

American

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New U.S. Cooperation for International Criminal Court	1
North Korea Persists in 59-Year-Old Disinformation.....	1
Burns: U.S. Helped by India's Strength, Progress.....	3
U.S.-Bangladesh Partnership Advances Food Security Initiative	4
Americans Seek Smart Growth, Less Dependence on Cars.....	5

New U.S. Cooperation for International Criminal Court

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — Although the United States is not a party to the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Obama administration is looking for ways to cooperate with the international body to increase its effectiveness while also encouraging increased capacities in local judicial systems to prosecute atrocities and human rights violations.

The State Department's ambassador-at-large for war crimes issues, Stephen Rapp, and legal adviser Harold Hongju Koh are leading the U.S. observer delegation to the May 31-June 11 conference in Kampala, Uganda, reviewing the 1998 Rome Statute that established the ICC. They told reporters June 2 that the United States strongly supports accountability for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Koh said that after years of resistance to the ICC, the U.S. push to cooperate with the court under the Obama administration can be seen as part of President Obama's broader agenda to increase its engagement with international institutions, also exemplified by U.S. participation in the December 2009 climate change conference in Copenhagen and its election to the United Nations Human Rights Council.

Rapp said the United States supports international justice "focused on atrocity crime," but wants to ensure that U.S. and international assistance can also be targeted "to strengthen national systems and to have these cases prosecuted close to the victims and the affected communities."

The ICC is a "court of last resort," he said. It should be used "only when there is no will or capacity" on the local or national level, "and then only [for] the most serious offenders, with the national system being reinforced to handle the rest of the accountability issue."

But in the future, "when it comes to situations where mass atrocities are committed and where there is no possibility of achieving justice at the national level and you need to go to an international level to have accountability, it's the ICC where that will happen," Rapp said. "For that reason we want to look for ways to engage with the ICC to make sure that it's effective."

For example, the ambassador pointed to recent African conflicts such as in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan where "it was far more dangerous to be an innocent woman or child than it was to be a soldier."

Koh said that in its approach to the ICC, the United States has a "long-term commitment to promoting accountability by supporting the responsible development of international mechanisms of criminal justice."

The United States signed the Rome Statute in 2000, but the treaty requires ratification by the U.S. Senate before the country can be bound by the agreement.

Rapp said the United States "takes a long time when it comes to international treaties and conventions, and studies things very carefully" before a president of either party will submit a treaty for Senate approval. "We're nowhere near that point," he added, but the Obama administration is "looking for ways to support this court constructively" as one of the Rome Statute's observer nations.

Rapp said the United States has been participating in the Rwanda Tribunal and the Special Court for Sierra Leone. For the war crimes trials covering killings and abuses that occurred in the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s, Rapp said, the United States has paid one-quarter of the tribunal's costs and provided it with assistance for law enforcement, intelligence sharing and victim assistance.

"Whether we can provide all of that in regard to the ICC is a matter of study under our law, but we're going to work to try to find ways that we can ... support these prosecutions to make sure that the people who are committing these mass atrocities are held to account," Rapp said.

North Korea Persists in 59-Year-Old Disinformation

Washington — It is the disinformation story that refuses to die. North Korea persists, after 59 years of futile efforts, in trying to convince the world that the United States used chemical and biological weapons during the Korean War.

The North Korean claims are false, and documents discovered in the Soviet archives in the 1990s reveal that the Soviets knew the charges were fraudulent as long ago as 1953. But North Korea continues to try to spread its disinformation, and reputable news organizations occasionally err in giving it credence, often citing as a source Japanese professor Masataka Mori, who has made four trips to North Korea. In 2002, 2005, and 2010, reputable news organizations gave credence to North Korean disinformation based largely on Mori's "investigations."

The false North Korean claims, first made in 1951 but promoted most vigorously in 1952, are that the United States used biological warfare, also referred to as

bacteriological warfare, during the Korean War.

SOVIET ARCHIVES REVEAL MORE OF STORY

Documents uncovered in the Soviet archives demonstrate that North Korean, Chinese, and Soviet authorities cooperated to fabricate bogus "evidence" in an attempt to bolster these false charges. The cooperation included infecting North Korean prisoners with naturally occurring plague and cholera, some of which was obtained from China.

The Soviet documents first were reported in the January 8, 1998, issue of Japan's Sankei Shimbun by its Moscow-based reporter Yasuro Naito and have been deemed credible by historians. Milton Leitenberg, a longtime expert on biological weapons, writes that the documents and publications written about them "were made available to the most knowledgeable living Russian specialists on the Soviet-era archival records dealing with the Korean War, and there have been no demurrals to date; nor have any denials been made by Russian or Chinese officials." ["The Korean War Biological Warfare Allegations: Additional Information and Disclosures," Asian Perspective, 24:3 (2000), pp. 159-172.]

For the text of the documents and an analysis of them, see "Deceiving the Deceivers: Moscow, Beijing, Pyongyang, and the Allegations of Bacteriological Weapons Use in Korea," by Kathryn Weathersby, published by the Cold War International History Project.

The Soviet documents are dated 1952 and 1953.

Document number 2, written by a former Soviet adviser to North Korea's Ministry of Public Security to Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers Lavrenty Beria, dated April 13, 1953, states:

"The Koreans stated that the Americans had supposedly repeatedly exposed several areas of their country to plague and cholera. To prove these facts, the North Koreans, with the assistance of our advisers, created false areas of exposure. ... Two false areas of exposure were prepared. In connection with this, the Koreans insisted on obtaining cholera bacteria from corpses which they would get from China."

Document number 4, written by Lieutenant General V.N. Razuvaev, the Soviet ambassador to North Korea, written April 18, 1953, states:

"With the cooperation of Soviet advisers a plan was worked out for action by the [North Korean] Ministry of Health. False plague regions were created, burials of bodies of those who died and their disclosure were organized, measures were taken to receive the plague and

cholera bacillus. The adviser of MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] DPRK [Democratic People's Republic of Korea] proposed to infect with the cholera and plague bacilli persons sentenced to execution ... the [North Korean] minister of health was sent to Beijing for the bacillus. However, they didn't give him anything there, but they gave [it to him] later in Mukden. Moreover, a pure culture of cholera bacillus was received in Pyongyang from bodies of families who died"

The Soviet ambassador also states that he had found no evidence of use of chemical weapons by the United States in Korea:

"Moreover, the Chinese also wrote that the Americans were using poison gas in the course of the war. However, my examinations into this question did not give positive results. For example, on 10 April 1953 the general commanding the Eastern Front reported to [North Korean leader] Kim Il Sung that 10-12 persons were poisoned in a tunnel by an American chemical missile. Our investigation established that these deaths were caused by poisoning from carbonic acid gas [released into] the tunnel, which had no ventilation, after the explosion of an ordinary large caliber shell."

Document number 8 is a Resolution of the Presidium of the USSR Council of Ministers addressed to Chinese leader Mao Zedong, dated May 2, 1953. It states:

"The Soviet Government and the Central Committee of the [Communist Party of the Soviet Union] CPSU were misled. The spread in the press of information about the use by the Americans of bacteriological weapons in Korea was based on false information. The accusations against the Americans were fictitious.

The document notes that, "Soviet workers responsible for participation in the fabrication of the so-called 'proof' of the use of bacteriological weapons will receive severe punishment."

As Leitenberg notes in his Asian Perspective article, despite the Soviet claim that they were shocked to discover the false nature of the biological warfare charges, there is "very substantial reason to suspect that the more likely instigator of the charges was Moscow," which played a dominant role in North Korean affairs at the time, as the documents and other historical knowledge indicate. Nevertheless, the Soviets eventually decided to abandon these false charges. North Korea still persists in attempting to spread them.

NUMEROUS DENIALS

At that time these false claims were first made, the United States, United Nations and officials from other countries

categorically denied them on numerous occasions.

- On March 4, 1952, U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson said, "I would ... like to state categorically and unequivocally that these charges are entirely false; the U.N. forces have not used, and are not using, any sort of bacteriological warfare. ... The inability of the Communists to care for the health of the people under their control seems to have resulted in a serious epidemic of plague. The Communists, not willing to admit and bear the responsibility that is theirs, are trying to pin the blame on some fantastic plot by U.N. forces." [*Department of State Bulletin*, March 17, 1952, pp. 427-428.]

- On May 7, Acheson stated at a press conference, with regard to "false Communist charges that we have waged bacteriological warfare in Korea. ... These charges have been flatly denied by American authorities, by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and by authorities of other nations having forces in Korea. ... Although not permitted to make an on-the-spot investigation, competent scientists in many parts of the world have examined the 'evidence' submitted by the Communists and, as a result, have pronounced the charges an obvious and clumsy hoax." [*Department of State Bulletin*, May 19, 1952, p. 777.]

- General Matthew Ridgway, former commander of the U.N. forces in Korea, stated before the U.S. Congress on May 22, 1952: "I am constrained at this point to refer again to the officially propagated allegations of Communist leaders that the United Nations command in Korea has employed both germ and gas warfare. I wish to reiterate what I have repeatedly stated publicly, that these allegations are false in their entirety; that no element of the United Nations command has employed either germ or gas warfare in any form at any time." [*Department of State Bulletin*, June 9, 1952, p. 926.]

- Ridgway stated in Rome on June 17, 1952: "As former Commander-in-Chief of United Nations forces in Korea, and as God is my witness, I tell you that no element of that Command employed any form of germ warfare at any time, and that all of the so-called 'proof,' including photographs, was manufactured by the Communists themselves." [*Department of State Bulletin*, July 28, 1952, p. 158.]

- On July 1, 1952, Ernest A. Gross, the deputy U.S. representative to the United Nations, said, in a statement to the U.N. Security Council, "I now repeat and reaffirm [Acheson's March 4, 1952] denial. Similar flat denials were made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, by the U.N. Commander-in-Chief, by the Secretary of Defense of the United States, and by numerous other responsible officials of other U.N. members, including those contributing forces to the

repulsion of aggression in Korea. ... Independent scientists, including at least 10 Nobel prize winners, have publicly expressed complete skepticism of the charges." [*Department of State Bulletin*, July 28, 1952, pp. 154, 157.]

During 20 years of "research" on this issue, Mori, the Japanese professor, gives credence only to long discredited North Korean disinformation claims, never the facts that have proved the claims to be wrong.

Burns: U.S. Helped by India's Strength, Progress

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — India's strength and progress on the world stage are in the strategic interest of the United States, which is why the U.S.-India relationship is one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century, Under Secretary of State William Burns says.

"India plays an increasingly significant role in Asia and on a wide range of global challenges," Burns said in a June 1 speech at the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington. "Soon to be the world's most populous country and already the world's largest democracy, India is now the world's second-fastest-growing economy and a central player" in the Group of 20 (G20) advanced economies.

"Never has there been a moment when India and America mattered more to one another," Burns said. "And never has there been a moment when partnership between India and America mattered more to the rest of the globe."

The U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue began meetings June 1 and will continue through June 4 in Washington. It is co-chaired by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Indian External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna at the State Department. The dialogue provides an opportunity for direct talks between U.S. and Indian officials.

The dialogue covers a range of issues, from common security interests and defense cooperation to nuclear nonproliferation, education, climate change and energy security. It is not limited to the two governments; it will include the private sector and academia. The Obama administration has increasingly begun using "strategic dialogues" to build broader relations with key nations.

Obama will attend a reception for the participants in the talks June 3 and have an opportunity to meet with the Indian delegation, Burns said. A third of the U.S. Cabinet has visited India in the first 16 months of the administration, and Obama intends to visit India later this year.

Burns, the under secretary of state for political affairs, is holding talks June 2 with Indian Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao. The four-day ministerial meeting expands June 3 to include Clinton and Krishna. Burns said there are 18 separate dialogues involving Cabinet and agency heads with Indian officials.

Burns acknowledged that the United States seeks stronger relations with Pakistan and other nations across the South Asia region, "but we will not inject ourselves into issues that divide the two governments unless India and Pakistan ask for our help. And we will continue to urge Pakistan to take decisive action against the violent extremists who threaten its own interests as much as they do the security of India and America."

Globalization and sweeping domestic reforms have helped unleash extraordinary growth in China and India, Burns said, which is causing considerable change in the global architecture. China and India are the most populous nations in the world followed by the United States and Indonesia. Asia is seeing significant change because of globalization's impact.

The United States recognizes these new realities and seeks stronger partnerships with emerging powers such as India to adapt the international architecture to support the roles their influence warrants, Burns said, but also to share responsibility for the common challenges facing the 21st century.

U.S.-Bangladesh Partnership Advances Food Security Initiative

Bangladesh plan promotes long-term way to feed nation

By Carrie Loewenthal Massey
Special Correspondent

New York — With a comprehensive plan in place to address food security issues, Bangladesh is making strides in feeding its hungry through sustainable, economically stimulating means. To support these efforts, the United States will expand its agriculture and nutrition teams in Bangladesh and commit \$19 million in 2010 to enhance the country's efforts.

"The government of Bangladesh is fulfilling its commitment to lead the [food security] process. My government will fulfill our commitment to support your progress in any way possible," said Dr. Rajiv Shah, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) administrator, in remarks at the Bangladesh Food Security Investment Forum in Dhaka May 26.

The majority of USAID funds — \$15 million — will help advance the agricultural components of Bangladesh's plan, which include efforts to increase farming efficiency. The remaining \$4 million will assist in nutrition-

intervention programs, such as food for infants and young children. The United States' 2010 support pledge supplements the ongoing five-year, \$200 million food assistance program already in place, Shah said.

In addition to financial backing, Shah said the United States would stand behind Bangladesh's application to the World Bank's Trust Fund and the Asia Development Bank's investment forum scheduled for July. The United States will support Bangladesh's future food security efforts as long as Bangladesh remains committed to its food security plan, Shah said.

"We know success will take many years, and we want to stand together with you for the long haul," he said.

Shah expressed confidence in Bangladesh's existing plan, which he said reflects the government's commitment "to creating a vibrant, market-oriented agricultural economy," and incorporates the involvement of "civil society and private sector partners."

Bangladesh's National Food Policy Plan of Action calls for irrigation projects, the development of microfinance associations, and specific indicators to measure the progress of certain programs. The plan also "recognizes that agricultural issues are intricately related to gender, climate and nutritional issues," Shah said.

Shah encouraged the Bangladeshi government to enhance oversight and quantify more goals, like putting in place a way to measure gains in food storage capacity.

Bangladesh faces the challenge of feeding an ever-increasing population. Today's 160 million residents will increase to 180 million by 2020 and 220 million by 2050, according to numbers cited by Shah. While the country has made agricultural gains, undernutrition remains a pressing issue.

FEED THE FUTURE INITIATIVE

The U.S.-Bangladesh partnership for food security falls within the Obama administration's Feed the Future Initiative, a commitment to support countries in developing their own food security plans. The initiative aims to help feed more than 1 billion people worldwide and sets aside at least \$3.5 billion for food security assistance.

Under the initiative, the United States and other donor countries pledge to support countries that create their own food security plans; fund comprehensive efforts that combine elements such as research, marketing and food access for vulnerable populations; prioritize programs for women; facilitate effective partnerships; and focus on results.

In Bangladesh, USAID's work will follow the Feed the Future Initiative's protocols.

Programs include boosting private sector investment, "especially in livestock, fisheries and high-value agricultural crops," Shah said. USAID's Development Credit Authority will expand Bangladesh's access to bank lending, while grants will assist small and medium-sized Bangladeshi firms in obtaining financing, according to Shah.

USAID will also promote the hiring of women for agricultural jobs and advocate for increased investment in fellowship programs to develop female agricultural leaders, Shah said.

"In recent years we have learned that women are the backbone of our partners' agricultural systems. Women have a central role in farming. And when women control gains in income, they are more likely to spend their gains on family needs," he said.

Other interventions include introducing nutritional supplements to help treat malnourishment, efforts to improve diet quality and maternal health, and support for research, science and technology to enhance agricultural practices.

USAID IN BANGLADESH

Support for Bangladesh's current food security plan builds on a long history of USAID involvement.

In the 1960s, USAID helped start the Bangladesh Agricultural University. Additionally, it assisted in the development of the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute and the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute. New fertilizer technologies and stress-tolerant cereals furnished by USAID have helped Bangladeshi farmers increase crop output over the years.

Since 2005, USAID's food assistance program in Bangladesh has "improved the health, economic well-being and, ultimately, food security of over 4.6 million people," Shah said. Successes have included raising program beneficiaries' monthly income by 128 percent and reducing by 28 percent stunted growth, a result of undernourishment, among children under age 5.

USAID wants to use these accomplishments as steppingstones to future progress in improving food security in Bangladesh and around the world.

"The fight to end hunger starts here in Bangladesh," Shah said. "Now we must show the world we can succeed. By working together, I am confident we will."

Americans Seek Smart Growth, Less Dependence on Cars

People are moving to walkable neighborhoods with public transportation

By Karin Rives
Staff Writer

Washington — Something unusual is happening in the United States, a country where people love their cars and spacious suburban homes.

A growing number of Americans are rediscovering their cities and moving closer to places where they work and play. This coincides with a push to develop so-called "sustainable" neighborhoods and communities that cater to those who want public transportation, schools, parks and stores within walking distance.

Two-thirds of Americans today live in counties that make up the nation's largest metropolitan areas, and those urban-centered regions continue to grow. That's opening up new opportunities for policies that promote public transportation and more environmentally friendly developments.

A recent report by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) shows that housing construction in urban neighborhoods has doubled in 15 large metropolitan regions in the last five years, despite a prolonged downturn in the country's real estate market. At the same time, there's been a push to develop dense suburban communities that mix housing with commercial districts and encourage residents and workers to use public transit.

In Denver, a city of 2.5 million people in the state of Colorado, the city is building 100 miles of new rails and bus lanes that will link 32 suburbs surrounding the city. And outside Washington, a sprawling business center called Tysons Corner is being redeveloped into a city of high-rise buildings, affordable housing and energy-efficient sidewalk cafes and businesses. A new Metrorail line will tie the area together and provide the first-ever train service to Dulles International, the third-largest airport on the East Coast of the United States.

New federal initiatives, including billions of dollars earmarked for public transportation under the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, are keeping the momentum going at a time when many municipalities can't afford large capital projects.

MORE PEOPLE USING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The new urban and suburban lifestyles have helped boost public transportation and reversed a 40-year trend of declining transit ridership. While the vast majority of

Americans still travel alone in their car to work — 76 percent — the share of commuters who take a bus or train has been growing in recent years, research shows (PDF, 1.6MB). As more people move within reach of urban public transportation routes, they can choose to leave the car at home — or to own no car at all.

Mike Hess, 34, who manages operations at a Washington nonprofit organization, said he and his editor wife, Anji, chose to buy a home in 2010 in a new energy-efficient neighborhood in the city because of its convenient location, green standards and nearby amenities. They can walk to three train stations and several bus routes and usually only take the car if they leave town on a weekend or need to buy lots of groceries.

“We’re very excited that our house is LEED-certified and we hope to see savings in our utility bills because of this,” Hess added, referring to the international energy-efficiency standard developed by the U.S. Green Building Council. “One day we also hope to put some solar panels on the roof, using a grid-tie system, so we can produce our own electricity and rely even less on oil- and coal-produced energy.”

The term “sustainable community” grew out of a 1987 United Nations report that defined sustainable development as “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

Opinions differ over what such communities should look like, but the movement to design more self-contained neighborhoods that don’t require constant driving continues in the United States. It marks a gradual departure from the way millions of Americans have lived since the 1950s, when middle-class families fled the city and many services and stores moved out to shopping malls along expressways.

DENSER, SMARTER GROWTH MEANS LESS EMISSIONS

If the trend toward denser city and suburban living continues, this shift in lifestyle could directly affect emissions of greenhouse gases and other environmental pollution in the United States. Today, passenger cars and light trucks account for nearly 60 percent of greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector, which, in turn, produces 27 percent of total emissions.

More compact developments in areas with access to public transportation can reduce traffic by up to 40 percent, one often-cited 2007 study (PDF, 5MB) showed. If the American appetite for such “smart growth” neighborhoods continues, there could be a 7 percent to 10 percent drop in transportation-related emissions, the

study found.

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