

Annual Refugee Conference Celebrates ECDC's 25th Anniversary

Featuring commendations and special observances of ECDC's 25th anniversary of service to African refugees and immigrants, the organization's 14th national conference in

Arlington, Virginia May 5-7 attracted more than 200 leaders of national, state and local organizations and agencies engaged in refugee affairs.

In connection with the conference, Virginia Governor

and other non-profit organizations.

Representatives James P. Moran (D-VA) of Virginia and Mike Honda (D-CA) attended the banquet to extend personal greetings, both lauding ECDC's record of service.

"The breadth and scope of ECDC's programs are an excellent example for all organizations interested in Diaspora communities," said Honda, founder and chairman of the Congressional Ethiopian American Caucus. "It is so important to integrate immigrant communities while preserving their culture, heritage and dignity, and after 25 years, ECDC has built a strong reputation for doing just that."

Conference participants spent an afternoon on Capitol Hill, visiting with their representatives to discuss issues of concern to the refugee and immigrant community.

Under the theme *African Refugees and Immigrants: The Optimism of Generations*, the conference included plenary sessions on the current state of refugee protection and assistance efforts on the African continent; challenges facing the resettlement program in the United States; and strategies for improving program

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From left: Oumar Ba, Daniel Kosten and Kassahun Bisrat speak at a plenary session at ECDC's conference.

Tim Kaine and Arlington County Board Chairman Walter Tejada proclaimed the week of May 5-9 as 'African Refugee and Immigrant Awareness Week'. A commemorative book given at the conference banquet included commendations from key Members of Congress, area mayors

Capitol Hill Visits Present Key Advocacy Goals

As participants in ECDC's annual conference made their traditional visits to Capitol Hill to discuss issues of concern to the African refugee community, they focused on four priority goals: the annual refugee admissions ceilings; protection

and assistance needs; strengthening elements of the UNHCR's durable solutions; and responding to urban refugees.

Noting that more than 30 percent of the 32.9 million people of concern to UNHCR are in sub-Saharan Africa—many warehoused in desolate refugee camps for years—the participants urged that the overall annual admissions ceiling be increased to 100,000, with at least 30,000 allocated to the Africa region.

For the U.S. contribution to refugee protection and assistance efforts—including support for ORR's resettlement programs—the participants recommended an overall funding level for FY 2009 of \$1.7 billion.

Recognizing that resettlement will always be a limited durable solution for the large number of displaced persons worldwide, the participants urged Congress and the executive branch to exert

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World Refugee Day 2008
Refugee Rights are Human Rights is the theme for this year's World Refugee Day observance on June 20 at the National Geographic's Grosvenor Auditorium in Washington, D.C., according to USA for UNHCR. The event will feature a screening of the Academy Award-nominated documentary film *War Dance*. Produced by Sean Fine and Andrea Nix Fine, the film follows a group of Ugandan refugee school children as they overcome nearly insurmountable odds in their quest to participate in the annual Kampala Music Festival.

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*In My Opinion...****Refugee Rights are Human Rights!***

To understand how timely and appropriate is the theme selected for this year's observance of World Refugee Day on June 20, one need only scan this issue of our newsletter or read a major daily newspaper or watch a nightly TV newscast. All are filled with sad and tragic reports of human rights violations and neglect or abuse by despotic leaders more concerned with personal power and privilege than public service.

The theme this year is *Refugee Rights are Human Rights*, prompting what I trust will be a time of reflection on the historic commitments made in such documents as the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol to the Convention, extending its scope beyond earlier limits of time and geography. The Preamble of the Refugee

Convention makes clear that its provisions are firmly rooted in the humanitarian traditions defined in the 1948 Declaration, affirming the United Nation's "profound concern for refugees" and its commitment "to assure refugees the widest possible exercise of these fundamental rights and freedoms."

Even as observances of World Refugee Day unfold around the world in late June, humanitarian agencies will be dealing with a host of Refugee Convention violations, such as those occurring in South Africa as described in the adjacent column, and in Chad, Kenya and other African countries, as reported in the News Briefs of page 6. Those who drafted the Refugee Convention were prescient in anticipating many of the challenges that are today surfacing in such disparate

countries as Kenya and Myanmar and in many African countries hosting thousands of refugees and IDPs.

One of those challenges is the principle of *non-refoulement*, insisting that no contracting state will expel or return ("*refouler*") a refugee against his or her will in any manner whatsoever to a territory where he or she fears persecution. In Kenya, thousands of people who fled the violence that accompanied last December's elections are being driven from camps and back to unsafe home areas. And in Myanmar, people who fled the devastation of Cyclone Nargis are being forced from temporary shelters back to unsafe areas where humanitarian aid is still being blocked by the military government. "It's unconscionable for Burma's generals to force cyclone victims back to their devastated homes," says Brad Adams, Asia director at Human Rights Watch.

Another issue anticipated by the Refugee Convention and of increasing concern to African countries is the burden refugee flows place on asylum countries. That, too, was anticipated by those who drafted the Convention. In the Preamble, they noted that "the grant of asylum may place unduly heavy burdens on certain countries," urging international cooperation to develop responses that would provide some relief. Most of those hosting countries are having trouble fulfilling their responsibilities to their own citizens and are simply unable to accommodate continued refugee flows. Offering resettlement as a "durable solution" is one response the international community has provided, although it has been—and will always remain—of limited benefit considering the numbers of displaced people involved.

Beyond using this year's World Refugee Day observance as a time of reflection, let it also inspire a recommitment to the principle defined in Article 1 of the 1948 declaration: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." Refugee rights are, indeed, human rights!



Tsehaye Teferra, Ph.D.

Xenophobic Violence In South Africa Uproots Thousands of Migrants

A United Nations human rights expert expressed dismay in late May about the recent spate of xenophobic attacks on foreigners and ethnic minorities in South Africa, urging authorities to launch a comprehensive discussion about how to better integrate migrants in the country.

"Only a cultural and ethical approach can address the deep-rooted problems of racism and discrimination and promote long-term tolerance and living together among all communities," said Doudou Diène, the UN's Special Reporter on racism.

Some 42,000 migrants, including refugees and asylum-seekers, are sheltered in 95 makeshift sites, mostly in Gauteng and Western Cape provinces. Most of the displaced people are undocumented migrants from Mozambique, Malawi and other African countries, some of whom have since returned to their countries of origin, or to a third country, according to a UNHCR spokesperson.

Among those affected are thousands of refugees and asylum-seekers from Zimbabwe, Somalia, Ethiopia and other African countries, whose homes were destroyed and businesses looted and burned.

There are more than 128,000 registered refugees and asylum-seekers in South Africa, coming from a wide variety of countries, the spokesperson said.

Capitol Hill Visits...

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greater influence toward strengthening repatriation and integration efforts in African countries.

Noting that hundreds of African refugees are stranded in urban areas of major African cities, where they are essentially invisible and underserved by humanitarian agencies, the visitors recommended that Congress, the Department of State and UNHCR mount an aggressive effort to identify and approve for resettlement to the United States those who are not able to repatriate to their home countries or integration into the mainstream of their host countries.

ACC Arlington's Peer Network Promotes HIV/AIDS Prevention

Of the 35,314 new cases of HIV/AIDS infections diagnosed among American adults, adolescents and children in 2006, 73 percent (25,928) were among males, only 26 percent (9,252) among females, according to a recent report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

And while blacks, or African Americans, made up only 13 percent of the population in the 33 states with long-

term, confidential name-based HIV reporting, they accounted for almost half of the diagnoses. Of that number, 67 percent was attributed to male-to-male sexual contact. Among newly-diagnosed female cases, 80 percent were attributed to high-risk heterosexual contact.

It is that group which is targeted by the CDC's Real AIDS Prevention Project (RAPP), a community-level initiative using peer network volunteers to

encourage greater condom use and to promote other safe-sex behaviors.

Appropriating the long-established communications theory that people are more likely to adopt new behaviors that have already been accepted by others who are similar to them and whom they respect, ECDC's African Community Center (ACC) in Arlington, Virginia, is administering a RAPP program using African newcomers to reach the local African community.

Now in its fourth year, the program served an estimated 250 community members last year and currently has 18 trained volunteers representing various African countries and speaking a variety of languages and dialects.

"Discussing sexual issues is difficult and embarrassing in all cultures," says ACC project manager Jeanne Tshibungu, "but probably more so among Africans. Since our peer networkers are part of these communities, outreach has been much more successful."

Beware of Internet Offers of Migration Aid, IOM Warns

Responding to a recent surge of fraudulent schemes on the Internet offering migration assistance, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has issued a warning, urging extreme caution in analyzing and responding to suspicious emails. "These schemes seek to extract money from migrants by claiming their program is under the auspices of the destination country or from the United Nations, lawyers' associations or other humanitarian organization," IOM says. "Be extremely wary of any such offers, particularly where money is requested to be sent in advance.

The schemes falsely promise visa facilitation and transportation assistance, resettlement opportunities, job openings and recruitment abroad. A list of names being used by some of the scams is available on the IOM website at:

www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/pid/1634.

Casey Nguyen Assumes Leadership Role at ECDC's Las Vegas Branch

Casey Nguyen has assumed duties as program director of ECDC's African Community Center in Las Vegas, Nevada.



Casey Nguyen

She is a former resettlement department supervisor with the Alliance for African Assistance (AAA) in San Diego, and a graduate of the University of Maine with major studies in international affairs and political science and a minor in economics.

Her new assignment represents the latest progression in a career commitment made when she was "old enough to engage in proper listening," she says.

What she listened to were stories—sometimes plaintive, always courageous and inspirational—told by her father about his personal pilgrimage as a refugee from Vietnam. A former member of

the South Vietnam's naval service, he arrived in the United States as a young, single man, a complete stranger in a strange land, supported only by a sponsor family living in Maine.

Those stories prompted Casey's commitment to work in refugee affairs, leading her first to serve as a volunteer with AAA's resettlement program, moving quickly to a position as a case manager, then to department supervisor.

"My father often told me fascinating stories about his country of origin and why he had to leave his home and come to America," she said. "He experienced isolation and loneliness, with no family or common connection with those around him. The worst part was that there was no formal resettlement process, and he was left to his own devices"

He learned English by watching Sesame Street on TV. He worked in Maine paper mills, established a family, nurtured Casey—and her brother Justin—to adulthood and through college.

"I vowed that one day I would work to ensure that refugees would be more welcome in our society and have a better

chance for long-term success," Casey said. "I did not want to see the look of sadness in my father's eyes or on any other people who have had to overcome so much. In the last five years, I have been able to truly make an impact and see some of my goals through. In Las Vegas, I hope to continue achieving my goals, transform the way refugees are regarded and to provide the best possible services to our refugee clients."

ACC Las Vegas is one of three ECDC branch offices and among 11 resettlement affiliates located in major cities around the country. The other branch offices are in Denver and Arlington. Of the 1,940 refugees resettled by the network last year, 149 were served by the Las Vegas office.

ECDC and its affiliates are part of a far more structured refugee service network than was available when Casey's father arrived. Supported by the Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, the program last year resettled 48,281 refugees.

With Support from UNHCR...

Dublin Convention Adopts Restrictions on Cluster Bombs

When more than 100 countries adopted the Cluster Munitions Convention in Dublin, Ireland, on May 30, few people were more pleased than Berihu Messele, an Ethiopian who lost both of his legs in a cluster bomb attack on the city of Mekele in 1998.

Among other gratified observers at the conference were UNHCR representatives who have focused on the issue for many years because of its impact on refugees and internally displaced people in conflict and post-conflict zones.

Describing the cluster bombs as “particularly insidious weapons,” UNHCR Representative in Ireland Manuel Jordao said the agency is often confronted with situations where conflicts have ended, but it is still impossible for refugees to return home, work on productive land, or resume normal life again.

“The scourge of these contaminated areas is terrible,” he said, noting that many of the “bomblets” fail to explode on impact, creating virtual minefields for years, killing or maiming people long after a conflict has ended. Children are particularly vulnerable, often mistaking the sub-munitions for toys.

“Countries very far apart have come

together. We have a very good feeling that if this cooperation continues, we’ll succeed in saving lives,” said Messele.

The treaty, aimed at ending the manufacture, use and stockpiling of cluster bombs, is scheduled to be signed in December in Oslo, according to a UNHCR report by Steven O’Brien in Dublin.

His report said that England reversed its opposition, but the United States, the Russian Federation and China still do not support the treaty.



Cluster Bomb Victim Berihu Messele

RefugeeWorks Photo Contest to Highlight Contributions

To illustrate and promote the contributions refugee newcomers make as they enter the nation’s mainstream, *RefugeeWorks* is conducting a “Refugees in the Workforce Photography Contest,” with winners to receive scholarships to attend one of the organization’s 2009 Employment Training Institutes.

“From cabinet makers to bakers and microbiologists, refugees contribute to the vitality and diversity of today’s workforce everyday,” says an announcement of the contest, requesting photos showing refugee workers engaged by supportive companies. “The winning photograph will be used as the centerpiece in a professional poster promoting refugees in the workforce.”

RefugeeWorks was created in 1997 as a program of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), one of the ten national voluntary agencies responsible for resettling refugees into the country each year. The same year, the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement selected *RefugeeWorks* as the government’s principle training and technical assistance provider for employment and self-sufficiency.

For information and instructions on the contest, visit: www.refugeeworks.org.

Somali Activist-Educator Receives HRW’s Medal of Liberty Award

Hawa Aden Mohamed, a Somali activist-educator who founded the Refugee Women’s Relief and Development Center, received the 2008 Roger N. Baldwin Medal of Liberty Award presented by Human Rights First at a private reception in New York in mid-May.

Honored for her work to improve the quality of life for Somali women and girls, she is currently serving as executive director of the Galkayo Education for Peace and Development (GECPD), a



Hawa Aden Mohamed

community-based organization in the Puntland area of Somalia.

“Hawa Aden Mohamed has helped thousands of women and girls get access to education in what

many would consider a failed state,” said Maureen Byrnes, executive director of Human Rights First. “But she has also helped challenge pervasive problems of violence against women in a setting where they are most vulnerable—one of conflict.”

Before the award ceremony, Mohamed met in Washington, D.C., and New York with international organizations, elected officials and policymakers to speak about the situation in Somalia.

“We asked the international community to hear women’s voices as part of the process of peace and reconciliation in Somalia,” said Mohamed.

Mohamed has dedicated her life to advancing the health and education of Somali women and girls, to providing both emergency and long-term assistance to internally-displaced Somali

families, and to abolishing the practice of female genital mutilation.

Since it’s founding in 2000, GECPD operates primary and vocational education programs for impoverished, displaced, and minority women and girls and works within communities to promote women’s rights, including combating the grave problems of gender-based violence and female genital mutilation.

Named in honor of the principal founder of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the award is presented by Human Rights First every other year to a human rights organization or activist outside of the United States that has made a distinguished contribution to the protection and promotion of human rights.

In alternate years the ACLU selects a U.S.-based winner.

Conference Celebrates Milestone...

[Continued from page 1]

development and delivery. Workshop sessions dealt with such subjects as healing strategies for victims of torture and human trafficking; communication across cultural lines and intergenerational challenges among African immigrant families; effective models of community health education; and micro-business opportunities.

Dr. Calvin O. Butts, pastor of New York's Abyssinian Baptist Church and president of the State University of New York College at Old Westbury delivered the keynote address, commending ECDC's leadership role in African refugee affairs and urging greater U.S. involvement in efforts to end refugee-producing conflicts on the continent.

Maureen Bunyon, news anchor for WJLA-TV in the District of Columbia, described her personal and professional journey as a young immigrant from Aruba to the highest ranks of broadcast journalism.

Merrill Smith, Director of International Planning and Analysis at the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, discussed activism and advocacy strategies at a luncheon session prior to afternoon visits to Capitol Hill.

Other participants included David Siegel, acting director of ORR; Thomas Albrecht, deputy regional representative of UNHCR; Barbara Strack, director of refugee affairs at USCIS; Mary Lange, representing Margaret McKelvey, director for assistance to Africa at the Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration; and Kathleen Newland, co-founder and director of the Migration Policy Institute.

ECDC President Tsehaye Teferra described highlights of the organization's growth and development and presented special awards to the following individuals and organizations: Linda Thomas-Greenfield, nominated as the next U.S. Ambassador to Liberia, a former official with PRM and currently Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs; Irene Lee, a senior program associate of the Annie E. Casey Foundation who provided ECDC its first foundation award while serving with the Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation; Henok Tesfaye, a native of Ethiopia who obtained a loan through ECDC's Enterprise Development Group subsidiary and now owns businesses in the District of Columbia; the International Rescue Committee; and to the Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago, a refugee resettlement affiliate of ECDC.



At award banquet are Congressman Mike Honda and Special Assistant Selam Mulugeta, with ECDC President Tsehaye Teferra.



Rep. Jim Moran



Dr. Calvin O. Butts



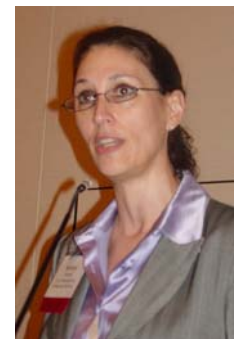
David Siegel



Kathleen Newland



Thomas Albrecht



Barbara Strack



Linda Thomas-Greenfield, a senior African affairs official with the State Department's who has been nominated to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, receives ECDC's Distinguished Service Award from Allene Wright and Tsehaye Teferra.

NEWS BRIEFS

USCIS Introduces Revised Form for TPS Applications

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced in late May that it has revised the Application for Temporary Protected Status (Form I-821), adding new questions designed to enhance the agency’s ability to determine an applicant’s eligibility.

The new form becomes effective on June 27. Until that date, USCIS will accept previous editions of the form.

Form I-821 is the application used by nationals of a country currently designated for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). The form is used by individuals to apply for TPS for the first time, as well as by aliens applying to re-register for TPS. During the development of the revised form last year, the public was notified and given an opportunity to comment on the proposed changes.

Violence in Eastern Chad Curbs UNHCR Activities

Expressing concern and dismay about escalating violence in Eastern Chad, including a fatal attack on security guards near a refugee camp and more vehicle hijackings, UNHCR said in late May that they had been forced to reduce staff movements and aid activities as precautionary measures.

Two guards were killed and two others wounded in an attack by local Chadians, UNHCR spokesperson Jennifer Pagonis told journalists in Geneva. One of the attackers was killed and another badly wounded. That attack followed two hijacking incidents a day earlier near the Touloum refugee camp.

Kenyan Election Refugees Return From Uganda

After fleeing to Uganda to escape the inter-ethnic violence that followed last year’s presidential election in Kenya, more than 300 refugees returned to the border towns of Busia and Malaba in mid-May. They were among some 12,000 Kenyans who fled to Uganda to escape the post-poll violence, which left

an estimated 350,000 people displaced and 1,200 dead.

A further 207 refugees crossed the border at Malaba. The returnees were expected to make their own way to their final destinations, either in the two towns or further afield, according to a report from UNHCR.

New Camp in Chad Will House Refugees from CAR

To accommodate a new wave of refugees fleeing violence in northern areas of the Central African Republic (CAR), UNHCR has established a new camp in Chad, deeper inside the country than the camp in Dembo where they began arriving in January through March.

The new Moula camp is about 90 miles from the border and will provide the refugees, most of whom are farmers, with about six acres of cultivable land. An estimated 32,500 CAR refugees are housed in other camps in Chad.

UNHCR Resumes Assisted Returns for Liberians

Nearly 900 Liberians have returned to their homeland from other West African countries since UNHCR resumed a voluntary repatriation program in mid-

April. The agency formally ended its Liberia repatriation program in June last year, after bringing back more than 100,000 refugees—half of them from Ghana—in slightly less than three years. Another 50,000 returned home on their own, encouraged by the restoration of peace and democracy.

But a decision was taken to renew the assisted repatriation program during a meeting in April between UNHCR and the governments of Ghana and Liberia.

The meeting followed disturbances a month earlier in Ghana involving refugees at Buduburam camp near Accra, who were seeking resettlement in a third country or repatriation with a vastly increased cash grant.

UN Delegation to Visit Five African Nations

A U.N. Security Council delegation began a five-country visit to Africa in late May to obtain a first-hand assessment of the crises engulfing Somalia, Sudan’s Darfur region and neighboring Chad and to help with efforts to promote peace and reconciliation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Côte d’Ivoire.

The delegation was scheduled to start its 10-day mission in Djibouti with talks between representatives of the Government and the opposition in neighboring Somalia. The delegation planned to spend three days in Sudan, including a visit to El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur.

FY 2008 African Refugee Admissions

As of May 31, 2008 • Ceiling for FY 2008 is 16,000

Country of Origin	Refugees	Country of Origin	Refugees
Burundi	2,098	Mauritania	20
Cameroon	2	Niger	1
Congo	41	Nigeria	29
Dem. Rep. Congo	245	Rwanda	32
Eritrea	124	Sierra Leone	50
Ethiopia	207	Somalia	1,377
Gambia	6	Sudan	273
Guinea	2	Togo	106
Ivory Coast	29	Uganda	17
Liberia	871	TOTAL	5,530

Source: U.S. Department of State, PRM

Women’s Commission Honors Refugee Activists at Annual Luncheon

The Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children honored refugee activists from Liberia, Sri Lanka and Chechnya at its 2008 Voices of Courage Awards luncheon in early May at the



Kula Borbor

Mandarin Oriental Hotel in New York City.

This year’s honorees are engaged in efforts to end sexual violence against refugee women and girls.

Kulah Borbor was honored for her work as an International Rescue Committee (IRC) peer educator in Monrovia, Liberia, and for spearheading the West Point Women for Health and Development Organization. For three years, she has been raising awareness and mobilizing communities to stand up against violence against women and girls.

Much of her work is devoted to stopping the practice of female genital mutilation, common in Liberia, and to bring rapists of girl children to justice.

Gistam Sakaeva is a pioneer in fighting violence against women in Chechnya, helping survivors find safety and

rebuild their lives. Her most courageous initiative is working with perpetrators of violence against women who are serving jail time, most of them for honor killings—the killing of female relatives for “dishonoring” the family reputation.

Gistam also works to raise awareness and change harmful attitudes in the general population and offers a range of trainings to empower women.

Shreen Abdul Saroor founded two women’s organizations in Sri Lanka in response to that country’s endemic sexual violence and human rights abuses.

The Mannar Women’s Development Foundation helps Muslim and Tamil women displaced by violence, and Mannar Women for Human Rights and Democracy seeks to bring international attention to sexual violence in the war-torn areas of the north and east, where hundreds of thousands of internally displaced people live.

The event, hosted by CBS News Correspondent Lesley Stahl, raised almost \$600,000 and was attended by more than 500 guests, according to a report on the Commission’s web site. For information about the Commission’s work, visit: www.womenscommission.org.

SEED Honors ECDC President Tsehaye Teferra

Describing ECDC President Tsehaye Teferra as “a distinguished role model to Diaspora Ethiopians, Africans and others,” the Society of Ethiopians Established in Diaspora (SEED) honored him at the organization’s 16th annual award dinner at the Marriott Georgetown Hotel in Washington, D.C., on May 25.

The salute recognized Dr. Teferra’s 30-year commitment to public service, education and civic responsibilities during “a distinguished career that has touched the lives of countless students in his Ethiopian homeland; enhanced awareness and appreciation for Ethiopian history, culture and traditions; and enabled thousands of refugees and immigrants to establish new lives in America.”

He was among seven adult Diaspora Ethiopians honored at the event, which also honored recent Ethiopian high school and college graduates for their academic and leadership achievements.

SEED was established in 1993 to recognize Ethiopians who are engaged in significant leadership roles in the United States and to encourage “Ethiopians in Diaspora to strive for excellence and to become productive model citizens where they are.”

Dr. Teferra’s career highlights include graduating from Haile Selassie I University in Addis Ababa with a degree in Ethiopian languages and literature; teaching students at the Addis Ababa Teachers Training Institute and conducting cultural

and language training courses for Peace Corps volunteers in Ethiopia; being named a UNESCO Fellow who came to the United States to study linguistics and earned Master’s and Ph.D. degrees from Georgetown University, teaching at Catholic University and the Foreign Service Institute; and establishing ECDC in 1983, which today includes the Center for African Refugees and Immigrants, the Enterprise Development Group, and the Axumite Heritage Foundation.

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Bush Calls for International Monitors To Observe Zimbabwe's Runoff Vote

President Bush called on the African Union, the United Nations and other international organizations to "blanket" Zimbabwe with election and human rights monitors during the June 27 presidential runoff election, decrying what he described as the continued use of government-sponsored violence to impede campaign activities of opposition figures.

Issued on June 2 as Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe attended a United Nations World Food Security conference in Rome, Bush's statement also expressed dismay about "misguided government policies that are projected to result in one of the worst crop harvests in Zimbabwean history."

"While Robert Mugabe makes political statements in Rome, his people continue to face empty markets at home," the President said. "The United States currently feeds more than 1 million Zimbab-



A halt to CARE's aid activities as President Mugabe discusses food security at a conference in Rome is a "cruel irony," the United States says.

weans and spent more than \$170 million on food assistance in Zimbabwe last year. We will continue these efforts to prevent government-induced starvation in Zimbabwe."

The country's food crisis is heightened by Mugabe's recent suspension of CARE's operations in the country, which is effectively depriving more than 110,000 citizens of food aid, according to a report by Stephen Kaufman, a staff writer with America.gov.

State Department spokesman Sean McCormack called the decision "a tragedy," noting that CARE is one of the largest NGOs working in the country and provides assistance, including distributing food to Zimbabwe's most vulnerable people, including orphans, the sick and the elderly.

Mugabe accused CARE of supporting the political opposition ahead of the runoff vote between President Mugabe and challenger Morgan Tsvangirai. A CARE official denied the accusations, saying the organization's assistance is "nonpolitical and nonreligious" and speculated the government could be angry at "our insistence on assisting people across the political divide." International observers estimate that four million people, or one-third of the country's population, need food aid.

"That is a far cry from Zimbabwe's proud history as a net exporter of food," McCormack said. "It used to be one of the bread baskets of southern Africa."

News Flash

U.S. Announces Latest Contribution to UNHCR

The Department of State announced in early June an additional contribution of \$110.3 million to the refugee protection and assistance programs of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The money will fund relief programs for refugees and other displaced people around the world, including in Darfur, countries in the Great Lakes region of Africa, Colombia, the Thai-Burma border, and many other areas. Historically the largest single donor to UNHCR, the latest allocation boosts the total U.S. contributions this year to \$376.8 million.

Here are the contributions from other top-ten donor countries as of May 9: Japan, \$101,252,902; Sweden, \$92,275,556; European Commission, \$75,989,107; Netherlands, \$75,494,147; Norway, \$47,751,888; Germany, \$38,177,249; Italy, \$39,946,484; Canada, \$33,409,634; and Denmark, \$33,216,928. Nearly all of UNHCR's operational funds are provided through such voluntary contributions.

CALENDAR

June 28 — A celebration of Southern Sudanese culture, cuisine and arts will be held at the Southern Sudanese Community Center in San Diego from 3-5 p.m. SSCSD Executive Director Dep Nhial Tunay says the event will also offer "surprise appearances by celebrities and world class athletes."

July 28-31 — The 2008 National Migration Conference co-sponsored by CLINIC and USCCB will be held at the Hilton Washington Hotel in Washington, D.C. Under the theme *Renewing Hope, Seeking Justice*, the event will feature sessions covering a wide range of migration-related topics. For information visit: www.cliniclegal.org.

September 25-26 — The 2008 National Refugee and Immigrant Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Chicago-Mart Plaza Hotel in Chicago. The conference will address issues of concern to refugee and immigrant children and their families, schools and organizations engaged in cultural adjustment. For information, visit the website at: www.thecentweb.org.

RESOURCES

Youth Arts and Voices is the title of a new web resource recently launched by BRYCS. It showcases the creative contribution and artistic talent of refugee and immigrant youth from around the country. For information, visit: www.brycs.org.

MPI's Data Hub has updated its popular fact sheets on the foreign born residing in each state and the nation overall with 2006 data. It includes the most recent data available from the Census Bureau. Two additional factsheets on the foreign born—Workforce and Income & Poverty—are expected to be posted soon. The data are available at: www.migrationinformation.org.

Asylee Eligibility for Resettlement Assistance is a new guide produced by CLINIC under a grant from ORR. Visit: www.cliniclegal.org.