



Public Diplomacy UPDATE

February 2007

FROM THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Business Leaders Announce Grants and Priorities for Lebanon Partnership Effort

THE UNITED STATES PLANS TO MORE THAN TRIPLE ITS AID TO Lebanon to address reconstruction needs and finance long-term redevelopment. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced the proposed \$770 million in additional U.S. assistance, bringing the total U.S. reconstruction commitment to \$1 billion, in Paris at the International Donors Conference on Lebanon on January 25, 2007.



Business leaders Craig Barrett of Intel Corporation, John Chambers of Cisco Systems, Yousif Ghafari of GHAFARI, Inc. and Jay Collins of Citigroup

met with Secretary Rice and Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora before the summit and announced several new initiatives that the private sector is taking to assist the people of Lebanon. Along with Steve Ballmer of Microsoft and Dr. Ray Irani of Occidental Petroleum Corporation, these business leaders are focusing on five key areas critical to creating sustainable economic growth in the region: crisis relief and response; information technology infrastructure; workforce training; job creation; and connected government. In addition, they announced grants to Habitat for Humanity, The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), American Near East Refugee Aid (UNERA), and Mercy Corps—that will help address the immediate needs of adequate housing, education and worker training.

A key part of this public-private initiative is the agreement between the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) and Citigroup.

According to Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Dina H. Powell, Citicorp has pledged \$120 million to underwrite mortgage and commercial lending by three Lebanese banks. These loans will support Lebanese business and homeowners, encouraging additional private investment and contributing to economic growth.

In 2006, President Bush sent Barrett, Chambers, Ghafari, and Irani on a Presidential delegation to Lebanon led by Powell to determine ways that Americans could assist the Lebanese people.

“Through this partnership, we have a chance to make a difference in a country and perhaps even a region,” said John Chambers, Chairman and CEO of Cisco Systems. ■

For more information, please visit www.lebanonpartnership.org



Under Secretary of State Karen P. Hughes and American Public Diplomacy Envoy Michelle Kwan Visit China



UNDER SECRETARY of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Karen P. Hughes and the first American Public Diplomacy Envoy Michelle Kwan

traveled to Beijing, Guangzhou, and Hong Kong in January to help promote cross-cultural dialogue and understanding between the United States and China. Kwan, a five-time world champion and two-time Olympic medalist, accompanied Under Secretary Hughes to meet with students, women's groups, business and community representatives, government officials, and the media.

While in Beijing and Guangzhou, Hughes and Kwan talked with a non-governmental organization dedicated to empowering women and protecting their rights, and visited several schools, including a secondary school dedicated to teaching English literacy and computer skills to physically disabled individuals. The school in Guangzhou is the first of its kind and boasts a 96% employment rate for its graduates, many of whom find jobs with American firms in China.

In Hong Kong, Hughes and Kwan talked with a group of 24 representatives from



the Hong Kong Girl Guides Association, headed by HKGGA President Mrs. Selina Tsang, during a brownbag luncheon event. During their discussion, HKGGA youth representatives aged 14 to 20 exchanged ideas and reflections on leadership, setting goals, shared cultural values, family values, and different international experiences. Hughes told the students, “It is very inspiring listening to you all talk about what you've learned through your experiences, the insight and self-confidence you've gained by meeting people from other countries.”

Building on her experiences as a figure skater, Kwan sought to increase understanding of America by sharing her

Continued on page 4...

Executives Develop Eleven Ways that Business can Help with US Public Diplomacy



THE PRIVATE SECTOR SUMMIT ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY WAS THE FIRST event of its kind that brought together over 160 top communications executives with State Department leadership and other business and academic associations to identify clear action steps that the private sector can take to support and improve U.S. public diplomacy. The Summit was cosponsored by the State Department and the PR Coalition on January 9-10, 2007.

The PR Coalition approached the State Department about co-hosting the summit because they recognized that public diplomacy is an issue that impacts all Americans and that getting the private sector involved can make a huge difference in how the world views the United States. As Secretary of State

Condoleezza Rice emphasized at the Summit, “the solutions to the challenges of the 21st century are not going to be met by government alone. They come from all sectors of American society working together, and that means a close and vital partnership between government and the private sector.”

At the Summit, Secretary Rice announced the establishment of the Benjamin Franklin Award for Public Diplomacy to recognize the broad spectrum of businesses, foundations, NGOs and private citizens for their outstanding contributions to America’s public diplomacy efforts.

The Summit and the new Secretary’s Award for Public Diplomacy display Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Karen Hughes’ and Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Dina Powell’s vision to create a new paradigm for public diplomacy in the 21st century which recognizes that public diplomacy is not the work of government alone. The Summit and the new public diplomacy award build upon increased efforts to engage the private sector and private citizens over the last 18 months. At the conclusion of the Summit, participants identified eleven potential models for action that the U.S. business community can take to showcase America’s generosity and values. ■



Worldwide Public Affairs Officer Conference “Public Diplomacy: A New Architecture”

The U.S. Department of State’s community of senior Public Affairs Officers from missions around the world joined Under Secretary of State Karen Hughes in Washington, D.C., January 8-10, 2007. The event brought together Public Diplomacy officers from 170 US Embassies and Consulates to share best practices for outreach to foreign publics, and to discuss strategies for communicating America’s foreign policies.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice opened the conference by highlighting her goals for transformational diplomacy – of which public diplomacy is a key component – and policy priorities for the coming months. Public diplomacy officers focused on getting out America’s message in today’s 24/7 media-saturated environment; ways to effectively harness new technologies; and how to best reach out to young people around the world. Colleagues from the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Department of Defense, and the Broadcasting Board of Governors joined in discussions on how to encourage greater cooperation among agencies, between the public and private sectors, and between Washington and the field.

Other distinguished speakers included Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns, who discussed the centrality of public diplomacy in all the Department’s efforts. Political and communications advisors James Carville and Mary Matalin were a big hit with their humorous and insightful discussion on how to reach audiences with a convincing message. Rear Admiral Thorp and White House Press Secretary Tony Snow talked to the Public Affairs Officers about the importance of communicating America’s message of hope and opportunity in a coordinated fashion around the world.

The insightful discussions and feedback will help guide America’s public diplomacy work around the world over the next year. ■

STORIES FROM THE FIELD



Ambassador Aguirre Participates in In-Orbit, 'Hair-Raising' DVC with Spanish-born American Astronaut

In collaboration with NASA, the U.S. Embassy in Madrid hosted an in-orbit news conference with American Astronauts Michael Lopez-Alegria and Sunita Williams aboard the International Space Station (ISS). U.S. Ambassador Eduardo Aguirre launched the event with a greeting to the astronauts, and then the audience of Spanish media, European Space Agency representatives and students interviewed the astronauts. Astronaut Lopez-Alegria, an American who was born in Spain, answered questions in Spanish describing a “regular” day in space and the mission’s scientific experiments. The program stressed the international cooperation of the ISS, thrilled the audience and was quite literally hair-raising. Covered by wire, radio and TV

pools, the program was featured on that evening’s Spanish TV news on all major national and regional channels and on six national radio networks, as well as print media.

Partnership Nets Basketballs for Algerian Youth

The benefits of youth basketball—teamwork, communication, sportsmanship and leadership—are skills that will help the participants in a sports program both on and off the court as they take on larger roles within Algerian society.

Thomas Daughton, Chargé d’Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Algiers, helped distribute 1,000 Spalding basketballs to Algerian youth in Algiers. Daughton joined the President of the Algerian Basketball Federation in distributing the balls to representatives of 26 wilaya (province) youth basketball leagues, local clubs, and the national boys and girls junior and cadet teams. The boys and girls Algerian cadet teams participated in the presentation event and played scrimmages with the new basketballs. Afterwards, the Chargé and the federation president joined in on a friendly 3-point shooting contest.

The public-private partnership with Spalding continues the Sports Diplomacy outreach to Algerian youth initiated in 2005 with the support of the NBA and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the Department of State. NBA and WNBA stars conducted basketball skills clinics for Algerian youth in Algiers and neighboring Tipaza in November 2005. This February a sports exchange led by a consortium of Big 10 conference schools in Indiana will conduct basketball skills clinics for Algerian youth players, offer youth coaching clinics and lead “time out for unity” sessions that will promote tolerance, leadership, and sportsmanship.



U.S. Ambassador to the UN Food and Agriculture Agencies Highlights U.S. Contributions to the UN while Touring Mali

The United States has been the largest financial contributor to the United Nations every year since its creation in 1945 and in 2006 contributed 44% of the budget of the UN World Food Programme. Ambassador Gaddi Vasquez, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Agencies in Rome, represented America’s support for humanitarian programs and multi-lateral engagement on a recent tour of Mali. His trip provided five journalists traveling with him from Kuwait, Egypt, Morocco and Mauritania the opportunity to visit development projects that are partially funded with U.S. contributions to the UN and highlighted continued U.S. commitment and support

for UN development and humanitarian programs. The U.S. Mission to the UN in Rome, working with the Bureau of International Organizations Affairs and the Bureau of International Information Programs at the State Department, was able to update the traditional media reporting tour format with web-based blog and chat tools. This allowed Amb. Vasquez to provide regular trip reports, upload photos and respond to questions from chat participants from around the world throughout the trip. The weeklong program included visits to several development projects, including an HIV/AIDS clinic, a water management project, and a field school from which local farmers run micro-credit projects. The visit also highlighted the United States’ support for cultural heritage programs by a visit to the library of Islamic Manuscripts in Timbuktu which was restored with funds from the Ambassador’s Fund for Cultural Heritage, a program administered by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the State Department. The journalists on the trip called for their own countries to re-examine their assistance programs and contributions to the world community. ■

Continued – Under Secretary of State Karen P. Hughes and American Public Diplomacy Envoy Michelle Kwan Visit China

story and life experiences. Kwan will continue to reach out to international young people by visiting schools and clubs. By speaking about shared values, she engaged a young audience in a dialogue on social and educational issues. “We share common values, common dreams, whether you’re American or Chinese,” she told students in China, encouraging Chinese students to share their culture with tourists and athletes during the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

Under Secretary of State Karen P. Hughes Visits the Philippines

Following her visit to Beijing, Guangzhou, and Hong Kong with Kwan, Hughes continued on to the Philippines where she met with President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and conveyed President George W. Bush’s congratulations to the Armed Forces of the Philippines for their recent successes in the war on terror. “They are on the front lines and they are sacrificing to protect not only the citizens of the Philippines, but also Americans and people around the world who are interested in peace and stability and confronting the international threat of terrorism.”

While in the Philippines, Hughes joined U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney on a visit to Jolo Island in the southern region of Mindanao to learn about U.S. Government-sponsored development projects, including a farm-to-market road that will allow residents to transport more agricultural produce to market and improve access to schools and hospitals; a USAID Computer Literacy and Internet Connectivity Project that provides students in otherwise remote locations with computers and internet access; and a new Home Economic Center jointly funded by USAID and a local school’s Parent Teacher Association. ■



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Under Secretary of State Karen Hughes tours the Rapid Response Unit with Fox News.

Digital Outreach Team Created to Counter Misinformation about the U.S. in the Blogosphere

The Bureau of International Information Programs’ Digital Outreach Team, formed last year to engage Arabic language blogs and forums, began in late November to interact with those online forums. The team members clearly identify themselves as employees of the State Department and share information on U.S. policies and address misinformation about the United States. The tenor of views on these blogs and forums is decidedly unfavorable to the United States and often exhibits a virulent strain of elaborate conspiracy theories. Almost all participants on these internet sites have been uniformly receptive to having a conversation with the Digital Outreach Team. On average, a few hundred to several thousand people see the team’s postings on each site. Through the Digital Outreach Team, the State Department is actively and directly present in cyberspace. ■

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

The Office of Private Sector Outreach for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs was established in 2005 by Under Secretary of State Karen Hughes and Deputy Under Secretary of State Dina Powell to engage U.S. businesses, universities, foundations, and private citizens in the critical work of public diplomacy. The global presence, creativity and efficiency of private sector organizations make them invaluable resources and natural allies in our efforts to share America’s story and ideals with people around the world.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Develop a mentoring partnership with emerging business, academic and civic leaders from around the globe.
- Sponsor an academic, cultural, or professional exchange: The State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs manages the Fulbright and other scholarship programs, cultural exchanges, sports programs, youth study exchanges, English language initiatives, and several programs for professionals in various fields.
- Speak with international audiences: The U.S. Speaker program, administered by the Bureau of International Information Programs, recruits and sponsors American experts to travel to one or more foreign countries to engage international audiences through lectures, workshops, roundtables and seminars. Speakers can also participate in digital videoconferences or webchats.
- Share your corporation’s best practices and success stories: We are interested to hear about, learn from, and help expand the good work being done by American companies abroad.
- Encourage employees and their families to host international youth exchange students.

To learn more about the Office of Private Sector Outreach, or to discuss potential partnerships, email us at diplomacyupdate@state.gov.