



## NORWAY: UNDER SECRETARY DOBRIANSKY REACHES OUT WITH MESSAGE ON CLIMATE CHANGE



Dobriansky and embassy officer Kristen Bauer in Svalbard during Dobriansky's visit August 7 to August 13, 2008. [U.S. Embassy Oslo]

Under Secretary for Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky visited Norway to discuss climate change, the High North, and carbon capture and storage issues with Norwegian politicians, researchers and opinion makers. She saw the Statoil Hydro Carbon Capture Storage facility at the Mongstad Oil refinery and then went to the Svalbard islands to visit a station that provides support to NASA and NOAA, as well as the Ny Alesund research facility, where the National Science Foundation and other U.S. Government agencies conduct research. In Oslo, she engaged the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Environment and held discussions with researchers during a roundtable sponsored by Bellona, an environmental NGO.

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## MONTENEGRO: BASKETBALL DIPLOMACY BRINGS SPORTS AND EDUCATION TO YOUTH



Sead Dezdarevic (L) talks to the youth camp participants about educational opportunities. [Carlos Gallardo, U.S. Embassy Podgorica]

Matt Henry, Director of Operations at Georgetown University, and Sead Dezdarevic, from Bijelo Polje, Montenegro, former member of the Georgetown basketball team and current staff member at the Center for Intercultural Education

and Development, traveled to Herceg Novi, Montenegro to conduct a basketball camp for boys and girls between the ages of 13 and 16. Joining Sead and Coach Henry were former Georgetown basketball players Ashanti Cook, Darrel Owens, Amadou Kilkenny-Diaw, and RaMel Ross. Together, they have been training participants in basketball basics, as well as talking about the educational opportunities that sports can bring to young people. This event was sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and Georgetown University, with support from Opportunity Bank, the Ministry of Culture, Media and Sports of Montenegro and the town of Herceg Novi. To watch a short video documenting the event, go to <http://stream.state.gov/streamvol/libmedia/montenegro/61077/Basketball/Basketball%20promo.wmv>.

## GREECE: US THANKS GREECE FOR ASSISTANCE IN FIGHTING CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

Responding to a request for assistance from the U.S. Government, a team of Greek firefighters went to California July 15 through August 9 to work with their American counterparts in fighting the recent wildfires in that state. The request came after a year of mutual cooperation on wildfire assistance between Greece and the U.S., and was part of the National Response Framework's Emergency Support Function. The firefighters also met with California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger who expressed his deep appreciation for the assistance provided by Greece. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice sent a letter to Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis thanking her for Greece's assistance.



Governor Schwarzenegger thanks Greek firefighters for their assistance, August 8, 2008. [Property of CA Governor's Office, may not be reproduced]

## SLOVENIA: AMBASSADOR'S MOUNTAIN DIPLOMACY MAKES HIM A "TRUE SLOVENE"



Ambassador Ghafari (L) greeting Janez Janša, the Prime Minister of Slovenia, July 26, 2008. [Sam Zegas, U.S. Embassy Ljubljana]

According to a popular Slovene tradition, no one can be a "true Slovene" until they have climbed Mt. Triglav, the symbol of Slovenia, which appears on the Slovene coat of arms and the national flag. With this in mind, U.S. Ambassador to Slovenia Yousif Ghafari made it a high priority to celebrate the time-honored Slovene tradition. Ambassador Ghafari successfully climbed Triglav, the highest mountain in Slovenia at 9,396 ft, returning the base in under 11 hours. He was accompanied by three local guides and four staff members from the U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana. Just below the summit, the group met Janez Janša, the Prime Minister of Slovenia.

## KOSOVO: MEDICAL DIPLOMACY UNITES MULTI-ETHNIC COMMUNITY

Becky Haddad, Global Delegate for the Susan G. Komen for the Cure Foundation and 22-year survivor of breast cancer, spent several days in Kosovo as part of a U.S. Embassy in Pristina's Balkans Breast Cancer Initiative (BBCI). Involving several regional embassies, the U.S. Agency for International Development, NGOs, the Ministry of Health, medical personnel, and patients, the BBCI has been working since December 2007 to raise awareness of breast cancer in the female population of the region - a goal which has resonated very positively among all populations. Ms. Haddad was the keynote speaker at a Pristina conference that featured women members of parliament, NGO leaders, doctors, patients, several Serbian women, and a Serbian rep from the Ministry of Education. Haddad also spoke at a roundtable in Mitrovica South, bringing together Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, Turkish, Albanian and Serbian women. She answered hard questions about dealing with, and surviving, cancer. Ms. Haddad also did an interview with KTV that will be part of a two-part documentary scheduled to be aired in the first two weeks of October, building up to the October 19 Walk for Breast Cancer Awareness.



Becky Haddad is interviewed by Radio Kontakt Plus, a widely listened to station in north Mitrovica during her visit August 4-7, 2008. [Merita Muserati, U.S. Embassy Pristina]

## BULGARIA: VILLAGERS CELEBRATE RENOVATED KINDERGARTEN



Members of U.S. and Bulgarian militaries gather with children at the ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the completion of the renovation of the kindergarten, July 24, 2008. [Sgt. Aimee Millham]

The village of Mokren held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate completing the renovation of the local kindergarten. U.S. Navy Seabees and Bulgarian soldiers renovated the kindergarten as part of a series of humanitarian assistance projects affiliated with the current rotation of troops visiting Novo Selo Training Area. The groups worked together to repair the building's interior, replace windows, paint walls and install new floors. In addition to the work at the kindergarten, a separate team made similar repairs to the Mokren Community Center. The groups worked on more projects in the weeks that followed.

## RUSSIA: ESSAY CONTEST WINNER TO BRAVE THE BERING STRAIT

U.S. Consul General (CG) Tom Armbruster and Public Affairs Officer Bridget Gersten joined Vladivostok Airlines CEO Alexander Alekseev to meet the contestants and the grand prize winner of a youth essay contest entitled “Russia and America: The Road to the Future.” The contest was initiated by the U.S. Consulate General in Vladivostok, in partnership with the local branch of the American Bar Association & Rule of Law Initiative and the airline VladAvia, in celebration of the newly-inaugurated flight between Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy and Anchorage. The flight is the first one in many years to link the U.S. and the Russian Far East. CG Armbruster gave congratulatory remarks and certificates of participation, and Mr. Alekseev handed over the coveted grand prize: a roundtrip ticket to Anchorage. The U.S. Consulate General in Vladivostok coordinated the winner’s week-long home stay and cultural program with the Governor’s Office in Anchorage, which includes visiting a Russian language immersion school, the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, the Institute of the North, the Native Alaska Heritage Center, the University of Alaska at Anchorage, as well as the National Park Service’s Beringia Days. The program demonstrated the lasting power of people-to-people diplomacy.



Consul General Armbruster congratulates the contest winner and her parents, August 2008. [Bridget Gersten, U.S. Consulate General Vladivostok]

## DENMARK: AMBASSADOR THROWS DOWN AT SPORTS PROGRAM FOR AT-RISK YOUTH



Ambassador Cain shows that he’s head over heels for sports diplomacy, August 2008. [Catherine Miller-Little, U.S. Embassy Copenhagen]

Sixty teenagers participated in the first phase of the sports diplomacy project “Taking the Lead,” a partnership between the U.S. Embassy in Copenhagen and private and public organizations in Denmark. The project, which aims to increase leadership and social participation among at-risk immigrant youth, offered soccer, martial arts, street movement, basketball, and dance classes. U.S. Ambassador to Denmark James Cain and players from ECB/RocStar Basketball, who have played professionally in the U.S. and abroad, played basketball with the teens and conducted skills clinics during their visit. Phase two of the project, an information session about education, internships and associations, will be implemented in mid-October.

## LITHUANIA: US AND LITHUANIA HONOR SOLDIERS SERVING IN IRAQ

Lithuanian soldiers of LITCON-10 received a warm welcome home after service in the Al Kut region of Iraq. At the War Museum in Kaunas, Chief of Defense of the Lithuanian Armed Forces General Valdas Tutkus praised the contingent of 29 soldiers, who voluntarily extended their original term of service by two months to finish their mission. U.S. Embassy in Vilnius officer Damian Leader, Defense Attaché David Millner and Naval Attaché Tomas Alksninis also showed their support to the coalition soldiers, who fought alongside U.S. troops. While in Iraq, several of the soldiers had been honored with the United States Army’s Commendation Medal for exceptionally meritorious service during Operation Iraqi Freedom. American commanders and fellow coalition soldiers praised the Lithuanian platoon for their professionalism and performance.



LITCON-10 returns home after serving in Iraq, August 4, 2008. [Lt. Col. David Millner]

## MALTA: AMBASSADOR BORDONARO HOSTS RECEPTION FOR REFUGEES BEING RESETTLED IN THE US

The small nation of Malta faces the huge challenge of dealing with an increasing number of irregular immigrants, and the U.S. has provided Malta with a great deal of help with refugee resettlement. U.S. Ambassador to Malta Molly Bordonaro hosted a reception for a group of over 60 refugees, mainly Eritreans and Somalis, who will soon depart Malta for resettlement in the United States. In her comments to the group, Ambassador Bordonaro spoke about the opportunities that await each of the refugees as they seek their own American dreams and embark on their paths toward becoming U.S. citizens. The ambassador praised the cooperative partnership between the Government of Malta, the Emigrants Commission, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Office of Migration, and several local NGOs.



Ambassador Bordonaro (center) hosts refugees participating in U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program, August 13, 2008. [Eric Catalfamo, U.S. Embassy Valletta]

## GREECE: MOSAIKO.GR HOLDS PIONEERING FREE PRESS CONFERENCE



Publishers, editors and journalists attending the Mosaiko.gr media conference, July 25-26, 2008. [George Vorvolakos, U.S. Embassy Athens]

Mosaiko.gr, the U.S. Embassy in Athens' youth-oriented Web site, sponsored a conference entitled "The Free Press Phenomenon" for publishers, editors, and journalists of the Greek free press. Former editor-in-chief of the Village Voice Donald Forst, and publisher and general manager of AM New York Terry Jimenez, were invited through U.S. Department of State's Speakers Bureau. The two-day conference was the first of its kind devoted to the increased circulation of free press, both alternative and newspaper-style. The speakers led seminars focusing on the impact of the free press on urban culture, advertising and budget issues, and the

Internet era. The embassy videotaped the presentations and will offer them to local journalism professors in the fall in order to reach out to the youthful, growing group of Greek free and alternative press leaders.

## UK: EMBASSY LONDON HOSTS ATLANTIC YOUTH FORUM TO DISCUSS AMERICAN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Matt Goshko, of the U.S. Embassy in London, met with 40 participants from the sixth Atlantic Youth Forum sponsored by Wilton Park, an independent academic center run by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, for a discussion entitled, "American Public Diplomacy: Is it working?" The Forum brings together participants aged 18 to 24 from over ten countries for a week-long program to gain insights into each other's concerns and perceptions on the key challenges facing their countries and the international community. Goshko began the discussion with the premise that American public diplomacy, despite criticisms of a number of U.S. foreign policy issues, was actually working. He highlighted the importance of both press and cultural programs for helping foreign audiences better understand American culture, values and policies. A key take-away message from the discussion was that public diplomacy does not produce instantaneous results. Exchange programs, one of the most successful tools, can take years before their positive impact begins to show. The discussion also centered on why it is essential to engage audiences even regarding deeply unpopular policies, such as the controversial issue of detainees at Guantanamo. While the participants still believed the facility should be closed, they had a better understanding of the legal, humanitarian and security concerns.



Goshko discusses the different aspects of American public diplomacy, August 6, 2008. [Sarah Jane Mayhew, U.S. Embassy London]

## GERMANY: AMBASSADOR CUMBER MEETS WITH MUSLIM GERMANS

Ambassador Sada Cumber, who was appointed earlier this year by President Bush as the first-ever U.S. Special Envoy to the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), held a roundtable discussion at the U.S. Embassy in Berlin with Muslim German academics, politicians, business executives and community organizers to learn about the challenges facing Muslim integration in Germany and throughout Europe. In a lively discussion, topics ranged from concern about the lack of Muslim education in Germany, to preventing Muslim extremism, to the social, structural, and identity issues at the root of the cultural divide between Muslims and Germans. Ambassador Cumber mentioned that he was especially glad to hear a European perspective on the sensitive issue of integration, and stressed the “question of responsibility,” encouraging them to improve their own conditions by building diplomatic relations with the West and productive relations with their home societies.



Embassy officer Ruth Anne Stevens-Klitz (right) introduces Ambassador Cumber and Minister-Counselor for Public Affairs, Dr. Helena Kane Finn (left), July 18, 2008. [Katrin Krueger, U.S. Embassy Berlin]

## MOLDOVA: EMBASSY LAUNCHES “OPERATION PROVIDE HOPE” IN BALTI



Medical equipment being unloaded from delivery trucks, July 25, 2008. [Sharon Ketchum, U.S. Embassy Chisinau]

The U.S. Embassy in Chisinau launched Operation Provide Hope at District Hospital in Balti. As part of this project, the U.S. is donating \$21.7 million worth of equipment and supplies to medical facilities in Moldova. The Balti hospital is the first of several in Moldova to receive these critical materials. Operation Provide Hope was developed to assist people living in countries of the former Soviet Union, and donations of medical equipment and supplies have been made to eleven countries. This is the third and largest donation to Moldova, so large it had to be transported by 100 trucks. Examples of the donations include monitoring equipment for intensive care, X-ray and film processing equipment, anesthesia machines, and sterilization equipment, as well as bandages, linens and needles.

## HUNGARY: “ROMA AND FRIENDS” YOUTH CAMP PROMOTES TOLERANCE

Laszlo Teleki, the Hungarian Prime Minister's Roma Commissioner, and Zoltan Balog, the Chairman of the Parliament's Human Rights Committee, joined U.S. Ambassador to Hungary April Foley in a recent visit to the embassy-sponsored summer camp "Roma and Friends." The week-long camp, designed to promote inter-ethnic understanding, empathy and tolerance brought together 42 young people and eight teachers from across Hungary. Campers participated in games, sports, drama and arts, and teachers received instruction in developing tolerance and conflict resolution skills. In her remarks to the students, Ambassador Foley commended them for "taking a step toward a future where intellect will overcome intolerance and excellence will overcome extremism."



Ambassador Foley joining in a Roma circle dance, July 31, 2008. [Attila Nemeth, U. S. Embassy Budapest]

## AUSTRIA: YOUNG AMERICANS, ISRAELIS AND AUSTRIANS GO “BACK TO THE ROOTS”

This year marked the 14th anniversary of the “Back to the Roots” project, which brings students from Israel and (for the first time this year) from the U.S. to Austria to trace the history of their families who had escaped the Holocaust. Kathy Perez of the U.S. Embassy in Vienna congratulated an international group of 30 students on the successful completion of the project at the wrap-up party in Vienna. The Austrian Ministry of Health, Family and Youth funds and organizes the ten-day program, in which students travel the country together. Supporting the Jewish community and Holocaust-related projects are important goals, especially in Austria. The embassy will assist the ministry to bring even more American students to Austria in 2009 under the umbrella of this program.



Students enjoy the “Back to the Roots” wrap-up party, July 22, 2008. [Agnes Vana, Catholic Youth Austria]

## SLOVENIA: EMBASSIES BRING US AND IRAQI ACADEMICS TOGETHER AT CONFERENCE



Ambassador Ghafari and embassy officer Susan Shultz with two Iraqi university academics sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad at the conference, July 23-26, 2008. [Sam Zegas, U.S. Embassy Ljubljana]

More than 200 American and 800 international academics attended the Second Global International Studies Conference in Ljubljana, including two Iraqi academics from the human rights field sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. As the sole Iraqis amid a small number of Middle Eastern participants, their views and research were of great interest to others. The conference, “What Keeps us Apart, What Keeps us Together” drew participants from over 70 countries to discuss global challenges related to international order, justice and values. U.S. Ambassador to Slovenia Yousif Ghafari hosted a reception in recognition of international academic collaboration, and the embassy co-sponsored former president of the International Studies Association, Professor Judith Ann Tickner of the University of South California, who chaired a plenary roundtable on global justice. In cooperation with the Department of State’s EducationUSA network, the embassy provided resources and guidance about study in the

United States. The conference was one of the largest events in Slovenia this summer.

## KOSOVO: DEMOCRACY COMMISSION GRANTEES BUILD BRIDGES IN DIVIDED MITROVICA

Three organizations in the ethnically-divided city of Mitrovica presented their work to officials from the U.S. Embassy in Pristina and the U.S. Department of State. The National Scout Center, With Hand on Heart, and Community-Building Mitrovica described their inter-ethnic projects, several of which were funded with grants from the embassy. The projects included dialogues about youth issues between Kosovo Serbs from northern Mitrovica and Kosovo Albanians from southern Mitrovica, camping and outdoor skills trips for youth from different ethnic communities, photo-journalism trainings for mixed-ethnic groups, and a bilingual magazine addressing the city of Mitrovica as a whole. By supporting the efforts of these local NGOs to rebuild a multi-ethnic city torn apart by conflict, these small grants promote grassroots democratic development in Kosovo.



Kosovo Albanian, Serb, Roma, Bosniac and Turkish youth at the offices of Community-Building Mitrovica, August 20, 2008. [Merita Musmurati, U.S. Embassy Pristina]

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