

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

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## U.S. Welcomes WTO Ruling Against European Subsidies for Airbus

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington – The Obama administration welcomed the World Trade Organization's (WTO's) June 30 ruling against "launch aid" and other subsidies paid to the Airbus aircraft company from European countries, saying those subsidies are inconsistent with WTO rules and have harmed the U.S. aircraft industry.

In a June 30 statement, Commerce Secretary Gary Locke said the ruling acknowledges that "distortive government subsidies should have no place in the global marketplace."

The decision, coming after four decades of European subsidies for Airbus, "marks a victory" for small- and medium-sized American companies who produce components for jetliners produced by the Boeing aircraft corporation, he said.

"No industry supports more U.S. jobs through exporting than American aerospace manufacturing," Locke said, adding that the Commerce Department and the office of U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Ron Kirk are aggressively trying to sell American products and services around the world to "help us reach President Obama's goal of doubling exports in five years and supporting 2 million new jobs."

According to the report released by the WTO panel, more than \$20 billion in low-interest government loans to Airbus has been used to develop six models of passenger jets. The WTO ruled that the loans were prohibited export subsidies.

USTR General Counsel Tim Reif explained June 30 that in order to launch a new model of large commercial aircraft, aircraft producers must invest billions of dollars before the first aircraft is delivered or any revenue is received.

To cover some or all of its launch development costs, Airbus received loans from many European governments and the European Union (EU), which then was to be repaid through aircraft sales royalties, Reif said. However, the loan balance was forgiven even if Airbus did not sell enough aircraft, he added.

The WTO panel "found that the launch aid for each and every model of Airbus aircraft was provided free of market interest rate, and therefore constituted a subsidy," Reif said. "The panel also found that the launch aid and other subsidies that the United States challenged caused adverse effects to the interests of the United States, and

therefore are inconsistent with WTO rules."

The approximately \$15 billion in launch aid and \$5 billion in other subsidies to Airbus "caused massive adverse effects to the U.S. industry," Reif said, pointing to the WTO report's documentation of Boeing's loss in market share to Airbus in Europe, Australia, China and other countries.

Reif also said the WTO panel concluded that certain launch aid provided for the A380 superjumbo, which made its first commercial flight in October 2007, was "prohibited outright under WTO rules, without the need for showing adverse effect."

The panel's ruling confirms that "launch aid and other subsidies significantly distorted the launch decisions that Airbus made, and found that, but for these subsidies, none of the Airbus aircraft models would have been launched when they were and certainly not with the same features," Reif said.

The United States initiated the WTO case in October 2004 and a panel chaired by Uruguay's former ambassador to the WTO, Carlos Pérez del Castillo, was formed to examine the matter in May 2005. The EU has filed its own WTO complaint that the U.S. government is subsidizing Boeing and a decision is expected in August, according to press reports.

Reif said the United States is seeking the immediate adoption of the panel's report, and would then see if the European Union decides to appeal the decision.

U.S. Trade Representative Kirk "has made clear that he is prepared to sit down or have his staff sit down with European Commission representatives at any point to work on the problems raised by the panel report," Reif said.

Airbus developed a new A350 airplane after the WTO dispute was filed in 2004, and Reif said U.S. officials hope that "the clarity of this ruling and its scope is something the EU will take to heart and the member states as they proceed forward" with existing and future Airbus programs.

"It would be very disappointing at this point in time if any of the member states proceeded ahead with disbursing launch aid to the A350," Reif said.

## National Muslim Convention Highlights Faith and Community

*Islamic Society of North America annual convention draws tens of thousands*

By M. Scott Bortot  
Staff Writer

Washington — Thousands of Muslim Americans gathered in Chicago July 2–4 at the Islamic Society of North America's (ISNA's) 47th annual convention to learn how combining faith and community service strengthens them and their country.

ISNA President Ingrid Mattson discussed the convention's theme, "Nurturing Compassionate Communities: Connecting Faith and Service," during a press conference.

"This year, we are really getting back to basics by trying to show to everyone in our community, both Muslims and our non-Muslim friends, that there is a compassionate and productive way to have a broad sense of community that will make this nation and the world a better place for all of us," Mattson said.

An estimated 30,000 people attended the event, which featured 300 speakers at about 90 panel sessions. Panels examined how Muslims can improve themselves and their religious community while making positive contributions to society.

"And that community includes not only Muslims, but our friends in the interfaith community, the social justice community, all of those people of good faith and good will who are interested in contributing to a compassionate American society," Mattson said.

Safaa Zarzour, ISNA secretary-general, said America is home to a burgeoning Muslim community.

"We continue to have a new generation of Muslims that are born and raised in America. America is their home, they have not known any other, and they need to be able to grow up, learning and knowing and feeling comfortable about being a Muslim and being an American," Zarzour said.

Panel topics ranged from how to improve home life, "Family: Secret Ingredients — Sugar, Spice and Everything Nice," to engaging the broader community, "Translating Faith into Service," to getting into politics, "Muslim American Political Engagement: Next Steps and a Practical 'How-To.'"

ISNA used its network of contacts to bring specialists to the convention from a wide range of fields.

"We go to those people in our communities who are the ground, who are doing the work, who are the experts, and we ask them to come to present for everybody else, for everybody else to learn," Zarzour said.

Abdul Suleiman, who attended the convention, enjoyed its spiritual aspect. In particular, he liked the session, "Trials of the Messengers: Compassion in the Face of Challenges."

"It discussed the trials and tribulations of the prophets and how they relate to us," Suleiman said, adding that panelists impressed him with their knowledge and spirituality. "They did it with sensitivity, love and compassion, and you really felt like they were conveying that spirit to you."

Danya Shakfeh, who also attended the convention, said the event provides an opportunity for Muslims to meet.

"It is a good platform for Muslims to get to know each other and to network," Shakfeh said.

Quran reciting competitions, Islamic art exhibitions, an Islamic film festival and a bazaar featuring the wares of hundreds of organizations and vendors are also an integral part of the event. At the bazaar, Muslim civil and religious rights groups, booksellers, clothes retailers, Islamic financiers and halal product vendors vie for the attention of convention attendees.

"I appreciate that there are so many Muslims that have different platforms and information," Shakfeh said, adding that the bazaar's variety can be overwhelming. "But at the same time, it is good to see them all coming together."

Event organizers said Chicago often hosts the ISNA convention because of its central location in the United States and for its Muslim community.

"The reason we do it in Chicago is because Chicago's Muslim community is such a vibrant community," Zarzour said. "It is such an active community that is trying to improve its own lot but also contribute to the larger society."

## U.S. Festival Honors Mexican, Haitian and Asian-Pacific Cultures

*Smithsonian Folklife Festival pays special tribute to Haitian arts*

By Ralph Dannheisser  
Special Correspondent

Washington — Four brightly dressed men climb to the top of a tall wooden pole and launch themselves off a narrow platform. Tethered by ropes around their waists,

they drop headfirst, twirling in ever-widening circles around the pole, toward the ground below.

In just a minute or two, they make their landing on Washington's National Mall, smack in the middle of the 44th annual Smithsonian Folklife Festival, to the cheers and applause of the watching crowd.

This harrowing descent from a 13-meter pole by a quartet of seemingly fearless men from the Téenek community in Tamaletón, San Luis Potosí, Mexico, demonstrates the ages-old Palo Volantín ceremony (also called the Danza del Bixom Tíiw), held in hopes of producing a good corn harvest.

"The flyers are symbolically bringing the rain to the earth, connecting it to Mother Earth," said Olivia Cadaval, curator of the festival's México program.

The Smithsonian Folklife Festival honors cultural traditions from across America and around the world. This year, it showcased people of Asian or Pacific Islander descent living in the United States, and the artistic and agricultural traditions of Mexico. In recognition of the January earthquake in Haiti, there was a special tribute featuring appearances by Haitian artists and musicians and the sale of paintings and crafts to assist in the island-nation's cultural revitalization.

During this year's festival, which is held each year in late June and early July, visitors could watch a Chinese-American chef debone a chicken or Wixárica (Huichol) women of Mexico prepare an indigenous stew of chicken and ground pumpkin seeds; learn how to make Japanese dolls and Korean masks; join dancers from Samoa on stage; watch Mongolian wrestling; and cheer Los Chinelos, costumed dancers from the state of Morelos, Mexico, playfully mocking the Spanish colonizers of the 16th and 17th centuries.

Another festival program featured the worldwide work of the Smithsonian Institution itself.

The cross-pollination of cultures that is the goal of the festival was exemplified by the spectators themselves. A Mexican-American family headed for the Asian Fusion tent to view martial arts demonstrations with roots in Korea and the Philippines. A couple from India sampled Chinese food at one of the four tents offering cuisine from different parts of Asia and Mexico, plus American barbecue.

Meanwhile, Pakistani immigrant Altaf Shah and his family cheered the Palo Volantín performers. "It's beautiful, it's amazing, it's unbelievable," said Shah. "My kids are very excited."

"It was really cool when that man was dancing on top of the pole," said Shah's daughter Hifza. Another daughter, Nayab, added, "I liked it when they swung around on the line."

## MÉXICO

Cadaval explained that the impetus for the México program was the dual celebration of that country's bicentennial of independence, and its revolution 100 years ago.

More than 100 participants – musicians and dancers and cooks and artisans – were brought from 18 distinct areas of Mexico. "The festival and its displays are not about nationalism, but rather about the diversity and the texture of the many different cultures that are alive and well today," she said.

"We have 18 stories from different communities to give a little flavor of what Mexico is," Cadaval said. "Each community that is here – from northern Sonora by the Pacific Coast all the way down to Yucatán, Campeche, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Durango – has its own particular cultural concerns."

She cited "the metaphor of the 'x' in Mexico – the confluence of cultures that have come together there. Before the Spanish, you had many different kinds of indigenous groups, each with a different tradition."

## Asian Pacific Americans: Local Lives, Global Ties

Participants in the Asian-Pacific-American (APA) program of the festival derive from 30 different Asian countries and 24 Pacific Islander countries, regions and groups.

"Everyone taking part is an American who happens also to be of Asian or Pacific Islander ancestry," said curator Phil Tajitsu Nash, a Japanese American. "We all, as Americans, have local lives, but we increasingly have global ties" because of business and family connections and travel.

The festival showcases the diversity of the APA community, as well as ways traditions are being preserved and also transformed. Some chefs have adjusted the recipes for traditional dishes to include new ingredients, Nash said. Folk dances might incorporate moves from jazz or tap.

The main entertainment venue was a tent labeled "Asian Fusions," and Nash explained that "we're trying to dispel the myth that we are a monolithic community in any sense. ... There are many different fusions of things."

In the family activities tent, Max Heckscher, 4, was learning how to write "Max" in the Lao language, tutored by Saly Chittavorabong, a Lao American. A small, yellow leaf had been painted on his cheek by a Burmese-American participant. Nearby, Maya Griffin, 8, and her brother Liam, 6, were playing the ancient Chinese board game, Go. Maya said they had also enjoyed trying Asian food. "We got noodles and broccoli," she said. "And an egg roll," Liam added.

## HAITI

Inside the Marketplace tent, items from Mexico and the APA community were on sale, along with the crafts and paintings by 77 Haitian artists. Proceeds will support the reinvigoration of traditional crafts in Haiti. Special guests included artists Mireille Delisme, known for her sequined flags, some of which incorporate voodoo designs, and Levoy Exil, master of the Saint Soleil school and one of Haiti's best-known painters.

"This is the way for America to offer us a hand and for us to be able to get up now from where we are," Exil said.

One night, the Grammy-nominated band Boukman Eksperyans and singer-songwriter Tines Salvant held a tribute concert for Haiti.

Geri Benoit, Haiti's ambassador to Italy and to the Rome-based United Nations food security agencies, stopped by to greet Exil. "For the Smithsonian to give the opportunity for the artisans to be able to sell their work is very important for us," she said. "It has been such a difficult year." Benoit has worked closely with the Smithsonian in organizing efforts to preserve and restore Haitian arts.

She was accompanied by Richard Kurin, the Smithsonian's under secretary for history, art and culture. The institution sees its role not only as helping to restore artwork damaged in the earthquake, but also encouraging living artists, craftsmen and musicians, he said.

"If we can help revive the cultural sector in Haiti so that artists themselves make a living from it, are appreciated for it, then it's helping with the overall economic recovery of Haiti," Kurin said.

## Soccer Helped Zuma, Others Maintain Humanity on Robben Island

*League formed by prisoners in apartheid-era jail had lasting legacy*

By Jim Fisher-Thompson  
Staff Writer

Washington — The 2010 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup soccer finals in South Africa have captured the attention of a worldwide

audience. But how many fans realize the game once helped political prisoners like South Africa President Jacob Zuma maintain their humanity while serving time in the notorious apartheid-era prison on Robben Island?

In the book *More Than Just a Game: Soccer vs. Apartheid: The Most Important Soccer Story Ever Told*, sports historian Charles Korr and co-author Marvin Close document how black political prisoners on Robben Island formed the Makana Football Association (FA), an action that would have far-reaching results even after the men were released from prison.

"The prison experience played an important role in the struggle against apartheid, and football was an important part of the lives of the men on the island," Korr told America.gov following his recent visit to South Africa for the FIFA matches.

"Makana FA helped prisoners connect to a larger outside world and helped preserve their sanity. It allowed them to retain their dignity and sense of purpose and to have some control over their lives."

## MORE THAN JUST A GAME

Korr, who taught history at the University of Missouri – St. Louis from 1970 to 2003 and is now a professor at the Centre for Sport History and Culture at De Montfort University in England, said Makana FA was a 1,400-member soccer league consisting of eight clubs or teams that played matches for 20 years, adhering strictly to FIFA game rules. Zuma participated in the league while incarcerated in the maximum security prison, located near Cape Town.

The soccer league was important as a school for organization, Korr said, because "it helped the prisoners develop the administrative skills that would be needed to run the country when freedom was finally achieved."

Korr's involvement with the Robben Island soccer story started when he was a visiting professor at the University of the Western Cape (Cape Town) in 1993. "A colleague showed me boxes of documents which were the basis for the archives of the Robben Island Museum," he said, and those contributed to the research for his book.

## "HUMAN AFTER ALL"

Two of the founding members of the Makana FA were its first chairman, Dikgang Moseneke, currently deputy chief justice of South Africa's Constitutional Court, and President Zuma, who was captain of Rangers FC, one of the Robben Island league clubs.

Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first post-apartheid-era

president, was a prisoner on Robben Island for many years but had no role in the soccer league, Korr said.

“He and the other prisoners in the isolation section had no open contact with the vast majority of the prisoners who were in the communal section. However, Mandela did know about Makana FA and how much it meant to the prisoners. When the authorities discovered he could watch part of a match, they built a wall to make that impossible.”

Korr said most guards regarded the prisoners as “subhuman terrorists and men who should be punished for their refusal to accept the idea of inferiority based on race. However, the way the prisoners organized and played sports did convince a few of them that the prisoners might be human after all. Some bonds resembling friendship developed when prisoners tutored some of the guards so that they could pass examinations and be promoted.”

#### INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION

While in Cape Town to attend a commemorative ceremony on Robben Island, Korr was invited to speak at the U.S. Consulate about the role soccer played in the lives of political prisoners and the nation as a whole.

Korr said the international sports boycott of South Africa became an important part of the anti-apartheid struggle. (South Africa was suspended by FIFA in 1963.) “Those people who complained that politics should not intrude into sports never understood that the white South African government had from the very beginning politicized sports.”

In 1991, during the dismantling of the apartheid system, a new South African Football Association was formed and gained admission to FIFA.

Consul General Alberta Mayberry said: “Just as the FIFA 2010 soccer World Cup brought the world to Cape Town, Chuck Korr’s discussion of his book was a great opportunity for so many of us from different backgrounds to come together for a meaningful discussion of sports and social change. From Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham of the Bahamas to FIFA executives, academics, former political prisoners, journalists and civil society leaders, we were riveted by Chuck’s stories.”

About his recent trip to South Africa, Korr said, “It has been fascinating to see how the population has rallied in support of the tournament and the great hospitality that has been shown to visitors from around the world.

“I think it’s fair to view hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup as a kind of international ‘coming-out party’ for South

Africa – the final step in the transformation from pariah state to respected member of the international community,” he concluded.

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