

DAILY BULLETIN

JULY 13, 2004

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U.S., WORLD SAFER SINCE SEPTEMBER 11TH, 2001, BUSH SAYS

President says danger has not passed

The United States and the world are safer today than three years ago, President Bush says, because of American leadership against the twin forces of terrorism and tyranny.

“The world changed on September the 11th, (2001,) and since that day, we have changed the world,” Bush told workers at the U.S. National Laboratory at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, July 12.

The Bush administration’s three-part plan to keep the United States and the world safe, he said, involves:

-- Defending the peace by taking the fight to the enemy;

-- Protecting the peace by working with friends and allies and international institutions to isolate and confront terrorists and outlaw regimes; and

-- Extending the peace in the broader Middle East by supporting the rise of democracy there.

As examples of this plan in action, the president cited events in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Libya.

The overthrow of “one of the most backward and brutal regimes of modern history” and the elimination of al-Qa’eda’s safe haven there demonstrate that Afghani-

stan today is “a world away from the nightmare of the Taliban,” Bush said.

Pakistan changed from a government that recognized the Taliban into an ally in the fight against terror, he said.

Saudi Arabia was a haven for al-Qa’eda, but now has joined the war against terror, the president said.

The United States is “leading a steady, confident, systematic campaign against the dangers of our time,” Bush said. Terrorists continue to plot against the United States, “but the ranks of their leaders are thinning, and they know what fate awaits them,” he said. Some regimes actively support terrorists even now, he continued, but there are of those nations “fewer than there used to be.” And outlaw regimes still pursue weapons of mass destruction, “but the world no longer looks the other way,” he continued.

“Today, because America has acted, and because America has led, the forces of terror and tyranny have suffered defeat after defeat, and America and the world are safer,” the president said.

U.S. WORKING WITH ASIAN COUNTRIES TO AVOID AIDS EXPLOSION

Raising awareness in Asia important theme at AIDS conference

By Charlene Porter
Washington File Staff Writer

Bangkok, Thailand -- For the first time in its almost 20-year history, the world’s largest gathering of AIDS experts, clinicians, policy-makers and activists is being held in Southeast Asia. In this setting, one clear purpose of the XV International AIDS conference is to send a message to Asian leaders that they must face the presence of HIV infection in their populations and take rapid and aggressive steps to control it.

The Joint U.N. Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) delivered a warning to Asia almost a full week before the conference began when it released an updated census on the status of the disease worldwide.

The report stresses the rapid expansion of the Asian epidemic, counting 7.4 million people currently living with HIV throughout the region with recent spikes in number of infections in China, Indonesia and Vietnam. UNAIDS found that the disease in Asia is currently concentrated among injecting drug users, men who have sex with men, and commercial sex workers and their clientele. Because of the region’s dense populations, however, the report warns that a spread of HIV into the general population will cause an explosion in the numbers.

During the opening ceremonies of the XV International AIDS Conference, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said, “There is no time to lose if we are to prevent the epidemic in Asia from spinning out of control.”

The potential magnitude of HIV infections in Asia may seem staggering, but at this meeting delegates are devoted to looking squarely at the challenges ahead and finding ways to overcome them. The key to doing that is the learning experience delegates share -- one nation to another, one example at a time. Thailand is considered a particularly appropriate host for the conference because the Thais have one of the world’s best records in recognizing AIDS in the early 1990s and in confronting and containing the disease.

Describing his nation’s efforts with pride at the July 11 opening ceremony of the conference, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra of Thailand said his country aims for 100 percent condom use as a means to contain the spread of the virus.

“The rate of condom use has been significantly raised from a very low level to more than 95 percent in just a few years,” Shinawatra said. “It is estimated that this simple program has averted more than 5 million infections among the Thai people.”

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has a long history in helping Thailand confront its AIDS problem, supporting programs for disease study, transmission prevention and medical clinic improvement as far back as 1987.

Currently USAID is involved in wider regional programs throughout Southeast Asia to help prevent the explosion of cases that analysts warn is possible. Given the concentration of the virus in certain vulnerable populations, USAID is working to better identify and protect those people, according to Lois Bradshaw, a USAID health officer based in Bangkok.

“We are trying to determine where [vulnerable people congregate], get size estimations of those populations, and test models to bring together a package of interventions to those areas to increase coverage rapidly,” Bradshaw said in a Washington File interview at Bangkok’s Impact Center, where the XV International AIDS Conference is taking place.

The USAID HIV/AIDS Health Office in Bangkok is addressing AIDS issues in five Mekong countries -- Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam -- as well as China’s Yunnan and Guangxi Provinces. The Mekong Regional Program is supported through \$20 million in U.S. funding each year.

Bradshaw said one critical element in designing these programs is to ensure that disease-prevention efforts are implemented in a way that is consistent with local conditions and responsive to local problems. “In the end, if you want to have any sustainable programs, they have to be culturally aware, they have to be fully engaged in and fully owned by the populations of the countries themselves,” she said.

The U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) also has a long history of working to combat AIDS in Thailand. With NIH funding, researchers from Maryland’s prestigious Johns Hopkins University have been collaborating with Chiang Mai University for 15 years to study epidemiological patterns of HIV/AIDS in northern Thailand. The United States has supported this work with about \$25 million in funding, and the collaboration is currently testing prevention and treatment interventions that have potential worldwide application.

The largest HIV vaccine trial in the world is currently under way in Thailand. The trial is a collaboration between the U.S. Armed Forces Research Institute of Medical Sciences, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Thai Ministry of Health. The trial began in late 2003 and is designed to involve 16,000 healthy, HIV-negative adults in a test of vaccines developed by private sector pharmaceutical companies. It is set to continue for five years.

Although there is a strong emphasis on the potential explosion of the AIDS epidemic in Asia at the XV International AIDS conference, the problems of Africa are also at the forefront. Africa remains the continent most seriously affected at present, home to 25 million people living with HIV out of a world total of 38 million.

U.S. FUNDING CYPRUS PARTNERSHIP FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH PROGRAM

Response to taken question on aid to Northern Cyprus

Spokesman Richard Boucher said at the State Department briefing July 9 that the United States is planning to provide \$30.5 million this year (FY 2004) “to aid the economic development of Northern Cyprus and the economic integration of the island in support of eventual reunification.”

A statement issued following the briefing said the \$30.5 million “will be used to fund the Cyprus Partnership for Economic Growth Program to promote economic growth in the Turkish Cypriot community and support integration of the north and south.”

Following is the statement issued following the briefing.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman
July 9, 2004

Question Taken at July 9, 2004 Daily Press Briefing

AID TO NORTHERN CYPRUS

Question: On what kind of projects will the \$30.5 million be spent, how will we disburse the money and what parties will be involved in the process?

Answer: The money will be used to fund the Cyprus Partnership for Economic Growth Program to promote economic growth in the Turkish Cypriot community and support integration of the north and south. This we hope will lead to a community able to shoulder its share of the economic costs of an eventual Cypriot settlement and reunification, and adopt European Union standards. The funds will be directed toward strengthening Turkish Cypriot small and medium enterprises and restructuring the financial sector. The mechanisms for disbursement are still being determined.

We will conduct this program in a transparent manner and consult with all parties as appropriate. Moving forward with this program does not mark a change in U.S. recognition policy on Cyprus.

U.S. SENDING \$1.6 MILLION IN RELIEF SUPPLIES TO DARFUR

Sudan aid detailed in USAID press release

The United States is sending relief supplies worth \$1.6 million to El Fasher in the Darfur region of western Sudan between July 5 and July 14, according to a July 8 press release from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

This assistance is in addition to the \$1.1 million in relief supplies that arrived in Nyala and El Fasher between June 19 and June 28, USAID noted.

Following is the text of the press release:

\$1.6 Million of Relief Supplies Sent to Darfur

WASHINGTON, DC 20523

<http://www.usaid.gov/>

Press: (202) 712-4320

Public Information: (202) 712-4810

July 8, 2004

Contact: USAID Press Office

WASHINGTON, DC -- As part of the U.S. Government's continuing humanitarian efforts in Sudan's western province of Darfur, eight airlifts will arrive in El Fasher between July 5 and July 14. These shipments will carry 3,150 rolls of plastic sheeting, which is enough shelter for 198,450 beneficiaries. Additionally, 55,000 blankets will be included in the airlifts. These relief supplies are worth \$1.6 million and are in addition to the \$1.1 million in relief supplies that arrived in Nyala and El Fasher between June 19 and June 28.

As of July 14, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) will have delivered a total of 10,830 rolls of plastic sheeting, 212,500 blankets, two water purification systems, and 600 water containers via 28 airlifts to Darfur. USAID's contribution of plastic sheeting will provide shelter for approximately 682,290 beneficiaries.

USAID has been proactive in resolving the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, which is currently the worst in the world. The Jingaweit Arab militias are backed by the Government of Sudan and have attacked innocent civil-

ians, burned and pillaged villages, and raped and beaten thousands of women. With more than 1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Darfur and approximately 160,000 refugees in neighboring Chad, USAID Administrator Andrew S. Natsios, U.S. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell and UN Secretary General Kofi Annan toured IDP camps in Darfur last week to pressure the Government of Sudan to rein in the Jingaweit militias and allow the flow of humanitarian aid. Administrator Natsios, Secretary Powell, and Secretary General Annan have stated that the situation in Darfur is ethnic cleansing. They have all encouraged the UN Security Council to pass a resolution that will place additional pressure on the Government of Sudan to follow through on its assurances to facilitate humanitarian access to Darfur and to stop the violence against innocent civilians.

The rainy season has made the situation even more difficult, impeding the distribution of food and supplies and spreading diseases such as measles, cholera and polio. USAID estimates that 1 million people may die by the end of the year if the Government of Sudan does not cooperate with the international community to resolve the current humanitarian crisis.

To date, the U.S. Government has provided a total of \$109.4 million of humanitarian assistance to Darfur, including 86,700 metric tons of emergency food assistance worth \$82.9 million, and will continue to be engaged in the region. For more information on USAID's humanitarian efforts in Sudan, please visit our website: www.usaid.gov.

U.S. ISSUES NEW ANTI-DUMPING, COUNTERVAILING DUTY GUIDELINES

Move will streamline duty collection process, Customs says

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has issued streamlined guidelines for the collection of anti-dumping and countervailing duties on agriculture and aquaculture imports.

The new guidelines will produce shorter times for determining duty rates. Shorter processing times will result in

savings for companies that import agriculture and aquaculture products, according to a July 9 CBP press release.

The period between the time Customs collects initial anti-dumping duties on agriculture products and the time the Department of Commerce determines the final antidumping duty rate has been, on average, 18 months, the release said.

Importers are encouraged to review their records to determine if their current anti-dumping and countervailing coverage is adequate, the release said.

A countervailing duty is an increased import duty imposed to offset a subsidy granted to a foreign product, the sale of which in the United States is injuring a U.S. producer of an identical or similar good.

More widely used anti-dumping duties are imposed on imports when it is determined that the foreign good is being "dumped" -- that is, sold, or likely to be sold, in the United States for "less than fair value." Less than fair value means the price of the import is less than the price of the good in the country of origin.

Customs and Border Protection is a part of the Department of Homeland Security.

For more information or to view the complete amended guidelines, visit:
<http://www.cbp.gov>.

Please Note: Most texts and transcripts mentioned in the U.S. Mission Daily Bulletin are available via our homepage www.usmission.ch. Select "Washington File" from the drop-down menu under "News."