Terrorist and criminal threats in the country and efforts to address them;

- Existence of formal and informal cooperation, including extradition; treaties, with the U.S. and international partners, such as Interpol; and

- Effective border security controls, including citizenship and passport issuance procedures.

The Secretary of Homeland Security is required to submit to Congress a report on a country's qualification for designation as a VWP country, including an explanation of a favorable determination.

While Greece and none of the new EU member nations meet all the criteria at this time (with the exception of Slovenia, who joined the VWP prior to EU accession), U.S. officials said that they would continue to review the situation in each country and make nominations for participation in the VWP if and when a country becomes eligible. This is similar to the approach used by most EU member states in defining which third countries qualify for "visa waiver" status according to the Schengen Agreement. U.S. officials reiterated the commitment of the U.S. Government to facilitate legitimate travel and trade between EU members and the United States, and look forward to the day when all EU member states meet the criteria to enter the VWP, and enjoy visa-free travel.

(end text)

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

----- ***** -----

**Text: Agriculture's Veneman Pledges
Reduction in Chronic World Hunger**

(Veneman also touts World Food Day theme of "Biodiversity for Food Security")

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman marked World Food Day October 16 by promising the United States would meet its commitment to help halve by the year 2015 the number of people suffering from chronic hunger.

In a videotaped address for World Food Day, Veneman said the United States is strongly committed to protecting and promoting biodiversity. President Bush has also reaffirmed U.S. support for the G8 Action Plan on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development, she said.

"Our country is the world's largest provider of food aid and the leading contributor to the World Food Program. But that and other aid programs are only temporary solutions to food insecurity," she said in a press release issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. "Increasing agricultural productivity is one of the pathways to a permanent solution. Science and technology have the potential to raise agricultural productivity, increase income, and ultimately improve nutrition and health across the world."

World Food Day marks the founding of the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) on Oct. 16, 1945.

Following is the text of the news release:

(begin text)

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of Communications
News Release
October 16, 2004

VENEMAN MARKS WORLD FOOD DAY

**BY PLEDGING INCREASED ATTENTION
TO HUNGER, BIODIVERSITY**

BUFFALO, New York, Oct. 16, 2004 --- Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today honored World Food Day and its theme "Biodiversity for Food Security" by highlighting increased U.S. commitments and pledging continued high-level attention to issues of food availability and quality in the United States and around the world.

"World Food Day is a way to acknowledge our accomplishments around the world, and to examine how we can do even more to meet the goal of reducing by half the number of people suffering from chronic hunger by the year 2015," said Veneman said. "Our country is the world's largest provider of food aid and the leading contributor to the World Food Program. But that and other aid programs are only temporary solutions to food insecurity. Increasing agricultural productivity is one of the pathways to a permanent solution. Science and technology have the potential to raise agricultural productivity, increase income, and ultimately improve nutrition and health across the world."

USDA works throughout the year to address hunger and poor diets at home and abroad by preserving biodiversity, promoting economic development, encouraging democratic institutions and fostering the use of science and technology to increase agricultural productivity around the world.

In a videotaped address for the World Food Day teleconference, Veneman said that the U.S. is strongly committed to protecting and promoting biodiversity. Last June, President Bush reaffirmed the U.S. support for the G8 Action Plan on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development. In June 2003, Veneman hosted the historic Ministerial Conference and Expo on Agricultural Science and Technology in California, and follow-up regional conferences were held in Costa Rica this past May and Burkina Faso in June.

USDA is working with several organizations to improve agricultural technology use and productivity in Africa and other poor regions in order to promote hardier crops for healthier people.

Under the International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the U.S. is working to identify standard agreements that will facilitate the smooth international exchange of genetic material. This will help ensure that important research into plant breeding continues to advance.

At home, USDA's food and nutrition programs are helping to feed millions of low-income Americans. Thanks to increased funding, more children are receiving free or reduced-price breakfasts and lunches, more mothers and infants are receiving nutritional assistance and nearly six million more people are receiving food stamps than just three years ago.

Globally, hunger and malnutrition afflict some 850 million men, women and children, causing human suffering, political instability and economic stagnation. The United States leads all other nations in providing about 60 percent of total international food aid to relieve chronic hunger in the world's poorest countries and respond to famines and other emergencies, such as the current tragedy in Darfur, Sudan. In July, USDA and the U.S. Agency for International Development celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Public Law 480 Food for Peace Program, which has helped feed billions of hungry people around the world.

Improving access to food means much more than bringing nutritious meals to needy people. Food aid goes hand-in-hand with development and capacity-building efforts-sharing technology to improve agricultural productivity, supporting economic and infrastructure development, increasing access to education, expanding trade, and promoting open and free institutions. As in food aid, the United States is the world leader in international development assistance.

USDA's McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program is currently improving educational opportunities for more than two million children in 21 countries through school feeding and nutrition projects.

To be successful, food policies and programs must address a broad range of interrelated issues, including biodiversity-this year's World Food Day

theme. Citing U.S. support for gene banks and sustainable agriculture, Veneman said USDA is dedicated to protecting genetic diversity in plants and animals around the world. Preserving a rich variety of life forms with different nutritional traits, climatic tolerances, and pest and disease resistance is one of the keys to feeding the world's hungry and ensuring adequate food supplies for the future.

Several agencies within USDA held their own observances or sponsoring other activities to recognize World Food Day. For example, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Economic Research Service are hosted a lecture on "Land Quality Changes in Recent History: Implications for Food Security."

World Food Day marks the founding of Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) on Oct. 16, 1945, and is celebrated by countries around the world. For more information, visit, www.worldfoodday.org

(end text)

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

----- ***** -----

Text: Powell Marks Upcoming International Education Week, Nov. 15-19

(Commends exchanges as enriching cultures, strengthening cooperation)

Marking November 15-19 as a worldwide celebration of International Education Week, Secretary of State Colin Powell said the United States welcomes foreign students and teachers who choose to participate in exchange programs here.

In an October 15 statement, Powell said, "Throughout America's history, openness has immeasurably enriched our democracy, our culture, our economy, and our nation as a whole" and cited the friendships and partnerships resulting from academic exchanges as important in developing understanding and cooperation between nations.

Powell also encouraged more U.S. students to study abroad.

"The more we learn about and understand each other," he said, "the more effective we will be in creating a world of global citizens, and the better our chances of achieving peace in our increasingly interdependent world."

The U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Education have jointly produced a website with more information on International Education Week activities at <http://exchanges.state.gov/iew/>.

Following is the text of Secretary Powell's statement:

(begin text)

Secretary Colin L. Powell
Washington, DC
October 15, 2004

The U.S. Department of State is pleased to join the U.S. Department of Education in marking the fifth year of International Education Week, November 15-19. Celebrated worldwide, International Education Week provides an opportunity to highlight the benefits of international education and exchange; to express appreciation for students and scholars who study and teach here; and to commend the millions of people who build and strengthen bridges of international understanding by organizing and participating in exchange programs.

Throughout America's history, openness has immeasurably enriched our democracy, our culture, our economy, and our nation as a whole. America's educational institutions attract talented future leaders from around the world. International students and scholars benefit from engagement with our society and academic institutions and we benefit enormously from their interaction with our society as they help our citizens develop understanding and knowledge that enriches our lives, increases international cooperation, enhances our national security, and improves our economic competitiveness.

Meeting the 21st century challenges that confront all countries requires an unprecedented degree of understanding and cooperation among nations and among leaders in every field. The professional partnerships and lifelong friendships that result from international education and exchange help build a foundation of understanding and lasting partnerships. These partnerships are important for a secure, prosperous future, not only for the United States, but also for the world as a whole.

We are immensely proud that more than 200 alumni of State Department-sponsored international exchange programs have become heads of state or government, and we recognize the contributions of teachers and language instructors in building grass roots mutual understanding. I know that tomorrow's leaders are among the thousands of men and women who will participate this year in U.S. government and privately sponsored educational exchange programs. We look forward to welcoming these exchange participants in our country, while continuing to encourage more of our own young people to study in other nations.

Please join us in this celebration and share your International Education Week activities on our website <http://exchanges.state.gov/iew/>. The more we learn about and understand each other, the more effective we will be in creating a world of global citizens, and the better our chances of achieving peace in our increasingly interdependent world.

(end text)

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

----- ***** -----

Text: Powell Releases 2004-2005 U.S. Fulbright Exchange Student List

(Program's purpose is to build mutual understanding between countries)

Secretary of State Colin Powell released the list of U.S. students selected for the 2004-2005 Fulbright exchange program on October 15.

Nearly 1,100 American students will study abroad under Fulbright grants this year while building mutual understanding by learning about their host nations and sharing their views as citizens of the United States.

The list of Fulbright recipients can be found at <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/fulbright/recipients/2005/recipients.htm>.

Following is the text of Secretary Powell's statement:

(begin text)

Department of State
Secretary Colin L. Powell
Washington, DC
October 15, 2004

I am pleased to release the official list of U.S. Fulbright student grantees for the 2004-2005 academic year. This year, under the nation's premier exchange program, 1,099 American students have been awarded Fulbright grants to study and conduct research in more than 110 countries throughout the world.

As Fulbrighters, these Americans have important responsibilities. First and foremost, they engage in serious academic study or research abroad. In addition, they will immerse themselves in learning about their new host country and will have opportunities to share their perspectives on the United States with their hosts.

When they return home, these Fulbrighters will share their experiences with their friends, families, and colleagues. Over the past six decades, more than 100,000 Americans have been awarded Fulbright student grants. Established in 1946 under legislation introduced by the late Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, the program's purpose is to build mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries.

Economist Milton Friedman, opera soprano Renee Fleming, Intel CEO Craig Barrett, and Brown University President Ruth Simmons are just four examples of the many distinguished Fulbright alumni. Last week, a foreign Fulbright alumnus,

Aaron Ciechanover, received the 2004 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, becoming the sixth Fulbrighter in the past five years, and thirty-fourth overall, to be awarded a Nobel Prize.

For a complete listing of the 2004-2005 U.S. Fulbright student grantees, please go to: <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/fulbright/recipients/2005/recipients.htm>.

(end text)

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

----- ***** -----

Text: Belarus Elections Fell Significantly Short of OSCE Commitments

(International observers cite disregard for democratic principles)

The elections held October 17 in Belarus fell significantly short of international standards for democratic elections, says an election observation mission sent by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The mission, comprising approximately 270 international observers from 38 countries, cited flaws including a disregard for democratic principles and the failure of Belarusian authorities to ensure the fundamental conditions necessary for an election. Ballot-box stuffing and coercion were also reported, along with problems in the run-up to the election such as biased state-run media and restrictive campaign rules.

The text of the Mission's Preliminary Report is available in Russian and English at <http://www.osce.org/odihr/>

Following is an OSCE release:

(begin text)

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
18 October 2004

BELARUS ELECTIONS FELL
SIGNIFICANTLY SHORT OF OSCE
COMMITMENTS

MINSK, 18 October 2004 - The 17 October parliamentary elections in Belarus fell significantly short of OSCE commitments for democratic elections. The Belarusian authorities failed to ensure the fundamental conditions necessary for the will of the people to serve a basis for authority of government. Freedom of expression, association and assembly were seriously challenged. This calls into question the willingness of the authorities to respect the concept of political competition on a basis of equal treatment, concludes the OSCE Election Observation Mission in a statement, issued today.

Around 270 international observers from 38 countries observed the voting and counting on behalf of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

"Democratic principles were largely disregarded by the authorities. Many candidates were actively excluded from registering or were deregistered, which limited the choice of voters," said Tone Tingsgaard, Vice-President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, appointed by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office as the Special Co-ordinator for the Short-term observers. "Although we were here to observe the parliamentary elections, we found that the Referendum largely overshadowed the parliamentary election campaign."

Ambassador Audrey Glover, Head of the Long-term Observation Mission, deployed by the OSCE ODIHR added: "Equally worrying were police raids on campaign offices, the detention of a candidate, campaign workers and domestic observers, as well as numerous reports of coercion on certain groups, particularly students, to vote. The dominant influence of the State administration was apparent at all levels of the election process."

There were restrictive rules on campaigning, which were further exacerbated by instances of discrimination in favour of pro-government candidates and against the opposition. State media demonstrated a strong bias, portraying the opposition in overwhelmingly negative terms, while conducting an extensive campaign in favour of the incumbent political forces.

The Election Observation Mission believes that aspects that could have contributed positively to the process were the possibility for candidates to have a fixed amount of free television and radio airtime, and the possibility to print a statement free of charge in the state press. This was however not sufficient to address the overwhelming media imbalance. There was at least a minimal degree of competition in the majority of constituencies, but in ten constituencies there was only one candidate. The Election Commissions met all deadlines foreseen in the law.

Although not specifically observed, the Election Observation Mission noted that the scale of the Republican Referendum proposing the removal of the two-term limit on the office of the president, its unrestrained bias and its unregulated intrusion into polling stations contributed to a highly distorted campaign environment.

On election day the voting was generally assessed positively in around 9 out of 10 polling stations, although basic information was frequently withheld from observers. The counting proved very problematic, as the counting lacked transparency in the majority of polling stations observed. Numbers were not being announced aloud as they were being established, observers were only given a limited view of the process, and procedures for compilation of protocols were not followed. There were instances where observers noted that some early voting ballot boxes appeared to have been stuffed.

(end text)

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

----- ***** -----

Text: El Nino-Related Drought may have Caused Severe Moth Outbreak

(Increasing El Nino events may alter forest species composition)

A study by researchers from the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) associates a severe moth outbreak with drought conditions following the 1997-1998 El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) event, according to an October 15 STRI press release.

If ENSO events become more common, repeated outbreaks of plant-eating insects might alter forest species composition, the release said. The work is published in the October issue of the Journal of Tropical Ecology.

In a dry lowland forest near Panama's Pacific coast, moth larvae devoured 250 percent more leaf material than usual at the same time researchers were setting up an experimental protocol to monitor herbivores and leaf damage on 20 tree species.

"This outbreak was unusual because it involved a dozen insect species, and followed a drought associated with one of the most severe El Niño events experienced here. We don't know how common outbreaks like this are in the tropics because people have begun to associate events like this with global climate change fairly recently," said STRI postdoctoral fellow Sunshine Van Bael.

Climatologists predict that ENSO events will become more common if global temperatures continue to rise.

Van Bael cautioned: "It's becoming increasingly clear that we should pay attention to these harbingers of climate change. A better understanding of the deep natural history of these systems may help us to predict outbreaks involving crop pests or human disease vectors."

Text of the Smithsonian Institution press release follows:

(begin text)

Smithsonian Institution

Press release, October 15, 2004

Multi-species herbivore outbreak follows El Niño drought in Panama

Plant-eating insects inhabit all forest ecosystems, but sometimes their numbers explode, resulting in massive tree defoliation. In the October issue of the Journal of Tropical Ecology researchers from the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) associate a severe moth outbreak with drought conditions following the 1997-1998 El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) event in a dry lowland forest near Panama's Pacific coast. If ENSO events become more common, repeated herbivore outbreaks might alter forest species composition.

"Although we regularly monitor insect populations from STRI's Canopy Crane system, we were actually tipped off about the outbreak by the crane operator, who complained that his parked car was covered with insect droppings," explains STRI post-doctoral fellow, Sunshine Van Bael.

Moth larvae devoured 250% more leaf material than usual even as researchers were setting up an experimental protocol to monitor herbivores and leaf damage on twenty tree species reachable from the gondola on the arm of a 42 m tall modified construction crane in Panama City's Metropolitan Park. The crane, one of two in Panama and nine worldwide, permits scientists to ascend into the treetops to study previously inaccessible aspects of forest dynamics and species diversity.

Dr. Annette Aiello, Staff Scientist at STRI noted smaller outbreaks at five other Pacific coast sites. Wondering if this was a country-wide phenomenon, entomologists at STRI's research station on Barro Colorado Island and at the Sherman Canopy Crane near Panama's Atlantic coast were advised to be on the lookout for increases in butterfly and moth larvae populations. However, lepidopteran numbers remained stable there. Whatever it was that caused the the Pacific Coast outbreak did not occur or have the same effect where rainfall levels were more constant.

"This outbreak was unusual because it involved a dozen insect species, and followed a drought associated with one of the most severe El Niño

events experienced here. We don't know how common outbreaks like this are in the tropics because people have begun to associate events like this with global climate change fairly recently," says Van Bael.

What caused the outbreak? Most likely the drought kept the caterpillars' natural enemies out of play, but the exact cause will remain a mystery. The team monitored lepidopteran populations again, after a milder El Nino event in 2003, but saw no large-scale outbreaks.

Drought stress of host trees is thought to be a factor in temperate area outbreaks of spruce bud worm and gypsy moths. But such outbreaks often last for up to 10 years. This short-lived (5-6 week) event in Panama was brought under control quickly by hungry birds, parasitoid flies and wasps, and aggressive caterpillar diseases.

Climatologists predict that ENSO events will become more common as global temperatures rise. And because herbivores hit some tree species harder than others, repeated herbivore outbreaks could change the species composition of the forest. In a recent volume of the *Journal of Tropical Ecology*, ecologists in Borneo reported a similar outbreak in response to the ENSO event in 1998.

Van Bael cautions: "It's becoming increasingly clear that we should pay attention to these harbingers of climate change. A better understanding of the deep natural history of these systems may help us to predict outbreaks involving crop pests or human disease vectors."

(end text)

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

----- ***** -----

United Nations to Increase Number of Peacekeepers in Haiti

(Several hundred new peacekeepers expected by end of October)

By Eric Green

Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The U.N. peacekeeping mission in Haiti has announced it will send several hundred more new staff members to the Caribbean nation by the end of October.

In an October 15 statement, the United Nations said its peacekeeping mission, which has been operating at less than half of its authorized strength, expected to send 125 police officers from China, along with 622 Sri Lankan troops, and troops from a Spanish-Moroccan battalion.

The U.S.-backed U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) currently has some 3,090 military personnel from Argentina, Brazil, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Uruguay, as well as 650 police officers. The 15-member U.N. Security Council had authorized 6,700 troops for Haiti.

Among its tasks, MINUSTAH is helping to establish a secure and stable environment; foster democratic governance and institutional development; assist Haiti's transitional government in organizing free and fair municipal, parliamentary, and presidential elections as soon as possible; strengthen the rule of law; and support the country's human rights institutions and groups.

The United Nations said Haiti's Interim Prime Minister Gerard Latortue has appointed a three-member Commission for the Demobilized Military to implement compensation and social reintegration policies.

Meanwhile, the U.N. Security Council joined the United States in condemning ongoing fighting in Haiti, calling on all parties in that country "to take as much care as they can to respect the rule of law and to refrain from violence."

The U.S. State Department said October 12 that the United States condemns the systematic campaign of violence in Haiti's capital city of Port-au-Prince, launched September 30 by armed gangs supporting former Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. These gangs, the State Department said, seek to undermine the nation's interim government and the efforts of the international community.

The State Department said pro-Aristide thugs have "murdered policemen, looted businesses and public installations, and terrorized civilians."

The violence is particularly reprehensible, given the mid-September flooding in Haiti that claimed over 2,000 lives, said the State Department.

In regard to the flooding and mudslides triggered by Tropical Storm Jeanne, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) said in an October 14 update on the situation that it has contributed more than \$4.9 million to fund emergency activities and relief supplies in Haiti.

In Haiti's particularly hard-hit northern city of Gonaives, USAID said its funding is being used for a "cash-for-work" cleanup project, since cleaning up the city will "reduce the threat of disease and increase mobility."

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

----- ***** -----

U.S. Dismantles Colombian-Based Drug Money Laundering Organization

(Reach of drug conspiracy reportedly spanned the world)

By Eric Green
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Some 24 individuals have been indicted by U.S. law enforcement authorities for their role in a Colombian-based drug money laundering conspiracy whose reach was described by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency as spanning South America, the Caribbean, and the rest of the world.

In an October 15 statement, ICE said its investigation targeted the drug organization, based in Colombia's capital city of Bogota, for the smuggling of cocaine and heroin from Colombia and Venezuela to the continental United States, Puerto Rico, the Lesser Antilles, and Europe.

ICE said the leaders of the drug organization -- Juan Isidro Toloza-Pena and his brother Juan Andres Toloza-Pena and 21 co-conspirators -- used a complex system known as the Black Market Peso Exchange to launder their illicit drug proceeds. To date, the investigation has resulted in the seizure of roughly 250 kilograms of cocaine, 22 kilograms of heroin, 12 domestic and international bank accounts, at least \$900,000 in currency, and an assortment of weapons and vehicles.

ICE said the Black Market Peso Exchange is a decades-old money-laundering scheme that is estimated to handle billions of dollars' worth of illicit funds annually. It is among the primary means by which Colombian drug cartels convert their U.S.-based drug dollars into "clean" pesos that they can use in Colombia.

According to ICE, the defendants in the case delivered large sums of drug cash to individuals in Miami, Florida, and Puerto Rico, and instructed that the cash be introduced into the U.S. banking system and wired to specified bank accounts throughout the United States, Colombia, Costa Rica, and China, for ultimate payment to the Colombian owners of the money. As part of the conspiracy, the defendants also created and invested in allegedly legitimate businesses to conceal the nature and course of the money, ICE said.

As part of the money-laundering indictment, ICE said the U.S. government is seeking forfeiture of 14 properties in Colombia and 16 domestic and international bank accounts for a total of more than \$4 million.

Penalties for the narcotics offenses alleged in the indictment range from 10 years to life imprisonment and fines of up to \$4 million. Penalties for the money-laundering offense range from a fine of not more than \$500,000, or twice the value of the property involved in the transaction, whichever is greater. The penalty can also include imprisonment of 20 years, ICE said.

Roberto G. Median, ICE Special Agent-in-Charge for Puerto Rico, said the agency's operation against the drug dealers "combined the best investigative techniques of U.S. and foreign law enforcement to

dismantle a money-laundering organization whose reach spanned the globe."

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

----- ***** -----

Peace Corps Helping Others Better Understand U.S., Official Says

(Volunteers highlight U.S. diversity, agency's Vasquez adds)

By Kathryn McConnell
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- In a world of security concerns and cultural misunderstandings, Peace Corps volunteers from all backgrounds are changing views of the United States and of its people, says Gaddi Vasquez, the agency's director.

"There has never been a greater time to promote understanding," he said October 14 at the National Press Club in Washington.

With more than 7,500 volunteers, the Peace Corps is at its highest level in 28 years and hopes to grow further, Vasquez said, adding that the institution is continually changing to meet developing countries' needs. In recent years, he said, the agency has expanded its programs in agriculture, community development, information technology, HIV/AIDS, and programs focusing on educating girls and helping them build self-esteem.

Volunteers also are working around the world in areas such as environmental protection and job creation, he said.

But as the agency changes, the Peace Corps goal remains the same: "promoting global peace and understanding," Vasquez said.

The director said that there are no boundaries to where the Peace Corps could serve in the developing world. He said currently 20 percent of Peace Corps volunteers serve in 18 Muslim countries, ranging from Morocco to Uzbekistan and

Mauritania. Of the 27 countries that have asked for the Peace Corps to start or restart programs, 13 are Muslim, he said.

"These countries want to better understand America," he added.

The Peace Corps also is evaluating how it might reopen a program in India, where 1,000 volunteers once served, Vasquez said.

Vasquez said the effect of Peace Corps volunteers on the people in their host communities can last lifetimes. For instance, he said, a woman who is now a leader in Afghanistan's government told him that she had learned English from a volunteer.

As a boy, Peru's President Alejandro Toledo also was taught by volunteers, Vasquez said.

By living and working at the community level, Peace Corps volunteers are able to change beliefs "that all Americans look the same," Vasquez said.

He recalled a Muslim volunteer serving in Cameroon telling him that his host community initially was surprised to see a Muslim from the United States. Then the volunteer sat down and talked to his neighbors and they developed a greater appreciation for the diversity of the United States, Vasquez said.

Vasquez, a Hispanic American, recalled another story illustrating how the Peace Corps helps change peoples' views of the United States. He said when he visited a school in Casablanca, a Moroccan boy told him, "You don't look like an American."

"That experience gave me an opportunity to put a face on America" for the boy, the director said.

To further illustrate the diversity within the Peace Corps, Vasquez pointed to the volunteers now in the Peace Corps' newest host country -- Mexico. That group includes volunteers born in Iran, Armenia, the Czech Republic and India as well as in the United States, he said.

Wherever they serve, Peace Corps volunteers do so in a manner that respects their host countries' traditions and cultures, Vasquez added.

Since its beginning in 1961, the Peace Corps has served in 137 countries. It now serves in 71. The Peace Corps serves only in countries where it has been invited and where volunteers' safety and security can be assured, Vasquez said.

More than 170,000 people have served as Peace Corps volunteers.

Pointing to the Peace Corps' impact on the people of the United States, Vasquez said that when volunteers return home they are able to help people in their communities better understand the cultures and values of the countries in which they served.

The administration has requested \$401 million for the Peace Corps for the fiscal year that began October 1, Vasquez said.

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