



December 23, 2011

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Official Websites:

<http://jerusalem.usconsulate.gov>

<http://arabic.jerusalem.usconsulate.gov>

<http://gaza.usvpp.gov>

<http://arabic.gaza.usvpp.gov>

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www.facebook.com/UsConGenJerusalem

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Thank You!

Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Visits Jerusalem and the West Bank



Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Greta Holtz, visited Jerusalem and the West Bank from December 8 to 10. Deputy Assistant Secretary Holtz hosted several meetings with civil society leaders and Palestinian alumni of U.S. government exchange programs and participated in an ACCESS graduation ceremony for 236 students from Ramallah, Salfeet, and Jericho.

Before departing she recorded this [message](#) on the U.S. Consulate General’s YouTube Channel for all our Facebook and YouTube fans who she did not have an opportunity to meet and engage with.

Consul General Rubinstein's Holiday Greetings



Consul General Rubinstein's Christmas Greeting

"May the joy of this Christmas and New Year season encourage each of us to rededicate ourselves to promoting peace, goodwill, and compassion for all humankind."

تهنئة القنصل العام روبنستين بمناسبة عيد الميلاد المجيد

نأمل أن تشجعنا السعادة التي تعم بقدوم عيد الميلاد المجيد وموسم رأس السنة على إعادة تكريس أنفسنا من أجل نشر السلام، والنوايا الحسنة والتعاطف من أجل الإنسانية جمعاء.

Consul General Rubinstein's Hanukkah Greeting

"During this year's Festival of Lights may the significance of the lighting of the Hanukkah menorah serve as a reminder of the role courage and faith play in overcoming oppression and injustice."

ב'התשע החנוכה לחג רובינשטיין הכללי הקונסול ברכת

שממלאים לתפקיד כתזכורת תשרת השנה האורים חג במהלך החנוכה מנורת הדלקת של והמשמעות יתן מי צדק-ואי דיכוי על בהתגברות ואמונה אומץ.

ACCESS Graduations in Jerusalem, West Bank, and Gaza Strip



The English Access Microscholarship Program (ACCESS), funded by the U.S. Department of State and administered by AMIDEAST, celebrated the graduation of 1,285 Palestinian students from throughout the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem during the month of December. This is the sixth class of students to participate in ACCESS since the program's inception in 2004. Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the Department of State Greta Holtz, American Consul General Daniel Rubinstein, Chief of the Economic Section Mark Johnson, and Cultural Affairs Officer Cynthia Harvey all attended graduation ceremonies in December, joined by officials from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, UNRWA, and Steven Keller, Country Director of AMIDEAST.

Speaking to students, teachers, families and administrators at a graduation ceremony in Ramallah on December 16, Cynthia Harvey said, "Everyone in this room today has worked incredibly hard to make ACCESS a success, and to build a better future for yourselves, and for your community. I offer my sincere congratulations and my personal best wishes."

The purpose of the ACCESS program is to increase the English language skills and capabilities of Palestinian youth whose families are unable to afford a substantive, sustained program of private English language training. The program also seeks to create a spirit of community involvement and develop leadership skills among the program participants. Since its inception in 2004, the ACCESS program has benefited nearly 6,100 Palestinian students in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza.

Secretary Clinton's Speech on Women, Peace and Security



"Today, I want to focus on one aspect of peacemaking that too often goes overlooked – the role of women in ending conflict and building lasting security. Some of you may have watched a week ago Saturday as three remarkable women – two from Liberia, one from Yemen – accepted the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo. For years, many of us have tried to show the world that women are not just victims of war; they are agents of peace. And that was the wisdom behind the historic UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which was adopted a decade ago but whose promise remains largely unfulfilled. So it was deeply heartening to see those three women command the global spotlight and urge the international community to adopt an approach to making peace that includes women as full and equal partners."

FACT SHEET: The United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

"The goal is as simple as it is profound: to empower half the world's population as equal partners in preventing conflict and building peace in countries threatened and affected by war, violence and insecurity. Achieving this goal is critical to our national and global security."

بيان حقائق للبيت الأبيض عن خطة عمل الولايات المتحدة بشأن النساء والسلام والأمن

إن الهدف بسيط بقدر ما هو عميق: تمكين نصف سكان العالم كي يصبحوا شركاء في منع الحروب وبناء السلام في بلدان تتهددها وتؤثر خطة العمل القومية الأميركية حول -- "فيها الحروب والعنف وانعدام الأمن. إن تحقيق هذا الهدف هو حاسم لأمننا القومي والعالمي النساء والسلام والأمن

President Obama Goes Christmas Shopping



Traditions Old and New Welcome the New Year



In the dark, first minutes of each January 1, the new year is welcomed with the explosions of fireworks in many cities around the United States. The noisemaking stems from an ancient belief that scaring away evil spirits is necessary for a happy new year. A relatively recent tradition adopted by many U.S. cities is “First Night” community festivities on December 31. Designed to be less rowdy and more family-friendly, the focus is on local culture, such as music, dance, comedy and art. Boston was the first U.S. city to adopt “First Night” celebrations in 1976. Even so, Boston ends the evening with a bang. Shown here, fireworks illuminate its historic downtown.

تقاليد عيد الميلاد في أمريكا

عيد الميلاد الذي يحتفل به معظم المسيحيين في 25 كانون الأول/ديسمبر من كل عام، هو إحياء لذكرى ميلاد السيد المسيح. وقد طور الأميركيون، شأنهم في ذلك شأن الكثير من سكان العالم، تقاليدهم واحتفالاتهم بعيد الميلاد، وتغيرت هذه تغييراً كبيراً مع مر الزمن.

[Photo Gallery](#): Winter Celebrations Mirror America's Diversity



[The 2012 NESAs Undergraduate Exchange Program](#)

The U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem is pleased to announce the annual competition of the 2012 NESAs Undergraduate Exchange Program that will provide fully sponsored scholarships for one full academic year (approximately 10 months) of non-degree undergraduate study at accredited two and four-year institutions. The goal of the program is to provide a substantive exchange experience at a U.S. college or university to a diverse group of emerging student leaders from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. All academic fields of study are eligible.

Deadline: No later than January 10, 2012.

["Doors to Diplomacy" 2012 International Web Project Competition for Middle and High School Students:](#)

The Department of State and the Global SchoolNet Foundation announce the 2012 "Doors to Diplomacy" award competition, recognizing the student-created Global SchoolNet Web projects from around the globe that best teach others about the importance of international affairs and diplomacy.

To qualify, middle school and high school students will work in small teams with teacher-coaches. **Projects must be completed by March 15, 2012**, and winners will be announced in May 2012. Every team that enters a project will receive a special "Doors to Diplomacy" certificate recognizing their achievement. Each student member of the two winning teams – one American and one international – will also receive a \$2,000 scholarship and the winning coaches' schools will each receive a \$500 cash award.

Deadline: March 15, 2012.

For a complete description of the competition and information about eligibility and judging criteria, please visit <http://globalschoolnet.org/gsndoors/>. For more information, contact Dr. Yvonne Marie Andres of Global SchoolNet by phone at (760) 635-0001 or by e-mail at diplomacy@globalschoolnet.org or Wanda Ramsey of the Department of State by e-mail at RamseyWC@state.gov.

[MEPI Information Technology \(IT\) Partnership Program](#)

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) announces the launch of the first-ever Information Technology (IT) Program that seeks to link MEPI grantees with major IT corporations. Through this new partnership, local NGOs will be able to access the latest computer software, hardware, and related training to improve the effectiveness of their projects, build organizational capacity, and assist with cementing the long-term sustainability of their work. For more information, please contact us at mepi-it-partnerships@state.gov

IMPORTANT CHANGES TO VISA APPLICATION PROCEDURES

On December 12, 2011, the U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem will implement new visa application and appointment procedures. The new system will make it quicker and cheaper to apply for a U.S. non-immigrant visa. Applicants will no longer need to pay one fee to obtain information and schedule an appointment, another fee to apply for the visa, and a third fee for courier pass back service. By paying only the current machine-readable visa (MRV) application fee determined by visa classification, the following services will be provided to visa applicants:

- MRV fee collection, either by phone, online, or at any branch of the Israeli Postal Bank or Bank of Palestine. Applicants can pay using cash or credit card.
- Scheduling of visa appointments by telephone 02-5677833 or through the online appointment website: <http://Jerusalem.usvisa-info.com>. There is no need to purchase a pin number.
- Information on general visa inquiries either by phone or online.
- Courier services for applicants, who need to submit additional documents to the Consulate after their interviews.
- Choice of passport delivery options for approved visa applicants, including home delivery, at no additional cost to the visa applicant.

تغييرات مهمة على الاجرات المتعلقة في طرق تقديم التأشيرة السياحية الى الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية

ابتداءً من تاريخ 12 12 2011 ستقوم القنصلية الامريكية في القدس بأدخال بعض التغييرات المتعلقة في تقديم التأشيرة السياحية للولايات المتحدة ونظام تحديد المواعيد. علماً بأن هذا النظام الجديد سيكون أسهل وأوفر على المواطنين الذين ينوون تقديم تأشيرة الدخول لهدف الزيارة.

وبهذا النظام لن يضطر مقدمي الطلبات الى : دفع أية رسوم منفصلة من أجل تحديد المواعيد والحصول على المعلومات العامة التي تتعلق في عملية تقديم الطلبات , أو دفع قيمة مالية أخرى تتعلق برسوم الفيزا , أو دفع أية رسوم من أجل خدمة التوصيل.

ومن خلال هذا النظام الجديد سيتوجب على متقدمي الطلبات في دفع رسوم الفيزا المتداول به حسب نوع التأشيرة المقدم اليها و سيحصل مقدمي الطلبات على الخدمات التالية:

- رسوم الفيزا ستدفع عن طريق أخطوط الهاتفية مباشرة أو عن طريق الانترنت أو من خلال احدى فروع بنك البريد داخل اسرائيل أو من احدى فروع بنك فلسطين في الضفة و القطاع. أو عن طريق بطاقات الائتمان .
- سيتمكن مقدمي الطلبات بتحديد المواعيد من خلال الرقم التالي 02-5677833 أو من خلال الموقع الإلكتروني <http://Jerusalem.usvisa-info.com> ولن يكون هنالك ضرورة الى شراء الرقم التعريفي الشخصي الخاص بتحديد المواعيد.
- خدمة معلوماتية حول التأشيرات السياحية عن طريق الهاتف أو الشبكة العنكبوتية.
- خدمة التوصيل الى القنصلية لمقدمي الطلبات الذين يحتاجون الى تقديم وثائق اضافية بعد مقابلاتهم .
- اختيار تسليم جوازات السفر للمتقدمين الذين تم الموافقة على طلب التأشيرة الخاصة بهم بما في ذلك خدمات التوصيل الى البيت دون اي تكلفة اضافية

International and Regional News

[White House on Terrorist Attacks in Iraq](#)

[بيان للبيت الأبيض حول الوضع في سوريا](#)

[White House Statement on Syria](#)

[الخارجية الأميركية حول العلامات المميزة على طريق العملية الانتقالية التونسية](#)

[Statement by President Obama on Hanukkah](#)

[State Department on Milestones in the Tunisian Transition](#)

[بيان لوزارة الخارجية كلينتون عن أنباء العنف في مصر](#)

[Secretary Clinton on Reports of Violence in Egypt](#)

[الولايات المتحدة تفرج عن 30 بليون دولار من أموال ليبيا المودعة في الولايات المتحدة](#)

[Ambassador Rice on Iran and Resolution 1737](#)

[الولايات المتحدة تفرض عقوبات على شركات وشخص لارتباطهم بإيران](#)

[U.S. Frees \\$30 Billion for Libya](#)

[U.S. Sanctions Companies, Person Tied to Iran](#)

[U.S. Trade Representative Kirk on Doha Development Agenda](#)
