



# CYBERNOTES

## USIA Alumni Association Reinvents Itself

The United States Information Agency Alumni Association was founded in 1981 to help USIA retirees stay engaged in professional affairs. It has now renamed itself the Public Diplomacy Alumni Association and launched a new effort to foster recognition of and support for public diplomacy — as opposed to public relations — through educational, social and outreach activities, including an annual awards program.

The 450-member PDAA is headed by retired FSO Eugene Nojek. The association has a directory and quarterly newsletter, and sponsors seminars, luncheons and other gatherings.

Its redesigned Web site, at [www.publicdiplomacy.org](http://www.publicdiplomacy.org), features discussion in two broad areas — the debate over public diplomacy, and its practice — with an up-to-date list of links to articles and speeches on each topic. The site also contains a PD community bulletin board, links to relevant associations, think-tanks, PD institutes and other sites, as well as the member-only online newsletter.

The PDAA's 2008 Award for Achievement in Public Diplomacy went to two individuals and one group at the May 4 annual dinner. Jonathan Henick, public affairs officer in Baku, was cited for his efforts in promoting and defending freedom of speech and independent journalism in the repressive environment of Azerbaijan. Nicholas Papp, cultural affairs officer and director of the American Center in Taipei, was honored for revitalizing

and modernizing Taiwan's Education-USA program and extending its outreach to broader publics through the innovative utilization of new media technologies.

The FSN staff in Rangoon received a group award for their outstanding efforts and perseverance in promoting democracy and human rights in Burma. In a challenging environment, they brought to bear a broad range of public diplomacy tools and programs, including exchange programs, the American Center library, English teaching, publications, donated book programs and media outreach.

The winners were chosen from among 17 strong nominations of Foreign and Civil Service employees from the Department of State, both overseas and in Washington, including FSI training specialists and a Virtual Presence Post team.

The PDAA is open to all former employees of the U.S. Information Agency as well as current and former State Department employees, both Foreign Service and Civil Service, and Foreign Service Nationals. The association is intent upon improving PD dialogue with foreign publics and communicating more effectively about what makes America tick, "warts and all." The association also energetically supports efforts to improve current PD operations and structure.

— Susan B. Maitra, Senior Editor

## 2008 Public Diplomacy Report Cuts to the Chase

This year's annual report of the

U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, mandated by Congress to evaluate the effectiveness of government public diplomacy activities, turns a rigorous analytical eye on the human resources dimension of PD — an "important and relatively under-explored topic," the commission notes — and offers seven concrete recommendations for improvement. The report is available online at [www.state.gov/documents/organization/106297.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/106297.pdf).

The commission acknowledges that the challenges confronting public diplomacy are varied, so there is no single fix. It also recognizes that U.S. foreign policy is probably the most significant proximate determinant of how foreign publics view the United States as a player in international relations. Still, as the report states, "getting the human resources dimension of public diplomacy right can go a long way toward enhancing the overall effectiveness of America's outreach to the world."

Looking at PD from the standpoint of its practitioners helps put the problem into perspective. Public diplomacy is the second smallest cone (next to management) in the Foreign Service, and officials acknowledge that the State Department makes no special effort to recruit individuals with relevant experience or skills into the PD career track. The Foreign Service Officer Test and Oral Assessment do not specifically test for public diplomacy instincts and communication skills. Nor does the department's Employee Evaluation Report form



contain any section specifically devoted to public diplomacy outreach.

The commission urges the department to make a concerted effort to recruit PD candidates. It recommends that the FS exam process include questions and tasks directly germane to the conduct of public diplomacy. It also advocates building specific PD requirements into the EER form for all FSOs, with one or more specific tasks of directly engaging and influencing foreign publics as work requirement objectives for PD officers.

Concerning training, a number of “conspicuous and serious blind spots” are identified. The commission recommends that the Foreign Service Institute develop courses comparable to graduate-level university courses in the area of communication theory, with special emphasis on political communication and rhetoric, advertising and marketing theory and public opinion analysis; and that the department establish a nine-month, in-depth public diplomacy course for mid- to senior-level PD officers, mod-

eled on that currently offered to rising economic officers.

The commission’s last three recommendations have to do with the integration of PD into the State Department. To determine the extent to which department officials are taking PD into consideration in actual foreign policy decision-making, the commission recommends a zero-based review of the PD area office staffing structure. Further, observing that the overseas staffing structure has remained unchanged since the 1999 consolidation of USIA into the department and that public affairs officers are largely viewed (and view themselves) as managers and administrators rather than communicators, the commission recommends a zero-based review of the overseas PD staffing model.

Finally, to right the “persistent under-representation” of PD officers in the department’s senior-most ranks, the commission urges they be promoted to senior positions at the same rate as other career FSOs.

— Susan B. Maitra, Senior Editor

### Site of the Month: [www.realclearpolitics.com](http://www.realclearpolitics.com)

Though John McIntyre and Tom Bevan founded *Real Clear Politics* in 2000, the site has picked up traffic this year as people flock to find independent data on an historic election. *Real Clear Politics*, with its signature clean design, is user-friendly, effective and succinct.

Aiming to “publish the best commentary, news, polling data and links to important resources from all points of the political compass and covering all the important issues of the day,” the Web site is continually updated and acts as an independent filter for political news. *Real Clear Politics* publishes the major political headlines and editorials, as well as Transcripts/Speeches, Best of the Blogs, Around the World, Real Clear Markets and Real Clear Sports. If users want to delve deeper into the political issues of the day, they can turn to news and election videos, detailed polling statistics, an alphabetized listing of the latest news by issue, as well as RCP’s own political blogs.

But this site’s real value is in that very first screen. There you have the latest polling data on the right and the top, independently filtered political headlines, news and commentary every single day and up-to-the-minute. Basically, you learn who’s winning and why, and how people feel about both candidates. Real clear, indeed.

— Ariana Austin, Editorial Intern

### AFRICOM Architects Lower Expectations

Excitement over the pioneering U.S. Africa Command has been muted in the weeks and months leading up to its scheduled Oct. 1 standup by concerns about Pentagon dominance, a lack of civilian agency resources and incompatible personnel systems.

The difficulties came to light in a hearing before the House Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs on July 15, “AFRICOM: Rationales, Roles, and Progress on the Eve of Operations” (<http://nationalsecurity.oversight.house.gov/story.asp?ID=2080>). Witnesses admitted that the goal of staffing at least a quarter of the command with experts from State, Treasury, Agriculture and USAID was “not realistic,” as John Pendleton, director of defense capabilities and management issues at the Government Accountability Office, put it.

Instead, interagency positions have been reduced to 52, or about 4 percent of the staff. Incompatible personnel systems may well put even that number out of reach. By Sept. 30, the Defense Department expects to fill only 13 of the 52 slots, though Ambassador Mary Carlin Yates, the AFRICOM deputy commander for civil-military activities, testified that hiring is being done “through a deliberate process that is progressing well.”

The Africa Command’s creation represents a shift in Defense Department thinking, acknowledged Lauren Ploch, an African affairs analyst at the Congressional Research Service. But Ploch also testified that concerns about the “militarization” of American foreign policy have surfaced.

Theresa Whelan, the deputy assistant secretary of Defense for African affairs in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, sought to allay concerns



**O**mar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir bears criminal responsibility for: the crime of genocide under Article 6(a) of the Rome Statute, killing members of the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa ethnic groups; ... crimes against humanity under Article 7 (1) of the statute, committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack directed against the civilian population of Darfur; ... and war crimes under Article 8 (2)(e)(i) of the statute.

— International Criminal Court Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo's July 14 indictment of Sudanese President Al Bashir, [www.icc-cpi.int](http://www.icc-cpi.int)

such as this and other “misconceptions” in her testimony. “The Secretary of State remains the chief foreign policy adviser to the president, and the Secretary of Defense remains the chief adviser on defense matters. The creation of a single U.S. DOD point of contact for Africa will simply allow DOD to better coordinate its own efforts, in support of State Department leadership, to better build security capacity in Africa.”

Whelan added, “The intent is not for DOD generally, or for USAFRI-COM at the operational level, to assume the lead in areas where State and/or USAID have clear lines of authority as well as the comparative advantages to lead.”

The status of the AFRICOM initiative was also covered in a report in the July *Government Executive* magazine ([www.govexec.com](http://www.govexec.com)).

— Susan B. Maitra, Senior Editor

### Government Documents: The Challenge of E-mail

The Government Accountability Office has spotlighted gaps in federal processing and preservation of electronic documents in a new report, “Federal Records: National Archives and Selected Agencies Need to Strengthen E-Mail Management” ([www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-08-742](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-08-742)).

In view of the important role e-mail plays in documenting government activities, the House Committee

on Oversight and Government Reform’s Subcommittee on Information Policy, Census and the National Archives directed the GAO to investigate the electronic records kept by 15 senior officials at four agencies: the Homeland Security Department, the Federal Trade Commission, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

GAO found that all four agencies used an inefficient and nonsecure process of “print and file” — e-mails are printed and stored in paper form. Only the EPA was converting the documents to an electronic system.

The GAO also noted that the National Archives and Records Administration, the federal agency charged with management of government documents, had stopped making inspections to ensure that departments properly store e-mail in 2000, although it has sponsored six studies of agency record-keeping since 2003. NARA officials told the GAO that the inspections take too much time and money.

The report was issued on the eve of a vote in the House of Representatives on H.R. 5811, a bill sponsored by House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Rep. Henry A. Waxman, D-Calif., and two other Democrats, to modernize the Federal Records Act and the Presidential Records Act to ensure the preservation of the electronic records (<http://oversight.house.gov/story.as>

## MARKETPLACE

[www.fsjournal.org](http://www.fsjournal.org)  
Click on Marketplace tab  
on the marquee

**AKA**  
[stay-aka.com](http://stay-aka.com)

**Clements International**  
[clements.com](http://clements.com)

**Cort Furniture**  
[cort1.com](http://cort1.com)

**Diplomatic Auto. Sales**  
[diplosales.com](http://diplosales.com)

**Georgetown Suites**  
[georgetownsuites.com](http://georgetownsuites.com)

**Hirshorn Company, The**  
[hirshorn.com](http://hirshorn.com)

**McGrath Real Estate Services**  
[homesdatabase.com/jimmcgrath](http://homesdatabase.com/jimmcgrath)

**ProMax**  
[promaxrealtors.com](http://promaxrealtors.com)

**Prudential Carruthers**  
[prudentialcarruthers.com](http://prudentialcarruthers.com)

**Remington**  
[remington-dc.com](http://remington-dc.com)

**SDFCU**  
[sdfcu.org](http://sdfcu.org)

**State Plaza Hotel**  
[stateplaza.com](http://stateplaza.com)

**Strategic Studies Quarterly**  
[au.af.mil/au/ssq/](http://au.af.mil/au/ssq/)

**University of Kentucky**  
[www.pattersonschool.uky.edu](http://www.pattersonschool.uky.edu)

**WJD Management**  
[wjdpn.com](http://wjdpn.com)

**When contacting an  
advertiser,  
kindly mention the  
Foreign Service Journal.**



## 50 Years Ago...

While legislation involving the State Department or foreign aid always causes considerable controversy in the House, Foreign Service legislation always goes rather smoothly. ... For a group that has no lobby, no pressure group support, the Foreign Service does very well.



— Rep. John M. Vorys, R-Ohio, “Observations on the Foreign Service,” Sept. 1958 *FSJ*.

2068). The bill orders NARA to set standards for capturing, managing, retrieving and preserving e-mails and other electronic communications and to issue regulations within 18 months requiring all federal agencies to preserve such communications in an electronic format.

Citizens for Responsibility and

Ethics in Washington, a watchdog group known as CREW, is critical of the legislation. The group issued a report in April, “Record Chaos: The Deplorable State of Electronic Record Keeping in the Federal Government,” charging that the bill “fails to make the substantial changes necessary to bring the federal government into the 21st century” ([www.citizensforethics.org/recordchaos](http://www.citizensforethics.org/recordchaos)).

— Susan B. Maitra, Senior Editor

## A Chilean Perspective on Lessons of the Iraq War

Heraldo Muñoz, Chile’s ambassador to the United Nations, has penned a diplomatic memoir that chronicles his experiences during the run-up to the Iraq War from a “behind the scenes” perspective.

Specifically, *A Solitary War: A Diplomat’s Chronicle of the Iraq War and Its Lessons*, published recently with a foreword by former U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, examines the Bush administration’s tactics in organizing backing for the U.N. Security Council resolution authorizing military action against Iraq ([www.fulcrumbooks.com/](http://www.fulcrumbooks.com/)).

Ambassador Muñoz received his Ph.D. in international political economy from the University of Denver’s Graduate School of International Studies, where he was a classmate of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and the book begins with a “telling call from Condi.”

A former president of the U.N.

Security Council, Muñoz looks at the United States’ controversial decision to take a unilateral stand and its repercussions for both the U.S. and the rest of the world. According to Muñoz, Washington badgered its allies and repeatedly threatened the “Undecided 6” nations — Chile, Mexico, Cameroon, Pakistan, Guinea and Angola — with trade reprisals in order to pressure them into voting in favor of the invasion.

Washington’s aggressive tactics were not limited to trade reprisals, but included spying on its allies in the Security Council and various acts of bullying, bribery and “diplomatic belligerence.” In Muñoz’s view, this approach has left a legacy of “deep mistrust” between the U.S. and its allies in Europe and Latin America, as well as other nations.

Chile’s effort to offer an alternative resolution to the Security Council was viewed as “an unfriendly act” by the Bush administration, according to reports in the *Washington Post*.

While the book contains grisly details of misguided diplomatic tactics, its focus is on what lessons can be learned as a new American president prepares to take office. “The most important lesson of the second Iraq War is that in a world characterized by global media, new threats and inextricably interwoven political and economic interests, the U.S. needs the support of significant allies and multi-lateral organizations for the long haul,” Muñoz writes.

The author then discusses ways to avoid future conflict and rebuild trust among the international community, noting that the most important price the U.S. paid for its Iraq diplomacy was “in terms of losing authority and respect as a leader of the international community.”

An extensive interview with Amb. Muñoz is available at [www.democracynow.org/2008/3/27/](http://www.democracynow.org/2008/3/27/). ■

— Ariana Austin, Editorial Intern

**YOU ARE OUR EYES & EARS!**

Dear Readers:

*In order to produce a high-quality product, the FSJ depends on the revenue it earns from advertising. You can help with this.*

*Please let us know the names of companies that have provided good service to you — a hotel, insurance company, auto dealership, or other concern.*

*A referral from our readers is the best entrée!*

ED MILTENBERGER  
ADVERTISING & CIRCULATION  
MANAGER  
TEL: (202) 944-5507  
E-MAIL: MILTENBERGER@AFSA.ORG