



Do'stlik



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The United States and the Uzbek Ministry of Health: Working Together to Eradicate Measles in Tashkent

December 15 marked the start of a month-long mass immunization campaign against measles and congenital rubella syndrome in Tashkent. The United States Government was pleased to play a major role in financing and facilitating this important public health initiative. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) purchased the 750,000 doses of vaccine and syringes needed to inoculate all Tashkent residents between the ages of ten and 30. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) helped train Uzbek health care professionals to monitor the mass immunization campaign.



Uzbek doctors at Tashkent's Polyclinic #14 meet with Ambassador Jon Purnell. (U.S. Embassy photo).

was able to work closely and effectively with the campaign's co-sponsors, the Uzbek

The U.S. Embassy was also pleased that it

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U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary Feigenbaum: "We want full, multi-dimensional, productive relationships with every country in the region, including Uzbekistan."

Deputy Assistant Secretary Of State For South And Central Asian Affairs Evan Feigenbaum in his recent visit to Tashkent stressed that the U.S. wants to have a full, multi-dimensional relationship with Uzbekistan. Below is the transcript of the press conference of Deputy Assistant Secretary Feigenbaum on March 2.

Ambassador Jon R. Purnell: I will just start with a few quick words of introduction. It is a great pleasure to welcome Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Evan Feigenbaum to Tashkent. As I have been telling our various Uzbek hosts, Mr. Feigenbaum is the most senior person in the Department

of State who deals exclusively with Central Asia. So, it is a great pleasure to welcome him to his first visit here in Tashkent. Evan, good to have you.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Evan Feigenbaum: Thank you very much. Thank you all for coming out today. I have been Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Central Asia for about seven months. And, as the Ambassador said, this is my first visit to Tashkent, my first visit to Uzbekistan. I have just come to the end of three very interesting days. I met with a very wide range

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Women's History Month, 2007

A Proclamation by the President of the United States of America

Throughout our history, the vision and determination of women have strengthened and transformed America. As we celebrate Women's History Month, we recognize the vital contributions women have made to our country.

The strong leadership of extraordinary women has altered our Nation's history. Sojourner Truth, Alice Stone Blackwell, and Julia Ward Howe opened doors for future generations of women by advancing the cause of women's voting rights and helping make America a more equitable place. In 1855, Dr. Mary E. Walker became one of the first female physicians in the country. Dr. Walker volunteered her medical services during the Civil War and became the only woman in United States history to receive the Medal of Honor. Vivian Malone Jones stood her ground in the face of a great injustice and helped integrate the University of Alabama, breaking down racial barriers to higher education and becoming the school's first African-American graduate.

Our Nation is a land of great opportunity, and women are seizing that opportunity and shaping the future of America in all walks of life. A record number of women are serving in the halls of Congress, and the number of women-owned businesses continues to grow. The women of our Armed

Forces are making a vital contribution to our Nation's security by serving the cause of freedom and peace around the world. And by giving care and guidance, America's mothers are helping to build the foundation for the success of our Nation's children and strengthening the character of our country. This month, we honor the spirit, leadership, and hard work of American women.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 2007 as Women's History Month. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities that honor the history, accomplishments, and contributions of American women.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-seventh day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

GEORGE W. BUSH

United States Celebrates Women's Achievements in March

In 1981, the U.S. Congress passed a resolution establishing National Women's History Week. In 1987, Congress expanded the week to a month, and has since passed such a resolution every year. Congressional action is followed by a U.S. presidential proclamation declaring March as Women's History Month.

Since its founding in 1980, the National Women's History Project has recognized and celebrated the rich and varied contributions of women to the history and culture of the United States.

The 2007 Women's History Month theme, Generations of Women Moving History Forward, celebrates the wisdom and tenacity of prior and future generations of women and recognizes the power of generations working together.

According to the National Women's History Project, "the year 2007 presents special opportunities to highlight some critically important events in women's history, including the 50th anniversary of the integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, and the 30th anniversary of the National Women's Conference in Houston, Texas.

"In 1957, the integration of Central High School helped ignite the Civil Rights Movement, and in 1977, the Houston Conference marked a high point in the influence of the Women's Rights Movement on the formation of government

policy."

Recognizing these anniversaries helps "acknowledge and celebrate the courage, determination, and steadfastness of the women who spearheaded these events and in so doing moved history forward," according to the project.



Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor shakes hands with Los Angeles Supervisor Yvonne Braithwaite Burke as they pay tribute to Clara Shortridge Foltz, California's first female lawyer, seen in the painting. (© AP Images)

Women Increasingly Likely To Be Leaders in U.S. Higher Education



Drew Gilpin Faust stands beneath a bust of John Harvard, the university's founder on February 11. (© AP Images)

Harvard University's selection of a woman as its new president is part of a trend in U.S. higher education to open its leadership posts to women.

More women than ever attend universities, and slating women for leadership positions in higher education is a natural outgrowth of this pattern, says Catherine Hill, director of research at the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

According to published reports, more females than males apply to U.S. universities, and 56 percent of undergraduates are female. Women's progress has not been achieved at the expense of men because more men are attending two- and four-year academic institutions than ever before, said Hill.

The U.S. Census Bureau predicts that by 2010, some 7.76 million males and 10.72 million females will be enrolled in post-secondary institutions, representing increasing numbers for both men and women. Enrollment figures for 2006 were 7.458 million males and 10.19 million females.

"Diversity in higher education is important because it provides new ways of looking at age-old problems and welcomes different approaches to scholarship," according to Hill. Also, opening the doors to women as students and leaders is important because it is widely recognized in American culture that higher education holds the keys to economic and political success, Hill said.

"Academia in America is the gatekeeper for many opportunities in this country," Hill said. "Who gets to decide when the gate opens and what kind of intellectual work gets done will determine how and which young people can move ahead and become decisionmakers."

Hill said such high-level appointments in academia mean women are positioned better to pursue careers and obtain well-paying jobs, especially in fields traditionally dominated by men.

Harvard University announced on February 11 the appointment of Drew Gilpin Faust, a history professor and founding dean of the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, as its next president. A study released February 12 by the American Council on Education (ACE) shows the rate of diversification in the university president's office has been slowly but steadily increasing. Hill said the appointment of Faust to lead Harvard is "symbolically important."

"In academy, there's no greater symbol than president of Harvard," Nancy Hopkins, a biology professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), said in published reports. "It sends a very powerful message." MIT is led by Susan Hockfield, its first woman president.

Faust is a strong leader who is interested in women's studies, according to Hill, and her "pivotal position at such a well-known institution will become a podium to shape public debate."

Founded in 1636, Harvard is the oldest institution of higher education in the United States and a worldwide leader in education and research. Seven U.S. presidents were graduates of Harvard, and 43 current and former Harvard faculty members are Nobel laureates. Radcliffe College, an all-female school closely affiliated with Harvard University, officially merged with Harvard in 1999.

"This is a great day, and a historic day, for Harvard," said James R. Houghton, the senior member of the Harvard Corporation and chair of the presidential search committee that for the first time in Harvard's history welcomed student input. Faust "combines a powerful, broad-ranging intellect with a demonstrated capacity for strong leadership and a talent for stimulating people to do their best work, both individually and together," Houghton said.

Three other "Ivy League" institutions -- Brown University, Princeton University and the University of Pennsylvania -- now have women presidents. The eight private colleges and universities in the Ivy League are considered among the most prestigious of all higher education institutions in the United States.

According to the 2006 ACE study, 23 percent of college presidents were women. "While that percentage has increased from 9.5 percent in 1986, it is clear that women are still underrepresented in this realm of academia," AAUW said in a press release.

Yet because more than half of all U.S. university presidents in 2006 were older than 60, compared with 14 percent in 1986, the future for women's leadership in academia is considered promising. "A potential wave of retirements means there is an opportunity to create greater diversity in the [university] presidency," said Jacqueline E. King, director of the ACE's Center for Policy Analysis.

U.S. Muslims a Bridge Between Islam and the West



Karen Hughes, Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy, left, shakes hands with ISNA vice president Ingrid Mattson during a news conference prior to the inaugural session of the Islamic Society of North America's annual convention. (© AP Images)

Muslim culture and Western society are mutually enriching, despite the talk of a so-called “clash of civilizations” between Islam and the West, says Mohamad Bashar Arafat, a Syrian-born U.S. citizen who is president of the Islamic Affairs Council of Maryland.

Arafat, an imam by training, took part in a State Department webchat October 20, fielding questions about Islam and interfaith dialogue. “In this age of globalization, which changed everything in the past 20 years, we are supposed to know one another [better] so that we can prevent” any such clash, he said.

“To me, there are so many things in the Western culture that go side-by-side with Islam, and I have no problem adapting” to new customs that do not contradict Islamic precepts, he said.

For example, the Western traditions of customer service, transparent business transactions, democracy, freedom of religion and respect for diversity are compatible with the principles of Islam, Arafat said. While some Westerners have been openly skeptical of Islam’s capacity to tolerate dissenting views, Arafat stressed that the Quran welcomes free inquiry and encourages the debate between faith and reason.

An interfaith dialogue about religious tolerance and Islamic law can

enhance cross-cultural understanding and promote the social integration of Muslim immigrants within their adopted Western homelands, Arafat said. Cultural clashes often can be avoided if immigrants make an effort to appreciate and absorb the most attractive features of their new environment, according to Arafat.

Western philosophers acknowledge the impact of Islamic civilization on the European Renaissance, Arafat observed. He added that Muslims should acknowledge that they also benefit from Western society’s technology and advancements.

Asked about U.S. misconceptions about Islam, Arafat said that American television and film could do a better job of challenging the notion that Islam promotes violence and

terrorism. American Muslims have an obligation to educate others about the true nature of Islam, he said, not only to dispel ignorance among non-Muslims, but also to prevent radicalized Muslims from distorting the faith. Muslims in the United States “need to start focusing” on creating television programs and movies that promote truer images of Islam, he argued. In this way, he said, American Muslims can be a bridge between the United States and the rest of the world.

Since 2005, Arafat has been conducting inter-religious programs through the U.S. State Department’s International Speakers Program.



Yasmine Asfor, a senior at Mountain Pointe High School in the Ahwatukee Foothills community near Phoenix, participates actively in a class lesson. (© AP Images)

New Quranic Reference Series Fills Gap in Western Academic Work

With the publication of the fifth and final volume of the Encyclopedia of the Quran, Georgetown University professor Jane McAuliffe believes she and her editorial contributors have filled an important gap in Western reference material on the text that more than a billion Muslims regard as the word of God.

“There really is no first-rate reference work on the Quran in Western languages,” McAuliffe said during a recent interview with the Washington File. “If you look at a correlative field such as biblical studies ... there are dozens of encyclopedias of the Bible or dictionaries, et cetera, and there was nothing of that genre available for the Quran. It was an obvious and a rather big hole in the field.”

McAuliffe and her editorial assistants collected nearly 1,000 articles from quranic scholars around the world to produce a comprehensive reference work on the concepts, practices, personalities and places associated with the Muslim holy text.

McAuliffe, a quranic scholar who teaches history and Arabic at Georgetown University in Washington D.C., said she has been struck by the rising interest in Islam, not only among American university students, but within the general American public.

“I’m constantly being asked by people, ‘What do you recommend? What could I read? What translation of the Quran should I use? Where do I go from here?’” she said. “I’d like the Encyclopedia to be part of where people go on the text.”

She said she and her editors worked very hard to make the work accessible to the widest possible audience.

“I’d like it to have as broad a readership as possible. Certainly I’d like university students, both undergraduate and graduate, to use it. But well beyond that, I’d like simply adult readers who find themselves interested in learning something about the Quran to have access to a reference tool that allows them to take the text and then to spend some time learning some of the background to this text,” she said.

In addition to entries explaining the main quranic terms and concepts, the reference work contains numerous essays on topics related to the field of quranic studies, including articles on art, architecture, literature and archeology, as they relate to the Quran. With this, McAuliffe sought to create “a summation of the field of quranic studies as it stands right now.”

McAuliffe was pleased to find tremendous enthusiasm among the scholars she approached to write the articles. She called on both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars in an effort to ensure the most comprehensive approach to the issues under discussion.

“I think it’s an artificial division to continue to think in terms of Muslim and non-Muslim approaches, and I really wanted

to have a more versatile research tool,” she said. “So there are some people who write for the Encyclopedia from a perspective that is deeply influenced by contemporary critical thought in the West, or in Euro-American universities, and there are others who write from a much more traditional perspective, and that’s fine.

“I think any reader who spends any time with the Encyclopaedia will discover this scholarly plurality,” she said.

McAuliffe says she always has had a strong interest in religion, even before she took up Islamic studies as a graduate student at the University of Toronto, and she is pleased to see a growing global interest in religion.

“Religion continues to matter. It continues to matter in people’s lives. It continues to matter in politics. It continues to matter in international affairs,” she said. She noted that there is a growing number of books about religion crowding the shelves of popular U.S. bookstores, and that many of those books are focused on Islam.

“I think, in terms of Islam, it is the fact that that religious tradition has been so much in the news in recent years, coupled with the fact that there are now so many American and European Muslims. Everybody knows Muslims or works with them or has kids that go to school with them. And there’s natural curiosity that grows out of that proximity,” she said.

A senior fellow at Georgetown’s Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, McAuliffe says that the growing interest in religion has opened the door to more interfaith dialogue. She notes that much of the interest in Islam is coming from Christian groups that recognize the similarities and differences between the two Abrahamic faiths and want a better understanding of how they are related. In response, she said, Muslim groups are showing “a desire to use the opportunity of interfaith dialogue as a way of helping people learn more about Islam and trying to dislodge some of the vicious misconceptions that circulate.”

She said the Encyclopedia is an example of how people of different faiths can collaborate to raise understanding about a religion and its foundational text.

The Encyclopaedia of the Quran is published by Holland’s Brill Publishing and is available in hard copy, CD-ROM and through online subscription. Currently it is only available in English, but McAuliffe said a group of Middle Eastern and North African scholars has expressed an interest in translating it into Arabic.

Afghanistan: Progress and Challenges



President George W. Bush waves as he stands with President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan, Mrs. Laura Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice during welcoming ceremonies, Wednesday, March 1, 2006, in Kabul. (White House photo by Eric Draper)

Afghanistan has made progress toward growth and stability in the five years since the fall of the Taliban regime and the United States remains committed to helping the people of Afghanistan confront the serious challenges that still face it, says Under Secretary of State R. Nicholas Burns.

“Security continues to be our primary priority. We have seen an increased number of attacks in Afghanistan this year, particularly in the South and East,” Burns told a group of U.S. and Afghan business leaders at the U.S.-Afghan Business Matchmaker Conference in Washington October 31. “These attacks do not pose a strategic threat to the central government, but they do have an impact by preventing the government from effectively expanding its mandate.”

He said the Taliban and other criminal elements have sought to test the will of the newly deployed NATO forces, but added, “NATO contingents have proven themselves to be extremely effective by winning military successes against the Taliban.” Burns also praised the growing capabilities of the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police to take responsibility for security operations.

He said the most important element of the joint U.S.-Afghan security strategy is road building. “The success of the Taliban depends on ungoverned and unpaved areas, where they can operate out of sight of the local authorities,” he said. “Roads change that picture dramatically.”

He said that more than 1,500 kilometers of roads have been built in the past five years, allowing easier movement of police and army units to security hotspots and improving the economy by employing Afghan citizens and facilitating the

transport of goods to market.

The second major challenge Burns identified was the growing narcotics trade. He cited U.N. statistics saying that Afghanistan’s 2006 opium crop was the largest in recorded history.

“Opium poppy cultivation brings corruption, weakens the Afghan government, and funds terrorist and insurgent groups,” he said. “The situation is very troubling.”

He said the United States is working with the Afghan government to establish a comprehensive counternarcotics strategy. This includes alternative crop programs for farmers, public information campaigns, drug interdiction, reform of the judicial sector and eradication of crops.

He cited Nangarhar province as an early success story. The provincial governor adopted the central government’s eradication policies, and local farmers were provided seeds, equipment and advice for producing high-value cash crops. As a result, Burns said, the province has seen a 96 percent drop in poppy cultivation over the past two years.

Burns said infrastructure is key to Afghanistan’s economic growth. He said that in addition to roads, the United States is funding numerous power projects, building capacities in generation, transmission and distribution. The under secretary added that the private sector is the primary means of development for Afghanistan.

“While the United States and other international donors can help Afghanistan create the conditions for a strong economy through security and infrastructure, we simply cannot make it happen alone. Real revitalization requires the ingenuity and expertise of the private sector,” he said.

Burns indicated that the United States could encourage economic growth by establishing Reconstruction Opportunity Zones, which would allow duty-free access to U.S. markets for certain products, but he said it is up to the Afghan private sector to seize the opportunities and become the driving force behind the country’s development.

The full text of Burns’ remarks as prepared for delivery is available on the State Department Web site.

U.S. Foreign Assistance Reaches Record Level

Total U.S. financial flows to the developing world -- official development assistance, private capital flows and private grants -- reached a record-breaking \$104.4 billion in calendar year 2005, according to new figures released by the government.

The latest figures, issued in mid-October after a six-month review, also show that official development assistance (ODA) from the U.S. government -- nonmilitary grants and loans -- attained a record \$27.6 billion, an increase of \$7.9 billion over 2004.

The largest recipients of U.S. aid were Iraq (\$10.8 billion), Afghanistan (\$1.3 billion), Sudan (\$771 million), Ethiopia (\$625 million), Egypt (\$397 million), Pakistan (\$362 million), Jordan (\$354 million), Colombia (\$334 million), Uganda (\$242 million) and Serbia-Montenegro (\$181 million).

U.S. money accounted for more than 25 percent of all gov-



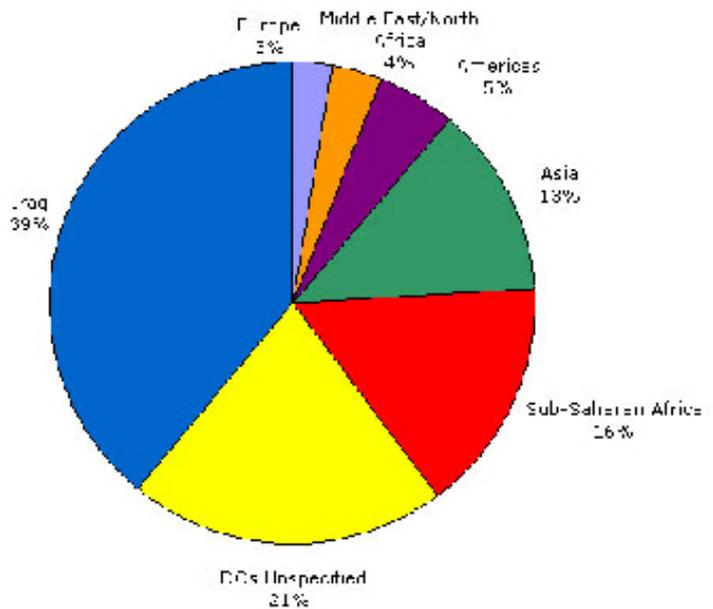
U.S. Army officers hand dress shoes to an Afghan girl during a humanitarian aid program at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, Aug. 15, 2006. The program, hosted by the 924th Medical Support Group, brought U.S. and South Korean military personnel together to help out the Afghan community. (DoD photo by Cpl. Bertha A. Flores, U.S. Army.)

ernment aid provided by the 30 members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the industrialized-country group that provides the bulk of foreign assistance worldwide.

Net U.S. direct investments in developing countries reached \$69.2 billion in 2005, as purchases of foreign stocks and bonds exceeded sales by \$39.8 billion and new long-term bank lending exceeded principal payments on existing bank debt by \$22.8 billion. Many of the private capital flows were directed to developing countries in the Americas and Asia.

The most recently released U.S. government figures also show that private grants from U.S.-based NGOs, foundations, faith-based organizations, institutions of higher education and other groups totaled \$8.6 billion in calendar year 2005, a \$1.8 billion increase over 2004. This was the 10th straight annual increase in overseas private giving by U.S. entities.

2005 U.S. Net ODA Disbursements \$27.6B



According to a study by the Hudson Institute, a private research organization, by including \$47 billion in remittances in the total of U.S. assistance, ODA represented only about 20 percent of total U.S. financial flows to the developing world in 2004.

Excluding remittances, in 2005 total U.S. ODA, private capital flows, and private grants, as a percentage of gross national income, was 0.84 percent -- the highest level since 1997.



Iraqi children run towards U.S. Army Soldiers who are in the area handing out school supplies in Kanan, Iraq, Nov. 7, 2006. (DoD photo by Spc. Elisha Dawkins, U.S. Army.)

U.S. Embassy Supports Disabled Children's Art Exhibit



Disabled Persons, the exhibit was organized by the NGO Sanvikt.

Ambassador Purnell, who spoke with a few of the artists whose works were on display, received a painting, which he proudly displays in his office.

Underscoring the importance of supporting the activity of young artists, the Ambassador praised the efforts by Sanvikt.

Ambassador Purnell (right) talks with an artist at the Disabled Children's Art Exhibit in Tashkent. (U.S. Embassy photo)

Ambassador Purnell visited a disabled children's art exhibit in Tashkent in December. Dedicated to International Day of

Ambassador Purnell Meets Students of Prestigious Business School

Recently, Ambassador Purnell addressed an energetic group of 65 undergraduate students at the International Business School Kelajak Ilmi, one of Uzbekistan's premier business programs.

The Ambassador spoke to the students about the opportunities and challenges facing future business leaders. The essential components of a successful business, especially in the field of entrepreneurialism, include operating with integrity and transparency, he said. He also underscored his respect and admiration for business executives, noting that the process of globalization, while often criticized, is an important vehicle for many countries, such as China, India and Russia, to prosper.

Although he personally chose a career in diplomacy, the Ambassador recalled that business was a part of his family as his father had spent a lifetime in the printing sector. Inspired by the Ambassador's openness, students asked questions ranging from the recent election results in the United States to the type and level of U.S. assistance to Uzbekistan. The Ambassador reiterated his sincerest desire that the U.S. and Uzbekistan continue with



Ambassador Purnell speaks to undergraduate students at the Kelajak Ilmi International Business School. (U.S. Embassy photo)

an open and productive dialogue. He noted the varied and many shared interests of the two countries.

U.S. Embassy Officers Learn about Karakalpakstan And Khorezm during a Visit

Ambassador Jon Purnell's trip to western Uzbekistan in November highlighted Embassy programs supporting culture, science and the environment in Uzbekistan.



A restorer at the Savitskiy Museum in Nukus shows his work to a U.S. Embassy staffer. (U.S. Embassy photo)

In Nukus, Ambassador Purnell visited the world-renowned Savitskiy Museum where he watched expert restorers repair and preserve several significant works of art including pieces by Alexey



Bukhara deer at Baday Tugay Nature Preserve. (U.S. Embassy photo)

Volkov, Nikolay Kosmeev and Nadejda Borovaya. Following his tour, the Ambassador presented the museum director with an Embassy grant that will help underwrite improvements to the museum's computer capabilities – the Embassy is already

supporting the Museum's effort to redesign and translate its website.

Next, the Ambassador toured three of the Ellik Kala: Chilpyk Kala, Gyaur Kala and Jampyk Kala. Made of clay brick, these settlements date as far back as the 6th century B.C. They are a record of the religious, commercial and cultural life of the early civilizations that once inhabited what is now Uzbekistan.

Following tours of these important archeological sites, the Ambassador stopped at the Baday Tugay Nature Preserve. This preserve protects an environmental niche unique to Central Asia. The tugay is a forest containing plants such as poplars and reeds that grow in saline soil. The preserve is also home to a herd of Bukhara deer, which are listed in both the Uzbek Red Book and the World Conservation Union Red List of Threatened Species as an endangered species.



Ambassador Purnell and other U.S. Embassy staff on a tour to Gyaur Kala in Karakalpakstan. (U.S. Embassy photo)

The Ambassador's final destination was a series of secluded lakes near Khiva. A U.S. Fulbright Student living there, is collecting data on the food web in these small lakes and ponds of the Khorezm region of the lower Amu Darya. She hopes that the data will lead to a better understanding of the aquatic ecosystem of these previously unstudied water resources. As part of the project, she is training young Uzbek scientists on modern scientific techniques for studying water resources, an important topic for Uzbekistan.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts -

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is a state in the New England region of the northeastern United States. With a population approaching 6.5 million in a relatively small area, it is mostly urban and suburban in its eastern half but still primarily rural in the west. It is the most populous of the six New England states and contains the region's main urban center, Boston.

The first Europeans to settle New England landed in present-day Massachusetts. These settlers were Pilgrims and Puritans from England seeking religious freedom. The majority of early settlers came from within 60 miles of Haverhill, England. They founded Plymouth, Salem, and Boston, which soon became the hub of the region. A century and a half later, Massachusetts became known as the 'Cradle of Liberty' for the revolutionary ferment in Boston that helped spawn the war of the Thirteen Colonies for independence.

During the 19th century, Massachusetts transformed itself from a mainly agricultural economy to a manufacturing one, making use of its many rivers for power to operate

factories for shoes, furniture, and clothing. Its economy declined in the early twentieth century when industry moved south in search of cheaper labor. A revitalization came in the 1970s when, nourished by the graduates of the area's many elite institutions of higher education, the Boston suburbs (particularly those around Route 128) became home to dozens of high-tech companies.



The Boston skyline is seen looking westward from across Boston Harbor. (© AP Images)



Network Operations Command Center Engineer Eva Chan, of Boston, front, studies her screen at Akamai Technologies Inc., in Cambridge, Mass. Five years after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, Akamai and much of the rest of corporate America depend more than ever on instant data retrieval to maintain an uninterrupted flow of goods and services. (© AP Images)

Massachusetts' colleges and universities, as well as its technology sectors, continue to thrive. The state is also considered a haven for progressive, liberal thought and often sends political candidates to the national scene. Massachusetts was the home state of US Presidents John Adams, John Quincy Adams, John F. Kennedy and George H. W. Bush; however, two of its last presidential aspirants, Michael Dukakis and John Kerry, were unsuccessful.

Massachusetts has undergone a profound economic transition over the past ten years. While the old manufacturing base lost much of its competitive edge, the state adapted - by necessity as much as by choice - to a "New Economy" characterized by knowledge-intensive production, high-tech innovation, and global trading. During the 1990s, especially between 1993 and 2000, great statewide economic expansion occurred. The Commonwealth expanded its export sector in the following industries: information technology, financial services, knowledge creation,



The Bay State

health care, traditional manufacturing and travel and tourism.

Massachusetts continues to have an abundance of assets in the area of entrepreneurship and innovation. The Commonwealth attracts substantial venture capital (VC) investment that supports the creation of new business ventures. Much of this investment leverages the state's solid knowledge creation network, comprised of universities, laboratories, incubators, angel investors, and supporting service firms. The state is also a leader in attracting federal investments in research and development (R&D).

Indeed, Massachusetts continues as a leader in the nation, working hard to ensure a high quality of life for all citizens of the Commonwealth.

Boston is the capital city of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the United States. Founded in 1630, Boston is one of the oldest, wealthiest and most culturally significant cities in the United States. Its economy is based on higher education, research, health care, finance, and technology, principally biotechnology.

Boston has many nicknames. The City on a Hill came from original Massachusetts Bay Colony's governor John Winthrop's goal to create the biblical "City on a Hill." It also refers to the original three hills of Boston. Beantown refers to early Bostonian tradition of making baked beans with imported molasses. Boston is sometimes called the Puritan City because its founders were Puritans, and also called The Cradle of Liberty for its role in instigating the American Revolution. Citizens of Boston are called Bostonians. The city lies at the center of Greater Boston, which also includes the cities of Cambridge, Quincy, and Newton, the town of Brookline, and many suburban communities farther from Boston. The Greater Boston area encompasses parts of the states of New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. The city also lies at the center of the Boston-Worcester-Manchester Combined Statistical Area (CSA), the fifth largest metropolitan area in the United States.

ECONOMY

The Bureau of Economic Analysis estimates that Massachusetts's gross state product in 2004 was US\$318 billion. Per capita personal income in 2004 was US\$42,102, making it the 2nd highest in the country behind Connecticut. Gross state product increased 2.6% from 2004 to 2005, below the national average of 3.5%.

Its agricultural outputs are seafood, nursery stock, dairy products, cranberries, and vegetables. Its industrial outputs are machinery, electrical and electronic equipment, scientific instruments, printing, and publishing. Thanks largely to the Ocean Spray cooperative, Massachusetts is

the second largest cranberry producing state in the union (after Wisconsin). Other sectors vital to the Massachusetts economy include higher education, health care, financial services and tourism.

As of 2005, there were 6,100 farms in Massachusetts encompassing a total of 520,000 acres, averaging 85 acres apiece. Particular agricultural products of note include tobacco, animals and animal products, and fruits, tree nuts, and berries, for which the state is nationally ranked 11th, 16th, and 17th, respectively.



U.S. Map, courtesy of U.S. Census Bureau.

Quick Facts

Abbreviations: MA Mass. US-MA.

Capital City: Boston.

Governor: Mitt Romney (R).

Date of Statehood: February 6, 1788

Population: 6,398,743 (est. 2005, U.S. Census Bureau).

Area: 27,360 sq km.

Origin of State's Name: Named after local Indian tribe whose name means "a large hill place".

Largest Cities: Boston, Worcester, Springfield, Lowell, Cambridge, Brockton, New Bedford, Lynn, Quincy (50states.com).

Economy:

Agriculture: Seafood, nursery stock, dairy products, cranberries, vegetables (50states.com).

Industry: Machinery, electric equipment, scientific instruments, printing and publishing, tourism (50states.com).

Continued from front page

of people: members of civil society, alumni of American programs, including exchange programs, members of the business community, including the American business community here, and, of course, a wide range of government officials. I have just come from a meeting with Foreign Minister Vladimir Norov. I also met with several other senior Uzbek officials, including National Security Advisor Murod Atayev, Minister of Defense Ruslan Mirzaev, Deputy Prime Minister and General Director of the Agency of Communication and Informatization Abdulla Aripov, Minister of Public Education Turobjon Juraev, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Higher and Secondary Special Education Rustam Kasymov, the State Advisor on Religious Affairs Bahrom Abduhalimov, and Human Rights Ombudsman Sayyora Rashidova.

What I can tell you about the meetings is that we had very candid discussions about next steps in the U.S.-Uzbek relationship. And this is a very important time to have these discussions because this year is the fifteenth anniversary of the American presence in Uzbekistan. From our perspective, this anniversary is important because it demonstrates the core American commitment in Central Asia to the sovereignty and independence of the countries of this region, including Uzbekistan. This is the basis for our involvement in this part of the world. We are not here to play games with other countries. The five sovereign, independent countries of Central Asia are not the objects of our struggle with other countries – they are the focus of our policy. Although the U.S.-Uzbek relationship has had its ups and downs over the years, this has always been our commitment and on the basis of this commitment we have built a record of real success together in many areas of cooperation.

We have also had some serious differences and the last 20 months have not always been easy. But recently we have heard from our Uzbek colleagues that they are interested in improving the relationship, and we have always been committed to a strong bilateral relationship. So this seemed like a good time for me to make my first visit to Tashkent.

We face three challenges in the relationship. The first is that both sides – the American and the Uzbek – have stated their commitment to cooperation. Our challenge, individually and jointly, is to turn these declaratory statements of commitment into concrete actions that transform the relationship.

Our second challenge is to do this in a multidimensional way. There are many aspects of American policy in Central Asia: security, trade and economics, political development, democracy and human rights, energy, terrorism, transnational issues, and regional issues. We do not have a one- or two-dimensional policy and so we cannot have one- or two-dimensional relationships. We want full, multidimensional, productive relationships with every country in the region. We believe that there is a basis for such a relationship with Uzbekistan and we will continue to try to find it.

In fact, we do not have to look very far to find a vision for that relationship: the 2002 Strategic Framework Agreement between our two countries. This is the fifth anniversary of

the Framework Agreement. This multidimensional agreement includes cooperation on security, on trade, on political development, on all of these issues. What we want to do here is to build on our track record of success because we are very proud of our successful cooperation and we hope that our Uzbek colleagues are proud of it too.

We want to take areas of the relationship that have a great deal of potential and where we have begun to cooperate but have not yet realized that full potential. These areas include education and trade – we have made a good start but we have not yet realized the full potential of our relations. We hope to remove obstacles and thus to do more cooperatively in these areas.

And third, we want to address our differences in a spirit of mutual respect. We continue to have some differences. But we do not want these differences to prevent cooperation in the areas where we agree. So that is why I am here – to explore a way forward in our bilateral relationship.

It has been a very interesting and useful three days. I would be happy to take a few questions.

RIA-Novosti: How do you assess U.S.-Uzbek cooperation in terms of preventing drug trafficking and drug control? You may be aware that 2006 was a record year for the amount of opium produced in Afghanistan. This happened despite the presence of coalition forces in that country.

Deputy Assistant Secretary: I am very glad you asked that question because counter-narcotics is a genuine and common interest between our two countries. It is one of those areas where we have had successes in the past and we hope to do more in the future. But there have been a few bureaucratic obstacles to doing more and that is one subject I discussed with my counterparts in the Uzbek government. I made a few concrete suggestions and I hope we will be able to move forward.

As you said, narcotics remain a problem in Afghanistan. It is also a problem globally. Since I know it is a challenge in Uzbekistan, I want to reassure people here that we are working diligently with our partners and with the Afghan government to deal with the problem in Afghanistan. We are working to promote alternative crops and alternative livelihoods for farmers. We are working with the Afghan government to build law-enforcement capacity. We are working with international partners, including those in Central Asia. Indeed, I would argue that counter-narcotics has been among the most fruitful areas for cooperation in the Central Asian region. We recognize the problem; we are working hard to fight it. We are doing so with partners and we hope that Uzbekistan will be one of these partners.

Turkiston-Press News Agency: In the recent past, Uzbek-American military cooperation was very productive. You had a chance to meet with the Uzbek Minister of Defense. Could you share your thoughts about the prospects for developments in Uzbek-American military cooperation?

Deputy Assistant Secretary: It has been one area of success

in the past and it continues to have much potential, especially for things like military exchanges and military education. We have also cooperated productively in the areas of non-proliferation and border security. Yet, as in many areas of our relationship, levels of cooperation have gone up and down. Regardless, there is a sound basis of common interest and we will continue to try to find ways to pursue that common interest. I thought it was a very good conversation with the Minister of Defense.

Turkish TV TRT: My first question is about the scope of the U.S.-Uzbek economic relationship. For example, what was the volume of trade in 2006? My second question is that



after the events in Andijon, the Uzbek government closed many American companies, while the Russians returned to Central Asia (for example, LUKoil and Gazprom invested in the Uzbek oil and gas sectors and Moscow State University opened a branch in Tashkent last year). What do you think about the possibility of such integration between the United States and Uzbekistan?

Deputy Assistant Secretary: You asked two very important and related questions. The first question is about the size of American investment and the second is about the future of American business and American institutions.

With respect to the size of American investments, I confess I do not know the exact number. We can get it for you, but I believe I read that over the years there has been about \$500 million in U.S. investment in Uzbekistan. Although that is a respectable figure, it is a much smaller one than the trade figures for some of the other countries in the region. This points back to one of the core statements I made in the beginning: there are areas of the relationship that have enormous potential but where we have not lived up to that full potential. In fact, not only is that trade number not as big as the one for some other countries in the region, I believe American investment here is declining year after year while at the same

time it is rising in some of the other Central Asian countries. These numbers concern me because I feel very strongly about the potential for American-Uzbek business cooperation.

You are right that some of the American businesses here have had problems. American businesses face a lot of high hurdles. These include import barriers, licensing issues, tax issues and legal issues. I think the challenge is to try to remove some of the obstacles because this is an area of great potential. I do not want to get into specific cases, however.

The power of American investment lies in the private sector. For instance, we have a trade relationship with China that now involves more than \$200 billion in two-way trade. This is not government investment, it is private sector trade. This is important because unlike some other countries that trade in this region, the basis of American investment and economic involvement is our private sector. What we hope to do is to remove some of these barriers because we think there is great potential for American investment here and throughout this region. So while I think developments with individual companies are important to watch, there is a more important point which is the general environment for business and investment. This necessarily formed a large part of my discussion with Deputy Prime Minister Aripov and others because we think it is an area of great potential.

Jihan News Agency: Currently there is tension between the United States and Iran. To what extent will diplomatic negotiations be successful, or will the United States ultimately have to use military force to resolve this crisis?

Deputy Assistant Secretary: I am not directly responsible for policy toward Iran. The American position on Iran is very well known. The entire international community has very deep concerns about the trajectory of nuclear developments in Iran and they have spoken about this in the past. The President of the United States has said that we are seeking a diplomatic solution. And, as you know, the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and other interested parties are talking and coordinating frequently on the issue. The United States has said that we are willing to join a diplomatic dialogue with Iran, but we have an expectation that Iran will suspend its nuclear program during that period. Our concerns in this and other areas are very well known and I would refer you to what Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has said on this issue, including her very recent testimony on Capitol Hill.

Deutsche Welle: You mentioned that the Uzbek authorities have expressed a willingness to reestablish cooperative ties with the United States. From what level of the Uzbek govern-

ment have you received this expression of willingness or hint that they are ready to reestablish cooperation? Also, many Uzbek officials ask how can the government of Uzbekistan reestablish a cooperative relationship with a country that allows organizations such as Hizb ut-Tahrir, which is a religious extremist organization, to freely operate. How would you answer them?

Deputy Assistant Secretary: Thank you for the questions. As to the first question, I began by telling you who I had spoken with here. These included officials at the levels of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister. Every single one of them expressed an interest and a commitment to cooperate with the United States. Of course, I was very encouraged to hear that, but as I said at the beginning, the challenge, our mutual challenge, will be to turn these declaratory statements into concrete actions that demonstrate our cooperation. I offered a few, very specific ideas and suggestions and they offered a few ideas and suggestions as well. Now we will go to work. We will try to explore what is possible. It may be difficult, but we must determine how to remove the obstacles and truly follow-up on the conversations so that we can cooperate in concrete ways.

As to the question of terrorism, this has been a great concern to the United States and globally, particularly since September 11, 2001. Both the United States government and the United Nations have institutionalized processes for looking at various allegations that groups have engaged in terrorist activities. We weigh the evidence carefully, openly and honestly. Working through our U.S. government process and through the international process, we have listed as terrorist organizations a large number of groups. That is the process for making such determinations.

The point I want to make is that terrorism – by which I mean acts of violence against innocent individuals – is of great concern to the United States. This is no secret, especially given our experiences since “9/11.” We are looking to cooperate in counterterrorism activities with a variety of governments around the world.

Transitions Online: The Central Asian countries have not had much success in achieving real economic cooperation since independence. How are you going to achieve success in this area?

Deputy Assistant Secretary: I am very glad you asked this question because I just gave a speech in Washington on this very subject. Our basic interest in Central Asia is that we want to see stable, strong, sovereign, independent states cooperating with one another, with the United States, with our partners, in order to build a more stable and prosperous and democratic region. Part of the challenge we see is to promote several kinds or levels of regional integration. The first, as you said, is economic integration among the Central Asian countries themselves. This is a great challenge, but the United States has worked for more than 15 years in partnership with Central Asian governments to promote such integration. For example, in the area of water management, our United States Agency for International Development, which is our cooperation agency, has spent almost \$40 million over the

years on transboundary water projects.

Some of our most successful programs in Central Asia are in areas like borders and customs, which are intimately connected to regional cooperation. This comes back to my point about a multidimensional relationship. Are secure borders and modern customs a security issue or a trade issue? The answer is that they are both. We know there have been problems of terrorism in Central Asia and terrorist groups have penetrated across borders. So secure borders are good for security. But you cannot promote trade without modern customs and the ability of traders to cross borders. Thus a big part of what we are doing to promote regional integration is to build capacity in areas such as borders and customs that bridge the boundaries between different sectors such as security, economics, political development and so on.

We are promoting other kinds of integration too; for instance integration into the world market by supporting WTO memberships for all five Central Asian states, although so far, Kyrgyzstan is the only Central Asian member. We hope Uzbekistan will some day be a WTO member as well.

We are also promoting regional integration between the Central Asian countries and their neighbors in every direction on the compass: north, west, east and south. For the last 200 years, Central Asia has been oriented toward the north and west. We respect that and we acknowledge it. But the most dynamic economies in the world today are to the east and south of Central Asia, in the Pacific Rim and in the areas around India. One thing we hope to do is to help create economic opportunity by working with Central Asian countries to forge links to the global economy, including South Asia. You may know that we reorganized our bureaucracy in the Department of State to help promote these linkages – not in one direction at the expense of any other direction, but in all four directions on the compass. We are doing a lot in this area. And I hope you will take a look at my speech because I gave a few very concrete examples.

Associated Press: As you know, President Karimov has ruled the country since 1989 and his second official term of office expired in late January. There is a legal loophole that allows him to stay until the end of December, but there is a bit of controversy about the legitimacy of his rule. What does the State Department think about this issue?

Deputy Assistant Secretary: Well, I am not a lawyer so I cannot comment on American law, much less on Uzbek law. I will leave it to my Uzbek colleagues to interpret Uzbek law.

Radio Golos Rossii: Are you visiting only Uzbekistan or are you going to other countries during this tour?

Deputy Assistant Secretary: I try to visit Central Asia often. I have been to every country in the region. When I visit, I try not just to visit the capitals, but to visit other cities as well. For instance, last year I visited Kyrgyzstan and I went to Osh. It is not easy, however, to visit multiple countries on every trip. On this trip, I am visiting only Uzbekistan, but I will be back in Central Asia fairly soon.

Radio Golos Rossii: My second question is whether, during the course of your visits, you have heard any concerns from the governments of the Central Asian states, particularly Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, that cooperating with the United States may hurt their relationships with Russia. My third question relates to our current understanding that the United States is trying to establish military bases in the Czech Republic and Poland. Maybe your visit to Uzbekistan also includes the goal of establishing a military base here? I may be speaking rubbish, but, then again, we never thought that we would have an American air base in Uzbekistan and that it would leave so quickly. Given the fact that the Central Asian states are closer to Iran than either the Czech Republic or Poland, how would you respond?

Deputy Assistant Secretary: First, I will make a very direct statement: I did not discuss the issue of bases here in Uzbekistan. Second, I am glad you asked the question about U.S.



and Russian relations in Central Asia. Eighty percent of the articles I read in the newspapers about Central Asia talk of a “great game” among the major powers in this region – a great geo-strategic competition among the United States, Russia, China, and others. This characterization is completely inaccurate and I will tell you why.

One, it is insulting to Central Asians. It reduces them to being passive receptacles of the strategies brought to bear on them by outside powers as if they themselves had no interests, no goals, no policies. I said it at the beginning and I will say it again: the Central Asian countries are not objects of our struggle with others. They are not anybody’s pawns on a chessboard. We see them as independent players and independent partners with international responsibilities. Working with them, not outsiders, is the basis of our approach to this part of the world.

Two, the major world powers actually have pretty good rela-

tions with one another. If you look at the last 300 years of international history, it is largely a history of war and conflict. We are living at a moment in international history when relations among big countries – the United States, Russia, China, Japan, India, and Europe – are comparatively peaceful and war is almost unthinkable. So despite all this talk about confrontation in Central Asia, the major powers actually have very productive relations at a global level. Of course, we do not agree on everything. And we are not naïve – there is some competition. That is natural. But competition does not mean confrontation, which leads to my third point.

The United States and Russia should have many common interests in Central Asia. Why would we not both want stable, prosperous democratic states that are integrated into the world economy? We certainly do, and I would think Russia does too. I suppose that is why we have had consultations with our Russian colleagues over the years. As recently as a week

ago, the Russian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, [Gregory] Karasin, was in Washington to meet with Under Secretary [of State for Political Affairs R. Nicholas] Burns and others. I was in a meeting with him and Assistant Secretary [of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, Richard] Boucher, to talk about Central Asia. I do not think that Central Asian countries should have to choose one or another partner. They should seek partnerships with everyone. That is what we are promoting. We are not anti-anyone. We are just anti-monopoly. We think more links to more partners is a good thing. More choices mean more independence. As I said, the core of American policy is to be partners with independent countries in the region. So I appreciate your question, but I think every

American official would reject the premise. We do not think countries should have to choose.

Jin Je Ban Newspaper: You noted that U.S.-Uzbek relations are improving and it is great to hear that. Your visit to Uzbekistan is proof of this improvement. Perhaps you are like the swallow that announces spring. But, I think that real improvement will start only if there is an exchange between the two countries’ leaders.

Deputy Assistant Secretary: I do not see the prospect of such visits at the moment, although the Uzbek president visited the United States in the past. As I said, the last 20 months have been a bit difficult and I have clearly outlined what I think the challenges are for both sides. I do not think my visit in itself symbolizes anything. We should be talking to our colleagues all the time. What I want you to take away from this is that both sides have said that they are committed to cooperation and the challenge we both now have is to turn

these words into concrete actions, while, at the same time, to continue being frank about our differences.

Jin Je Ban Newspaper: I did not mean just presidents. I also meant prime ministers, heads of parliaments or other high-level or high-ranking officials.

Deputy Assistant Secretary: We are not discussing anything specific right now. We are trying to improve our relationship.

Jahon News Agency: The Islamic Organization on Islamic Education and Culture announced that for 2007, Tashkent is the capital of Islamic culture. To what extent does this designation contradict the State Department's statement that Uzbekistan puts pressure on Islamic believers who practice their religion?

Deputy Assistant Secretary: Uzbekistan has had a great history as a locus for Islamic culture. I look at the great cities of Samarkand and Bukhara, at Ulughbek and other famous figures in Islamic history. Everyone in the United States would say that this is a great center of Islamic culture and Islamic learning throughout the ages of history.

You are right that the United States Department of State designated Uzbekistan as a country of particular concern. We are committed to religious freedom in every country around the world. That is our mechanism to express our concerns as we see them. It certainly does not mean that there is no religious practice in Uzbekistan. Of course there is, but there are some areas where the Department of State has expressed concern. Ambassador John Hanford, who is the State Department's representative in this area, has spoken in public about some of these issues. We think this would be a very good area for dialogue between the United States and Uzbekistan and I have tried to encourage that dialogue while I have been here. I hope this will be a subject of conversation as we go forward.

Radio Uzbekistan: I have two questions. First, in Uzbek we have a saying "if Muhammed does not go to the mountain, the mountain comes to Muhammed." How should we view your visit: as Muhammed going to the mountain or the mountain coming to Muhammed? Second, what do you think about the Uzbek opposition? Does it exist? As far as I know, there are a number of so-called political parties that try to position themselves as opposition parties and that certain leaders of the Uzbek opposition reside in the United States or in Europe. But, to my knowledge, there is no real opposition in either Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan or Turkmenistan.

Deputy Assistant Secretary: I am not sure I fully understand your first question. So I will just tell you how I see my visit

and hope you see my visit the same way. I see my visit as an opportunity to explore a way forward in U.S.-Uzbek relations after a very difficult period. And I do not want to pretend that it will be easy, because we do have differences. But we believe that over the last 15 years, we have demonstrated that there are many common interests between the two countries. We have seen in the past that there is a common basis. We believe we should continue to try to find one and we are committed to finding it. We hope that our Uzbek colleagues are too. And that is why I came to Tashkent.



As to your second question on what the United States seeks in the realm of political development, the answer is fairly simple. As Assistant Secretary Boucher has often said, we hope to see greater openness in every sphere of life. Openness to trade, openness to travel, openness to educational exchanges and yes, openness to participation in political life. That is why democratic development is part of our policy – not just in this part of the world, but in every part of the world. We do not expect that every country is going to look like a carbon copy of the United States. Every country has its own history, culture and traditions. But we believe that history has shown that democratic development makes sense all around the world. It cannot be imposed from outside. But we have seen democratic development in countries that are very different: from Botswana in Africa to Korea in Asia to Argentina in Latin America. Every country is unique, but we hope to see greater openness in every sphere in all countries around the world. That is why I said that our core goal in this part of the world is to see stable, prosperous, democratic states integrated into the world economy, cooperating with each other, with the United States and with our partners to support regional security and stability.

Thank you very much for coming. It is my first visit here but I hope it will not be my last and I hope to see you all again.

America Mourns Gerald R. Ford (1913 - 2006)

When Gerald R. Ford took the oath of office on August 9, 1974, he declared, "I assume the Presidency under extraordinary circumstances.... This is an hour of history that troubles our minds and hurts our hearts."

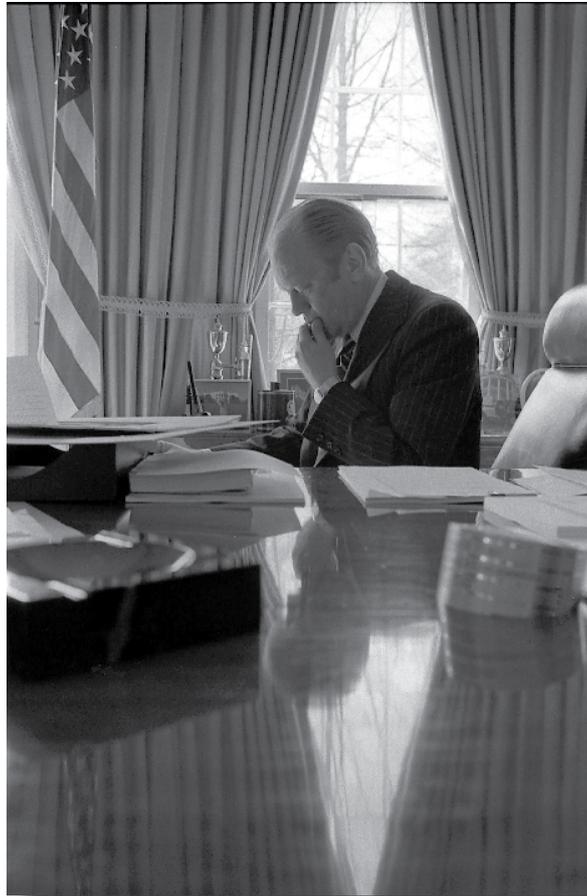
It was indeed an unprecedented time. He had been the first Vice President chosen under the terms of the Twenty-fifth Amendment and, in the aftermath of the Watergate scandal, was succeeding the first President ever to resign.

Ford was confronted with almost insuperable tasks. There were the challenges of mastering inflation, reviving a depressed economy, solving chronic energy shortages, and trying to ensure world peace. The President acted to curb the trend toward Government intervention and spending as a means of solving the problems of American society and the economy. In the long run, he believed, this shift would bring a better life for all Americans.

Ford's reputation for integrity and openness had made him popular during his 25 years in Congress. From 1965 to 1973, he was House Minority Leader. Born in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1913, he grew up in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He starred on the University of Michigan football team, then went to Yale, where he served as assistant coach while earning his law degree. During World War II he attained the rank of lieutenant commander in the Navy. After the war he returned to Grand Rapids, where he began the practice of law, and entered Republican politics. A few weeks before his election to Congress in 1948, he married Elizabeth Bloomer. They have four children: Michael, John, Steven, and Susan.

As President, Ford tried to calm earlier controversies by

granting former President Nixon a full pardon. His nominee for Vice President, former Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York, was the second person to fill that office by appointment. Gradually, Ford selected a cabinet of his own.



Ford viewed himself as "a moderate in domestic affairs, a conservative in fiscal affairs, and a dyed-in-the-wool internationalist in foreign affairs." A major goal was to help business operate more freely by reducing taxes upon it and easing the controls exercised by regulatory agencies. "We...declared our independence 200 years ago, and we are not about to lose it now to paper shufflers and computers," he said. In foreign affairs Ford acted vigorously to maintain U. S. power and prestige after the collapse of Cambodia and South Viet Nam. Preventing a new war in the Middle East remained a major objective; by providing aid to both Israel and Egypt, the Ford Administration helped persuade the two countries to accept an interim truce agreement. Detente with the Soviet Union continued. President Ford and Soviet leader Leonid I. Brezhnev set new limitations upon nuclear weapons.

President Ford won the Republican nomination for the Presidency in 1976, but lost the election to his Democratic opponent, former Governor Jimmy Carter of Georgia. On Inauguration Day, President Carter began his speech: "For myself and for our Nation, I want to thank my predecessor for all he has done to heal our land." A grateful people concurred.

For more information about President Ford, please visit the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum at <http://www.ford.utexas.edu/>.

PRESIDENT AND MRS. BUSH SADDENED BY PASSING OF FORMER PRESIDENT FORD

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Laura and I are greatly saddened by the passing of former President Gerald R. Ford.

President Ford was a great American who gave many years of dedicated service to our country. On August 9, 1974, after a long career in the House of Representatives and service as Vice President, he assumed the Presidency in an hour of national turmoil and division. With his quiet integrity, common sense, and kind instincts, President Ford helped heal our land and restore public confidence in the Presidency.

The American people will always admire Gerald Ford's devotion to duty, his personal character, and the honorable conduct of his administration. We mourn the loss of such a leader, and our 38th President will always have a special place in our Nation's memory. On behalf of all Americans, Laura and I offer our deepest sympathies to Betty Ford and all of President Ford's family. Our thoughts and prayers will be with them in the hours and days ahead.

World Aids Day - an Embassy Event



tatives from various health institutions and NGOs engaged in fighting HIV/AIDS and drug use and promoting human rights.

During his opening remarks, Ambassador Purnell characterized HIV/AIDS as a significant problem requiring worldwide cooperation. Presentations by Ishonch va Hayot and UNAIDS followed. These speakers focused on the status of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Uzbekistan, providing both statistics and moving profiles of those afflicted with HIV/AIDS.

Following the presentations, volunteers from Ishonch va Hayot unveiled the Uzbek AIDS Quilt, which memorializes people

Ambassador Purnell speaks to guests at the World AIDS Day event. (U.S. Embassy photo)

World AIDS Day (December 1) is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV/AIDS. On December 5, the U.S. Embassy hosted a World AIDS Day observance.

The theme was “Stop AIDS – Keep the Promise.” Ishonch va Hayot (Hope and Life), a prominent Uzbek NGO dedicated to supporting people living with HIV/AIDS, and UNAIDS co-sponsored the event. Ishonch va Hayot is supported by Mercy Corps and UNAIDS. Guests included the media as well as represen-



Uzbek AIDS Quilt. The Quilt memorializes Uzbeks who have died from AIDS. (U.S. Embassy photo)

who have died from AIDS. As part of the ceremony, volunteers read the names of hundreds of Uzbek victims of the pandemic.

Ambassador Purnell also spoke with a journalist from VOA; his interview was aired on December 10. The Ambassador stated that Uzbekistan and the United States have cooperated in several projects to fight HIV/AIDS. He praised the many people in Uzbekistan working on the issue and urged that more be done to raise awareness of the problem. He also outlined Embassy programs dedicated to the fight against HIV/AIDS.



Guests observe the Uzbek AIDS Quilt displayed in the U.S. Embassy at the World AIDS Day event. (U.S. Embassy photo)

First Muslim Congressman Takes Oath of Office on Thomas Jefferson's Quran

Incoming Minnesota Representative Keith Ellison became the first Muslim member of the U.S. Congress January 4, swearing his oath of office on a copy of the Quran that belonged to the author of the Declaration of Independence and the third president of the United States, Thomas Jefferson.

In an interview with USINFO, Ellison spokesman Rick Jauert said the choice of Jefferson's Quran was significant because it "dates religious tolerance back to the time of our founding fathers."

"Jefferson was ... one of the more profound thinkers of the time, who recognized even then that there was nothing to fear, and in fact there was strength in recognizing religious tolerance," he said.

Jefferson's 6,000-volume personal library was the largest in North America at the turn of the 19th century. He obtained his English translation of the Quran in 1765 as he was finishing his law



House Speaker Nancy Pelosi administers the House oath to Representative Keith Ellison as his wife holds Thomas Jefferson's Quran provided by the Library of Congress. (© AP Images)



The Quran used by Representative Keith Ellison during his swearing-in ceremony was once owned by Thomas Jefferson. (© AP Images)

studies at the College of William and Mary. The translation by British historian and solicitor George Sale first was published in 1734. The Quran, along with the rest of Jefferson's books, became the basis of the Library of Congress after British troops burned the U.S. Capitol, destroying the old congressional collection in the War of 1812.

The Library of Congress' division of rare books and special collections made the Quran available to Ellison for the ceremony. It has made similar rare books available for inau-

guration and swearing-in ceremonies in the past.

While Jefferson is best known for writing the Declaration of Independence, he also penned the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, which served as a basis for the religion clauses in the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights.

In the Virginia statute, he wrote, "[O]ur civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions, any more than our opinions in physics or geometry." He went on to say that denying a person the ability to hold an office of trust or declaring him unworthy of public confidence based on his religious beliefs was a violation of natural rights.

The document demanded "that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish enlarge, or affect their civil capacities."

The statute was one of Jefferson's proudest achievements. He instructed that his tombstone should not refer to him as president of the United States but should remember him only as the author of the Declaration of Independence and the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, and the founder of the University of Virginia.

Financing a college education in the United

Studying at U.S. institution is an expensive investment, but one many will find worthwhile. It is very important to start your financial planning at least 12 months before you intend to study in the United States.

Financing your college education consists of:

- compiling effective applications;
- assessing personal funds;
- identifying financial assistance for which you are eligible;
- reducing educational costs.

Assessing Personal Funds

Consult your parents and other family sponsors to find out how much money they can commit each year to your education. Try to raise as much as you can from family sources, because most scholarship awards, if available, cover only part of the total educational and living costs and may not be available to first-year international students.

Identifying Sources of Financial Assistance

“Be realistic about how much you need and what you can really afford.”

- International studies and sociology student from Ghana.

All types of scholarships and financial aid for international students are highly competitive and require excellent academic records. You will often find the terms “scholarships” and “financial aid” used interchangeably, but technically speaking, a scholarship is a financial award based on merit, including outstanding academic performance, special talent in sports or performing arts, or perhaps community service or leadership. Financial aid is a “need-based” grant based on the student’s financial need, as documented by family income, assets, and other factors. Below are the main types of financial assistance available for international students who want to study in the United States:

Home Country Funds: Conduct research at home to find possible funding from local government, corporate, or foundation sources. Although these sources are not found in all countries, you could reduce your educational cost with scholarships from local organizations.

Funding From Colleges: Meet with an educational adviser to learn how to research available financial aid for interna-

tional students. Careful advance research and realistic expectations are more likely to result in success. Do not assume that all colleges award financial aid. In fact, less than half of the institutions offering bachelor’s degrees can provide financial assistance to students who are not citizens or permanent residents of the United States. Keep in mind that financial aid for U.S. students is separate from financial aid for international students. Be sure to tell the admissions office your country of citizenship and request information on financial aid available to non-U.S. citizens. If offered, financial aid is usually made up

of a number of different types of assistance, including grants and scholarships and occasionally loans or part-time work programs.

You will discover that financial aid is very rare at state, or public, colleges and at colleges that offer professional courses such as engineering, business administration, and health profes-

sions. More financial aid may be available from the private liberal arts colleges, which offer the arts and science subjects.

As you do your research, make a table listing the colleges you would like to attend. Write down annual costs (as outlined above), then enter the average financial aid award and the number of awards made by each of the colleges. Such information is available from resources in your information or advising center. This chart can quickly allow you to see where your best chances lie, and can help you eliminate from your list the colleges where your admission with the needed funding is not viable.

International students often ask advisers about full scholarships, which cover all the costs of education except for airfare. The total number of full scholarships available each year to incoming international students in the United States is about 1,000, offered by only about 100 colleges. To get a full scholarship, you must be one of the top students in your country, usually with “A”s (excellent) in almost every subject, high SAT and TOEFL scores, and distinguished performance in other areas such as leadership and community service. There are 20 top students from all over the world competing for each scholarship, so you must distinguish yourself among a pool of outstanding students.



Mousa Dao of Ivory Coast sits in front of the campus bookstore Monday, April 26, 2004, at Florida International University in Miami (© AP Images).

States: International Students' Guide

Only a handful of wealthy colleges in the United States are able to meet the financial need of all the students they admit. (Please note that admission to these schools is usually very competitive.) Financial need is the difference between what you and your family can afford to contribute and the estimated cost of attending the college. The former is calculated on the basis of detailed information about your parents' financial circumstances, including supporting evidence such as bank statements, employers' letters, and other official documents and statements. Other universities, which make more limited awards on the basis of your financial need, will also ask to see such evidence.

Financial assistance from colleges is awarded at the beginning of the academic year and is rarely available for students entering mid-year in January or at other times. More aid is available for freshman students than for those transferring in from other institutions. Students who have already proven themselves at a college may find it easier to obtain financial assistance from that college than new students.

Sports Scholarships: Some U.S. colleges offer opportunities for gifted student athletes to play for the college team as a means of paying for their education.

International Awards: International students also ask about financial assistance from foundations, organizations, and the U.S. government. Very little aid exists through such sources, and it is usually earmarked for advanced graduate students. Again, your educational adviser can tell you whether there are special funds available for students from your country.

Loans: In limited instances, you may be able to negotiate a loan to fund part of your educational costs. Your educational adviser may have information on loan programs for which you may be eligible. You must usually have a U.S. citizen co-signer to act as a guarantor for any loans from U.S. loan programs, and in most cases you must already be enrolled in a U.S. university before you apply. Before taking a loan, make certain you know how you are going to repay it, and how a loan will affect your plans for graduate or other further study and for returning home.

Employment: Current immigration regulations permit international students to work only part-time — up to 20 hours per week — and only on campus during their first year of study. By working 10 to 15 hours a week, you could earn enough to pay for incidentals such as books, clothing, and personal expenses, but your campus job cannot pay your major expenses, such as tuition or room and board. This income also cannot be used as a source of income for any official financial statements. Campus jobs may include working at the university's cafeteria, bookstore, library, or health club, or within the university's administrative offices.

After the first year, you can also apply for employment as a resident assistant (RA) in a university dormitory. RAs serve as the first point of contact for students needing assistance or who have queries regarding dorm life. In return, RAs receive

free accommodation and sometimes a small salary and/or meal plan.

Under current regulations, after your first year of study, you may apply to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) for permission to work off campus for up to 20 hours a week. You should note, however, that there is no guarantee that this request will be granted. If you are married and are in the United States on an F-1 student visa, your spouse does not have permission to work. However, if you are in the United States on a J-1 student visa, your spouse is allowed to request a temporary work permit.

You should always check with your international student adviser before considering any form of employment.

Reducing Educational Costs

When planning your finances, consider these ways to reduce your costs:

Best Buys: Look for the colleges that offer you the highest quality education at the lowest cost.

Accelerated Programs: Completing a four-year bachelor's degree in three years saves thousands of dollars. Students can accelerate their programs by:

- earning transfer credit or advanced standing for college-level studies completed in the home country;
- taking courses at a nearby community college if tuition is lower and credits are transferable;
- attending classes during the summer if they are available;
- taking one additional course each semester.

Tuition Waivers: Based on your first-year grades, some colleges award partial tuition waivers. A superior academic record could save you thousands of dollars.

Living Expenses: Becoming a resident assistant in a dormitory could save thousands of dollars in living costs. Working in the dining hall offers a modest salary plus "all you can eat" meals. Living off campus with a relative or friend saves money if suitable accommodation is available and public transport is efficient.

Two-year and Community Colleges: Many students save thousands of dollars in tuition by attending community colleges for their first two years and then transferring to four-year institutions to complete their degree. For more information on community colleges, please visit Community Colleges USA (<http://www.cc-usa.org/>), the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) official resource for international students.

Source: <http://educationusa.state.gov/finaid.htm>

American Women of Influence: “The Real Architects of Society”

In recent years more and more societies all over the world have begun to recognize the vital contributions of women to commerce, their communities, and civic life. Whether it be Afghan women voting in a presidential election or women starting micro-businesses in Ethiopia, the worldwide trend toward greater equality is clear. Yet “the denial of women’s basic human rights is persistent and widespread,” as a 2005 United Nations Population Fund statement put it.

The two stories below offer a glimpse at how women in one country — the United States — have helped shape their society. These notable women believed that they had a contribution to make and did not shrink from the obstacles in their way. This account of their accomplishments is a reminder that all societies benefit from the talents and expertise of their women.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815 - 1902)

“The Mother of Woman Suffrage”

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was one of the major forces behind the empowerment of women in the United States and throughout the world. In particular, she was a founder and leader of the 19th-century women’s rights movement, which in 1920 won American women the right to vote.

Born in 1815 to a father who was a prominent New York state congressman and judge, Stanton read law informally under her father’s tutelage, and discovered an early vocation to reform the law of the day so it would treat men and women equally. In 1840, she married Henry Brewster Stanton, a lawyer, orator, and abolitionist. This marriage gave her a further entrée into politically progressive circles. In 1848, Elizabeth Stanton helped persuade the New York legislature to enact laws protecting the property rights of married women, and in July of that year, along with feminist Lucretia Mott, she helped lead the first women’s rights convention in the United States and probably the world, in the New York town of Seneca Falls. The convention passed numerous resolutions appealing for rights for women, and — significantly — a demand for female suffrage (the right to vote) in the Declaration of Sentiments, a document modeled on the U.S. Declaration of Independence.

During the U.S. Civil War, Stanton and her husband worked to abolish slavery, later splitting with other progressives over the lack of emphasis given to the votes-for-women issue.

Around 1850, Stanton began her association with Susan B. Anthony, also a leader in the movement to give women the right to vote. Their 50-year-long collaboration benefited from Stanton’s skills as the better orator and writer and Anthony’s as the organizer and tactician. “I forged the thunderbolts,” Stanton said of their partnership, “and she fired them.” Stanton became famous as president of the National Woman Suffrage Association, and also lectured on topics such as maternity, divorce law, and the social effect of liquor, which some felt destroyed homes, marriages, and lives. After 1880 she retired to collaborate with Anthony in the *History of Woman*

Suffrage. She died in 1902, having created a national agenda for women’s political and social equality that was to be realized in decades following.

Jane Addams (1860 - 1935)

Social Reformer, Humanitarian, Pacifist

Jane Addams was an internationally known advocate for the poor, a pacifist, a reformer, a leader in progressive groups, and the first American woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize. She is best remembered as the founder of Hull-House in Chicago, one of the first settlement houses that provided services for the working class immigrants in the neighborhood and served as a laboratory for reform.

A native of Cedarville, Illinois, Addams graduated from the Rockford Female Seminary. Her father’s death in 1881 and surgery in her back combined to make her nearly an invalid for two years. On a trip to Europe with her school friend Ellen Gates Starr, they visited London’s Toynbee Hall, a settlement house. Inspired by this experience, the two friends founded Hull-House in 1889. Addams lived and worked there until her death.

With donations, Hull-House grew to serve more than 10,000 people a week: immigrants from European countries in its first decades, and then African Americans and Mexicans in the 1920s. It offered night school for adults, a public kitchen, a gym, a library, a day nursery for the children of working mothers, and meeting places for trade union groups. Addams realized that the poverty around her would not end unless the country’s institutions organized to get rid of it. She campaigned with Hull-House’s clients for legislation to protect immigrants from exploitation, limit working hours for women, recognize labor unions, institute the first juvenile-court law, and provide for safe work places. In 1910 she became the first woman elected president of the National Conference of Social Work.

Addams directed her talents and unflagging energy to other causes, including women’s suffrage, politics, and as a founding member of organizations like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) — the pre-eminent civil rights and anti-hate organization — and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). She wrote 11 books and many articles. She became involved in the international pacifist movement in the first decade of the 20th century, and was elected chairman of the Woman’s Peace Party and first president of the International Congress of Women at The Hague in 1915. When the United States entered World War I, a move that she opposed, some Americans began to criticize Addams and her causes.

Her many achievements led to many awards, most importantly the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1931, which she shared with Nicholas Murray Butler.

Jane Addams died in Chicago. Hull-House has been preserved as a national monument to her memory.

U.S. Embassy Democracy Commission Small Grants Program

The purpose of the U.S. Embassy's Democracy Commission Small Grants Program is to award small grants for specific projects that support the development of democratic institutions in Uzbekistan. Primarily, grants will be awarded to non-governmental, non-profit organizations (NGOs). To be eligible for consideration, the applicant must be engaged in, or propose to carry out, a project whose purpose is the further development of democratic institutions in Uzbekistan.

In Uzbekistan, the Commission is interested in projects relating to:

- building democratic institutions
- fostering a strong and independent media
- supporting civic education
- respecting the rule of law
- protecting human rights
- furthering women's political and social rights
- supporting market reforms
- protecting the environment.

Projects not funded by the U.S. Embassy's Democracy Commission include (1) those requested by non-Uzbekistani organizations and individuals; (2) those relating to partisan political activities, charitable activities, political fund-raising, commercial enterprises and humanitarian aid; (3) those proposed by individuals not affiliated with an organization that can provide the long-term sustainability needed to complete the project, and (4) those that duplicate existing projects.

Proposals will be evaluated according to the nature of the project's goals, the applicant's clearly formulated plan to achieve those goals, the adequacy of the proposed budget, and the proposal's targeted audience.

Proposals must be sent via e-mail to TashkentGrant@state.gov. Supporting documents and applications for organizations that do not have access to e-mail can be sent to:

Democracy Commission
Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy
3 Moyqorghon Street, 5th Block, Yunusobod District
Tashkent 100093, Uzbekistan

In case of any questions about the Democracy Commission Small Grants Program, please contact:

Democracy Commission Small Grants Coordinator
Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy
3 Moyqorghon Street, 5th Block, Yunusobod District
Tashkent 100093, Uzbekistan
Phone: (998-71) 140-2441
Fax: (998-71) 120-6302
E-mail: TashkentGrant@state.gov
Website: <http://uzbekistan.usembassy.gov/demcom>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who can apply for a Democracy Commission grant?

Grants are awarded to NGOs and initiative groups that are engaged in, or propose to carry out, a project whose purpose fits within the program guidelines. The Democracy Commission will also consider proposals from individuals unaffiliated with an NGO or initiative group or from a commercial entity under special circumstances.

Is there a deadline for submitting proposals?

Proposals can be submitted to the Democracy Commission throughout the year.

How much money does the typical recipient receive?

Grants typically do not exceed \$10,000. All proposed project expenses must be realistic. Commission members will not authorize a grant if there are any questions about the budget.

What kinds of expenses will a Democracy Commission Small Grant cover?

Democracy Commission Small Grants can be used to pay for:

- supplies or equipment necessary for the fulfillment of the project;
- expenses related to workshops, seminars or conferences (e.g. preparation of course materials and post-event publications, room and audio-visual equipment rentals, etc.);
- administrative expenses relating to the project (e.g. phone, fax, Internet, postage); and
- in-country travel expenses relating to the project.

Although generally not allowed, the Democracy Commission will cover salaries and honoraria under special circumstances, provided the salaries or honoraria (1) are justified in the context of the goals of grant proposal, (2) the amount of the salary relates directly to the amount of time the recipient works on the project (for example, if the NGO's director intends to devote 30% of her time to the proposed project, then the NGO should request no more than 30% of the director's salary), and (3) the salary or honoraria is reasonable as compared with that received by similarly situated workers. Please note that once a grant has been awarded, the recipient cannot use the funds received for any purpose other than that specified in the approved budget.

The United States and the Uzbek Ministry of Health are Working Together to Eradicate Measles in Tashkent

Continued from front page

Ministry of Health and UNICEF. There are potentially thousands of cases of these serious diseases in Uzbekistan every year. According to the American National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, approximately 1.5% of measles victims die; many more suffer from serious complications, such as ear infections, pneumonia, chronic diarrhea, meningitis / encephalitis and inflammation of the optic nerves.

The mass immunization campaign opened at Tashkent's Polyclinic #14 in the Shaykhontokhur district. U.S. Ambassador Jon Purnell, along with UNICEF Representative Reza Hosaini and Sarat Shoumarov, an Uzbek Government health care official, were the keynote speakers. All emphasized the importance of the cooperative venture.



Thanks to an impressive media campaign, the organizers were able to reach their target within just a few weeks: nearly 700,000 Tashkent residents were vaccinated. Indeed, the Uzbek Ministry of Health declared the campaign a "complete success" and would like to extend it to other regions within the next year or so.

A 24-year-old female resident of Shaykhontokhur, district of Tashkent city receives the first vaccine shot. (U.S. Embassy photo)



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