



# United States Mission in Turkmenistan

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## Humanitarian Aid for Afghan Children Arrives in Ashgabat

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U.S. President George W. Bush sent off the first of two special American Red Cross humanitarian aid flights for the Muslim holy month of Ramadan on Saturday, December 8 in Maryland. The First C-17 U.S. military cargo plane arrived in Ashgabat December 10, and the second arrived December 11, 2001, carrying 1,658 winter jackets, 1,500 winterized family-sized tents, and 10,000 gift parcels (including hats, socks, school supplies, and candies) for children of Northern Afghanistan. This aid was funded by donations from American

children after President Bush announced the formation of "America's "Fund for Afghan Children" in early October. The American Red Cross, a U.S. non-profit organization, has transformed these donations into desperately needed relief supplies for the people of Afghanistan.

U.S. Ambassador Laura E. Kennedy was joined by Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers Berdimurat Rejepov, National Security Advisor Mukhmamet Nazarov, and Deputy Foreign Minister Batyr Hudaygulyev to welcome the first plane at its arrival in Ashgabat. American Red Cross Regional Director Francois de la Roche, American Red Cross Local Delegate Sheila Thornton, and Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan Chairwoman Zuhra Ellieva, as well as representatives of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), who will transport the aid overland to Afghanistan, were also present.



Boxes with American humanitarian aid at the Ashgabat airport being loaded into IOM trucks bound for Afghanistan

President Bush announced on December 8 that the fund had raised to date over \$1.5 million for Afghan children. "This first shipment represents the good will of the American children," he said. "It also represents our hope and desires that the plight of the Afghan children improves, that life can be better for all children in the world." *Continued on page 2.*

## U.S. and Turkmenistan Officials Joined World-Wide Commemoration of Victims of September 11 Terrorist Attacks

Ambassador Laura Kennedy and Chairman of Turkmenistan's Mejlis Rejepbay Arazov led a December 11 ceremony outside the U.S. Embassy chancery to commemorate victims of the September 11 terrorist attacks. The ceremony commenced at 6:46 p.m., local time of the first attack. The Marine Security Detachment lowered the American flag for a moment of silence, followed by the playing of both national anthems and brief remarks. President Bush led a similar ceremony at the same time in the White House, while Embassies and Governments in more than 80 other countries also simultaneously marked the anniversary.

*President George W. Bush and his wife Laura during the playing of the U.S. National Anthem in a ceremony "The World Will Always Remember September 11th" in the White House, December 11, 2001. Photo by Win McNamee/Reuters*

Also in attendance were Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers Berdimurat Rejepov, President's National Security Advisor Mukhamet Nazarov, *Continued on Page 2*

## Humanitarian Aid Arrives for Afghanistan (continued from page 1)



*Afghan girl receiving her portion of aid during American Red Cross aid distribution in Northern Afghanistan*

The United States Government was the leading provider of humanitarian assistance prior to September 11, and remains so today. From October to December 2001, the U.S. donated over \$246 million of assistance to Afghanistan. The U.S. supplies more than 80 percent of all food aid for Afghanistan through the World Food Program. It is deeply committed to the health and welfare of the Afghan people.



*Afghan children gathered together after receiving aid*

For more information on the America's Fund for Afghan Children coordinated by the American Red Cross, visit <http://kidsfund.redcross.org>

## Commemoration of September 11 Terrorist Attacks (continued from page 1)

President's National Security Advisor Mukhamet Nazarov, Minister of Foreign Affairs Rashid Meredov and members of the Religious Council, as well as heads of almost every diplomatic mission in country and a number of American citizens.

In her remarks, Ambassador Kennedy stated: "At this very moment, President Bush is leading a memorial in the United States while Embassies and governments around the world are marking this day as well. This is our way of responding to those who last month told us that 'America should forget about September 11 and move on.' This is our way of saying that we will never forget, and we will move on only to bring those guilty to justice." Chairman Arazov denounced the terrorist attacks, urged success in the war against terrorism, and praised the joint cooperation of America and Turkmenistan in providing humanitarian aid to the Afghan people.

## CHAP Marks Growing Success in Turkmenistan

In the year 2001, Counterpart and Community Humanitarian Assistance Program (CHAP) delivered 32 shipments of humanitarian assistance, valued at close to \$3.5 million, for the people of Turkmenistan. This aid consisted of medical equipment and supplies for the Ministry of Healthcare and Medical Industry of Turkmenistan. It also included clothing, footwear, food packages, bedding, wheelchairs and emergency items for the National Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan, the Ministry of Social Welfare of Turkmenistan, and local NGOs.

CHAP will continue this program in 2002. Most of CHAP's assistance will continue to be distributed in the velayats outside of Ashgabat. CHAP focuses on serving Turkmenistan's most needy groups: children, orphans, the elderly, disabled people, single mothers, large families, and victims of natural disasters.

In the end of 2001, CHAP began two new projects. Under the first project, It is distributing clothes and footwear through Turkmen Blind and Deaf Society. The second project implemented with the Counterpart Consortium implies distribution of medical equipment, supplies and outfitting to recipients in Lebap velayat through Gurbansoltan-Eje Women's Union' Lebap velayat division.



*Chary Achilov received his wheelchair*

CHAP is a U.S. State Department-funded activity that has been operational in Turkmenistan since 1998. CHAP provides a full range of needs assessment, transport logistics, distribution and monitoring services. To ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches the neediest and most vulnerable populations of Turkmenistan, CHAP works with the Ministry of Health & Medical Industry, the Ministry of Social Welfare, and the Ministry of Education, the National Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan and the variety of NGOs, including the Center of Industrial Unions and Organizations of the Disabled of Turkmenistan, Association of the Disabled of Turkmenistan, "Annageldy", "Nargiz" of Women's Union, "Charity Without Borders", National Paralympics Committee, "Umyt" Social Adaptation Center, Ashgabat City Labour Union of the Disabled, Turkmen Blind and Deaf Society and the Gurbansoltan-Eje Women's Union of Turkmenistan, Lebab Division.

### **Ambassador Kennedy Presents Collection of American Literature to Azadi Institute of World Languages**

On December 13, 2001, Ambassador Laura E. Kennedy visited the Azadi National World Languages Institute of Turkmenistan and presented to the Institute's students the Collection of American Literature. In her remarks, Ambassador Kennedy praised the students for their efforts in studying English language and noted that the full collection of books by American writers will help to improve their language skills.



*Ambassador Kennedy signing the guest-book in the Institute's British Center*

Rector of the Institute Roza Nepesova welcomed Ambassador Kennedy and told her about the activities of the Institute in improving English language teaching.

Ambassador Kennedy was pleased to find a number of alumni of the U.S. Government's educational exchange programs among faculty members and students of the Institute.

### **Ambassador Laura E. Kennedy Addresses Turkmenistan on the Occasion of Neutrality Day**

U.S. Ambassador Laura E. Kennedy gave a televised address on the occasion of Turkmenistan's Neutrality Day on December 7, 2001. The following is the text of this address:

Congratulations to President Niyazov and the people of Turkmenistan on Neutrality Day.

Turkmenistan deserves recognition for the responsible role it is playing internationally, and regionally. My government is pleased to cooperate with Turkmenistan on the provision of humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan. This has been a vitally important partnership involving many countries and private relief organizations all working together under the guidance of the United Nations. In the longer term, we hope to continue such cooperation with Turkmenistan as the international community focuses on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan to repair the ravages of over two decades of civil war and to link it with its neighbors in Central Asia.

Turkmenistan's policy of neutrality has been accompanied by a record of peaceful relations with its neighbors. We hope that Turkmenistan will build on this record by increasing its cooperation in the international arena and especially with its regional partners. In our increasingly global economy and society, such engagement is ever more necessary. We look forward to cooperating more closely with Turkmenistan under the umbrella of such valuable international organizations as the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and NATO's Partnership for Peace.

Such increasing interaction is of course compatible with neutrality. Positive neutrality does not mean isolation from the rest of the world nor avoiding the necessity of making choices. Notably, in the war against terrorism, there is no neutrality. The civilized community of nations to which Turkmenistan belongs, recognizes that there is no middle ground. Any form of support for terrorism puts the provider of that support squarely in the camp of the terrorists. Similarly, a neutral foreign policy does not mean that one should avoid speaking out against any form of abuse, whether it involves human rights or any other global issue.

I appreciate this opportunity to speak to the people of Turkmenistan on Neutrality Day. I would also like to use this address to convey the best wishes of Americans to the people of Turkmenistan. Many millions of our Muslim citizens join you in celebrating the holy month of Ramadan, just as Christian communities in both countries prepare to celebrate Christmas.

May the blessings of God be on all our peoples.

Thank you.



### **U.S. Mission Specialists Introduce Internet Skills to Executives, Professors and Students**

In December 2001, U.S. Mission specialists conducted workshops on basic Internet skills. U.S. Embassy's Information Resource Center Specialist Azat Myradov conducted a series of presentations on the Internet for staff and administrators of libraries in Ashgabat, the Humanitarian Association "Turkmens of the World", and students at the Youth Internet Center. The presentations covered the history of the Internet, the way it works today, and how it is used. In addition, specialists from IREX provided training for professors from higher educational institutions as part of Resource Network for Economics and Business Education (RNEBE).

The participants in Mr. Myradov's presentations were introduced to the World Wide Web, electronic mail, and other services available on the Internet. They also learned about the Internet resources available in their field of work and activity. They obtained such basic Internet skills as opening an Internet e-mail account for their organizations, and signing up for list-serves for exchange of information with similar organizations abroad and in Turkmenistan. During these presentations, the participants received a list of useful websites and hints on searching the Internet for resources. The Embassy plans to continue to conduct such presentations in future with other organizations. For more information, please contact Azat Myradov at 35-00-45.

In the RNEBE trainings, thirty-four professors in business and economics related areas from Turkmen higher education institutions and various business-training centers gained skills in methodologies of professional search of education information using the Internet search engines.

The professors were provided with web-addresses of the most effective search systems dealing with educational databases. The professors also learned how to register on the RNEBE web-site and find special electronic resources for members of RNEBE online.

RNEBE is a USAID sponsored project being implemented by ACCELS. The event was initiated by joint efforts of RNEBE and IREX; the latter provided the classroom and the qualified trainer.

### **Grantees of U.S. Embassy's Small Grants Program Presented Their Projects**

The consumers' rights group "My Right" and the ecology group "Young Geologists" made presentations of their projects conducted in the framework of the U.S. Embassy's Local Initiative Grants Program in December.

The "Young Geologists" group presented its project, which includes website development and issuing a newsletter in which the group gives ecological information from various international ecological sources.

At its presentation, the group "My Right" explained to the audience Turkmen law defending rights of a consumers and how to determine quality of goods and return goods of low quality.

The Embassy's Local Initiatives Grants Program has been active in Turkmenistan for nearly two years. It gives small grants to various NGOs and initiative groups to carry out community projects in fields such as health, business, education and women in development.

If you have comments or suggestions,  
for the newsletter,  
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