

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

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<b>Presidential Proclamation for World Freedom Day, 2008.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Obama Foreign Policy May Be Rooted in Multilateral Diplomacy .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Secretary Rice Says Israeli-Palestinian Peace Is in U.S. Interests.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>BURMA: Public Statement on the Prosecution of Four Defense Lawyers.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>U.S. Food Products Company Quick to Help Communities in China .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Veterans Day Honors Those Who Served in U.S. Military .....</b>	<b>4</b>

## Presidential Proclamation for World Freedom Day, 2008

*President Bush renews commitment to help those who suffer under oppression*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary  
November 7, 2008

WORLD FREEDOM DAY, 2008

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### A PROCLAMATION

On World Freedom Day, we celebrate the anniversary of the historic fall of the Berlin Wall and honor the brave citizens of East and West Germany who helped secure freedom and liberty for future generations.

The Berlin Wall stood as a barrier that isolated the victims of imperial Communism and totalitarian power from the promise of the free world. Standing in the presence of the wall, with an unshakable belief in the power of liberty, President Ronald Reagan issued a resounding challenge on behalf of the free and the unfree alike: "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." On November 9, 1989, the citizens of East Germany finally triumphed over their Communist oppressors, and the Berlin Wall came tumbling down. As the hope of freedom spread, the Soviet empire collapsed, the Iron Curtain was lifted, and Eastern and Central Europe were liberated from decades of cruel tyranny.

The Cold War demonstrated once again that freedom is precious and cannot be taken for granted, that evil is real and must be confronted, and that if they are allowed to do so, harsh rulers will subjugate others in the name of hateful ideologies. History has also proven that the transformative power of liberty overcomes this oppression. Today, many former Communist countries are using their sovereignty to aid the rise of other young democracies and to shine the light of conscience on human rights abuses. Our belief in the universality of freedom is challenged time and again, but we continue to go forward with confidence that free nations will always prevail over the enemies of liberty, peace, and justice.

On World Freedom Day, we are reminded that injustice overseas can threaten our way of life at home, and we renew our commitment to helping those who suffer under the weight of oppression.

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 November 9, 2008, as World Freedom Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities, reaffirming our dedication to freedom and democracy.

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

GEORGE W. BUSH

## Obama Foreign Policy May Be Rooted in Multilateral Diplomacy

*Change in policy will not be immediate, political analyst says*

By Michelle Austein  
Staff Writer

Washington – When Barack Obama takes the oath of office January 20, 2009, a new American approach to foreign policy may be in the works. But change will not come immediately, a political analyst says.

For the Obama administration, there is "potential for making real progress" in foreign policy, Stephen Flanagan of the Center for Strategic and International Studies told journalists at the State Department's Foreign Press Center November 4.

Although "the expectations are enormously high," Flanagan said, there is a "limit to how quickly things can change, given, already, that the new president is saddled immediately with whatever the state of the global financial crisis is, still two major military operations overseas, [and] a great deal of other priorities at home that are demanding attention."

Throughout Obama's campaign, the Illinois senator and his staff stressed his willingness to work with and strengthen relationships with U.S. allies. His campaign repeatedly said Obama would implement a multilateral approach to foreign policy that would restore America's image to the world.

"There will be a different way of dealing with the international community," Flanagan said, adding that there likely will be "a greater commitment to multilateralism."

It is an approach that many in the world may welcome, as Flanagan cited several international and domestic polls

indicating "a profound sense in the United States right now that our foreign policy is not quite on the right direction."

Many will be watching around the world to see how the 44th president will work with U.S. allies, interact with international institutions and confront transnational challenges.

#### OBAMA'S FOREIGN POLICY GOALS

With two ongoing wars, most Americans expect the security situation in Iraq and Afghanistan to be among Obama's top foreign policy concerns, as well as the financial crisis, which is being felt on a global scale.

Even before assuming office, Obama will be reviewing new proposals on how to manage the war in Iraq and looking toward a "gradual turnover of further responsibility to the Iraqi people," Flanagan said.

Obama will also be examining the struggle against violent extremism and terrorism on a more global scale, Flanagan said. The focus of this fight likely will be in Afghanistan and Pakistan, he added. The next president may decide that deterring terrorism may need a more multilateral approach, Flanagan said.

Obama may take a multilateral approach to climate change, a topic in which the European community is particularly interested, he said. The next president likely will be looking to revitalize partnerships with European allies, Flanagan said. Obama will also be looking for a "way to work [with] Russia with areas of common interest," he said.

The Obama administration will inherit many strong relationships with Asian countries, Flanagan said. Obama is likely to pay particular attention to China and India, two major powers that will "play an enormous role in the international economic system," he said.

The Obama administration is likely to recognize "the growing importance of Africa," Flanagan said. Flanagan said he expects the United States to play an important role in advancing regional cooperation on both economic and political activities on the continent.

Throughout his campaign, Obama said he would review U.S. trade agreements with Central and South American nations. "Obama has been seen as more critical of some of the existing free trade agreements," Flanagan said. "I don't think it's an anti-free trade kind of posture, but I do think it's wanting to look more specifically at the way some of those deals were put together."

Like any president, Obama at some point will face unprecedented challenges. "It's almost inevitable that there will be some kind of international event" like a terrorist attack or major problem related to the financial crisis, Flanagan said. "There will be some event that will, in all likelihood, test the next president."

Many presidents have faced major international crises early in their terms. Just nine months into his presidency, President Bush led the country through the September 11, 2001, attacks.

This is why presidents begin setting up their foreign policy teams before they take office. In the coming weeks, President-elect Obama will nominate people to serve in important foreign policy posts, including secretary of state, secretary of defense and national security advisor. These people could play an influential role in shaping the new administration's foreign policy goals.

#### Secretary Rice Says Israeli-Palestinian Peace Is in U.S. Interests

*United States will continue to support peace efforts*

By Merle D. Kellerhals Jr.

Staff Writer

Washington — The Palestinians and Israelis have demonstrated a brave commitment to substantive talks in an effort to reach a comprehensive peace settlement, says Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Rice said at a news briefing that she wanted to assure the Israelis and Palestinians "the United States will continue to support and facilitate the efforts of the parties to reach a lasting peace. The United States has a national interest in sustaining that progress."

Rice said the current negotiations should not be viewed as a failure even though a peace accord is unlikely to be reached by the end of this year as many had hoped. "While we may not yet be at the finish line, I am quite certain that if Palestinians and Israelis stay on the Annapolis course, they are going to cross that finish line and can do so relatively soon," she said at a November 7 press conference with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah on the West Bank.

President Bush relaunched peace talks between the Israelis and Palestinians with a November 2007 conference at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, in hopes of reaching an accord that ends the long-running Arab-Israeli conflict and establishing a Palestinian state living in peace

and security alongside Israel.

Bush is the first American president to call for Palestinian statehood and to get the talks going again after nearly a decade, Rice said. The secretary is on a four-day diplomatic mission to Israel, the Palestinian Territories, Jordan and Egypt.

Rice travels to Jordan before concluding her mission at the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh for a meeting with the "Quartet" for Middle East peace mediators — the European Union, Russia, the United Nations and the United States. The purpose of the Quartet meeting is to secure international support for sustaining the peace process until a two-state solution can be reached, Rice said.

Rice told journalists that a diplomatic mission of this magnitude is built "brick-by-brick, day-by-day."

"It is a process in which human dignity can overcome old wounds and old differences," she said. "President Bush's vision of a Palestinian state at peace with Israel doesn't come and will not come in a single, dramatic moment, but as the result of methodical, sustained, sincere initiative to conclude a final agreement that benefits both Israelis and Palestinians."

Core issues to be resolved in the peace talks include the final borders of a Palestinian state, the future of Jerusalem, Israeli settlements, Palestinian refugees, water rights, and future relations between the two states.

This diplomatic trip across the region is Rice's eighth since the Annapolis Conference in November a year ago.

### **BURMA: Public Statement on the Prosecution of Four Defense Lawyers**

Press Statement  
Robert Wood, Deputy Spokesman  
Washington, DC  
November 7, 2008

The United States condemns the Burmese regime's recent prosecution of four defense lawyers in connection with their legal representation of political detainees. In the past two weeks, defense attorney Nyi Nyi Htwe was sentenced to six months' imprisonment and three others, U Aung Thein, U Khin Maung Shein, and Saw Kyaw Kyaw Min, face possible prison time for contempt of court after they lodged complaints about the lack of due process in their clients' trials. These actions represent a blatant attempt by

the regime to intimidate these lawyers and demonstrate its contempt for the rule of law. We call on the regime to release immediately Nyi Nyi Htwe and drop all charges pending against U Aung Thein, U Khin Maung Shein and Saw Kyaw Kyaw Min. We further reiterate our call for the regime to cease harassing and arresting citizens for peacefully exercising their internationally recognized human rights, to release all political prisoners immediately, and to begin a genuine dialogue with democratic and ethnic minority groups on a transition to a civilian, democratic government in Burma.

### **U.S. Food Products Company Quick to Help Communities in China**

*Cargill China's relief efforts, farmer training, conservation stand out*

By Kathryn McConnell  
Staff Writer

Washington — In May, one day after a devastating earthquake struck China's Sichuan province, Cargill China quickly mobilized a worldwide fundraising campaign among its businesses and employees to help people affected by the disaster.

By the end of June, the company, a subsidiary of the Minneapolis-based food and agriculture products company Cargill Inc., had collected more than \$1.1 million. It donated some of the funds to the China Red Cross and to the International Red Cross for relief efforts and awarded a grant to Beijing Normal University to provide psychotherapy to children affected by the earthquake. It continues to support post-earthquake reconstruction efforts.

Earlier in 2008, during the worst snowstorm to hit China in more than 50 years, Cargill China was one of the first U.S. companies to offer disaster relief assistance, helping to rebuild schools and providing clothing for children affected by the disaster.

For its relief efforts and for promoting sustainable agriculture, food safety and environmental stewardship, as well as for establishing a network of employee-led volunteer Cargill Cares Councils, Cargill China has been named a finalist for the secretary of state's 2008 Award for Corporate Excellence.

"Cargill strives for world-class, good corporate citizenship in China," Cargill President Norwell Coquillard said in a statement to America.gov.

"Cargill is in a unique position to contribute its global

experience and expertise to helping China meet its goals of raising the incomes of its population and developing its countryside.

"By improving efficiency and adding value to the production, processing, distribution and trade of food and agricultural products in China, we aim to promote sustainable agriculture and a secure food supply for China," the statement says.

### **Veterans Day Honors Those Who Served in U.S. Military**

*Parades, ceremonies and tributes scheduled throughout the U.S.*

Washington — November 11 is Veterans Day in the United States, and parades, ceremonies and tributes to veterans are planned in small towns and large cities throughout the country to honor those who have served in the U.S. military.

"Our country is forever indebted to our veterans for their quiet courage and exemplary service," said President Bush. "On Veterans Day, we remember these heroes for their valor, their loyalty, and their dedication."

This year, as always, the memorial amphitheater built around the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington Cemetery, just outside Washington, remains the focal point for national Veterans Day ceremonies. The traditions have been firmly established: a combined color guard representing all military services executes "present arms" at the tomb, the president lays a wreath, and a bugler plays "taps," the beautiful and haunting bugle call used at U.S. military funerals.

In 1958, two unidentified American war dead, one from World War II and one from the Korean War, were buried in Arlington Cemetery alongside the Unknown Soldier from World War I who had been interred there in 1921. And in 1984, an unknown serviceman from the Vietnam War was placed beside them. They jointly symbolize all Americans who gave their lives in all wars.

The earlier, more narrowly focused Armistice Day commemorated the end of fighting in World War I under the armistice implemented at 11 a.m. on November 11, 1918 — "the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month."

President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the first Armistice Day just a year later, setting the characteristic tone of the U.S. observances in years to come. He said that the holiday

would be "filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations."

Armistice Day's message of peace and international solidarity was reiterated when the holiday formally received its name in 1926. Congress passed a resolution asking the president to call for the U.S. flag to be displayed on all public buildings on November 11, and to call on citizens "to observe the day in schools and churches, or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies of friendly relations with all other peoples."

Congress followed up in 1938 by designating Armistice Day a legal holiday, dedicated to the cause of world peace.

But Wilson's hope that World War I would be the "war to end war" collapsed soon after, with the outbreak of new fighting in Europe. The United States entered World War II in 1941. More than 16 million Americans were to take part; 407,000 of them died, more than 292,000 in battle.

Seeking to pay tribute to those 16 million, and others who had served the nation in any of its wars, Congress and President Dwight Eisenhower in 1954 redesignated the November 11 holiday as Veterans Day. "On that day let us solemnly remember the sacrifices of all those who fought so valiantly, on the seas, in the air, and on foreign shores to preserve our heritage of freedom," Eisenhower wrote in his first Veterans Day proclamation, "and let us reconsecrate ourselves to the task of promoting an enduring peace so that their efforts shall not have been in vain."

Television journalist Tom Brokaw called attention to the sacrifice of the World War II generation of veterans in a 1998 book, *The Greatest Generation*, in which he deemed them "the greatest generation any society has ever produced." In the same year director Steven Spielberg portrayed American soldiers in World War II Europe in his film *Saving Private Ryan*; Clint Eastwood did the same for troops in the Pacific in his 2006 films *Letters from Iwo Jima* and *Flags of Our Fathers*.

In May 2004, aging but proud veterans attended the dedication of the National World War II Memorial on Washington's National Mall, between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument.

In 2007, a 15-hour-long Ken Burns documentary, *The War*, featured interviews with dozens of World War II veterans.



Burns said he had undertaken the project partly because the war's veterans were dying at an accelerating pace. "It hurt me that we were hemorrhaging these memories," he said.

This year marks the 15th anniversary of the Vietnam Women's Memorial, which will be the focus of the annual Veteran's Day ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial — in Constitution Gardens, adjacent to the National Mall — features a black stone wall inscribed with the names of more than 58,000 service members killed or unaccounted for in the Vietnam War. The names of eight service women who died in the Vietnam War are included.

The women's memorial is a sculpture that depicts three women, including one who is caring for a soldier. More than 265,000 American women served during the Vietnam War.

"By honoring women in military service during the Vietnam era, the Vietnam Women's Memorial paved the way for recognizing the many women who serve in our armed forces today," said Diane Carlson Evans, founder and president of the Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation, who served as an Army nurse in the Vietnam War.

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