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COMBATING TERRORISM THROUGH EDUCATION: THE NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIAN EXPERIENCE

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COMBATING TERRORISM THROUGH EDUCATION: THE NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIAN EXPERIENCE

TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 2005

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Richard G. Lugar, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Lugar and Nelson.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is called to order.

Today, the Foreign Relations Committee meets to discuss American education assistance programs in the Near East and South Asia and their contribution to United States national security. Outdated and poorly funded education systems in many Near Eastern and South Asian countries have led to an education deficit. This gap has contributed to the rise of extremist ideologies that have provided fertile ground for terrorist recruitment during the last decade. It is imperative that we focus sufficient attention and resources on promoting strong education systems as a way to counter extremism at its roots.

The 2003 Arab Human Development Report by the United Nations Development Program highlights this "knowledge deficit" and concludes that overhauling the region's education systems should be a critical priority. It notes that these changes should come from within the region, drawing from its rich cultural, linguistic, and intellectual heritages.

The lack of educational opportunities for women in the Near East and South Asia is of particular concern. Statistics show that while 73 percent of men in Arab States are literate, only 50 percent of women in these countries can read and write. In Pakistan, only 39 percent of women are literate, compared to 63 percent of males, with the largest disparities in rural areas. Finding ways to encourage the education of girls and women, while respecting cultural norms, is crucial to fostering economic growth, democracy, and stability.

The Bush administration and the Congress have established the Middle East Partnership Initiative, the Millennium Challenge Ac-

count, and the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative to promote reform. These efforts complement our bilateral education assistance programs in countries such as Egypt, Morocco, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

Today, we want to assess the effectiveness of these efforts and ask what can be done better. About 3 percent of total United States foreign aid to Near Eastern countries, (excluding Israel), is devoted to education. Can we achieve better results if we shift aid resources from traditional forms of economic assistance to education? The United States recently has tripled its education spending in Pakistan, where the connections between the education system and the development of extremism are particularly acute. We need to assess whether national security benefits could be achieved by taking similar steps in other nations.

I encourage the administration to devise and implement programs under the new authorities provided by the National Intelligence Reform Act, signed in December, to expand educational and cultural exchanges. Last October, the Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing to examine the impact of our visa policies on foreign students studying in the United States. Several leaders of prominent United States universities testified on the benefits of international educational exchange programs and on the importance of maintaining these programs despite new visa restrictions. The committee hosted two roundtables that focused on ways to ameliorate the problems of visa delays without sacrificing national security. I believe it is essential that we expand student exchange programs, not scale them back, as they not only serve our national security interests, but also enrich our society and our culture.

In June of last year, I introduced Senate Resolution 375, supporting reform and modernization initiatives in the Greater Middle East, including a Twenty-First Century Trust. This resolution acknowledged that advancement in educational opportunities has yet to reach large percentages of the people in the Near East and South Asia regions. It further noted that reform and modernization must come from the people of the region, and cannot be imposed from the outside.

Next month, an Education Ministerial meeting in Jordan will bring together leaders from the G–8 and the Greater Middle East and North Africa to address challenges of modernizing education through collaborative partnerships. I applaud this as an excellent example of regional coordination.

We have two distinguished panels for today's discussion. On the first panel, we will hear testimony from Dr. Bassem Awadallah, former Minister of Planning and newly appointed Finance Minister of Jordan; Shahid Javed Burki, former Finance Minister of Pakistan, and now a consultant with Nathan Associates; Dr. Samina Ahmed, South Asia Project Director for the International Crisis Group, based in Islamabad, Pakistan; and Mr. Frank Method, Director of International Education Policy and Systems at the Research Triangle Institute. Each of these distinguished witnesses has been active in education reform efforts in the Near East and South Asia. The committee looks forward to their unique perspectives.

On the second panel, we will hear from two administration officials. Mrs. Liz Cheney is the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs and the point-person for the Middle East Partnership Initiative. Mr. James Kunder is the Assistant Administrator for Asia and the Near East at USAID. Both Ms. Cheney and Mr. Kunder bring a wealth of expertise to today's topic. We welcome them to the committee.

Let me note the distinguished presence of the Senator from Florida. Do you have an opening thought or comment?

STATEMENT OF HON. BILL NELSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Senator NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I do. First of all, I want to thank you for recognizing the importance of this subject to our Nation.

We've read in the newspapers recently about Pakistan, for example, wanting to purchase F–16s. It's not in the $3 billion package over 5 years that has been promised to support Pakistan. There's other money in there for P–3 aircraft, TOW–2A antiarmor guided missiles, and Phalanx close-in weapons systems. All of that does not include the F–16s. But of the $1½ billion that is set aside for domestic assistance, only $100 million over 5 years is suggested by the administration for education reform; $200 to $300 million is set aside, to go directly to budget support in Pakistan. That means that the Pakistani Government can use it for virtually anything they want.

And it seems to me—and thank goodness you are sensitive to this, as our chairman, recognizing the desperate need for education in, not only Pakistan, but other areas, other countries in that area—of the money that we give to them, it is one of the greatest benefits to the free world to elevate the educational awareness and attainment of people in that part of the world?

And so, in the course of this hearing—and I must admit, I've got to go to another one; we're confirming the Deputy Secretary of Defense in another committee—but I wish the panel would address: How big is the education program in Afghanistan by comparison to Pakistan? What is your estimation of the amount of money that Pakistan could use to truly reform its education system over the next 5 years? And if there were real reform in the Pakistani education system, what types of jobs will these young people be able to find with the new skills?

And perhaps the second panel could discuss: How much does the Pakistani Government actually spend on education annually? What is the percentage of their budget for that? And if you ranked the priorities in Pakistan, where would education be on that scale? And then, overall, why doesn't our aid to Pakistan support that goal of education?

I must admit that in a couple of trips to Pakistan, in discussions with a number of officials there, it seems like we've got a long way to go and that we could better further the interests of the United States if we'd be serious about getting the money, not to the government, but making sure that it gets right down there to the level of education.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much, Senator Nelson. The panel can be reassured that you start with strong bipartisan support this morning, as well as a desire to hear more.

I will ask that you testify in the order that I introduced you. If it is possible, please either give your statements or summarize them within approximately a 10-minute period of time. The Chair will not be unduly rigorous about that, because we've come to hear you. At the same time, we want to have ample opportunity, as Members appear, for questions. We also have a second panel. As life goes on, we will have rollcall votes coming along at 11:30 or 11:45. So, we can accomplish a great deal in that period of time, but I'm hopeful that you will help me in that respect.

Let me, first of all, call upon you, Dr. Bassem. We are delighted that you are here. We congratulate you on your new assignment in your country.

STATEMENT OF BASSEM AWADALLAH, MINISTER OF FINANCE, HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN, AMMAN, JORDAN

Dr. AWADALLAH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I am honored and privileged to represent the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan this morning in front of you, and I wish to thank you and to express our gratitude, and that of His Majesty the King and the Government of Jordan, to you, personally, for taking the initiative to look at reform and development in the Middle East and to pay a lot of attention to the need for a Marshall Plan for the reform and the development of our part of the world.

In particular, your emphasis on education is extremely important, and we very much value and appreciate the emphasis that you have given to this, and this hearing, which we are proud to participate in.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Dr. AWADALLAH. Mr. Chairman, I have taken the liberty of sending the testimony that I'm going to make, and the remarks that I'm going to make, in to your office, and you most probably have a copy of it.

The CHAIRMAN. We do, and it will be published in full. And that will be true for each of the statements that you have written. They will be published in full in the record; so that if you choose to summarize, please know that your full text will be a part of our hearing record.

Dr. AWADALLAH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I will depart from the written statement. I will just use some relevant parts of it and try to limit myself to the 10-minute——

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Dr. AWADALLAH [continuing]. Deadline that you've given.

Mr. Chairman, the most important point, which you referred to in your introductory statement, is about the demography and the demographic explosion that we will face in our part of the region.

Some statistics. By 2010, we will have 146 million people who will seek employment in our part of the world, 185 million by the year 2020. With unemployment rates now at about 15 percent, we will need to create close to 50 million jobs in the coming 5 years, and 100 million jobs by the year 2020. This is doubling the current level of employment just within the first two decades of this cen-

tury. So when we speak about reform in the Middle East, it's not because this particular administration of the United States has paid attention to it, it's because of the need for reform; because if we do not have reform, there is no future for our part of the world. And it starts with educational reform.

In Jordan, we have a population of 5.35 million people. Our population is growing at 2.4 percent per annum. And we have a demographic composition of a predominantly young people; 72 percent of our people are under the age of 29, 60 percent of our people are under the age of 25, and 51 percent of our people are under the age of 18.

Now, our ability in Jordan to transform into a knowledged-based economy and to join the ranks of the more advanced nations will be significantly determined by the contribution capacity of the young and the growing population; and there is only one way to do that, and that is educational reform.

This is exactly what the Government of Jordan, under the leadership of His Majesty the King, did in 1999 upon his accession to the throne. Through a public/private partnership, he got together more than 180 people to come up with a blueprint for reform for Jordan, to accelerate reform; hence, the homegrown nature of that kind of reform.

We identified what we needed to do in our public schools. We identified the need to introduce kindergartens for early-childhood development in public schooling. We identified the need to introduce English in grade one in our public schools, and not in grade five. And we identified the need to bring computer skills to the curriculum of our school system.

Five years later, we have spent more than 250 million U.S. dollars. More than 85 million U.S. dollars came from the Senate and the House and the administration of the United States in support of this initiative. And we are proud to say that our educational reform not only includes brick and mortar and the construction of new schools, but it includes the training of teachers, it includes the development of e-learning capabilities, the revamping of our curricula to introduce e-content. And the introduction of an e-learning platform that was designed by a Jordanian company, and now that is being exported to Saudi Arabia, to Bahrain, and even to the New Jersey system of education.

So, we are proud of the amount of achievement that we have made over the past few years, and we have started to see the results, in terms of the achievement of the public school.

Perhaps most importantly, Mr. Chairman, we had a dichotomy in our society between those who had and those who did not have. Those who had, could afford to go to private schools, could afford to have personal computers and learn English, and even French, in their private schools; and those who didn't—and those are the majority of the people of Jordan—had to go to a public schooling system, where they did not see a computer throughout their education, until they graduated, and where they only received English at grade five. Today, that dichotomy is being addressed, and equal opportunity is being given to everybody in Jordan through an education system. We believe that that's where equal opportunity

starts, this is where reform starts, and this is where pure and good governance comes along.

Mr. Chairman, one of the major ideas that we initially started with, which was the introduction of computers and English language in public schools, was not very favorably accepted by our people. They thought that this was being imposed on us, and, Why do we need to introduce computers, when kids did not have milk in school? They said, "Instead of the computers, why don't you have milk?" Five years later, there's a tremendous buy-in by the people of Jordan for the need for educational reform. They all know, they all realize now, that through the educational reform initiative, their kids are being offered equal opportunity, and that if you offer them computers, it is not mutually exclusive to offering them milk or anything else in schools.

So the public buy-in and the popular support for reform initiatives is extremely important to sustain these initiatives. Beyond just writing about them or testifying about these initiatives in front of you, our own people need to see value for these reforms, they need to realize that these reforms are going to be reflected on their lives in a positive and tangible manner.

I am proud to say that the partnership we've had with the U.S. Government and with the U.S. Congress over the last 5 years has been a very, very positive factor in accelerating the pace of the reforms, and people in our part of the world are realizing that.

When opposition groups in our Parliament, the Islamic Action Front, accused us of importing the educational e-curricula from the United States, we stood tall, and we said, "We developed this curricula. We, in Jordan. We did it in 1999, even before this administration came to power. We did it in order to focus our minds and our entire mental ability on reforming the educational system in Jordan. Yes, it is true, we got the American taxpayers' money to help us fund these programs, and the American administration and the Congress were very positive and understanding and supportive in this effort. But it was a homegrown effort of educational reform supported by external powers?" And this is extremely important to continue to remember.

One last thing, Mr. Chairman. In the year 2000, in Davos, in Switzerland, His Majesty met with a group of American companies, U.S. corporations, led by Cisco—by John Chambers, of Cisco. They've identified Jordan as one of the areas which can be an example for other developing countries in harnessing IT for educational purposes. As a result, an initiative grew. It's called the Jordan Education Initiative. We have, today, 35 United States—35 corporations, many of them are United States corporations, including Intel and Microsoft, that are participating in this public/private partnership to build 100 Discovery Schools in Jordan. I hope you will have the time, on your next visit to Jordan, to come and visit these schools, which have become a real shining example of what educational reform is all about.

This initiative is currently being modeled in the Palestinian areas. In Davos, in January of this year, we met with the Minister of Finance of Palestine and with Cisco and with representatives of the MEPI program in the State Department, and we all agreed that this example should be replicated in the Palestinian areas.

And it is. It is also being replicated in Egypt, and it will be replicated in Bahrain in order to introduce a model house, if you will, of what educational reform products will be like in 5 years' time. It will show people how achievement in schools will be able to change their lives and to offer them opportunities.

Obviously, the main challenge remains, Mr. Chairman, for us to find the jobs and to matchmake between the educational output and the input that is required by the labor markets. This is something that requires governments, private sector, and academicians and universities, in particular, vocational training centers, as well, to cooperate together in order to identify what are the needs, what are the projected needs in the economies of the Middle East, and how the educational reform process can help prepare all the young minds, all these big numbers that I mentioned at the start of this testimony, in order to get them the jobs, to give them hope, to give them a vested interest in the moderation and the stability of our region. Failing that, we are going to have a major catastrophe. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement and additional material submitted by Dr. Awadallah follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. BASSEM AWADALLAH, MINISTER OF FINANCE, HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN, AMMAN, JORDAN

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to share with you my thoughts on educational reform in the Middle East, the nexus between education and terrorism, and our efforts in Jordan to place education at the center of the reform and development agenda. To be sure, the Middle East is faced with the immense challenge of its demographic trends: By 2010 some 146 million workers will seek employment, 185 million by 2020. With unemployment rates now at about 15 percent, the ambitious goal of absorbing unemployed workers in addition to the new job entrants implies the need to create close to 50 million jobs in the coming 5 years and 100 million jobs by 2020; that is, doubling the current level of employment within the first two decades of this century.

But within this stark statistic lies the hope of regional renaissance. Regardless of natural resource endowment, the future of the region will hinge on its ability to harness its human potential. Human resources, nurtured and provided with the opportunity to produce and innovate is the only way toward closing the knowledge and development gap that currently exists.

Hatred, bigotry, and violence are not caused by the lack of access to knowledge, but rather, by the lack of opportunity. And education is central in allowing people to seek opportunity.

Education must reflect a culture, a distinct understanding of the role of the individual and that of society. Closed societies with a reference point long lost in the past cannot teach knowledge as culture, but rather teach dogma as truism.

This, Mr. Chairman, should be, in my modest opinion, the starting point and driver for any educational reform effort in the region. The central role that education plays is not lost on anyone in the region—we live in young societies that yearn for it, whether through popular culture, media, or how we used to do it when I was in school, through reading.

Terror and ideology are taught as doctrine in many places around the world. But helping build schools and pay for more teachers is not the solution—it is part of it though. The solution is the creation of an incentive-based system of assistance, particularly in education, in which countries modernizing their educational systems, encouraging creative thinking, problem solving, and trusting their students to make their own judgments about what is right and wrong are asssisted.

There are three principal difficulties that challenge education in East Asia today: (i) The poor quality of basic education; (ii) limited access to educational opportunities, especially for girls; and (iii) the inadequate relevance to economic, social, and health needs.

For our part in Jordan, the primacy of education in our development process has long been established, and we have long sought to invest heavily in our youth. The focus of Jordan's human resource development covers wide-ranging activities includ-

ing public and higher education, vocational and technical training, and youth development. We find a pressing need to incorporate enhanced levels of student learning capabilities to include analytical skills, team-based activity, and computer literacy at every stage of the education system, enabling citizens to become increasingly highly educated, broadly skilled, adaptable, and motivated.

This has been carried out through a 5-year comprehensive program (2003–2008) at a cost of US$380: The Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy program (ERfKE), devised in close coordination with the World Bank and other donors. It sets out a coordinated and integrated plan of action to meet the current and future needs of society in Jordan in the context of the knowledge economy. That is, relevant knowledge, adequate physical environments, and an environment in which students can discover, absorb, and contemplate values, thoughts, and knowledge.

Since 2002, more than US$180 million have been channeled in human resource development, 39 percent of which was provided by the United States (US$70.6 million). Double shifts have been phased out in almost all schools; about 180 schools are being established, 140 kindergartens have been established, 650 science laboratories were built and equipped, while more than 500 schools have already been computerized, resulting in the ratio of students to personal computers decreasing from 42 to 16. Further, 14 new vocational training centers have been established, and 8,000 people have received, or are currently receiving, increasingly demand-driven training.

Today, Jordan ranks 51st of 127 countries (and first among Arab States) in UNESCO's Education for All (EFA) Development Index (measuring primary enrollment rates, adult literacy rates, gender specific EFA, and survival rate to grade five).

The Middle East region today is home to 130 million children who constitute 50 percent of the population. While most governments have made tremendous strides toward extending access to basic education to all children, the region is characterized by great underlying variation at the country level. For example, Egypt, Jordan, and Tunisia have achieved near universal enrollment, while literacy in Morocco is less than 40 percent. Similarly, access to education continues to be uneven across the population.

Clearly much more needs to be done. USAID investments in education in the region of US$43 in 2003 are not sufficient. Educational reform will continue to occupy center stage, and we cannot but start with our young to lead a comprehensive national renaissance. Schools still need to be built, old curricula need to be revised, new e-curricula needs to be developed, and youth need to be trained with relevant skills. They must be provided with the tools necessary to lead productive and fulfilling lives.

Within the framework of change to meet the economic needs of the future, and given the similarities and differences between countries of the region, there are a number of success stories that could be replicated through adaptation and modification in other locations and countries in the region. Given the pressing need to improve education and training, and given the scarcity of resources, it is important for all countries to consider what the necessary changes are, what approaches to change can be employed, and how sustainable change can be achieved. We have much to learn from each other through discussion, sharing of ideas, debate, and application.

At the heart of any modernization plans in the region must be a review of the educational systems and a discussion of the modalities for reshaping them into true vehicles for advancement. Knowledge societies that cherish innovation and scholarship are the bedrock of development. The region's history of innovation is indeed a suitable backdrop for discussion, and a true revival of this tradition lies at the heart of a meeting of Education Ministers from the Middle East and the G–8.

A renewed faith in partnership and shared interests is the main impetus for the meeting. This process was launched at the Forum for the Future meeting in Rabat, Morocco, in December 2004, where Jordan outlined its suggestions for cooperation between the G–8 and BMENA countries in educational reform.

In a preparatory meeting held in London in February 2004, Jordan presented the following areas as what it expects will be the outcomes that will emerge from the ministerial meeting on education.

a. A renewed commitment by countries of the BMENA region to initiate and pursue homegrown and credible educational reform initiatives.

b. A clear and practical framework of action based on technical consultations to explore the mechanisms of implementing educational reforms. This is to be reviewed and vetted at the Forum for the Future meeting in Bahrain in November 2005.

c. A commitment by countries of the G–8 to render support (financial, technical, and political) to the educational reform efforts in the region.

Agreement has been reached on the agenda for the ministerial to tackle four main agenda items, as follows:

Agenda item I: Critical success factors for educational reform

a. Political commitment.
b. Financial commitment (importance of budgetary transparency and access to resources).
c. Building on best practices.
d. Systemwide governance.
e. Monitoring and evaluation.
f. Partnership with schools, parents, civil society, business, and donors.
g. Systemic approach to reform.

Agenda item II: Literacy and access

a. Support and commit to the framework of action to halve illiteracy as agreed upon in the Literacy Workshop to be held in Algeria in April 2005 (agreement on regional program).
b. Support for regional and national plans to enhance access to, and participation in, education.
c. Develop mechanisms for lifelong learning and out-of-school children.

Agenda item III: Equity and social inclusion

a. Innovative uses of ICT in special education programs.
b. Specialized outreach programs for disadvantaged students.
c. Mechanisms to provide equal opportunities for girls and people in need.
d. Inclusive models of schooling.

Agenda item IV: Quality of education

a. Curricula renewal that maintains national identities and respects cultural particularities while facilitating modernization and development.
b. E-content development.
c. Quality assurance at all levels based on international standards and benchmarks.
d. Occupational standards to ensure quality and facilitate labor mobility.
e. Skills-based pedagogy backed by support for efficient professional development programs.

The ministerial meeting on education will take place in the period 22–23 May 2005, on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum meeting. Given the wide participation of the private sector and civil society, the ministerial meeting on education will have a rich pool to draw upon in its consultations.

On 22 May 2005, a sub-Cabinet meeting on education will be held, in which roundtables will be formed to discuss each of the four agenda items outlined above. Each roundtable will include representatives from BMENA and G–8 countries, as well as representatives from the private sector and civil society organizations. Discussions will aim at producing a framework for action within each agenda item. The resulting frameworks for action will then be collated into a general framework that will be presented the following day for the ministerial meeting. The ministerial meeting will then review and discuss the document, with the aim of reaching agreement on the framework by the end of the day, and will be making an announcement to that effect.

The support of the G–8 to the reform efforts of countries in the region is instrumental in their timely implementation and in ensuring their success. With the realization that regional reforms that reflect the realities of the region and address the fears of the people and the deficiencies of the existing systems are undoubtedly necessary, the G–8 countries have much to contribute, in both expertise and resources. Education is no exception.

Thank you very much.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN JORDAN

INTRODUCTION

Following the economic crisis that was witnessed in 1989, Jordan underwent a series of deep structural economic reform programs that were primarily aimed at eliminating macroeconomic imbalances and reinstating macroeconomic stability. However, despite the reform efforts throughout the 1990s, strong and sustainable growth in real output continued to be low, and per capita income remained stagnant. This, combined with the high population and labor force growth, has led to

a marginal reduction in unemployment and poverty levels. Furthermore, Jordan remained to be faced with a number of other critical challenges such as a high external debt, a high budget deficit (after grants), chronic water deficit, and an unproductive private sector.

Reform efforts were hence revisited in 1999 when His Majesty King Abdullah II ascended the throne, prompting an accelerated pace and the launch of new strategies and initiatives aimed at enhancing the welfare of the Jordanian people and propelling economic growth to higher and sustainable levels. During the past 5 years, the government began to focus on devising and implementing measures to combat the critical challenges facing the economy, while at the same time laying the foundation for building a new Jordanian model that is commensurate with the evolving global trends. This new model is based on the premise of transforming into a knowledge-based society that is built on the vast potential of the people—its most valuable asset.

With a population of 5.2 million that is growing at 2.8 percent per annum, coupled with a demographic composition that is predominantly young (72 percent of the population are below the age of 29), Jordan's ability to transform into a knowledge-based economy and join the ranks of the more advanced nations will be significantly determined by the contribution capacity of its young and growing population. Although education has always ranked high on the government's development agenda, the educational system is yet to meet the evolving labor market requirements of excellence, innovation, competitiveness, and productivity.

The need for citizens to be highly educated, broadly skilled, adaptable, and motivated has been recognized and validated. In this regard, educational reform efforts and investment in human resource development began to intensify in recent years, and particularly following the launch of the Social and Economic Transformation Program (SETP) in November 2001, which made funding more readily available for such extensive endeavors.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT OF THE SETP

Human resource development (HRD) comprises one of the major cornerstones of the SETP, an integrated socioeconomic development program, spanning a period of 3 years (2002–2004), with the main aim of attaining sustainable development, and elevating the quality and standard of living of all Jordanians. Acknowledging the global shift from a resource-based to a knowledge-based economy, the government recognized the pressing need to emphasize analytical skills, team-based activity, and computer literacy at every stage of the educational system.

Total investment in the Human Resource Development component over the 3-year period 2002–2004 amounts to US$180.6 million, of which US$64.1 million has been allocated for 2002, US$81.8 million has been allocated for 2003, and US$34.7 million has been allocated for 2004

The HRD component of the SETP focuses mainly on investing in public education, higher eucation, and vocational and technical training.

(1) Public Education

Modernizing the public education system has been an ongoing process since 1989. Nevertheless, initial reform efforts were mainly focused on building and expanding school facilities, particularly in the disadvantaged areas of the country. In recent years, however, efforts began to focus on transforming and modernizing the educational system to meet the challenges and needs of a knowledge-based economy through designing a system that adequately prepares future participants in the labor force, as well as improving the skills of the current labor force. The growing mismatch of skills was giving rise to higher unemployment rates, as secondary education graduates were increasingly unable to secure jobs in the highly complex and evolving labor market. In fact, the unemployment rate for this segment currently stands at an alarming 40 percent.

In addressing this challenge, the government identified the need to realize lifelong learning in the medium to long term, and to adjust curricula to meet market requirements. In the near term, early childhood education opportunities need to be extended and gains at the basic education level to be consolidated. The SETP will enable the government to target additional public investments in the qualitative reform of the educational system to enhance Jordan's competitiveness, domestically, regionally, and globally.

To this end, the government is concentrating its efforts on training students to think creatively, flexibly, and critically. The ultimate goal is to enable students to become socially active and responsible, to be more productive and work-oriented, and to be more self-reliant and independent in learning. Therefore, the government

is keen to modernize the educational system by adopting new curricula development processes that meet the highest standards.

Total SETP investment in public education projects over the 3-year period 2002–2004 amounts to US$72.6 million, of which US$21.1 million was allocated for 2002, US$25.2 million was allocated for 2003, and US$26.3 million was allocated for 2004.

EDUCATION REFORM FOR THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

The guide for government investment in public education is the ERfKE program, which was devised by the government in close coordination with the World Bank and other donors. It sets out a coordinated and integrated plan of action to meet the current and future needs of learners and society in Jordan in the context of a knowledge-based economy. The total cost of the first phase of the project is estimated at US$380 million, and implementation will span over the 5-year period 2003–2008.

From this new vision for human resource development in Jordan, four broad national initiatives were identified in transforming the current educational system to meet the requirements of the new knowledge economy. These include:

- Structuring the educational system to ensure lifelong learning;
- Ensuring responsiveness of the educational system to the economy;
- Accessing and utilizing information and communications technologies to support effective learning and system management; and
- Ensuring quality learning experiences and environments.

ERfKE represents a landmark step in the progress of change in education in Jordan, embodying all four initiatives. A relevant and responsive quality education system is the bridge to the achievement of these goals. The program sets out in detail the intentions for reform of early, basic, and secondary schooling within an extensive and inclusive framework. The need for, and value of, highly educated, broadly skilled, adaptable, and motivated citizens has been recognized and validated in the program. These citizens will be the people with the knowledge and skills to make Jordan's economy competitive in the global marketplace and maintain and extend the security and stability of Jordanian society. It is also possible that due to the rapidly changing social and economic environment, certain skills and areas of content will consequently have a relatively short lifespan. Therefore, the knowledge economy will require lifelong learners who can readily acquire new skills sets and access, create, adapt and share knowledge throughout their lives.

Jordan has made remarkable progress in education coverage over the past decade. The net enrollment rate in 2000/2001 was reported at 96 percent for grades 1–6 (primary cycle), 92 percent for grades 1–10 (basic cycle) and 80 percent for grades 7–12 (lower and upper secondary). The primary completion rate in the same year is estimated at 100 percent for boys and girls. Significantly, Jordan is also well advanced with regard to the elimination of gender disparities: In 2001, female enrollments accounted for 46 percent of all kindergarten enrollments, 49 percent of all basic education enrollments, and 50.5 percent of the upper secondary enrollments. Reform efforts are intended to have an additional positive impact upon these encouraging enrollment and participation statistics.

The reform program is organized into four major interconnected and interdependent components:

Component I: "Reorient Education Policy Objectives and Strategy through Governance and Administrative Reform." This component supports the development and implementation of policies and strategies to reorient and enable the effective management of the education system to serve the needs of the individual learner and society at large. It includes the formulation of a clear vision, the articulation of a comprehensive and integrated national strategy, and the effective transfer of authority and responsibility to regional and local education authorities, including the schools. The intentions and activities for reform in Component I are crucial elements for initial and continued success in each of the other components.

Component II: "Transform Education Programs and Practices to Achieve Learning Outcomes Relevant to the Knowledge Economy." This component confronts the central issue of education reform as it deals with the nature of, and expectations for, learning and teaching within the context of a new curriculum, designed to prepare students for life and work in the knowledge economy. Furthermore, professional development and training, as well as providing the resources to support effective training, are central to this component.

Component III: "Support Provision of Quality Physical Learning Environments," The purpose of this component is to describe and explain the goals and activities that have been determined as the most effective ways in which to improve the quality of education by improving the physical quality of the learning environment in

public schools. Substantially, this involves the alleviation of overcrowding, the replacement of unsafe buildings, and the upgrading of facilities to support the education reform initiatives for transformations in the learning for the knowledge economy.

Component IV: "Promote Learning Readiness through Early Childhood Education." The ERfKE project will directly assist the government, specifically through the Ministry of Education, in partnership with a wide range of international and local funding organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector, in the implementation of a comprehensive approach to improving the scope and quality of essential early childhood services. This component has been subdivided into four main areas of activity and intended outcomes. These areas cover a series of important themes, and success in each of them over the next 5 years will make significant inroads into the realization of better opportunity, support, and achievement of 4–6-year-old children in Jordan.

Following is a brief on the progress of the ERfKE project by component:

- Component I: Reorient Education Policy Objectives and Strategy Through Governance and Administrative Reform
  - —National Public Relations Campaign: Negotiations with the selected firm started 5 December 2004, and have been concluded successfully.
  - —Gender issues: Further attention will be given by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in regards to gender issues and ERfKE as the MOE has indicated that part of the curriculum renewal process under ERfKE will investigate the gender stereotyping in the curriculum and work on addressing them. There will also be a gender specialist attached to the project (funded by CIDA) for the next 2–3 years to assist in integrating gender further into ERfKE activities.
  - —Integrated Education Decision Support System (EDSS): An inception report was completed and an awareness workshop on the nature and purpose of EDSS was held in October 2004.
  - —National Learning Assessment: A National Learning Assessment Test has been administered and the results are currently under analysis.
  - —Learning Readiness Assessment: Pre-pilot, pilot, and main surveys have been administered, analysis is underway, and the final report is scheduled for March 2005.
- Component II: Transform Education Programs and Practices
  - —Curriculum and Learning Assessment Framework: The General Curriculum and Learning Assessment Framework document has been appraised and approved.
  - —Institutional Capacity Building of DCT and Exams: An international consultant is in the process of following up on the implementation of an integrated plan and designing a leadership training plan in the MOE.
  - —Curriculum Development: A master schedule for curriculum renewal; phasing and resource acquisition completed.
  - —Monitoring and Review of Curriculum Implementation: A UNESCO consultant submitted an inception report on M&E needs of ERfKE.
  - —ICT Training of Teachers, Principals, and Administrators: 18,000 teachers successfully completed training on ICDL, 600 teachers completed training on Worldlinks and 14,000 teachers on Intel.
- Component III: Support Provision of Quality Physical Learning Environment
  - —Construct 160 new schools to replace confirmed existing unsafe facilities: 40 schools funded by WB (construction phase) are all under construction; 42 of the 45 schools funded by EIB (design phase) are ready for construction; 38 schools funded by the Arab Fund (construction phase) are under construction; 9 of the 26 schools funded by IDB (construction phase) have been awarded; approximately 15 schools are to be funded by the KFW (design phase).
- Component IV: Promotion of Learning Readiness Through Early Childhood Education
  - —Development and Monitoring of Early Childhood Development (ECD) curriculum: The curriculum is in place, and was officially launched under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania along with the Kidsmart program on September 1.
  - —Recommendations for the monitoring and evaluation framework for the national curriculum has been prepared.
  - —Learning Readiness Assessment: Pre-pilot and pilot surveys have been completed, and the main survey has also been conducted. Analysis of the main survey is underway and the final report is scheduled for March 2005.

—Train Trainers, Teachers, Supervisors and Principals: 89 teachers successfully completed training on Wisconsin and have been certified in 2004.
—Buildings and Facilities Extensions Design phase: The design of 140 KGs is underway.
—Furnishing 100 KG Classrooms: A contract for the renovation of 4 KGs has been signed, and delivery is scheduled for the end of January 2005.

(2) Higher Education

Universities are increasingly assessed by their relevance and contribution to national economic performance and quality of life. While there has been rapid quantitative expansion of the higher education system in Jordan, it has not yet been accompanied by a sufficient qualitative shift. Jordan's capacity to reach its goal of becoming more competitive within the global economy will be largely dependent upon the orientation of its higher education graduates.

There are currently 21 universities in Jordan (13 private and 8 public), with around 150,000 enrolled students. The government has recently identified the major issues for higher education reform, and will embark on a major reform agenda that will encompass the following:

- Focusing on quality control issues to enhance the level of higher education.
- Updating and modernizing the higher education curricula to meet the hard and soft skill requirements labor market (both domestic and international).
- Revisiting admission requirements to allow students to pursue their desired career tracks.
- Allowing for the licensing of new private universities.
- Channeling more funding for higher education.
- Promoting research and development.
- Amending the necessary legislation to allow for greater private sector participation in higher education and allow for their affiliation with prominent higher education institutions.

SETP projects will work in tandem to improve the performance of public higher education institutions, strengthen the accreditation process with the aim of meeting international standards, and improve the reputation and standards of universities in the areas of computerization, information technologies, and English language teaching.

The total cost of this subcomponent over the 3-year period 2002–2004 is US$49.6 million, of which US$19.8 million was allocated for 2002 and US$29.8 million was allocated for 2003.

(3) Vocational and Technical Training

Recognizing that there has been limited change over the past several years in the provision of vocational and technical training, the reform of this sector has recently become a government priority. Vocational and technical education has tended to emphasize the supply of narrow, occupationally specific skills as opposed to broad-based, labor- and global-market relevant skills.

The SETP aims to reorient the focus of existing vocational and technical training programs from an information-based training model, to one that is demand-driven, competency-based and provides the employability skills required to increase worker productivity, technological adaptation and innovation. Specifically, the SETP will reactivate the Higher Council for Vocational and Technical Education and Training to improve the coordination of vocational training programs and services; computerize training centers to encourage the acquisition of information technology skills; develop competency-based training programs and curricula that are more responsive to labor-market needs; upgrade instructor skills; encourage private sector participation in adapting training to meet their human resource requirements; and support additional activities for upgrading and updating the current technical labor pool. Furthermore, support will also be provided for specialized, regional-based technical vocational training centers, such as training centers for women and training centers responsive to domestic labor market needs, such as those for the hospitality services, electronics industry, construction industry, and metal industries.

The total cost of this subcomponent over the 3-year period 2002–2004 is US$41.6 million, of which US$18.9 million was allocated for 2002, US$19.4 million was allocated for 2003, and US$6.7 million was allocated for 2004.

INTRODUCING ICT INTO THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

EduWave Project

One of the main pillars of educational reform is the increased access to information and communications technology (ICT). Extensive efforts have been made at

computerization of schools, as 500 schools that include about 173,000 students have been computerized, resulting in the ratio of students to personal computers decreasing from 42 to 15. Moreover, 32,000 teachers have been trained on ICDL, and an additional 2,070 schools now have Internet access. Providing schools with computers alone, however, does not ensure a transformation in the educational process. The deployment of the necessary tools that will allow students, teachers, and administrators alike, to effectively use ICT for their own benefit is as imperative as the hardware itself.

With over 1.5 million students in schools, the educational system in Jordan directly affects over one-third of the population. The government realizes that a special initiative should be adopted to bring students, teachers, and administrators up to pace. Thus, and as a result of a true partnership between the Jordanian public and private sectors, the national Jordanian e-learning initiative was launched in September 2002.

One of the main pillars of this initiative is EduWave, which is a comprehensive e-learning solution that was fully designed and developed by a leading Jordanian IT company. With EduWave, the 1.5 million students will be connected to a broadband network and will be able to learn, and access learning content and information inside and outside their classrooms, during and after school hours. Furthermore, around 35,000 teachers will be able to work and interact with their students online. They will be able to track individual student performance and accordingly apply the appropriate educational schemes that suit each student's individual strengths. Teachers will also have access to a pool of learning tools, which they can use and reuse to build a variety of courses and educational material from which students can learn. Through on-line group study sessions, resources will be maximized, and teachers along with students will be able to share information and study sessions across distances. Furthermore, administrators will have access to educational related data that would help them in decisionmaking and in better future planning.

The vision is to make learning available in places where there is none, to enhance resources where there are few, and to open the learning place and expand the learning day. The prime goal is to make the learning experience more exciting and effective. EduWave will:

- Provide all school students, teachers, and education administrators with access to information and resources relevant to their educational needs.
- Enhance productivity in the educational sector by integrating technology, innovation, and cutting edge educational practices to maximize student benefits.
- Provide students with tools to improve their learning and self-development and to monitor their performance.
- Provide teachers with tools to help them communicate ideas and concepts and measure students' performance and developments.
- Provide administrators with tools that help them develop full school systems by creating a data bank that can help them monitor development and performance and adjust resources accordingly.
- Provide the educational sector with a system that utilizes reusable learning tools to achieve predefined learning outcomes allowing maximum benefit from all content.
- Personalize the learning experience according to every student's needs in order to maximize performance results.
- Offer new and innovative ways for faculty and students to engage in the process of teaching and learning.
- Allow for smooth transition into the new digital era using easy-to-use tools and authoring tools.
- Help bridge the digital divide and close the gap between the mere presence of technology and its effective integration into curricula to deliver the skills needed for the 21st century.
- Allow easier and more equitable access to education.
- Improve the level and quality of education both inside and outside the classroom.
- Increase efficiency in the classroom, allowing for more room for innovation and creativity.
- Allow for customization of the learning experience to maximize results.
- Increase efficiency in the process of student assessment.
- Allow for a high level of teacher-student interaction.
- Foster innovation and creativity in education, society, and the economy.
- Enhance and complement the teachers' role in the classroom by allowing for effective guidance and support.

CONCLUSION

Human resource development has always ranked high on the development agenda of the Government of Jordan. In recent years, however, a new direction was adopted in the education reform agenda to ensure that the extensive investment in the human capital will yield the desired returns of equipping people with the needed skills that are required by today's evolving labor market.

The course of this direction is also commensurate with the overall development path that Jordan is taking. The ultimate goal is to build a sustainable resilient and liberal socioeconomic model that effectively enhances the welfare of all Jordanians. Without equipping people with the needed skills to compete in the global market, Jordan's growth potential will continue to be hindered by the mismatch between the output of the educational system and the requirements of the labor market, and the resulting high unemployment rates among the growing young stratum of society.

Educational reform and the extensive investment in HRD is necessary for attaining sustainable socioeconomic development. Thus, the government has identified the weaknesses in the educational system and is embarking on a sweeping reform agenda to equip people with the needed skills to compete in the global arena.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, Doctor, thank you very much for that very exciting testimony of optimism and challenge. We thank you very much.

Mr. Burki.

STATEMENT OF SHAHID JAVED BURKI, CONSULTANT, NATHAN ASSOCIATES, POTOMAC, MD

Mr. BURKI. Mr. Chairman, first allow me to thank you for giving me the opportunity to appear before you. It's a singular honor, because under your leadership the United States has embarked upon a very important program to bring education to the Muslim masses in what has now come to be called the Near Eastern Region. And with your devotion and your commitment and your leadership, I hope both sides, working together, the countries in the Muslim world and the American Government and the American Congress, will be able to achieve good results.

Mr. Chairman, in my own introductory remarks, I really don't have a great deal of—a great deal to say about achievements. I will focus much more on the problems that my country faces. And, as you know, these problems are severe, they need to be handled with a great deal of imagination, courage, and some commitment of resources. I'll come to the question of resources. But it's an area that needs urgent attention. And I believe that it is right for the world to focus on a country such as Pakistan, which has a very large population, growing very rapidly. Pakistan today has 155 million people; of this, about one-half of the population is less than 18 years old. For a person like me, who's been living in the United States for a very long time, it's interesting to make a comparison between the structure—age structure of your population and the age structure of my country's population. You have twice as many people in the United States, but the number of young in the United States is exactly the same as the number of young in Pakistan, with half the population. So that gives you some flavor of the problem that the country faces.

It is right for donor agencies, including the United States, to focus on the Pakistani problem. This is not the first time that this has been done. I was, for many years, at the World Bank, and my old institution put together a program called Social Action Program, in which billions of dollars were committed. Unfortunately, much of this money was wasted; and, therefore, the new donor in-

volvement in the reform of education in Pakistan has to be handled with a great deal of care.

Mr. Chairman, one worry that I have is that there has been an excessive focus on madrasas in Pakistan. It is correct to focus on madrasas, but, at the same time, it is important to underscore that madrasas don't provide education to a very large number of people. Estimates vary. I have seen estimates from 1 to 5 percent, but it's a relatively small number of school-going children who are attending madrasas.

The main problem, Mr. Chairman, is in public-sector education. This has become dysfunctional over time. It caters to something like 73 percent of the school-going population in Pakistan. And if this system is not fixed, then we really have a big problem on our hands. And my view is that if, as the 9/11 Commission report wrote eloquently about this problem, it is not the madrasa that could provide manpower, pulling foot soldiers to jihadi causes, it will be the dissatisfied, unhappy graduates of the public school system, who have spent years in a system which doesn't provide education, and when they come out they are not ready to enter the modern economy.

I wish I could tell you the same about Pakistan as we heard about Jordan, the great achievements that have been made. In the case of Pakistan, those achievements are still in the future.

I'm convinced, Mr. Chairman, that the Pakistani problem will not be solved by throwing more money at the problem. It has been done before; and, as I said, there was a lot of wastage, a fair amount of corruption. What is needed is a reform of the system. And listening to a report, day before yesterday, at the Woodrow Wilson Center, I was heartened to note that the United States involvement through AID is now, indeed, focused on systemic reform, and not just providing easy access to lots of money to those who are managing the Pakistani system.

One other thing that I would like to underscore, and this is something that is not often recognized when people talk about the Pakistani education, is the enormous role, and important role, that the private sector has begun to play. There are estimates which suggest that something like one-fifth—or one-fourth of the school-going population now is attending private schools. Most of these schools are run on profit basis; some of them are run on nonprofit basis. Some of these schools are run very well. They provide Western liberal education. And they are producing the types of people that a country like Pakistan, and an economy like Pakistan, will need.

So, I say this, because it is my view, that in designing a reform program for the education sector, it is extremely important to include within it the role of the private sector and how a private/public sector partnership could work.

Mr. Chairman, I have, as I was requested, put in a reasonably long statement for the record, but I'll just like to conclude by offering you, very quickly, 12 suggestions that I think would be appropriate for the reform of the sector.

As I said, my first suggestion is that reforming the entire public sector should be the main area of focus.

Second, there is now evidence, from many parts of the world, to indicate that for functional literacy it is important to have children stay in school, not for 5 years, but for a much longer period of time; as long as 10 to 12 years.

When I was at the World Bank, I was responsible for the region of Latin America and the Caribbean, and folks in Chile did some very interesting analysis and came to the conclusion that it is rather wasteful to say that compulsory education is only for 5 years, if you really want to make a difference to how well people get equipped with knowledge and behavioral change. And they suggested something like 10 to 11 years.

I would like to see something very similar done, in the countries of the Muslim world, that just focus on primary education can be wasteful. It has—children have to be kept in school for a much longer period. And this particularly applies to female education, where all these countries, barring none, have fallen way behind.

I've already indicated, and that's one of my suggestions, that we should just not focus too much attention on money, but we should focus a great deal of attention on reforming the entire system, particularly, the institutional aspects of this system. One area that needs tremendous attention, so much so, in one conversation I had with President Musharraf, not—in fact, very recently—I said to him that he should make this his passion, the education of girls, because I am of the view, which everybody shares in the development field, that a country that condemns its women to backwardness condemns itself to eternal backwardness. And, unfortunately, Pakistan has done that, and continues to provide all kinds of obstacles for the advancement of women. And so, women's situation, starting with education, has to become a very important part of this program.

It is important for the reformers to develop a comprehensive approach that includes curriculum improvement, teacher training, improving the physical infrastructure, improving the quality of textbooks, and so forth. So there are lots of things to be done.

What is very important, Mr. Chairman, is improving the quality of governance in the country, particularly in Pakistan. My longer paper talks about why Pakistan's educational system has become dysfunctional. It became dysfunctional because it was politicized. And so, politics has to be taken out of the system.

And one other initiative which is taken by the present government, to—which I hope it does not backtrack from—is a devolution of government authority right down to the community level. And we saw this in Latin America, that whenever you brought education closer to the people, it worked very well, and this is something that Pakistan should do.

It is my view that the donor community should provide some of its assistance directly to nongovernment organizations, private-sector institutions, and for student assistance. Some of the schools that I talked about, which are providing excellent education, are not accessible to children of poor families, because they charge very high fees. So, it is important to put together a program of providing assistance to children of poor families who can access these institutions.

When I was at the World Bank in Mexico, we started a similar program in which the banking system was used in order to provide scholarships and low-cost loans to the students.

One other aspect which should come into play is the economic significance of the Pakistani diaspora in the United States. It's a subject about which I've done some work. There are about half a million Pakistanis in this country. Their total income is roughly equal to 25 percent of Pakistan's GDP, so it's an enormous resource that is available, in terms of the proportion of GDP generated by this particular group. Pakistani diaspora is one of the largest in the world, and I know that these people are now very keen to help education in Pakistan through the creation of various foundations, and so forth. So, it would be an appropriate time to get this particular group involved.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the role of the state. My own view is that the state should unburden itself from directly managing public-sector institutions, but play much more of a role in a regulatory sense. Regulate the training of teachers, regulate the certification of teachers, regulate the certification of schools, develop a core curriculum that must be taught in all schools, whether they are madrasas or Western oriented, and so on. So, this is the kind of role that a state should be playing, rather than spending scarce resources on managing universities, colleges, and schools. And this, I think, should become a primary interest on the part of the donor community.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll stop with that.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Burki follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SHAHID JAVED BURKI, CONSULTANT, NATHAN ASSOCIATES, POTOMAC, MD

EDUCATING THE PAKISTANI MASSES: THE WORLD NEEDS TO HELP

Introduction

Let me start this brief presentation with the main conclusions that I have to offer with respect to the deteriorating state of education in Pakistan and how this could affect the rest of the world. I would like to underscore the following six conclusions. One, it is right for the world to worry about the larger impact of Pakistan's dysfunctional educational system, especially when it has been demonstrated that poorly educated young men in a country as large as Pakistan pose a serious security threat to the rest of the world. Two, it is timely for the world's donor agencies to offer help to Pakistan to reform its system of education so that it can produce people who have the right kinds of skills to operate in the modern economy. Three, it is correct to focus on the reform of the madrasa system but it would be imprudent to give too much attention to this part of the educational system in the country. Four, the part of the system that really needs attention is the one managed by the public sector. This is the system that looks after the education of some 90 percent of the school going age. Reforming it is of critical importance. Five, the problem of public education will not be solved by throwing more money into the system. What is required is systemic reform. Six, and finally, the private sector has an important role to play in reforming the educational system. This is an area in which the large and well-endowed communities of Pakistanis resident in the United States could also participate.

I will develop these conclusions in five parts. In the first, I will provide a quick overview of Pakistan's demographic situation and how it has affected the system of education. In the second part, I will give a brief description of the structure of the educational system in the country from the time of independence in 1947 to the early 1970s when it began to deteriorate. The third part will provide a quick overview of the reasons that led to slow collapse of the educational system. In the fourth part I will indicate the lessons Pakistan can learn from attempted reforms in other

parts of the world to improve its own system. In the fifth and final part I will suggest some approaches to the reform of the Pakistani system.

Pakistan's demographic situation and how it has impacted on the system of education

Pakistanis, both policymakers based in Islamabad and the public at large, were slow to recognize that the country's large and increasingly young population was mostly illiterate and was singularly ill-equipped to participate in the economic life of the country.

Pakistan's young did not even have the wherewithal to participate in the process of "outsourcing" that had brought economic modernization and social improvement to many parts of India. The economic and social revolution that India is witnessing today could have also occurred in Pakistan but for a number of unfortunate developments discussed below. For the moment we will reflect on the problem Pakistanis face today—in 2005.

In 2005, Pakistan is the world's sixth largest country, after China, India, the United States, Indonesia, and Brazil. Its population is estimated at 155 million; of this, one-half, or 77 million, is below the age of 18 years. Pakistan, in other words, has one of the youngest populations in the world. In 2005, the number of people below the age of 18 in the United States was less than those in Pakistan and yet the American population is almost twice as large as that of Pakistan. What is more, with each passing year the population is getting younger.

In spite of a significant decline in the level of fertility in recent years, Pakistan's population is still growing at a rate well above 2 percent a year. Even with some further reduction in birth rate, by 2030 Pakistan could—a quarter century from now—overtake Brazil and become the world's fifth most populous country, with a population of 255 million. Or, put in another way, Pakistan is set to add another 100 million people to its already large population over the next 25 years.

A significant number of this additional population will end up in the already crowded cities of the country, in particular Karachi, in Lahore, and in the urban centers on the periphery of Lahore. Karachi already has more than 10 million people; by 2030 it could have a population of 25 million. By the same time, Greater Lahore may have a population of 15 million. Will such large urban populations live in peace and become active contributors to Pakistan's economic growth and development? Or will they become increasingly restive and disturb peace not only within the country but also outside the country's borders? The answers to these two questions lay in the way the authorities and people of Pakistan approach the subject of education and what kind of assistance they can receive from the world outside.

There are four characteristics of Pakistan's demographic situation that have attracted attention in the Western World, particularly in the United States, One, that in two to three decades Pakistan will have the largest concentration of Muslims in the world, more than in Indonesia and in India. Two, the population of Muslims will be very young. Out of a population of some 255 million projected for 2030, about 170 million will be below the age of 18. Three, unless an ambitious program is launched soon and implemented with the government's full attention and energy, a significant proportion of the young will be poorly educated and will have skills that will not be of much use as a factor of production in a modern economy. Four, an indifferently educated workforce made up of millions of young people, living in a few crowded mega cities, will become attractive recruits for groups and organizations that are alienated from the global economic, political, and social system. In a Muslim country such as Pakistan, the groups that will be able to attract the young espouse various radical Islamic causes.

There are two questions that need to be answered in order to explain the situation in Pakistan. One, why did the education system in Pakistan deteriorate to the point where it now threatens economic, political, and social stability, not only within the country, but also poses a real danger for the world at large? Two, what can be done to redress this situation?

The structure of the system after the creation of the State of Pakistan

In the late 1940s and up to the early 1970s, Pakistan had a reasonably efficient system of education, not much different from other countries of the South Asian subcontinent. It was dominated by the public sector; educational departments in the provinces administered schools and colleges while a small number of public sector universities provided post-graduate instruction. The private sector was active at the two extreme ends of the educational spectrum. On the one end were missionary schools and colleges specializing in Western-style liberal education. At the opposite end were religious schools, called dini madrasas that imparted religious instruction. Some of the better institutions belonging to this genre were either imports from

India or were patterned after the old madrasas in what was now the Indian State of Uttar Pradesh. The best known of these was the Darul Uloom at Deoband that had developed its own curriculum and taught a highly orthodox or fundamentalist interpretation of Islam. Following the partition of India and the birth of Pakistan, a number of ulema (Islamic scholars) from Deoband migrated to Pakistan and established seminaries in the new country. Two of these, a madrasa at Mora Khattak near Islamabad called Darul Uloom Haqqania and the other in Banori township of Karachi played a prominent role in bringing an austere form of Islam to Pakistan. We will return to the subject of these madrasas a little later.

The private schools catered mostly to the elite while the religious schools produced imams (preachers) for the mosques or teachers for the madrasa system of education. These two systems are producing two different social classes with very different world views and views about the way Pakistan should be managed. The two groups are now clashing in the political and social arena. One recent example of this is the controversy over the deletion of a box in the newly designed and machine readable passport that initially did not have a column indicating the religious affiliation of the passport holder. This step was taken by the government headed by General Musharraf as one small move toward what he has called "enlightened moderation." He was, however, beaten back by the religious parties and the "religion column" was reinserted in the passport.

In between these two social classes is a large inert group, the product of the public educational system, The large public school system includes all aspects of the system of education. It starts with kindergarten and primary schools at the bottom, includes secondary and higher schools, and has at its apex semiautonomous but publicly funded universities. For several decades the standard of instruction provided by this system was adequate; the system's graduates were able to provide workforce for the large public sector and also for the rapidly growing private sector of the economy. Those graduates of the system who went abroad for further education, either at their own expenditure or relying on the funds provided by various donor supported scholarship schemes, did not experience much difficulty in getting adjusted to the foreign systems. Some of Pakistan's better known scholars and professionals, such as the Noble Prize winning Physicist Professor Abdul Salaam and the well-known economist Mahbubul Haq, were the products of this system.

However, the system has deteriorated over time to the extent that it has become common to describe Pakistan as the country that has done the least for the social development of its large population. It is also common to fear that without major investment in education, Pakistan may well become a large exporter of manpower to the stateless Islamic organizations—al-Qaida being the most prominent among them—that will continue their crusade against the West, Western values, and anything else they see from their narrow prism as anti-Islamic.

How did Pakistan travel the distance from a moderate Muslim country with a reasonably efficient educational system to a country in which the public system of education is virtually broken down and in which a large number of educational institutions are providing instruction that teaches hate for those who hold different points of view and encourages jihad against them? Pakistan's gradual transformation from one state to the other occurred slowly under many different impulses. As such the country offers a good case study of how a society can get derailed.

Systems progressive collapse over time

The Pakistani educational system collapsed slowly, at times its progressive deterioration was not even noticed by the people who later were to be most affected by it. The collapse occurred for basically four reasons. The first jolt was given in the early 1970s by government headed by Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Bhutto decided to nationalize private schools, in particular those run by various Christian missionary orders. His motive was simple. He was of the view that private schools encouraged elitism in the society whereas he wanted equality and equal opportunity for all.

Bhutto was also responsible for delivering the system the second shock and this time around the motive was political expediency. His rise to political power was viewed with great apprehension by the religious forces in the country. They considered the socialism Bhutto espoused as "godless" and were determined to prevent him, and the Pakistan People's Party founded by him, from gaining ground. The two sides—Bhutto and the Islamists—chose to use the college and university campuses to fight the battle for the control of the political mind in the country. Both sought to mobilize the student body by establishing student organizations representatives of their different points of view.

For a number of years campuses of the publicly run institutions became the battle ground for gaining political influence at the expense of providing education. It was

in this battle, waged in educational institutions, that Pakistan witnessed the birth of another organization—the Muhajir Qaumi Mahaz—that was to use violence in order to spread its word and make its presence felt.

The third development to turn the system of education dysfunctional occurred in the 1980s when a coalition, led by the United States and included Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, decided to use the seminaries as training grounds for the mujahideen who were being instructed to battle the Soviet Union's troops occupying Afghanistan. There was an unspoken understanding about their respective roles among these three partners. The United States was to provide equipment and training for the foot soldiers of the jihad. Pakistan was to set up madrasas in the Afghan refugee camps and along the country's long border with Afghanistan. Its military, with better knowledge of the Afghan terrain, was to be actively involved in training the mujahideen. The government of Islamabad also reserved the right to choose among the various groups that were prepared to do battle in Afghanistan. The Saudis were happy to aid the effort with money as long as they were allowed to teach Wahabism, their brand of Islam, in the seminaries that were to be used for training the jihadis. This proved to be a potent mix of motives: The United States was able to recruit highly motivated fighters to go after the occupying forces of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, Pakistan was able to further its influence in Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia was able to introduce its extremely conservative interpretation of Islam into a large Muslim country that had hitherto subscribed to a relatively liberal, accommodating assimilative form of religion.

The fourth unhappy development to affect the sector of education was the political confusion that prevailed in the country for more than a decade, from the death of President Zia ul-Haq in August 1988 to the return of the military under General Pervez Musharraf in October 1999. In this period four elected governments and three interim administrations governed the country. Preoccupied with prolonging their stay, the elected governments paid little attention to economic development in general and social development in particular. Under the watch of these administrations, public sector education deteriorated significantly.

The failure of Pakistan to educate its young was the result of the failure of the state to provide basic services to the people. As already noted, the collapse of the public sector began in the mid-seventies when the socialist-leaning administration of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto nationalized some parts of the educational system while denying an expanded public sector the resources it needed. In the 30-year period since then, various governments, both military and civilian, continued to neglect public education while allowing it to be politicized. Politicization took the form of increased political activity on the part of student organizations representing various political parties. It was the Islamic parties that gained the most in the battle to influence the campuses.

The progressive failure of the public sector to provide reasonable education to the masses brought in two very different types of educational entrepreneurs into the sector. On one end of the spectrum were groups of entrepreneurs who filled the space for Western-style liberal education. Since there was enough demand for this type of education on the part of the relatively well-to-do segments of the society, a number of for-profit institutions were established. They have flourished over time, providing high quality education to the upper end of the society.

At the other end of the social spectrum were the poor who needed institutions that could provide basic education to their children without placing an unbearable economic burden on the families. This is when the madrasas stepped in with the financial wherewithal to take in male students, provide them with board and lodging, and give them instruction in religion. Most of these institutions did not have qualified teachers who could give instruction in mathematics, sciences, and languages other than Urdu to their students.

The result of all this is that the Pakistani society today is split three ways when viewed from the perspective of education. At the top are the students who have received reasonably good education from Western-style institutions that operate mostly for profit. They count for perhaps 5 percent of the student body in the 5- to 18-year age group of some 70 million people. At the bottom are the religious schools that provide education to an equal number of students. In between is 90 percent of the student population dependent on a public system that is inefficient and corrupt. It is, in other words, dysfunctional. Before addressing the important subject of the remedies that are available to improve the educational system, we should take a look at the situation as it is today.

Reforming an educational system

There are several ways of assessing the status of an educational system in the developing world. Among the more frequently used indicators are adult literacy

rates for both men and women in various parts of the country; enrollment rates for both girls and boys at different levels of education and in different areas of the country; the dropout rates at different levels of education; the number of years boys and girls spend in schools; the amount of resources committed to education as a proportion of the gross domestic product, particularly by the public sector; the amount of money spent on items other than paying for teachers' salaries; and, finally, some measure of the quality of education provided. To these indicators, one should also add the quality of data and information available about education. Unfortunately, Pakistan's record is relatively poor on all these counts, including the quality and reliability of the data which makes it difficult to provide a reasonably accurate description of the state of affairs in the sector.

The latest information available for Pakistan suggests an adult literacy rate of only 43.5 percent for the entire population above the age of 15 years. The rates for Sri Lanka and India are considerably higher than for Pakistan; 92.1 percent and 61.3 percent respectively. Of the South Asian countries, only Bangladesh has a slightly lower rate, 41.1 percent. Since the level of literacy has a profound impact on the quality of human development, Pakistan ranks 142 in terms of the UNDP's Human Development Index. Sri Lanka ranks at 96, India at 127, and Bangladesh at 138.

There are noticeable differences in gender literacy and in the level of literacy in different parts of the country. Some 58 percent of the male population qualifies as literate while female literacy rate is estimated at only 32 percent. In other words, two-thirds of the country's women can't read or write. There is not a significant amount of difference in the rates of literacy among different provinces. Sindh, on account of Karachi, has the highest rate at 60 percent while Balochistan at 53 percent has the lowest rate. However, it is among women living in different parts of the country that literacy rates vary a great deal: In Balochistan the rate is as low as 15 percent while it is 36 percent for Punjab's women. It is clear that the women of Balochistan must be targeted in any drive to educate the masses in the country.

There are wide discrepancies in the various estimates of enrollment provided by various sources of information. My own estimates are for the year 2003 when the number of children in the primary school age was 22 million of which 11.5 million were boys and 10.5 million girls. According to the Ministry of Education in Islamabad 9.6 million boys were in school, giving an enrollment rate of 83.4 percent. The number of girls attending primary school was estimated at 6.6 million, giving an enrollment rate of nearly 63 percent. There was in other words a gender gap of almost 20 percentage points. Once again the policy implication of this information is the need to focus on the provision of education for girls. Another conclusion suggested by these numbers is that we should expect a fairly significant increase in the rate of literacy as the cohorts presently in school reach adulthood.

There is considerable disparity in the rates of enrollment among the richest 20 percent of the population compared to the poorest 20 percent. The gap is 2½ times as large in the urban areas and even larger in the rural areas. Applying these number to overall literacy rates, it appears that while universal primary education has been achieved for the richest one-fifth of the population for both boys and girls, the enrollment rate for the poorest 20, one-fifth is only a shade above 45 percent. Public policy aimed at increasing the level of education must, therefore, focus on the poor in both urban and rural areas. There is demand among the poor for education; if it is not satisfied by the public sector, it will be met by the dini madrasas.

As is to be expected, the well-to-do families tend to enroll their children in high performing privately managed schools while the poor are forced into the public sector system. According to a recent survey while only 27 percent of the children from the richest 20 percent of the households were enrolled in government schools; these schools catered to as much as 75 percent of the children from the poorest 20 percent of the families. This means that the rich have been able to bypass the part of the educational sector managed by the government while the poor have no recourse but to send their children to public schools. This process of selection according to income levels is reducing the quality of the student body in government schools.

There is a high-level dropout rate in the public system with the rate increasing as we go higher up in the system. Barely 10 percent of the school going age children complete 12 years of schooling; around 25 percent leave after 8 years of schooling and another 15 percent by grade 10. Such a high level of dropout has serious budgetary implications. At least 50 percent of the educational budget is spent on the children who drop out early. This is a tremendous waste for a sector that is already short of resources.

A high dropout rate has one other adverse consequence. Even if the level of literacy increases in the country, the level of skill acquisition will not improve. For many years a number of development institutions emphasized the provision of pri-

mary instruction without focusing attention on higher level education. It is only recently that there is recognition that human development means more than primary education. Some researchers maintain that universal education should mean more than 5 years of schooling; it take a much longer stay in schools to be able to become functional in a modern economy.

In light of this, what are the options available to policymakers and to the donor community that is eager to help the country reform its educational system? The donor interest in the country's educational system reflects the understandable fear that, unless the educational system is fundamentally reformed, it would create a large body of young alienated people who would be prepared to lend a helping hand to the forces of radical Islamic not just in Pakistan but in all corners of the world.

Educating the Pakistani masses: A new approach

The conventional approach for addressing the problem posed by the underdevelopment of the educational sector involved is based on five assumptions. One problem—by far the most important one according to most experts—many societies face is that the opportunity cost of sending children to school is greater than the benefit education is likely to bring. Parents bear costs even when education is free. Perceived cost of education is likely to be more of an inhibiting factor for the attendance of girls in schools than for boys. In poor households girls help their mothers handle a variety of chores including the care of their siblings. One way of approaching this problem is to provide monetary incentives to parents to send their children to school. School feeding programs fall into this category of assistance; they lower the cost of education for parents.

Two, the state may not be spending enough on education. The remedy is to increase the proportion of public resources going into education. The donor community has been prepared to help with funds if there was the fear that the domestic resources were too constrained to allow for an increase in public sector expenditure on education. This was one reason why development institutions such as the World Bank significantly increased their lending for education.

Three, typically a state spends more on secondary, tertiary, and university education than on primary education. The cure is to divert more funds into primary schooling.

Four, the quality of instruction is poor. The obvious solution is to invest in teacher training, reforming the curriculum, and improving the quality of text books. Sometimes the quality may suffer because schools may lack proper physical facilities. They may be poorly constructed or the buildings may be poorly maintained. The students may not even have chairs and desks on which they can sit and work. This problem can be handled, once again, by committing more resources for public sector education.

Five, the educational bureaucracy is too remote from the parents who wish to see an improvement in the quality of education given to their children. This gap between the provider and the receiver can be bridged by organizing parents to oversee the working of the educational system. Teachers can be made responsible to the parents' association in addition to being responsible to the educational departments in some distant place.

Six, in highly traditional societies, parents will be prepared to send their girls to school only if they don't have to travel long distances, if they are taught by female teachers, and if the schools have appropriate toilet facilities. In some situations parents would educate girls if there are single-sex schools. The solution for this problem is to build more schools for girls and to employ more female teachers.

All this was learned from a great deal of experience by the donor agencies from their work around the world. Most of these lessons were incorporated in a high-profile program of assistance for educational improvement launched by the World Bank in Pakistan in the late 1980s. Called the Social Action Program, the plan developed by the Bank was supported by a number of donor agencies and billions of dollars were spent on it for over a decade. The result was disheartening. The program was inconsequential in achieving even the most fundamental objectives: Increasing the rate of enrollment in primary schools for both boys and girls and bring education even to the more remote areas of the country. The Bank made several attempts to correct the course during the implementation phase but the program did not succeed. There was one simple reason for the program's failure. It did not take full cognizance of the fact that the educational bureaucracy was so corrupt, inefficient, and dysfunctional that it could not possibly deliver a program of this size. Ultimately the donors decided to abandon the program.

Given this experience and given the magnitude of the problem the country faces what options are available to the policymakers in the country and the donor community interested in providing help to Pakistan?

A variety of donors have already committed large amounts of finance for helping Pakistan educate its large population. According to a recent count by the Ministry of Education in Islamabad, foreign commitment for education is currently estimated at $1.44 billion spread over a period of 7 years, from 2002 to 2009. Of this $450 million is being provided as grants with the United States at $100 million the largest donor. The remaining $1 billion is being given in the form of soft loans by the World Bank ($650 million) and the Asian Development Bank ($339 million). These commitments amount to some $370 million a year.

The government has also announced its intention to significantly increase the amount of public funds for education. In 2000–2001, funding for education amounted to only 1.96 percent of the gross domestic product. This increased to 2.7 percent by 2003–2004 when the government spent about $2 billion on education, of which about one-quarter was provided by donors. It is the government's intention to increase the amount of public resources committed to education to about 4 percent of GDP which would bring the expenditure in par with that of most other developing countries.

However, the experience with the World Bank funded and supervised Social Action Program tells us that a mere increase in the availability of resources will not address the problem. What is required is a multipronged approach in which resource increase plays only a small part. For Pakistan to succeed this time around, it will have to be imaginative and comprehensive in the strategy it adopts. There are at least six elements of this approach.

First, the government must develop a core curriculum that must be taught in all schools up to the 12th grade. Along with the prescription of such a core syllabus, the government should also create a body to oversee the textbooks used for instruction. There should be no restriction on the submission of books that can be used as authorized text and there should be a fair amount of choice available to schools. They should be able to pick from an approved list. The selected books must carry the "good housekeeping seal of approval" of the authority created for this purpose. The members of the authority should be selected by an autonomous Education Commission which can be nominated by the government and approved by the national assembly.

Second, no institution should be allowed to take in students unless it registers with the Education Commission. The Commission should issue certificates of registration to the institutions which should indicate what kind of curriculum is being taught in addition to the core syllabus. Overtime the Commission should develop the expertise to grade schools according to their quality. A scale of the type used by credit rating agencies could be used by the Commission as a way of informing the parents about the type and quality of education on offer.

Third, either the Education Commission or a similar body should issue certificates to qualified teachers. No school, no matter what kind of curriculum it teaches, should be allowed to hire teachers unless they have been appropriately certified by the authority. The certificate should indicate which subject(s) the teacher has the competence to teach.

Fourth, in order to further encourage the participation of the private sector while lessening the burden of the public sector, the state should encourage the establishment of Private Education Foundations that will be run on nonprofit basis and will raise funds that will qualify for tax exemption. These foundations should also be encouraged to register abroad so that they can receive contributions from the members of the Pakistani diasporas in the United States, Britain, and the Middle East. The government should offer for sale to the Foundations the institutions it manages at all levels. This will be a form of privatization with the intent to encourage not only educational entrepreneurs to enter the field but to involve the people who are interested in improving the quality of education in the country.

Fifth, the government must reform the management of the educational system. One way of doing this is to decentralize the system's running to the local level. The recent devolution of authority permitted by the reform of the local government structure has created an opportunity for the involvement of local communities in educational management. The development of the local government system as envisaged by the administration of President Pervez Musharraf is being challenged by some vested interests including the members of the National and Provincial legislatures who fear erosion of power as more authority flows to the local level. The old bureaucracy that had exercised enormous power under the old structure is also reluctant to loosen its grip. This resistance will need to be overcome.

Sixth, parent-teacher-administrator associations should be created that manage funds and allocate them to the areas in which serious deficiencies exist. These associations should also have the authority to assess the performance of the teachers and administrators based on the quality of education given. Parental involvement

in education, even when the parents themselves were not literate or poorly educated yielded very positive results in several countries of Central America.

Seventh, the government should attempt to level the playing field by making it possible for children of less well-to-do households to gain admission into the privately managed schools. The government could initiate a program of grants and loans that should be administered by the commercial banks. Such an approach was tried successfully in Mexico. Letting the bank's manage these programs will save them from being corrupted.

Eighth, to address the serious problem of youth unemployment in a population growing rapidly and in a society that is becoming increasingly susceptible to accepting destructive ideologies, it is important to focus a great deal of attention on skill development. This will require investment in vocational schools or adding technical skills to the school curriculum.

Ninth, in undertaking a school construction program to improve physical facilities, special attention should be given to the needs of girls. Only then will the parents have the assurance that the schools to which they are sending their daughters can handle their special needs.

Tenth, and finally, a serious review of current expenditure on public sector education should be undertaken. It is well known that the state pays to a large number of "ghost teachers" who don't teach but turn up to collect their monthly pay checks. It is also well known that the annual recurrent cost in well-managed private schools that are able to provide high quality education is one-half the recurrent cost of public schools. Rationalization of these expenditures will increase the productivity of resource use.

Conclusion

Pakistan's educational system requires an almost total overhaul. It will not be reformed simply by the deployment of additional resources. This was tried once before by the donor community under the auspices of the World Bank's Social Action Program. That as we noted above did not succeed. What is required now is a well thought out and comprehensive approach that deals with all facets of the system.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Burki.

Dr. Ahmed, may we have your testimony?

STATEMENT OF SAMINA AHMED, SOUTH ASIA PROJECT DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN

Dr. AHMED. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me to testify on behalf of the International Crisis Group. Like you, we are deeply concerned about the absence of meaningful educational reform in an area which, as you know, has, in the past, and may continue to add to the numbers of the Islamic extremists that threaten not just the stability of their own countries, but U.S. national security, as well.

We've issued this report yesterday. It's on sectarian conflict in Pakistan. And I point this out because it is so important, when you're talking about educational reform, to talk about the political context.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: The report, "The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan," will be retained in the complete record of the hearing or can be accessed at www.crisisgroup.org.]

I'm going to be touching on Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan. My focus will be on the issue of what should you do? How do you reform the education sector to make sure that more and more young people are not drawn to Islamic extremism, and that they, too, become not just citizens in their own societies that contribute to their own state, but they also contribute to international security and stability?

There is a problem here, and we need to address it. And the problem lies in the fact that, in Pakistan at this point in time, you

have the moderate secular parties sidelined, the religious parties in alliance with the ruling party, controlling the provincial education ministries in two of the four federating units. How can you expect reform from these people, who are the most resistant to reform, not just the reform of the madrasas sector, which is their own turf, but even of the public education sector?

So there is a challenge here, and the challenges lies in the fact that we cannot ignore the threat, and that threat must be dealt with. It is not the role of the United States to dictate to governments in Pakistan and in Bangladesh what they must do with their educational systems, but, certainly, it is in United States national interest and in the interest of these states, themselves, to regulate these institutions that we call madrasas, which are the religious ceremonies.

In both Bangladesh and in Pakistan, you have three different educational systems at work. You have the public-school sector. You have private schools, which are elite schools, a large number of them. You need to have money to go to those schools. And then you have the madrasas. And those numbers matter because when we go to schools in the region, we see the state the students have to study in. You have teachers who are barely literate. You have schools with no infrastructure—no toilets, no running water, no playing fields, very often not even a roof over the heads of these children, no boundary walls.

We want to increase the enrollment of female children. Well, you know what? Some of these schools are located so far away from the villages that parents are scared to send their girls. This is not a cultural matter here. People talk about cultural problems: "Well, you know, these are Islamic countries; and so, there is a resistance to female education." That's not true. We've gone to remote areas of Baluchistan, where people have said, "If only I could send my child to school, but it's too far away, and it's unsafe." This is why you see a gender disparity in particular in places like Baluchistan and in the northwest frontier province, where, as you know, given past history, it's essential to bring about education reform of a people that have been exposed to, unfortunately, because of state policy, the madrasa system. It created the Taliban. The Taliban have not gone away. There are Pakistani Taliban and Afghan Taliban. They emerge out of these schools, and the schools are unregulated.

When we talk in terms of percentages of children in schools, we forget one thing: Why is there such a very high dropout rate, first at the primary level and then again at the secondary level? But it does matter, when we are talking in terms of investing either the United States taxpayers' money into these educational systems or, for that matter, Pakistani Government resources into these systems.

It's really quite simple. The madrasas are booming. Absolutely no doubt about it. If you actually look at the numbers, they're astounding. In Bangladesh, you've had, at least, a tenfold increase in the number of madrasas since 1986; in Pakistan, a fourfold increase since 1988. There are anywhere between 10,000 to 13,000 madrasa schools, and we really don't know and the government doesn't know because there is no regulatory authority.

It's true in Bangladesh, as well. There are no ways of regulating what's happening in the madrasas. What do they teach? Where do they get their sources of finances from, which is so important? That is a responsibility of the state, and, in fact, an international obligation, under U.N. Security Council resolutions. Who are the students? We don't know. All of that is very disturbing.

However, the U.S. Government focus, in terms of allocating funding, is, and should be, on the public school system. The dropout rates here are disturbing as well.

If you take an average number, given by government ministers, of the students in madrasas, which is anywhere between 1, 1.5, to 1.7 million, nobody seems to know, and then you look at the dropout rates, which can be available from the data of primary schools and secondary schools, by the time children drop out of primary school, there are only 4.2 million children left in the primary schools. And you know what? That only covers 4 years of education; 4 years of education. Just imagine if that was happening in the United States. What kind of a youth would you have in the United States? How could they contribute constructively? And then when you go on further, to grade 12, all of a sudden you have a huge dropout rate again. And then, in fact, at the high school you almost get down to one on one, because so many kids have dropped out.

Why do they drop out, even where facilities are available? Because the education is bad. Because it doesn't provide for job opportunities. Because parents realize the need to send their child to school, but also realize, if the child only has under 4 years or 6 years or 8 years of schooling, how is that child going to get a job with the education that child has got?

So it is so important to actually look at these issues. And I know that the U.S. Government is addressing a number of these issues on the ground, but one of the things we would strongly suggest is that as part of the ongoing assessment of new districts that AID will be allocating funds for, consider needs assessments from the communities on the ground. Where is it the need is greatest? Where is it that they have a real gender imbalance in the schools? Where is it that you have more madrasas booming, being constructed there? Because with the absence of public schools, you are going to have the children going to the madrasa. The madrasa is also attractive—free board, free housing; but it's also so dangerous, because it's indoctrination.

That said, it is equally important to reform the public school educational curriculum, because one of the policies that the Government of Pakistan seems to be adopting at this point in time—and I'm sure the Bangladesh Government might be tempted to go down that route—is to mainstream the madrasa. In other words, you introduce three or four subjects into the madrasa and don't touch the religious content of the education. So you would introduce computer sciences and maths and social studies. But children are being taught in the public-school sector, in social studies and in history, to demonize other religions—the Hindu is the enemy; Pakistan is threatened by India—to demonize the neighbors, to demonize other religions, as well, and, more so, to glorify the jihad. You actually see that in the national curriculum. "Jihad. Describe how important the jihad is to you. Jihad is central to your existence." This

is the indoctrination that the children are getting in their regular school system. Now, if the children in the madrasas are going to be taught that, what difference would it make?

To introduce English language, where one of the things the madrasa administrations have said to this point in time, they said, "Fine, we'll have our own English-language textbooks." And you can well imagine the content.

For us, it's very, very important that with the funding that the United States is planning to put into the educational sector in the next few years, these are the issues that should be looked at. The U.S. taxpayers' money should not be given for the production of textbooks in which children are asked to make speeches on jihad, to recognize the importance of jihad in every sphere of life, to talk about jihadi, which is martyrdom. That is not where the U.S. taxpayers' money should be going. That should be conditional, "This money shall not go to the production of these textbooks." But the money should go toward English-language textbooks since the English language is so essential now for jobs and for opportunities. And the U.S. Government can help produce good-quality English-language textbooks for schoolchildren, and that is important.

But should the Government of Pakistan depend on donors? I think there's a good point made here by you, Mr. Chairman, that this has to be domestically driven. And one of the ways to judge that political will is by the amount of GNP spent on education. And, unfortunately, neither Pakistan nor Bangladesh fall into that category of actually spending what they should be spending, which is 4 percent of GNP. They fall far, far behind. So then to expect that the internationals will pick up the rest of the tab, they should be made to stick to their commitment, they should be made—this should be conditional, and it is important.

So, other than that, where do we go, in terms of U.S. assistance? One of the things the U.S. Government should not do at all is to provide any assistance for the madrasa school system. Not in Pakistan. Not in Bangladesh. Not in Afghanistan. What is failing—and that is where the emphasis should be—is the public school system.

On Afghanistan, let me very, very briefly say that there's been a sea change in some ways in Afghanistan because of the fall of the Taliban. Female children have come back to school. But that doesn't mean that the challenges are still not immense. The infrastructure was totally destroyed; the country was destroyed in the war. Rebuilding means that the Karzai government is going to keep on needing massive U.S. assistance.

What is needed, of course, is also security, because, even after the Taliban have fallen, girls are being attacked, their schools are being attacked, teachers who are teaching them are being attacked. Even though there's a great will, right now, to enroll the girls in school, physical insecurity is something that will discourage parents from sending their children to school.

The challenges are immense. At this point in time, the opportunity is also huge, in particular in Pakistan, because the United States is engaging on education reform, to press upon the Pakistan Government to undertake the measures that it should take, and take them fast. I don't think Pakistan has that much time that it

can afford to have yet another generation of children badly educated or illiterate or educated in jihadi madrasas.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Ahmed follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. SAMINA AHMED, SOUTH ASIA PROJECT DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN

I want to thank Chairman Richard Lugar, and the ranking member, Senator Joseph Biden, for holding this important hearing, and inviting me to testify on behalf of the International Crisis Group on the continuing challenges of education reform in South Asia.

The Crisis Group has been in South Asia since December 2001, and has published reports directly relevant to the issues under this committee's review. We are deeply concerned that the absence of meaningful education reform will aggravate social and economic rifts, and feed the spread of extremism amongst the region's youth.

Education in South Asia has been the subject of renewed international focus in the wake of the attacks of September 11, and millions of dollars in donor funds have been allocated for education programs. However, a lack of government commitment, political interference, and a deteriorating physical infrastructure threaten to undermine these efforts. My testimony will expand on these concerns as they apply to Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan, with a particular focus on President Pervez Musharraf's education reforms, whose outcome will be absolutely crucial given Pakistan's key role in the war against terrorism.

In a report that the International Crisis Group published yesterday on "The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan" we emphasize that:

> Sectarian conflict in Pakistan is the direct consequence of state policies of Islamisation and marginalisation of secular democratic forces. Co-option and patronage of religious parties by successive military governments have brought Pakistan to a point where religious extremism threatens to erode the foundations of the state and society. . . .
>
> Instead of empowering liberal, democratic voices, the government has co-opted the religious right and continues to rely on it to counter civilian opposition. By depriving democratic forces of an even playing field and continuing to ignore the need for state policies that would encourage and indeed reflect the country's religious diversity, the government has allowed religious extremist organisations and jihadi groups, and the madrasas that provide them an endless stream of recruits, to flourish.

As we look at the education system more specifically, it nevertheless is vital to see and understand the broader political environment in which the education system functions.

Pakistan and Bangladesh have almost parallel education systems. As they did under British colonial rule, both countries maintain a three-tiered education structure:

1. Private English-medium schools catering to privileged families;
2. A highly centralized public school sector including Urdu or Bengali medium schools for the poor;
3. Religious seminaries, or madrasas.

Each sector has its own syllabus, exam systems, and fee structures. The growing disparities between these sectors, in terms of the quality of education and the professional opportunities available to graduates, are exacerbating already sharp social and economic divisions.

Pakistan and Bangladesh are signatories to the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA, signed in Jometien, 1990), yet are falling significantly behind on achieving agreed targets. Both spend well below the 4 percent of GDP on education recommended by UNESCO (currently Pakistan has allocated 2.7 percent; and Bangladesh 2.3 percent). Most of this goes toward salaries, leaving extremely limited funds for development and other productive inputs. Their public school infrastructure is deteriorating, with dropout rates in primary education fluctuating around 50 percent in Pakistan, and 33 percent in Bangladesh. In rural areas and urban slums we've visited in Pakistan in the last year, many schools were in locations where there was very little public transport and their learning environments were deplorable—many lacked boundary walls, water and toilet facilities, electricity, and proper furniture. That parents are unwilling to send their children to such schools should come as no surprise.

Not only do one of every two children in Pakistan drop out before completing primary school (5th grade), but also there is an equally devastating flaw in public school education. The content of that education is increasingly irrelevant since it does not prepare students for the demands of a modern economy (or for higher education). In Bangladesh, a National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) devises the national curriculum and produces public school textbooks. In Pakistan, a central Curriculum Wing determines the government syllabus, and Provincial Textbook Boards then produce all public school textbooks. Teachers are prohibited from deviating from the prescribed material. These virtual monopolies have prevented the emergence of innovative and flexible education systems. Teachers and students we've interviewed in the field argue that public school education is no preparation for employment. As a result, many families chose instead to send their children into labor, or to madrasas, which provide accommodation, food, and other basic necessities, and yield professional opportunities in mosques, madrasas, and other religious institutions.

Bangladesh's madrasa sector has mushroomed, reaching an estimated 64,000 madrasas from roughly 4,100 in 1986, with little if any government oversight. This has accompanied the rise of militant Islam, including increased numbers of radical groups, some with ties to global terrorist networks, such as the Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami. Two Islamist parties, the Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikyo Jote are coalition partners in the Bangladesh Nationalist Party-led government. According to the latest official estimates (2003), there are 10,430 madrasas in Pakistan. However, adding the numbers provided by each of Pakistan's five madrasa boards, the figure is closer to 13,000. Both figures mark a significant increase from the official estimate of 3,000 madrasas in 1988.

Both countries continue to harbor Islamist radical groups who seek recruits from poverty-stricken and education-deprived areas. Increased jihadi rhetoric in madrasas and mosques, including calls for an anti-American global jihad, is a major cause of concern. Without a viable public school system that expands students' economic opportunities, more and more children are likely to drift toward extremism.

REFORMS UNDER THE MUSHARRAF GOVERNMENT

The Musharraf government has publicly acknowledged the problem, and made education reform a centerpiece of its modernization drive but has failed to follow through. In January 2002, the government launched its Education Sector Reforms (ESR) program, aimed at reforming the education system. In 2005, we continue to have serious concerns about the program's directions. Our findings indicate that three main obstacles beset meaningful education reform.

First, the government has proved reluctant to divert more of its own resources to education. Repeatedly pledging to raise the education budget to 4 percent of GDP, it has yet to follow through on its commitment. To meet Pakistan's commitments to EFA, the government will need an estimated $7.9 billion. According to its EFA Action Plan, the government expects $4.4 billion of this, more than 55 percent, to come from foreign donors, symbolizing an unwillingness to invest its own resources in education reform.

Second, Pakistan's public education bureaucracy is highly centralized and inefficient. Since salaries and opportunity in the public and private sectors depend on educational qualifications, positions within the education department—and degree-granting institutions are some of the most lucrative in government service. Appointments are based on politics rather than merit within the education sector, thereby severely impairing the quality of teaching. Overly centralized control has further prevented effective monitoring over public school teachers and administrators.

Third, the government has repeatedly yielded to political pressure from religious parties that have openly opposed education and madrasa reforms. These lobbies have managed to hijack curricular content to promote their own ideological and political agendas. We are particularly concerned about the public school curriculum's emphasis on religious indoctrination. General Zia-ul-Haq's Islamisation policies in the 1980s had resulted in a massive expansion in the numbers of madrasa, with the numbers increasing from 1,745 in 1979 to almost 3,000 by 1988. During this period too, militant interpretations of Islam were systematically incorporated into the mainstream public school curriculum. Current national syllabus guidelines require students between classes I–VI, for example, to "recognize the importance of Jihad in every sphere of life" and "make speeches on Jihad."

In 2003, an independent Islamabad-based research group, the Sustainable Policy Research Institute (SDPI) documented religious, sectarian and gender biases in the public school syllabus in a report entitled, "The Subtle Subversion: The State of Curricula and Textbooks in Pakistan." Although a goverment-formed committee of

independent academics and education officials approved the report's recommendations for an immediate and comprehensive review of the national curriculum, subsequent pressure from the religious parties prompted the government to finally reject its proposals. Then Education Minister Zobaida Jalal had also announced that Quranic references to jihad would be deleted from public school science books but backtracked under pressure from the religious right, and those references remain in place.

In this context, the ESR objective of streamlining the madrasa syllabus with the mainstream curriculum is questionable. Any effort to do so would be premature without a comprehensive review and improvement of the public school curriculum.

The government's capitulation to the religious right on education reform stems from its reliance on them to counter its civilian secular opposition. The six-party Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal presently controls the NWFP government and governs Balochistan in alliance with the ruling Muslim League. MMA officials head the provincial education ministries of both these provinces and have publicly opposed the reform of the public school sector.

This reliance on the religious right has also led the government to back down on its pledges to reform the madrasa sector. In June 2002 the government approved a draft bill, the Deeni Madaris (Voluntary Registration and Regulation) Ordinance calling for the voluntary registration of madrasas, imposing restrictions on foreign grants and donations, and barring foreign students or teachers without valid visas and official permission. A week after Cabinet approval, however, President Musharraf opted not to sign the bill after it was strongly opposed by madrasa board representatives.

The lack of effective registration requirements and oversight has resulted in the madrasa sector's alarming and unchecked expansion. Today most registered madrasas are licensed under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 after the ban on such registration, imposed in 1996, was removed in 2004. The act lacks any significant monitoring mechanisms over financial accounting, internal governance, or madrasa curricula; its only practical requirement is for registered organizations to submit an annual list of governing body members,

THE U.S. ROLE

The United States can, and should, play an important role in education reform in Pakistan and Bangladesh. USAID should consider significantly expanding its current financial commitments for education in Bangladesh, which were below $5 million for fiscal year 2004, focused on early childhood and primary education, and are planned at similar levels for fiscal years 2005 and 2006. USAID has allocated $100 million over 5 years to Pakistan's education sector, aimed at teacher training, engendering democratic ideals, improving the quality of exams, and enabling greater access to schools. The U.S. government has a stake in the direction and outcome of educational reform and should adopt a more proactive approach. That approach should affect both the direct primary education and literacy program but also some portion of the $200 million in annual budget support provided to the government of Pakistan over the next 5 years.

The United States should:

1. Condition continued education aid to Pakistan and Bangladesh on their raising education expenditure to 4 percent of GDP. Comprehensive reform efforts will not be sustainable under current expenditure levels. In that regard, some clear conditioning should provide for evidence of additionality in government resources going to expand access and quality of education from the budget support the United States is providing.

2. Expand programming to address educational content, and attach conditions that its funds cannot be used, as they could under present circumstances, to support a curriculum, and any textbook material, that promotes intolerance toward women, and religious, sectarian, and ethnic minorities; and contains references to jihad, or any historical inaccuracies. The United States should urge Pakistan to immediately resume reviewing public school curriculum and textbooks to address historical and factual inaccuracies, glorification of armed struggle and jihad and minority and gender biases. USAID should extend its programs to support the private production of quality English language textbooks for public schools, presenting valuable substitutes to the Provincial Boards and NCTB's texts. This is crucial to improving public school educational content.

3. Assist in the shift to English-medium instruction. Since the language of instruction in elite private schools is English, given the demand for English in Pakistan and Bangladesh's public and private sectors, the products of Urdu and Bengali medium government schools are at a severe disadvantage in competitive job markets.

The United States should assist in all aspects of this shift from textbooks to teacher training to monitoring results.

4. Urge the Pakistan Government to follow through on its commitment to establish better oversight on the madrasa sector; to put in place a new madrasa law that requires financial transparency, curriculum and management reform, and mandatory registration of all madrasas under this new law, including those currently registered under the Societies Act. Pakistan should also be urged to immediately resume reviewing public school curriculum and textbooks to address historical and factual inaccuracies, glorification of armed struggle and jihad, and minority and gender biases.

5. Ensure against politically motivated teacher and administrative transfers. USAID should require all local partners to sign memorandums of understanding with the relevant education ministry to curb the transfer of any teacher trained under their programs for a minimum period of 3 years.

6. Target more funds based on district need. In Pakistan, much of the education funding currently is limited to only a handful of Sindh and Balochistan districts, some of which are relatively developed and pose no significant threat of extremism amongst youth. A recent proposal to expand the $60 million USAID-funded Education Sector Reform Assistance (ESRA) program from 9 to 25 districts is a welcome step, and should be followed through. However, the new recipients should be identified on the basis of need, the number of donors already active in the district, as well as areas that have witnessed an expanding madrasa sector or increased jihadi activity. USAID should also consider extending ESRA to NWFP, where tribal customs and the spread of extremism continue to hamper education especially for girls. In some NWFP districts we found clusters of up to 14 villages without a single girls' school. In 2004, female enrollment made up about 35 percent of total enrollment in NWFP, the lowest ratio of any province.

7. Address infrastructure constraints. In determining any program's performance targets, USAID should take into account practical constraints. Targeted enrollment rates in most rural areas of Pakistan cannot, for instance, be achieved without addressing factors such as transport and security problems, particularly relevant in addressing education for girls and women.

8. Avoid diverting scarce aid funding to the madrasa sector. The United States Government must not allocate any of its assistance for madrasa schools in Pakistan and Bangladesh. Donor funding and engagement is unlikely to reform the madrasa sector and the provision of modern facilities will only make madrasas more attractive educational venues, increasing the clergy's social and political influence. United States educational assistance should instead remain focused on strengthening Pakistan and Bangladesh's failing public school systems.

9. Finally, with regard again to the broader political context in which the education system functions, the United States should strongly press the Government of Pakistan to reaffirm the constitutional principle of equality for all citizens by repealing all laws, penal codes, and official procedures that reinforce sectarian identities and cause discrimination as well as those laws that discriminate against women and minorities and to disband all private militias, particularly those organized for sectarian and jihadi causes.

AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan also presents a daunting set of challenges, linked directly to that country's reconstruction. Over two decades of war and repressive government have left a shattered economy and physical infrastructure, and some of the lowest human development indicators in the world. By all accounts, Afghanistan's school system is in ruins. However, the Taliban's ouster has opened up new opportunities in education, especially for girls who were banned from attending school, and has led to unprecedented levels of enrollment. Over 4 million students have registered in schools since 2002, with female enrollment estimated at around one-third of the total amount. Yet, the existing infrastructure is unable to meet the increased demand for schooling. An estimated 80 percent of schools were damaged or destroyed by war, and many have yet to be restored. Millions of children remain out of school, and current teacher/student ratios are unsustainable, by some accounts averaging around 1:60.

Security remains a primary concern. Girls' schools continue to face external threats, and many have come under attack. In 2003, Afghanistan's female literacy rate was 19.6 percent (compared to 49 percent for males). Many regions remain under warlord control. Militia forces and remnants of the Taliban and al-Qaida continue to operate in and around Afghanistan, seeking recruits amongst the country's disaffected youth. Former soldiers, including child soldiers, and returning refugees

are especially vulnerable in the current environment, and more extensive efforts are needed to reabsorb them into Afghan society. According to an Asian Development Bank (ADB) estimate in July 2002, there were 25,000 to 30,000 ex-child soldiers in Kandahar alone. A strong education system would contribute significantly to such efforts.

Given ongoing security concerns and limited resources, President Hamid Karzai's government will continue to require significant levels of external funding to rebuild and revitalize its education system. We believe an effective approach should include expanded efforts in:

1. Establishing a strong physical infrastructure, including new schools and adequate educational facilities.
2. Policy-oriented capacity building of regional education departments and other policymaking institutions, whose responsibilities include curriculum development and long-term education policy.
3. Involving Afghan civil society in the delivery of education.
4. Building a broad and equitable education system. Afghanistan's education infrastructure must extend its reach to accommodate a scattered, highly diverse, and multiethnic population.
5. Continued and expanded teacher training programs, geared especially to induct more female teachers into the sector.
6. A sustained and coordinated international effort to provide security, especially in remote areas of the country where the writ of the central government has proved limited, and where attacks against civilians, especially against women and girls, continue.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, South Asia's economic growth and security depend on a strong education sector. The failure to implement meaningful reform in Pakistan and Bangladesh's madrasa sectors and deteriorating public education systems and to revitalize Afghanistan's educational infrastructure will undermine regional stability, promote extremism, and prevent the spread of democratic ideals.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much, Dr. Ahmed.

We now call on Mr. Method, as our final first-panel witness.

Mr. Method.

STATEMENT OF FRANK METHOD, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY AND SYSTEMS, RESEARCH TRIANGLE INSTITUTE, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. METHOD. Thank you, Chairman Lugar. Good morning, and thanks for the opportunity to appear before the committee.

Research Triangle International is a not-for-profit research institute working to support education reform around the world, primarily funded by USAID, including working with the Education Sector Reform Program in Pakistan and a number of other countries in the region.

I've worked on international education policy and strategic planning most of my professional life. I'm particularly proud of having been involved, over the last 15 years, in the international effort to create policy consensus and advocacy for the investments needed to achieve Education For All, which I consider one of the most powerful strategic agendas of our time.

I put the emphasis particularly on "all." The emphasis on "all" is what drives the linkages between education and rights, citizenship, responsibility of government to meet its full commitment to the society, and shape the society.

I submitted a statement for the record, and I'm only going to summarize some of the key points.

First, education systems do more than educate children; they also build and shape the nation. Education reform must be about more than the schools and pedagogic inputs. National efforts to improve curriculum, to develop more appropriate reading and learn-

ing materials which respect the dignity, rights, and beliefs of all learners, are imperative. At least equally imperative, is attention to the children who are not in school and whose opportunities to learn have been frustrated. Tolerant, peaceful, and stable societies cannot be built or sustained when large numbers of young people reach adolescence frustrated, alienated, without opportunities to participate effectively in their communities, economies, and political systems.

Educators cannot do it alone. Improving education requires fundamental changes in public policy, public administration, financing, and the political will to make the changes. There is no easy, inexpensive, or quick solution to the problems.

It's possible to paint a very bleak picture of education in the Near East and South Asia Region. I agree with the characterizations that we've just heard. Class sizes and dropout rates are too high. Education opportunities for girls and women are inadequate. Too often, bureaucratic sclerosis wastes resources, slows change, stifles innovation.

However, progress is being made, albeit slowly. There are reform plans in place for many countries. Jordan is a particularly good example, but there are others—in Egypt, in Pakistan, Indonesia, and elsewhere. The United States does not need to instigate reform so much as it needs to respond aggressively and substantially to the opportunities that exist. There are opportunities. There is reform. We should get behind it.

Since the events of September 2001, United States education assistance levels have increased substantially, particularly in Asia, in Near East, less so in other regions. There now are programs in Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Cambodia, in the Philippines, and under development for Sri Lanka.

The main concerns are that the programs still are relatively narrowly focused on primary education and on quantitative measures. There's great pressure to demonstrate short-term impacts—schools built, teachers trained, textbooks provided, rising examination scores.

However, education systems change slowly and incrementally. Advances toward more tolerant and resilient societies are first demonstrated by increased participation in education decisions, more open and informed public debate about education policies, and increased public accountability at all levels, particularly at the level of the school. Much more effort is needed on education standards, objective data and data-management systems, monitoring and reporting systems.

Achieving broad agreement on what good education is, or should be, and what parents have a right to expect, is the essential first step toward the participation needed for accountability and progress. A great deal can be done, and is being done by nongovernment organizations supporting programs for specific communities and needy populations. However, sustainable reform requires public leadership, comprehensive planning, and broad mobilization. The most effective reforms include efforts to decentralize education systems, improving accountability, allowing flexibility, and creating support for local initiatives. Additional resources would be used ef-

fectively both to expand the current programs and to support emerging priorities. My recommendations are for increased attention to media and technology, quality standards, early-childhood development, and secondary education. Those are discussed more in the prepared statement.

There's been success with the use of television and radio to support instruction and enrich the learning environment. The United States-supported Alam Simsim Program in Egypt has been extraordinarily successful, and has now been extended to 21 other countries. Information technologies also are needed as management tools for the more data-intensive approaches to quality improvement. These areas of media and the application of information technologies are areas of particular strength and experience in the United States. There is a lot that we can offer in this area.

Performance standards are key to managing for results, as well as to increasing accountability and parent support for reforms. Improving data management and measurement tools are among the most cost effective and politically acceptable strategies for external support of national reforms, improving management and accountability at all levels.

Quality early-childhood development addresses the needs of the whole child, not just preschool education. Community-based programs are particularly effective, engaging parents with the learning needs of children and helping to strengthen local civil-society organizations. Such strategies also help in supporting new leadership roles, social and economic opportunities for women.

Young people, 12 to 15, in all cultures face decisions about their identity and future. Discouraged or alienated adolescents are potentially dangerous, especially where there are few roles other than illicit occupations or militant political movements. A priority area for new initiatives is the development of new models of lower secondary education, operating at a smaller scale (so that they can get closer to the communities) with integrated learner-centered curriculum, cross-trained educators, and effective use of media and technology. The United States could lead such an effort and help to set that agenda.

Secondary education also should include work-related skills development. The preferred strategy is to integrate skills development in the general secondary curriculum, including problem solving, critical-thinking skills, and other soft skills. I do not recommend vocational/technical education programs at the secondary level.

With respect to madrasas, there are good reasons to be concerned about some of the organizations supporting madrasas and other forms of Islamic education, particularly those which operate outside of the purview of government. The respective governments are aware of the political agendas of these organizations, which, in most cases, are directed as much against the secular nature of the government as they are against the West in general, or the United States in particular.

However, generalizations about the madrasas, themselves, are very risky. The majority of Islamic schools are run by responsible educators attempting to teach national core content along with Islamic studies and social values. Increasingly, these schools are

being integrated as part of hybrid systems of public education or supported directly by governments as parallel systems of public education. There is little reason to oppose such integration. Particularly in the poorer countries, it is difficult to see how the universal education goals can be met without some reliance on privately initiated, funded, and managed schools, including the religious schools.

The major danger in many communities is the lack of education opportunities of any kind and low quality of existing schooling, particularly for the poor and rural. Raising the quality of public education, including addressing the issues of inappropriate content, should be the priority. Strategies of direct support for madrasas with externally funded inputs are not recommended. Many, perhaps most, Islamic education organizations or associations would be reluctant to accept such support, particularly if it's aimed, or seen to be aimed, at influencing content or reducing autonomy. Further, the political backlash against any initiative perceived as externally directed or influenced may reduce the ability of governments to work with external assistance on other aspects of needed reforms and improvements of the public education systems.

In conclusion, addressing the needs of education reform for all, and in all countries, is among the most strategic steps the United States can take toward helping countries become more tolerant, democratic, open to new ideas, and capable of participating in the changing global economy. There is much more to be done, and the United States has many opportunities for leadership.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Method follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FRANK J. METHOD, DIRECTOR, EDUCATION POLICY AND SYSTEMS GROUP, RESEARCH TRIANGLE INSTITUTE, WASHINGTON, DC

INTRODUCTION

Education systems do more than educate children; they build nations. Education reform must be about more than the schools, and the pedagogic inputs to education; it also must be about how education decisions are made, how resources are mobilized and distributed, how societies address special needs and the rights of all learners, how the school systems are accountable to parents and communities, and what options parents have if they are dissatisfied with the education their children are receiving.

The achievement of quality education, for all, is one of the most important challenges of our times. It is one of the most powerful ways of affirming basic rights and supporting positive changes in the lives of children as well as their households, communities, and nations. Improvements in education opportunities for girls and other disadvantaged or marginalized populations are particularly important, affecting not just their personal opportunities and choices but also the health, economic, and social progress of the larger societies. The positive and lasting effects of expanding education opportunities and improving the quality of education are well documented, and the policy priorities for doing so are a basis for international cooperation as well as for national investments. In fragile states and for countries such as those in the Arab world and South Asia where there are challenges of political legitimacy and social cohesion, the efforts required to achieve quality education for all are central to national reform.

Assisting countries to accomplish this priority agenda, fully and well, should be one of the assistance priorities for the United States. There is no better investment in terms of meeting basic human needs, the affirmation of basic fights, the reduction of poverty and inequity and accelerating social progress. There is no more necessary investment in terms of helping countries move toward democracy, moderate their political and social dynamics and participate effectively and successfully in open, competitive economies.

I. Overview of United States assistance to education in Asia and the Near East

The United States helped establish the goals for Education for All (EFA),[1] beginning with cosponsorship of the World Conference on Education for All in Thailand in 1990 and continuing through the World Education Forum (WEF) in Dakar in 2000, and the international mobilization related to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)[2] USAID currently cochairs the Fast Track Initiative by which funders have committed to mobilizing the necessary funding for those countries putting in place serious plans of action to achieve universal primary education of acceptable quality for all students. The United States, both through official agencies and through the involvement of the NGO communities, can be proud of its leadership and constructive contributions to this shared strategic agenda. It is one of the most far-reaching initiatives of the international community and the United States has helped shape it and support it. This effort must be sustained and enlarged. There is much more to be done.

The EFA and WEF commitments are to a broad international partnership including private sector and nongovernment communities as well as the bilateral and multilateral funders and international organizations. The international commitments are to support national plans of action, led by national leaders with broad participation of the national partners, public and private, including civil society, nongovernment organizations and public opinion generally. UNESCO, the World Bank, and other international organizations have taken responsibility for ensuring that these plans are technically sound, well-documented and monitored against agreed goals, metrics and indicators of progress. Basic education for all is to be understood in its broad framework of learning systems beginning in early childhood and continuing through community-based and lifelong learning. Central to these goals and commitments are improving instructional quality and learning standards, with explicit attention to distributional concerns, gender equity, and the learning needs of poor and disadvantaged children.

Despite broad support for the EFA goals, it has been difficult to meet the promised funding levels. In part this reflected limited funds and the many competing priorities. In part this reflected "bean counting" approaches to education and development, which left countries making quantitative progress to rely on their own resources for further education improvement. Until the events of September 11, 2001, forced attention to the social conditions, weak and nonrepresentative governments and extremist political movements in much of the developing world, including the countries of North Africa, the Middle East, Central and South Asia, most assistance for education improvement focused narrowly on quantitative expansion, teacher education and better distribution of opportunities, particularly for girls. Issues of quality, administrative and financial decentralization, local accountability, curriculum reform, early childhood education, and attention to youth and adults outside of school received lesser priority.

Total USAID support for education across the Asia and Near East Region (ANE) was only $71.8 million in fiscal year 2001, including $66 million of ESF funds. The United States played a significant role in a few countries, but not a leading role in any. There was an important program supporting education for girls in Morocco and a significant program of school building in Egypt, scheduled to be completed in 2001 with no plans for further education programming.

Since fiscal year 2001 the assistance levels for the ANE Region have increased substantially, the program priorities have broadened to include administrative and financial reform, decentralization and local participation and the range of countries assisted has expanded. ANE funding for education in fiscal year 2005 is projected to be $239M (plus any supplementals) and countries with significant education sector programs now include Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, India, Cambodia, and Indonesia. Expanded programs are under development for Yemen, Bangladesh, the Philippines, and possibly Sri Lanka.

Each of these programs responds to the particular circumstances and needs of the country.

- They include countries undertaking major reform efforts such as the Education Reform for a Knowledge Economy (ERfKE) initiative in Jordan—one of the most ambitious reform efforts anywhere, combining reforms at the early childhood, basic and secondary levels to produce graduates with the skills needed for the knowledge economy. The integrated strategy includes: Governance and administrative reform, a sophisticated Education Decision Support System (EDSS) supporting policy analysis; effective system management, transparency and ac-

[1] See http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/index.shtml.
[2] See http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/.

countability with comprehensive and coordinated educational research, policy analysis, and monitoring and evaluation activities; and substantial investment in school infrastructure, teacher training and e-learning application of instructional technologies and media. USAID is assisting with early childhood education, teacher training for new coursework related to business skills and development of an improved school-to-work strategy.

- They also include countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq, where education systems need to be built or rebuilt virtually from the ground up.
- And, they include countries such as Yemen and Bangladesh, and to some extent Pakistan, where the governments are relatively weak, financing for education is inadequate, corruption and bureaucratic inefficiency waste resources and consensus on how best to achieve national education objectives for all, in all parts of the country, does not yet exist.
- In a few countries such as Morocco, assistance now includes activities at the lower secondary level and increasing attention to the linkages between education, workforce development, and job growth. This reflects the growing concerns about large numbers of youth and young adults without employment prospects, or skills for the jobs that do exist.
- In other countries such as Indonesia, Pakistan, and Egypt the focus is on helping countries decentralize education administration, improve local accountability, and increase the participation of parents and community leaders.
- An important new regional initiative is the Education and Employment Alliance, supported by USAID through the International Youth Foundation, which seeks to mobilize the private and nonprofit sectors to work with youth in Egypt, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Pakistan, and the Philippines.

Additional education program support is provided regionally through the Middle East Partnership Initiative focused on education opportunities for girls and strategies to improve access, quality, and skills development across the region, and through other USG programs such as the child labor programs of the Department of Labor.

One of the encouraging emerging trends is the substantial involvement of the U.S. private sector in support of education improvement in the region. Private initiatives such as the Education and Employment Foundation, initiated by Ron Bruder with $10M of his own funds is an excellent example. Corporations such as CISCO, Microsoft, General Electric, and others are supporting programs both through their philanthropy and through their direct investments in programs managed by NGOs, or in the case of CISCO, learning through a direct partnership with the Jordanian Ministry.

For reasons that are not entirely clear, the major U.S. foundations which played leading roles in earlier decades, including in countries with which the United States found it difficult to work through official mechanisms, no longer play a leading role. This is unfortunate as the foundations can more easily and appropriately support strengthening of the social sciences and their application to education reform and improvement, work on sensitive issues of language and curriculum content, research and experimentation on leading edge approaches that cannot easily be supported by official development assistance programs.

II.Overview of education in the region

It is possible to paint a very bleak picture of education progress in the region. According to recent reports, up to half of adult women in the Arab world are illiterate and more than 10 million children in the region don't go to school. In parts of South Asia, illiteracy rates and the numbers of children not in school are even higher. Countries have large young populations. Examination scores are low, both against the standards of the countries and against international comparative measures. The physical quality of schools in rural areas is often very low, sometimes little more than the shade of a tree or a building without adequate water and sanitation. In urban areas schools typically are very crowded, often double-shifted, and frequently in buildings such as large former residences not built as schools. Class sizes of 60 children or higher are not uncommon. Teacher training is inadequate, supervision ranges from bureaucratic and political to inattentive, absenteeism is unacceptably high, morale and incentives tend to be low, and in-service professional support is unsystematic and infrequent. Dropout rates are high and for all but the best students and students able to afford private education options, access to secondary education is limited and inequitably distributed. Even comparatively wealthy states such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait lag badly in terms of EFA goals, particularly in terms of the education of girls and the commitment to educate all children.

However, I do not share the bleak view. Progress is being made and it is possible to make further and faster progress with increased assistance and better national leadership. Substantially more resources are needed and could be used effectively both for existing programs and for complementary activities such as secondary expansion and improvement (particularly lower secondary), early childhood development, increased emphasis on workforce development and work-related skills (not necessarily vocational-technical training in the schools), administrative decentralization and management improvement, improved monitoring, measurement and accountability systems.

Unquestionably, there are very large quantitative problems, most countries remain relatively poor and there are serious problems of distributional equity and access, particularly for girls but also for rural areas, cultural and linguistic minorities. Improving these systems will take time, 10–15 years minimum, and the changes will come slowly and incrementally. There is no quick fix, nor is there any inexpensive or risk-free and politically easy strategy. Progress will take sustained leadership, funding, technical and administrative expertise. It also will take a difficult combination of patient confidence in long-term strategies and the courage to take short-term risks and to learn from mistakes.

The encouraging trend is that most countries have now put in place plans for moving toward Education for All. These are uneven and it remains to be seen whether the countries will have the political will to actually implement the plans fully and the international community will honor the commitments to mobilize resources to help these countries achieve the EFA objectives. But, they do exist and are a basis for action and investment, as well as a benchmark for monitoring progress. UNESCO, the World Bank, and others, including USAID, provide important support for improving data systems, monitoring and assessment against agreed goals and internationally monitored indicators of progress. Further encouraging is that most countries are making quantitative progress, albeit more slowly than they need to achieve. Youth literacy rates for the 15–24-year-olds are rising along with schooling rates and gender parity is improving in all but a few countries, particularly Yemen, Saudi Arabia, parts of Pakistan and Bangladesh. A third basis for optimism is, there is beginning to be more partnership with the private sector and broader consensus across the public sector that education reform, expansion, and qualitative improvement is essential for achieving social objectives, maintaining political cohesion and stability, and creating the conditions for investment and job creation. Finally, there now is substantial expertise in the region. A few countries such as Tunisia, Jordan, and Qatar are becoming exemplars for the region and there is increasing potential for regional cooperation and exchange.

This growing public policy consensus and broad support, reaching well beyond the sectoral concerns of most educators, is articulated in the series of Arab Human Development Reports. For example, the 2003 Arab Human Development Report addressed the "knowledge deficit" in the Arab world, suggesting that overhauling the region's outdated education systems is necessary for future economic prosperity and human development. The report noted that Arabs themselves need to drive this process of change, drawing from their rich cultural, linguistic, and intellectual heritages.

The same point should be kept in mind for all countries of the region. Assistance is much needed, and welcomed in most countries, but it is the national leaders, public and private and at all levels, who must assess and understand their issues, build consensus, take the political risks and make the budgetary and administrative commitments to drive aggressive national plans of action. There is much the international community can do to provide technical support and critically needed inputs, but sustainable and effective reform leading to full mobilization to achieve quality education for all has to be nationally led, owned, and managed. There is much that can be done, and is being done, working through nongovernment organizations and alternative schooling systems in countries that have not yet made such commitments. Such programs often are very innovative and effective in addressing specific needs, particularly for poor and marginal populations, girls and women and others not being effectively reached by public education programs. However, other outcomes resulting from the building of national systems of public education, and the administrative and accountability reforms necessary to build such systems fully and effectively, will not be achieved by strategies bypassing the weaknesses of public administration and public leadership.

Public funding, public policy, and public administration of public schools will continue, for better or worse, to be the dominant influence in most countries (Lebanon may be the exception). To effect major changes in these systems, donors must work within the framework of national leadership and national plans of action. This is often very delicate and cannot be externally driven except at the margins.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I thank you very much, Mr. Method, for your testimony.

We'll now have a period of questioning. The Chair regrets to announce that a Democratic Senator or Senators have objected to the committee meeting 2 hours after the Senate came in. Thank goodness we started early. And so, it would appear that we will be able to continue until 11:45. But I mention that because we will have a period of questioning, and then we want to hear the other witnesses, likewise, and have an opportunity for their testimony today.

Let me begin by pointing out that you have all made a distinction between the preoccupation of many in the United States on the madrasas schools—which you all see, at least in Pakistan, and perhaps elsewhere, as a very real concern—and the much broader concern of the public school movement, as a whole.

I think you, Mr. Burki, pointed out that many students who are alienated by their public school experience, or lack of it, may be as hostile to their countrymen and the rest of the world, as those who have special indoctrination. Perhaps so. But, in any event, it indicates, as both you and Dr. Ahmed have pointed out, the enormity of the problem. You're suggesting that 4 percent, perhaps, of the GNP of Pakistan should be devoted to education. Obviously, only a small fraction of that is happening. Generous contributions by the U.S. Government, or other governments, are going to supplement this. But Pakistan is a very large country with many students, as you pointed out. Perhaps close to half of the entire population is in what you might say an educable area. That is a big figure.

What is reasonable, in terms of the economic development of Pakistan? I don't mean to dwell entirely on that country, but clearly it's a country in which GNP is rising. I suspect that per capita income is rising, although I'm not certain of that, given population increases. What is a reasonable percentage in, say, an intermediate period, 10 years of time? Four? One? One and a half? In other words, if you were taking a look at this from the rest of the world, and you keep mentioning, strongly, to Pakistani leaders, "Spend more on education," and then there is a pushback factor there, and they're saying, "Listen, you don't understand all of the problems that we have. We're not a wealthy country, and we're developing rapidly, but we can only do so much," can you give us some parameters of what the argument should be?

Mr. BURKI. Mr. Chairman, at this point Pakistan is spending less than 2 percent of its GDP——

The CHAIRMAN. I see.

Mr. BURKI [continuing]. On education. There is virtual consensus amongst development people that a country should spend more than 4 percent; preferably, 5 percent of GDP. So Pakistan has to double its expenditure, in terms of GDP, from 2 to 4 percent.

I gather that this is the program that the government has launched at the urging of the donors, that this would, indeed, happen over the next 3 to 5 years.

The CHAIRMAN. In 3 to 5 years, a doubling might happen?

Mr. BURKI. A doubling will happen. That is their intention. Which also include—includes the money that is coming in from out-

side. A total of $1.34 billion have been committed by various donors to—for the support of education in Pakistan. These are over different periods of time. The World Bank is the largest donor, with about $600 million of soft money and grants. Asian Development Bank is also quite active in this. The United States is putting in $100 million. There are several countries who have converted their debt into grants for education.

So, my expectation is that by the year 2010, 5 years from now, if everything goes well, Pakistan should be spending what developing countries normally spend on education; that is to say, about 4 percent of GDP. My expectation is that about one-fourth of this will come from the outside.

The CHAIRMAN. So, maybe 1 percent of the 4?

Mr. BURKI. One percent of the four will come from outside.

The CHAIRMAN. Outside.

Mr. BURKI. It will be the donor money.

There is also a great deal of money which is now being sent to Pakistan by way of contribution by the diasporas in the United States and in Britain for educational reform. I have not seen any numbers on this, but it is a significant amount, and it is increasing. And it is my suggestion that that money should also be used in a way that it adds to the development of education.

The CHAIRMAN. Is the diaspora——

Mr. BURKI. Mr. Chairman——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. In any way organized? Are Pakistanis in the United States——

Mr. BURKI. Yes, diaspora is organized. It has—taking advantage of your tax laws, a number of nongovernment organizations have been set up in this country, which hold various functions around the United States and raise money. There is an intention on the part of some of these organizations, not to establish new schools, not to spend money on new brick and mortar, but to go to the government and say, "Well, why don't you sell this school to us, or sell this university to us, and we will take it over, and we will improve it, on the condition that we will provide education to poor children, so we will not charge a large amount of money."

The Indian diaspora has been very successful in doing something very similar, and some of us have been talking to the Indians to learn some lessons from their initiatives.

In terms of the amount of income that the Indian diaspora has, it is much greater than Pakistan's, but then India is 10 times as large as Pakistan. So, in terms of proportion of GDP generated by the Pakistanis working in the United States, it is one of the largest diasporas in the world, and willing to contribute a lot of money for the social welfare of their own country.

Mr. Chairman, you also asked me the question about economic performance in Pakistan. It has been good in the last 2 or 3 years. Last year, the gross domestic product increased at the rate of 6.1 percent. Population increased at 2.2 percent, which means that there was a 3.9 percent increase in per capita income. This year, the government expects the increase in GDP to be above 7 percent; so, population increasing at 2 percent will mean a GDP per capita increase of 5 percent.

Now, these are gross numbers. These are aggregate numbers. Pakistan is a country in which income distribution is highly skewed. The top 10 percent of the population earns much more than the bottom 10 percent of the population than is normal for most developing countries. So, because of the skewness in the distribution of income, when GDP increases, a significant part of it goes into the pockets of the rich, rather than the poor, and that is a problem which can only be solved through education and creating employment opportunities and so on.

I just want to reiterate what I said earlier, that things—developments are in the right direction in Pakistan. But Musharraf's government—I think my colleague Samina Ahmed was alluding to this in her own presentation—has been not always willing to take on the forces of conservatism. And I think where the donor community could come in, is to persuade Musharraf and his colleagues that it is extremely important to move the country toward modernity, rather than toward obscurantism. And there are sometimes efforts to move the country forward toward modernization, but then the molvees, the mullahs, come in and they make a lot of noise, and the government does backtrack in several different ways.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Bassem, let me ask the same question to you about the experience in Jordan. How much of the GNP of Jordan is devoted to education? And what is the goal of the country in that respect?

Dr. AWADALLAH. We are actually spending more than 4 percent of GDP on education. Most of the expenditure, however, has been in recurring—in current expenditure. And until we developed this Education for Reform Initiative, very little was spent on capital expenditure. We were reliant on donor assistance, particularly on loans from the World Bank, in order to construct new schools; and those were project loans, they were not part of an overall strategy for reform.

It was only in 1999 that we started thinking about this through a public/private partnership, and it took us about 2 years to put the plans together. In the year 2001, when we came up with the social and economic transformation plan, one of its major tenets was educational reform. So that's when we came up with all the requirements for educational reform—the construction of new schools, the computerization of the schools, the linking of the schools through a highspeed broadband network, the training of the teachers, the educational platform, the revamping of the content, the introduction of e-learning. All of these formed the component of education reform for the knowledge economy.

We brought all the donors together, and we asked USAID, we asked the Japanese, we asked the Europeans, we asked the Canadians, we asked the World Bank, we asked some of the Arab gulf funds that have given us loans, as well, for this project, we asked the Islamic Development Bank in Jeddah, and other donors—we asked them all to form a donor group, which will support the educational reform in Jordan. Obviously, their support has to be matched but what—by what we come up with, in terms of our budget. So it has been more or less a 50–50 split between what the donor community has provided us for the educational reform, and

what we have come up with, out of our domestic revenues in the budget in order to accelerate and go ahead with this reform plan.

The first phase of this education reform for the knowledge economy is 500 million U.S. dollars. That's the cost of it. And that will take us into the year 2007 to 2008. The second phase will complete the cycle, and we will get rid of the double shifts, which were referred to earlier. There were major constraints, social constraints, especially with regards to girls and women going to school, especially during the wintertime, when the sun sets at early hours and families will not allow, socially, their girls to go out of their houses after 3:30 or 4 p.m. in the afternoon. So we had to deal with the double shifts in many of the schools. We had to deal with a lot of the schools in rural areas which were not really schools; they were one rooms, which had a blackboard, and it was a small room taking more than 40 or 50 students. We had to attend to all of these issues, and we are making a marked improvement, in terms of the educational reform.

One thing, Mr. Chairman, that I want to mention is, educational reform is extremely important at the primary level; but, as the Doctor mentioned, the tertiary level is extremely important. When we speak about higher education, it's even more important. One of the key areas that His Majesty the King has focused on is the Shari'ah teaching. Because we noticed that the rejects of the educational system, those who come last on their scores, on their high school scores, get into the Shari'ah schools, or the Shari'ah departments at the different universities. And those are the ones who turn out to become the preachers in the mosques, and who captivate their audiences every Friday at noon prayers, and captivate them into thinking what they would like them to think.

We really think that the preaching and the Shari'ah teaching in universities should be done along the lines of the law degrees in the United States. It should be a post-graduate curriculum, rather than an undergraduate curriculum. And this is what we are working on right now, in terms of reforming our higher education system in order to make sure that we address this issue.

Beyond the Shari'ah discipline, I think just focusing on areas of vocational training—and I agree with you, sir, that perhaps vocational training should not be part of the educational training, but it should be a separate, parallel system that would cater to the requirements of the labor market. And herein, as I said, is the major challenge which we, in Jordan, have yet to face, matchmaking the output of the educational process with the requirements of the labor market, not only in Jordan, but across the Middle East. And this is something which is extremely important.

In the past, we've relied on gulf countries to absorb Jordanian labor force. Over the last few years, we've seen, in the gulf countries, a nationalization effort. They do not import labor from Arab countries as much as they used to, before. We've noticed that visa requirements and immigration to the Western, more-advanced countries has been sharply curtailed, which necessitates the need for us to create more jobs for our growing labor market. And this is not only unique for Jordan, this is across the Middle East and North African region; indeed, for the Bemina region.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. That's a very important point. We are talking about education and expansion, how vital that is, but each of you, in your own way, has testified that there has to be something after, that there has to be something there—a job, a career, an opportunity—or else you have another dislocation in society that is very disquieting.

I just wanted to ask you, Mr. Method, as you take a look at several countries in your purview—we've had very, very good testimony about Pakistan and Jordan—is their experience unique? Can you generalize, in any respect, about the countries that you have surveyed, and how much they are spending, how much they're obtaining from outside the job picture, as related to these elements we've been discovering in Pakistan and Jordan?

Mr. METHOD. It's difficult to generalize——

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, of course.

Mr. METHOD [continuing]. Across this set of countries that covers several continents. Most countries are underspending. I think one of the things to keep in mind is that it's a matter of the political commitment that is made to achieving this objective that drives the funding. That's part of what I meant when we talked about the importance of emphasizing *all*—the political will to make difficult changes—where it's treated as an imperative, you know, no excuses, "You've got to do it, like we do in the United States." Somehow, governments have to find a way to raise those funds.

In most of the countries of the region, it's not treated as an imperative. It's treated as a public-administration task. People start with, "All right, this is how much we have for resources. How are we going to allocate it?" And that allocation becomes a political process, rather than some kind of categorical commitment. By moving it to a categorical commitment—and I think external donors can help to move it there—you force changes in fiscal policy, you force politically difficult decisions as to who's going to be taxed. Pakistan could raise considerably more funds if it had the political will and the political strength—and it is a fragile government—to take on some of the feudal landholding practices in the 20 families or so that control much of the wealth in Pakistan.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me interject to point out that in your testimony, you point to Jordan, Tunisia, and Qatar as models for reform. Do they have political will or some framework for achievement? Likewise, are they small countries, as opposed to large populations, and, therefore, do they have better hope of a comprehensive plan becaise they have fewer persons to work with?

Mr. METHOD. Clearly, in Jordan, the fact that the King (and the Queen) took a personal interest in this and made it happen, helped to make it happen. In Qatar, the sheik and the sheikha have taken a personal interest, and have driven that very hard.

I think Tunisia has done better than others. Jordan is trying to do somewhat the same, trying to change the relationship to the employing sectors—much more consultation with the employers, many more forms of advisory mechanisms, much more of a demand-side approach to achieving education—whereas, other countries still are rather stuck in an unreformed curriculum that is relatively rigid, that tries to supply people to the labor market without really knowing what the labor market wants, that tends to overemphasize

the hard technical skills and underemphasize the soft skills that employers want, in terms of information-seeking capacities, critical-thinking skills, ability to work in teams, all of those aspects. I think that's one of the areas for further emphasis.

I do also agree that there needs to be—I don't know about equal attention—but certainly serious attention to the tertiary education systems. I would like to see more variants of the U.S. community-college model being adapted in these countries. I think that that's a very effective way of linking the schooling system to the world of work, intermediating with the employers through a variety of advisory mechanisms, the consultative mechanisms that shape those community colleges.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, you touched, each of you, in a way, upon the jobs issue. At least two of you have mentioned that there may be greater problems in students, from the countries we're discussing today, finding work in the United States. Is this a part of what I touched upon in my introductory statement, namely our current visa restrictions? Or is there more reticence with exchange programs and work-study programs? Maybe this is not an area that you have studied, but certainly in the past this has been an outlet for many talented persons. This committee has been seized with the issue with a task force, as I mentioned, in talking with Assistant Secretaries of State and Homeland Security and the executives at NIH and what have you, who have testified about what a great contribution, particularly graduate students are making in our medical research institutions, or, for that matter, in our engineering colleges. But this is obviously changing, because we have apparently put more barriers in those areas, or more opportunities are found elsewhere, and people are not selecting to come here. I'm curious as to whether you have any comments in this general area.

Yes, Dr. Bassem.

Dr. AWADALLAH. Mr. Chairman, thank you for raising this issue. If you look at the talent that is present from many countries—Pakistan, maybe Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, Egypt—you find enormous talent, particularly in the United States, but also in Europe—but, in particular, in the United States—that has found equal opportunity here, that has found the ability to come and contribute to American society, to American knowledge. And they have gone back to their countries and to contribute to the improvement of life in their own countries. And they are good emissaries and ambassadors of the American way of life and of what America stands for, because they experienced equal opportunity and freedom in this country.

We are terribly worried about what is happening right now. We do understand, obviously, the security considerations, but this should not be, in any way, used to stop the flow of people who are coming into this country. Today, you look at the Jordanian Cabinet, and over three-quarters of the ministers in the Jordanian Cabinet were educated in the United States.

The CHAIRMAN. Very interesting.

Dr. AWADALLAH. Now, in—if the situation continues like it is today, in 20, 30 years time this is not going to be the case. Now you will see that the dichotomy in Iraq, people who have been closed in Iraq for the last 30 years under Saddam Hussein. They

have no idea what the United States is all about. Probably all they know about the United States today is just military occupation, and they do not know anything about American values, they do not know anything about American freedom. Whereas, people who lived in the United States, Iraqis who lived in the United States and who have gone back now to Iraq, see the United States in a different light. Same applies for Palestinians. Same applies for Syrians or Egyptians. And it is a very important point, which I hope that the administration will attend to.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I didn't want to generalize the point, but I'd just underline the fact that, in terms of our so-called public diplomacy—and we are still working at this arduously—we have these opportunities that have come, historically, as you say, with this high percentage of the Cabinet of Jordan. This is certainly true of the young people in the Rose Revolution in Georgia, for example. I had the privilege of entertaining six of them, 6 years ago in the Senate dining room, without any idea that they were going to be ministers in Georgia. But the fact is that we can give our money, and some of our institutions are working, but it's another thing if a Pakistani or a Jordanian or a Tunisian, who has some idea of what goes on in this country, and liked it, in fact, later becomes the leader for reform, or among that leadership, in his or her home country. We're all talking about some indigenous, homegrown qualities. But, as you say, if people have no idea—isolated in Iraq, for example, all these years—as to what in the world we are doing here, then an injection of money suddenly may have some benefit, but not nearly what we think, and perhaps not in the forms that we find is compatible with local needs. So I appreciate your making that point.

Yes, Doctor.

Mr. BURKI. Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to reinforce what you're saying. The change that has come about, possibly, because of 9/11, has produced an enormous amount of resentment in Pakistan, particularly amongst people who are naturally friends of the United States. If you go back into my country's history, you will see that, for the first 20 years after Pakistan was born, in 1947, the preferred destination for higher education was Britain. I went there as an undergraduate, myself. This was Colonial-linked, and so on. But about the mid-1960s, it began to change, and the preferred destination, therefore, became the United States. And up until very recently, something like 10,000 students used to come to the United States. Not all of them went back, but even those who stayed back have performed very good service for their country. I keep on talking about diaspora. These are the members of diaspora who are now heavily engaged in the development of their own country.

So, I would like to just reinforce what you're saying, Mr. Chairman, that, as a part of United States public policy, it is extremely important to reopen the United States to students in Pakistan and other Muslim countries, rather than make it more difficult for these people to access your wonderful institutions.

I have just finished reading Tom Friedman's excellent book called "The World is Flat," and the picture that he paints of the

world is a picture of which Pakistan should be a part, which is supplying services to the aging populations of the United States, Japan, Germany, and so on, without migrating to these countries, but acquiring those skills first by coming over here, and then going back to their own countries.

So, we've got to get that thing started once again. It has been interrupted by 9/11, but I hope wiser counsels will prevail and access, once again, would become available to frustrated students becoming angry because they find it so difficult to gain access that they desperately want.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Ahmed.

Dr. AHMED. Mr. Chairman, there was a question raised at the beginning of this testimony which was on arms sales, and I will link it to what you have said now. With the money that the United States is providing for education reform, the United States is winning a lot of goodwill within Pakistan. These are not children of families that can come to the United States to study. Only the elite can do that. And that's, as Mr. Burki said, a very thin layer of Pakistani society.

And let's not assume that money and wealth means leadership, not here in the United States, where opportunities are present for people to find their way up the ladder just like that; in Pakistan, with the opportunities being present, we would hope to see that leadership emerge from all classes of society, not just for young people who are economically mobile and socially mobile.

So, here is a thing that I think we need to understand. It is also the type of assistance given and where it's visible. In some of the areas that I have actually seen USAID projects, there's virtually nothing, but there's a little bit of money. It's not very much, but it's made a difference.

What does Pakistan need? And this was a question that was raised earlier on. You had asked that question, and I'd like to add to the answer that you gave. It is a question of political will. It is a question of saying, "This is a priority for my country," not, "We are poor, and we can't afford it, and we'll wait for another 5 years, and we'll have another, God knows, how many more children who will probably be out in the streets or in madrasas." That will come from leadership, and that leadership, unfortunately, is lacking. The United States is making a contribution, and we would hope that that contribution would be in these areas that Pakistan so desperately needs—in social-sector development, in education, in health.

If you actually look at the indicators—pick any indicator, it really doesn't matter—it's abysmal.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, we thank you very much for that wisdom.

I thank the entire panel, and I appreciate, so much, your papers, which will be made a part of our record, and, equally, your thoughtful responses to these questions. We look forward to staying in touch with you. You are good friends of the committee, and good friends of all the ideals that we have talked about today. And we thank you.

The Chair would like to call, now, the witnesses who will be a part of our second panel.

[Pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair would like to call the meeting back to order.

We are very honored to have, as a distinguished panel, Ms. Elizabeth Cheney, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, the United States Department of State; and Mr. James Kunder, Assistant Administrator for Asia and the Near East, in USAID.

I'll ask you to testify in the order in which I have introduced you. As in the case of the first panel, your full prepared statements will be made a part of the record. We will ask you to summarize, hopefully in about a 10-minute period, and then we will ask questions.

Ms. Cheney.

STATEMENT OF ELIZABETH CHENEY, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for the opportunity to be here and to speak with you this morning about what is a really critically important issue of education reform in the broader Middle East.

I think that, as we gather today, we really are in a moment of historic opportunity for the people of the Middle East. I think if you look at, sort of, what's happened across the region in the last several months—beginning with the elections in Afghanistan, the elections then in the West Bank and Gaza, the elections in Iraq, the assassination of Prime Minister Hariri, and the uprising from the people of Lebanon since then, as well as the Saudi elections, the very bold announcement by President Mubarak that he will, in fact, be pushing for constitutional reform and multiparty elections in Egypt, the reforms that you heard about on the part of the Jordanians, in terms of their economic reforms, educational reforms, and political reforms—there really, I think, is a movement of change across the region. And I think for us, in the U.S. Government, the task is to do everything we can to help support that change.

I think it's a critical element for us in securing long-term victory in the war on terror that we do everything we can to provide hope and opportunity to the region's young people, in particular. And I think that means focusing on reforming schools so that we are sure they teach tolerance, so we're sure that they guarantee that people have the skills they need to compete in the 21st century economy, ensuring that economic systems are open and are growing enough so they can create jobs, and ensuring that political systems, as well, are open so people can have a voice in determining their own destiny and their own future and how they're governed, and I think, finally, and, in my opinion, perhaps most importantly, that we work to empower women and to ensure that women across the regions have a voice in their society as equal participants and equal players and have access to the same opportunities that the men and the boys in those societies do. As the President has said, increasingly ensuring that liberty spreads in other regions is necessary to secure our own liberty at home.

As you're aware, Mr. Chairman, 50 percent of the population of the broader Middle East and North Africa is under the age of 20,

and economies today are simply not growing quickly enough to create jobs that those people will require once they're entering in the labor market. We are faced, in most countries in the region, with closed political systems, with illiteracy rates—I think it's 75 million men across the region, and 45 million women—sorry, 75 million women and 45 million men are illiterate today. In many countries we have a 50-percent illiteracy rate among women. At the same time, you've got school systems, as I said, that are failing to teach values of tolerance and failing to equip people with the tools that they need.

As we look at the systems that we see in place, I think, as the U.S. Government, this means it's critical for us to support efforts to help to reform those schools systems. We're doing a number of things. One is working directly with Ministries of Education in countries where they've demonstrated that they've got a political will to make change. We provided $4.5 million, for example, for the Jordan Education Initiative that Minister Awadallah briefed on earlier today. We also are working at—to ensure that our assistance is felt at a grassroots level. And in places where we see less of a political will to change, we want to ensure that we are doing everything we can to touch people's lives, to teach women how to read, and to provide scholarships both to attend school and also in English language training.

I recently returned from—I was in Morocco last week, where I had the opportunity to meet with some recipients of some of our microscholarships. And it's a very impressive and effective program, where, for a small amount of money, we're providing 9 months of English language training to high school students and college students, college-aged students, from some of the poorest areas around Rabat and Casablanca, and really giving these kids an opportunity to experience a better future that they clearly wouldn't have had otherwise.

We're working both bilaterally and multilaterally on these issues of education reform. Multilaterally, we signaled, beginning at the Sea Island Summit last year, that the G–8 partners are very committed. We've launched a separate G–8 education initiative, which is focused on improving school systems and also very much focused on literacy. These goals were reaffirmed last December in Rabat, at the Forum for the Future, and we'll be having an educational ministerial meeting in May at the Dead Sea in Jordan. Our Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings, will be representing the United States there.

Bilaterally, the largest portion of our funds on education reform are provided through USAID, so I'll let my colleague, Assistant Administrator Kunder, talk about those.

From the Department of State's perspective, we've got several different programs underway. Through our Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, we've got approximately $356 million, which we anticipate will have a focus on the Muslim world and on youth in the Muslim world. Issues like exchange programs, some of the very things that the last panel was talking about, in terms of making sure students have the resources to come to the United States. We recognize that that's critically important to building relationships. We also, through ECA, are funding a teacher-training pro-

gram in Afghanistan, and our Fulbright programs across the region, including new programs in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In addition to that, we have the Middle East Partnership Initiative, which has dedicated $75 million, out of the $293 million appropriated to the Partnership Initiative, to education and women's literacy. And we have a number of different programs that the Partnership Initiative is funding. We've launched partnership schools. We're working now, initially in Oman and Algeria, to identify schools, in conjunction with those governments, that the Partnership Initiative can then go into the schools and work on a whole range of issues—work on curriculum, work on IT training, training for the administrators and the teachers—to help use those as pilot schools that very much can then become a model.

We also are providing translated textbooks and translated children's books. We were guided in this by the findings in the first Arab Human Development Report, in 2002, that demonstrated that the numbers of books that are translated into Arabic every year really are dwarfed by numbers across the rest of the world, in terms of English translation, French translation, Spanish, even Greek. So we provided a grant to help to get textbooks and children's books into schools.

We're also providing funding to an organization called Arab Civitas, which is focused on helping to provide citizenship training through the schools so that students are equipped to participate in the emerging democratic political systems.

We're also, finally, very focused on public/private partnerships, such as the Jordan Education Initiative. And the other model, that I think is very impressive, is the Alexandria, Egypt, model, where the local community, the local private sector, has taken a major role in helping to reform those schools systems. And, through USAID in Egypt, we've provided funding to help replicate that model in other cities across Egypt.

In addition to these programs, we're also supporting university partnership in 10 countries. We're funding Visiting Student Leaders, which is another exchange program. We're helping to provide Internet service in Yemeni High School. And we're very much looking at how we measure the success, going forward, of these. Some of these programs' results are relatively easy to measure. If you're talking about literacy training, for example, you can measure how many people you've taught how to read. Scholarships for girls, you can measure enrollment statistics.

It obviously becomes more difficult and will take more time to be able to determine, you know, which programs are having a moderating influence in society, but it's something that we will be following closely, obviously, as we go, in the coming months.

We're working, right now, to produce annual—our 2005 country strategies for every country across the region, which will be looking at the whole range of foreign-policy issues we have in our bilateral relationships, but will include, obviously, a large portion of freedom agenda issues. And the education reform will be central to that.

So, in closing, I think I would just like to say we'll continue to stress the importance of education reform, both in our policy dialogs with governments in the region, as well as working with NGOs, and in working to ensure that we're doing everything pos-

sible to provide tangible, real, and effective assistance, recognizing that, in many cases, we are not the largest or the only donor, and we need to ensure that we aren't being duplicative. But I think there's a lot of important work the United States can do, both at the policy level and at the assistance level.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Cheney follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ELIZABETH CHENEY, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today on the important topic of educational reform in the Broader Middle East and North Africa. The President's vision to promote freedom and democracy in the region is about giving young people hope for their future—a positive future built on the prospect of opportunity and prosperity—that strengthens regional stability and our own national security.

In the area of education reform, we need to support efforts to ensure that schools in the region teach tolerance and prepare students to compete in the global economy. We need to work to improve literacy, particularly among women. We are willing to lend our strong support to Ministries of Education in the region that have demonstrated commitment to reform.

We also need to do more to ensure that our assistance touches, is seen by, and improves the lives of more people at the grassroots level in the countries to which we provide assistance. In the area of education, this can be achieved by making greater use of literacy programs, scholarships for women and girls to attend school, and support for programs—such as those in Alexandria, Egypt—that involve the private sector in education reform.

THE CHALLENGE

Fifty percent of the region's population is under the age of 20. Economies across the region are not growing quickly enough—and are not sufficiently open to the outside world—to create jobs for these young people to fill. At the same time, rigid and closed political systems do not give citizens in many countries a voice in shaping their destiny or choosing their leaders. Finally, too many school systems across the region are failing to teach tolerance or to provide students with the tools they need to compete successfully in the global marketplace.

Regional stability and a reduction in the appeal of extremism depend on giving people in the region more power to shape their lives, their societies, and their futures. This endeavor will require reform of political, economic, and education systems, and the empowerment of women. Reform efforts will need to ensure people have a democratic voice in the governance of their countries, to strengthen the rule of law to protect citizens' rights, to modernize economic systems in order to create opportunity, and to facilitate access to quality education, particularly for women and girls, so that all citizens are properly equipped to participate fully in society.

The groundbreaking 2003 Arab Human Development Report was pivotal in drawing attention to the critical issue of failing education systems that produce citizens ill-equipped for the challenges of the modern world. The authors of the report stressed this point again in the newest Arab Human Development Report released this month. Progress in the region is inextricably linked to strong democratic institutions and economic growth, which are not possible without significant reforms in educational systems.

There is no question that implementing genuine educational reform is a difficult process that entails overcoming numerous hurdles and working through a series of challenges. The Broader Middle East and North Africa has some of the lowest literacy rates in the world—particularly among women. Over 75 million women are illiterate, as are over 45 million men. Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, and Morocco are countries of particular concern. In Egypt alone, over 13 million Egyptian women contribute to a national female illiteracy rate of 56 percent—according to the United Nations.

Businesses in the region consistently report that national education systems are not producing graduates with the skills and qualifications needed by the private sector in order to compete in the modern, international marketplace. Basic education needs to be relevant to societal needs and workforce requirements if the region is to make progress on economic growth and social development. So, support for indigenously led efforts to train teachers, reform curricula, and provide vocational training is also important in helping to address the region's educational challenges.

The conversations on reform that are taking place throughout the Broader Middle East and North Africa are encouraging. And there are encouraging signs of change in the area of education in the region as well. As I already mentioned, the governorate of Alexandria in Egypt has been leading the way toward a school system characterized by greater local-level control and by strong collaboration and involvement on the part of parents and local businesses in shaping the education that is provided to their children.

The United States and its allies have clearly signaled their desire to support governments committed to education reform and to provide them with both material support and the benefit of their international experience.

At Sea Island, GA, the United States joined with G–8 partners and countries of the Broader Middle East and North Africa in committing to work together to support regional political, economic, and educational reform efforts, including support for the improvement of educational systems and a literacy initiative to impart literacy skills to an additional 20 million people by 2015. At the historic Forum for the Future in Rabat last December, G–8 and regional leaders reaffirmed these goals and agreed to convene a meeting of Education Ministers in Jordan this May to discuss the critical success factors necessary for reform. The education ministerial is sure to produce robust and constructive engagement and dialog on this key set of issues.

The key for the United States is to allocate our resources in a targeted fashion that does not duplicate other donors' efforts. In addition, we need to take advantage of opportunities where governments are committed to reform.

THE RESOURCES

Over $98 billion in assistance has been provided to the Broader Middle East and North Africa by the rest of the world over the last 10 years. According to the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD countries provided in excess of $74 billion in bilateral assistance between 1993 and 2003. The World Bank provided more than $24 billion during the same period (primarily in loans, but also via a small number of grants).

Of the $74 billion provided by the OECD countries over the last 10 years, $4 billion went to support education; $2.4 billion of the $24 billion provided by the World Bank was directed toward education during the same timeframe.

THE DONORS

The World Bank, and Germany and France have been the largest providers of foreign assistance to the Broader Middle East and North Africa in the area of education. The Bank provided over $2.4 billion in loans and grants between 1993 and 2003, while France and Germany provided approximately $1.5 billion each. According to the OECD, the United States provided $290 million over the same period; all of the U.S. money was provided in the form of grants.

The picture is somewhat different when it comes to foreign assistance for basic education. The World Bank is by far the largest donor; it provided over $900 million between 1993 and 2003—primarily in loans, but also via grants. The United States took second place with over $190 million, all provided via grant assistance.

Education reform is a difficult thing to do in any context, but particularly in the Broader Middle East and North Africa. As I have described, a huge amount of assistance is being provided to education systems throughout the region. There are many programs and there are many players. And the United States is not the biggest player in this area either.

In recent years, the United States has significantly increased the amount of education assistance provided to the region. In fiscal year 2005, we will dedicate almost $200 million to BMENA countries. The fiscal year 2006 budget requests $270 million for education assistance to BMENA countries, an increase of 37 percent over the 2005 levels.

Within the broader picture of total foreign assistance to education reform in the Broader Middle East and North Africa, we need to focus our activities and to ensure that we are not duplicating the effort of others.

Looking forward, the U.S. Government will focus its technical assistance funding on Ministries of Education, which have demonstrated a true and tangible commitment to education system reform.

We will also focus our efforts toward the grassroots level by providing literacy programs and scholarships to attend or stay in school—particularly for women and young girls. In this way, we can ensure that our assistance is not wasted, has a tangible impact upon the lives of people in the countries we are assisting, is visible at the street level and achieves results.

In countries where government Ministries of Education have demonstrated a commitment to reform, we will, of course, stand ready to provide governments with the best support that we can mobilize. This means not just funding, but it also means concerted action together with other donors to make the fruits of international experience in reforming education systems available to our partners in the region.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, the United States Government has three primary avenues through which it directs bilateral assistance to education and educational exchanges in the Broader Middle East and North Africa:

(1) USAID through development assistance and economic support funds;

(2) The Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs; and

(3) The U.S. Middle East Partnership Initiative's policy and program initiatives.

My colleague, Mr. Kunder, will speak in more detail about USAID's activities in the region. I would like to take a moment to describe the Department of State's activities in the area of education reform.

The Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) promotes democracy and reform through global exchange programs. With a 2005 appropriation of $356 million, ECA exchanges will target youth and youth influencers around the world. ECA's special emphasis will be on countries with significant Muslim populations in order to reinforce positive trends toward economic and societal change through professional and academic exchanges.

ECA sponsors a number of programs which support teachers and teacher-trainers from the region, particularly in English language instruction, and provides them with firsthand opportunities to learn about the U.S. educational system, the principles of student-centered teaching, effective democratic school governance, and parental involvement.

For example, the Afghanistan Teacher Education Project has brought more than 60 women educators from Afghanistan to the United States to enhance their professional and teacher training skills.

Similarly, the Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant program places new English language teachers from the Broader Middle East and North Africa on United States campuses for one academic year. They teach Arabic and other regional languages, and enroll in United States studies and/or English as a Second Language (ESL) methodology classes. Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco have been regular participants in the program.

THE U.S. MIDDLE EAST PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE (MEPI)

Let me now turn more directly to MEPI and its contribution to combating terrorism through education. Through MEPI we are linking the President's vision for democracy and freedom to our policy dialog with governments in the Middle East. As such, MEPI partners with those countries that have demonstrated a clear, political commitment to enacting reform in the education sector.

The U.S. Middle East Partnership Initiative has received $293 million in appropriations since its inception. Close to a quarter of these funds, or approximately $70 million, is being spent—in some cases in countries unserved by USAID—on promoting educational reform. MEPI's specific emphasis is on: Improving the quality of basic education; expanding access to basic education for all people, especially girls and women; and promoting skills development compatible with workforce needs.

The President's 2006 budget requested $30 million for MEPI's education reform efforts. Of MEPI's current funding, 25 percent supports programs that facilitate curriculum reform, teacher training, and community and private sector involvement in education.

Based on new, innovative models, MEPI has helped launch creative alternatives for improving the quality of, and access to, education for children in the primary and secondary levels through its Partnership Schools Program. This program allows MEPI to promote school autonomy in systems that have traditionally been very centralized. MEPI anticipates that by fall 2005 we will be able to conduct an initial assessment of the impact of the program's innovative instructional and management methods in the classroom, and how the methodology translates into actual enhanced autonomy and freedom of choice among students, teachers, and institutions.

The 2002 Arab Human Development Report noted that the Arab world translates about 330 books annually, one-fifth the number that Greece translates. The authors of the report also noted that the cumulative total of books translated since the times of Caliph Maa'moun (9th century) is 100,000, almost the average that Spain translates in 1 year.

In an effort to encourage independent reading, critical thinking, and analytical skills in young readers, MEPI launched "My Arabic Library," a major program that provides colorful and interesting Arabic language reading materials to third and fourth grade classrooms in the region. MEPI can demonstrate that this program is having a tangible impact. Three thousand schools will receive more than 1 million books, targeting approximately 120,000 students and 6,000 teachers at its launch. In the long term, the program will contribute to a substantive change in the approach toward education.

MEPI is targeted to respond quickly to emerging opportunities and to respond with programs targeted at the individual challenges faced by each country. Through the Arab Civitas civic education program, which is implemented in primary and secondary schools, MEPI also provides support to countries in the region wanting to build public awareness of civic rights and responsibilities. The program promotes an understanding of, and commitment to, democratic values and principles.

MEPI also has the flexibility to craft public-private partnerships to bring about effective education reform efforts. In Jordan, MEPI has partnered with the Ministry of Education and Cisco Learning to develop the Jordan Education Initiative, which provides a high-quality on-line curriculum and teacher training programs in the field of English. MEPI's education programs provide viable options and effective tools for people in the region who seek to implement reform in a manner that offers security and prosperity for all of their people.

We are in the process of working with our Embassies and USAID missions to update our country strategies in the area of reform, including education, and would be happy to discuss these with the committee as the process unfolds.

CONCLUSION

In closing, Mr. Chairman, the United States Government will continue to stress the need for positive change in education in our ongoing dialog and relationships in the Broader Middle East and North Africa and beyond. Where governments demonstrate a commitment to reform we will work closely with them to help make their efforts succeed. We will also focus our effort toward the grassroots level where we can be assured that our resources will have a tangible impact on individuals and their education.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you. I look forward to your questions and to our discussion of this important issue.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much, Ms. Cheney. We are especially appreciative, in the construct of the hearing, that we've heard from four distinguished witnesses, who have given us a view of the situations in individual countries. We are equally privileged to have a response by persons who, as you have illustrated in a very comprehensive way with a variety of programs, are attempting to understand, to listen, and to meet those requirements.

We have asked our second witness to carry on in that spirit. Mr. Kunder, we're delighted to have you here, and would you give your testimony?

STATEMENT OF JAMES KUNDER, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. KUNDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do very much appreciate your calling the hearing. I know it's obligatory to say that, but it really does help us focus our analysis when you call these kinds of hearings.

I wanted to start off by introducing you to four of the newest recruits in the global war on terrorism. These are Ikri Mikri, Tuktuki, Halum, and Shiku. They are four Sesame Street characters introduced, just last week, to Bangladeshi television as part of the Sisimpur Program, or Sesame Street in Bengali.

A couple of years ago, we would have been talking about how this was an extension of the U.S. Sesame Street program. In fact,

it's an extension of the Egyptian Sesame Street program, which we've now rolled off into Bangladesh. So we're trying to get out these programs—teaching these values of tolerance and understanding of minority groups, and so forth, that we do with similar programming in the United States.

I have another audio/visual display, if I can. This is a certificate I received for Cisco Systems computer training a couple of weeks ago, where I was taught by a very competent 19-year-old woman. I have to admit, I wasn't a very good student. She was a very good teacher. The interesting thing was that I received this certificate in the reconstructed Ministry of Women's Affairs in downtown Kabul, Afghanistan, and the young woman was an Afghani woman participating in a joint U.S. Government/Cisco Systems training program.

I raise these things, not to be humorous, but to display that, as Liz has said, we are trying, across the region, to use the taxpayer dollars we've been entrusted with, to use the best techniques we can in audio/visual training, in telecommunications, in private/public, business/government partnerships to win this war on terrorism.

These are humorous examples, but, of course, we understand we're engaged in a deadly serious battle. We've got programs going from the hardscrabble Hezbollah villages of southern Lebanon to the jungles of Mindanao, where we're doing demobilization programs for Moro Liberation Army fighters. So this is very serious work. And I think the taxpayers would be gratified that the kind of work that we're trying to do with the dollars we have available is as creative as possible.

I'd like to address, first, very briefly, the toughest question that I think the committee asked us, and that is the question of the link between education and moderate behavior. We have tried to do very serious research at USAID using partners like the RAND Corporation and other think-tanks to understand, as carefully as we can, whether there's a causal link between education and moderate behavior, or, ultimately, the avoidance of terrorism.

It's very difficult to draw a direct causal relationship on a one-to-one basis. That is to say, it's very hard to say that if an individual was educated to a certain level, he or she is less likely to engage in terrorist behavior. However, what we think we can show—and this is an important part, both of USAID programming and MEPI programming at the State Department—is that democracy and participation lead to moderation across societies. Tolerance and democracy and moderate behavior come from participation in democratic processes. Education—public education, private education, primary education, and secondary education—all contribute to democracy and participation. So we have an indirect link, we think, between education and the kind of behavior we hope folks will display across the region.

I have to tell you—truth in advertising—I wanted to make that point, specifically, because, in part of your opening statement, sir, you mentioned the shift in resources from other development programs in Pakistan into education. We believed that was a good thing, and that's why we did it. You also raised the question of whether we should shift resources from what we call traditional development programs into education. Our answer to that would be

that the goal of increasing moderate behavior and combating terrorism across the region is simply not a question of shifting money from one line item into another. Job training, participation for men and women in the society, democratic principles, and education, all contribute as a comprehensive package. The good news is, development works. As these societies advance, we will see less terrorist behavior and immoderate behavior. But just to shift money between line items, we don't believe is the answer to solving that problem.

If I could, we have just a couple of charts here, and I'll be very brief. I believe you have these in front of you, sir. This chart tries to summarize much of what the first panel said. The sheet that says "Complexity of the Education Challenge," the range of education problems that we try to highlight here is the result of our research that indicates that it's not just classrooms, it's not just teacher training, it's not just numbers of students enrolled; there are a range of access issues that have to do with how many schools are built, how many kids are out of school, low literacy rates, especially for women, and lack of early-childhood development programs, like the Sesame Street programs I talked about earlier. But then, these access problems have to be matched by investments in quality. If we don't have well-trained teachers and administrators, if we don't have systems to monitor education progress, if we don't have parental and community involvement in the school, and if we don't have pedagogy that increases student participation, that simply emphasizes rote learning, the education programs won't achieve the results we intend.

And, finally—and you were getting to this question with the previous panel, and Liz referred to it, as well—the programs have to be relevant. The reason a lot of the kids aren't in school, or the reason a lot of the kids drop out, is they simply don't see any economic advantage. So a lot of our programs have focused explicitly, on the link between economic growth and jobs and relevant training.

The second sheet, then, talks about education as a moderating influence, and talks about the kinds of strategies we've tried to launch across the region. So we promote quality education and economic opportunities, increase education opportunities for unemployed and out-of-school youth. We're not just focused on the kids in school, but we're focused on informal training programs for those kids who are out of school, street kids and so forth, who might be particular targets for terrorist recruitment.

Third, we've looked at providing alternative schools to radical madrasas. We come out at the same point that the technical panel talked to, that the best goal we can achieve is to support public education and alternative education, and let the madrasa phenomenon wither, because the parents who are sending their kids to madrasas are primarily sending them there because they don't see a good alternative.

Fourth, we're trying to teach critical-thinking skills and tolerance, both in our early-childhood development programs and in the public school system.

Fifth, we're trying to increase access to education opportunities through school repair and accelerated learning—these kind of programs are particularly critical in post-conflict situations, for exam-

ple, in Afghanistan, where girls missed so much schooling under the Taliban; we're trying to get them into accelerated training programs—provide training to bridge the school-to-work transition, and improve education monitoring and information systems.

I'll close with just two particular points. Your opening statement talked about the fact that we're spending only about 3 percent of U.S. foreign-assistance dollars in education. We probably need to provide the committee, with your permission, some additional numbers on that.

[The information referred to follows:]

PERCENT OF U.S. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE SPENT ON EDUCATION

The total Asia and the Near East (ANE) fiscal year 2005 budget (Economic Support Funds, ESF; Development Assistance, DA; Emergency Supplemental funding, and IRRF apportionments) is $4.673 billion. Of this, $331.4 million or 8.6 percent is for education programming. The fiscal year 2005 totals include $60 million in supplemental education funding for Afghanistan. The following table provides a country breakdown of ESF, DA, Emergency Supplemental, and IRRF apportionment combined totals for education.

ASIA AND NEAR EAST EDUCATION BUDGET ($000)

	Fiscal year 2002 total	Fiscal year 2003 total	Fiscal year 2004 total	Fiscal year 2005 total	Fiscal year 2006 total*	Total
Afghanistan	6,500	8,400	107,405	97,937	97,000	317,242
Bangladesh	2,500	2,350	2,971	3,500	3,000	14,321
Burma	3,000	1,500	1,500	1,000	1,000	8,000
Cambodia	0	2,500	2,000	6,000	1,250	11,750
Egypt	84,400	49,000	33,500	63,000	24,800	254,700
India	2,658	4,008	8,912	7,580	6,700	29,858
Indonesia	3,000	2,000	23,000	26,500	31,011	85,511
Iraq	0	75,583	90,200	0	0	165,783
Jordon	0	4,000	5,000	8,640	14,000	31,640
Lebanon	4,000	3,100	4,200	4,000	4,000	19,300
Morocco	1,428	1,528	2,000	14,640	12,400	31,996
Nepal	0	0	811	392	392	1,595
Pakistan	15,000	21,500	28,000	66,673	66,703	197,876
Philippines	0	2,000	4,000	9,680	6,680	22,360
Sri Lanka	0	2,250	1,250	3,375	2,750	9,625
Vietnam	350	600	0	0	0	950
West Bank/Gaza	0	2,800	2,200	8,700	11,000	24,700
Yemen	4,800	7,898	3,270	4,996	12,703	33,667
ANE Regional	1,764	2,184	6,117	4,810	2,300	17,175
Total ANE	129,400	193,201	326,336	331,423	297,689	1,278,049

*FY 2006 totals do not include all supplemental funding allocations.

Mr. KUNDER. We believe those numbers reflect the huge base, if you will, that's been established by the Iraq and Afghanistan reconstruction programs over the last couple of years, and we think the education expenditure is probably a little closer to 10 percent. Having said that, we agree with the basic assertion—I haven't cleared this statement; I'm not up here to request more funds without consulting with our OMB colleagues first—but we are talking about launching, in 2007, what we call an Education for 21st Century Jobs Initiative that would link together the basic education, the skills training, and then bringing the private sector in so that the jobs are relevant, so that the training and education are relevant to 21st century jobs. That's something we'll want to talk to the committee about.

And, second, in closing, we very much agree with the closing discussion that the chairman had with the last panel about the need to do exchange programs. We cannot, no matter how much we increase funding, expect ourselves, the U.S. taxpayers, to build the schools, print all the textbooks across the region. Even at the existing funding level, we're probably spending about 50 cents per student, between Morocco and the Philippines. If we spent the entire U.S. foreign-assistance program every year on this region, we'd spend about $15 per student per year, and that's not enough to build the schools. Clearly, we have to get the governments mobilized.

What we've tried to do is come up with creative model programs, like the parent-participation program that Ms. Cheney referred to earlier, in Alexandria, Egypt, which we're now rolling out across Egypt. To do that, we've got to have good partners in the ministries. Dr. Bassem Awadallah is a perfect example of a Jordanian who came to the United States for higher education. We need to have those kind of partners.

In the early nineties, USAID, alone, was funding about 17,000 foreign students to come here for graduate or post-graduate work. Now that number had declined to under 5,000. The State Department, through its exchange programs, has tried to compensate somewhat, but the numbers aren't backed up. And, most troubling, we have all seen the numbers lately, that even the non-U.S.-Government-funded number of students coming to this country is declining, for a range of reasons. We've got to fix that problem.

We can do good model programs across the region, like Sesame Street, like the girls' and parent-participation program in Alexandria, but, ultimately, we've got to expect the governments of the region to take the models we've helped them develop and implement them in their systems.

I would take respectful exception to what Senator Nelson said earlier. The cash-support programs, the financial-support cash-transfer programs, like in Pakistan and Egypt, are not irrelevant, because if we use these programs to engage in good policy dialog with our colleagues, and then encourage them to roll out successful model programs, they can make a valuable contribution for education.

So, thank you, again, for the opportunity to testify. These are some of the things we're doing that might be useful.

Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kunder follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES KUNDER, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, WASHINGTON, DC

I welcome the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the work of the U.S. Agency for International Development in Asia and the Near East on the theme of "Combating Terrorism through Education: The Near East and South Asian Experience." We appreciate the importance of education as a force for peace and progress, and welcome this opportunity to share the experiences of our ongoing education programs in these two critical subregions.

USAID works in 28 countries in Asia and the Near East—from Morocco to the Philippines and as far north as Mongolia. The region is home to 64 percent of the world's population and two-thirds of the world's poor. Across the region, there are many religious and cultural traditions. Some of the countries working to address terrorist threats have Muslim majorities. Some do not, such as Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Understanding and responding to the drivers of terrorism in all the countries we work in, requires a good knowledge of local conditions and putting in place programs that are directly relevant to those issues. Our field missions give USAID a capacity to act effectively to make appropriate education interventions. They do so within a framework of complementary investments which support stability, openness, and economic opportunity. Education alone is not "the answer" but it is absolutely critical to success.

I am proud that our many investments have shown positive results in improving access, quality, and the responsiveness of national education systems. This statement outlines some of the problems we face, some of the work we have done and notes accomplishments. There is an array of responses that can and do work. Oftentimes, in concert with host countries, other donors and the private sector, good ideas can be scaled up. In many settings, the resources are not there for the kind of robust response that is required to provide national level coverage.

Given the current knowledge deficit in the Near East and South Asia regions, education is one of our highest priorities. USAID's program approach supports the 9/11 Commission Report recommendation that "the United States should reach out to young people and offer them knowledge and hope." The current education challenges in the region are: The lack of access to functioning schools, low quality and irrelevant curriculum, a large number of out-of-school youths, high illiteracy rates, particularly for females, and unemployed youth without the necessary skills to find gainful employment. We have responded to these challenges by focusing our programs on increasing equitable access to education opportunities, improving the quality and relevance of education, improving literacy and strengthening workforce skills. We are monitoring the impact our programs—we have enrolled over 170,000 (56 percent girls) accelerated learning students in Afghanistan and 69,214 students are enrolled in literacy courses in Pakistan. We have printed and distributed 27 million textbooks in Afghanistan. We have recognized the important role of information technology in changing the way education is delivered and incorporated in our programs. We are encouraging the use of public-private partnerships and are collaborating closely with MEPI, Peace Corps, and other agencies to leverage our impact and to avoid duplication.

Since 2001, USAID's education portfolio in the Near East and South Asian region has dramatically expanded from 1 to 13 programs. The budget for education in the following 13 countries rose from $99.5 million in fiscal year 2002 to nearly $274.5 million in fiscal year 2004: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, West Bank/Gaza, and Yemen. Four of the USAID Missions housing these programs—Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, and Iraq—opened recently. We established them to handle priorities arising out of U.S. foreign policy goals and ongoing development challenges in the region.

As noted in the 9/11 Commission Report, the Muslim world has fallen behind the west politically and economically for the past three centuries. Governments find it challenging to meet the population's daily needs, including education. This has created an environment where young Muslims lack the tools and opportunities to effect change in intolerant political regimes. This has also created an environment where disaffected groups can be more easily turned against elements of western culture and institutions. Creating an environment of opportunity, tolerance, and greater openness to women and other marginalized groups must come from within Muslim societies themselves. The United States can help support the development of a more tolerant and open society by supporting quality education opportunities.

In response to the weakness of many national education systems, alternative schools have emerged, such as madrassahs, a small proportion of which spawn extremism. USAID, regional experts, and researchers agree that providing access to quality education for children and out-of-school youth of vulnerable populations is one deterrent to radical or fundamentalist ideology which may lead to support for, or participation in, acts of terrorism. As stated in the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, education programs diminish the underlying conditions that terrorists seek to exploit, particularly in rural, isolated areas. Access to a quality and relevant education provides children and youth with independent and critical thinking skills, leadership and life skills, and exposure to democratic values.

Although the global commitment to "Education for All" have led to increased enrollments and general improvements in the quality of life, educational quality, and increased learning opportunities in the Near East and South Asia, many countries in the region continue to struggle to meet the population's education needs.

CURRENT EDUCATION CHALLENGES

Current education challenges in the regions include a lack of access to functioning schools, a large number of out-of-school youth, high absenteeism and drop out rates, low transition rates from primary to secondary school, and high illiteracy rates.

High illiteracy rates, especially for women, are a critical problem facing the region. Key countries such as Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Egypt, and Morocco have 40–60-percent illiteracy rates and illiterate populations larger than 10 million. In the Arab States alone, women account for nearly two-thirds of the illiterate population.

Another critical gender concern has to do with large numbers of disaffected youth, mainly boys, who may come to form the primary social base for radical Islamist movements. Without immediate alternatives, the current breakdown of conventional institutions of family, schools, and community (compounded by increasing urbanization and bleak employment prospects) will continue to foster youth alienation, a sense of fatalism and lack of dignity. Unemployed and disenfranchised youth form a restive pool of recruits for extremist groups.

Compounding this problem is the curriculum, which is often outdated and irrelevant to socio-economic needs. Poorly qualified and trained teachers and school administrators are recurring problems. The lack of reliable systems to assess and monitor education imposes another obstacle to solving the problems. Finally, resources for education support fall short of the need.

The Asia and Near East region has experienced a drastic demographic shift and now houses the largest generation of youth ever—368 million young people (age 15–24) in the 19 countries where USAID has a presence. The youth bulge puts enormous pressure on governments with limited capacity and resources to provide education and employment opportunities. The quality of education is low and too many students leave school without the skills and knowledge needed to find gainful employment.

The following section presents USAID's strategy for helping the nations in the Near East and South Asia overcome their education challenges. Driving this strategy is the recognized need to help nations in the region open access to information, create learning environments that encourage critical thinking skills and democratic practices, and provide education that will lead to gainful employment. Target populations include girls, women, and disenfranchised youth.

USAID'S EDUCATION STRATEGY

To prevail over these challenges, USAID's strategy for education programs is to provide learners the opportunity to gain the general skills and knowledge needed to function effectively in all aspects of life. This is done through programs that focus on:

1. *Increasing equitable access to education opportunities:* Targeting groups that have been marginalized in the education system, such as out-of-school youth, girls, and disabled children, and those who have been impacted by conflict or disaster is of primary importance for ensuring equitable access to learning opportunities and the continuation of skills development. In post-conflict and post-disaster situations, transitioning children and youth into learning environments as soon as possible to normalize their lives is a priority.

2. *Improving the quality of education and providing more relevant education opportunities:* Improving the quality and relevance of education is a pivotal goal in that it encourages children to attend and to stay in school. It also offers the additional benefits of workforce development. This is particularly important in countries that lack relevant education materials, qualified teachers, and accountability for student learning in the school system.

3. *Improving literacy and strengthening workforce skills:* Education programs that improve literacy rates, develop curriculum, human capacities, and livelihood skills, and aim to link skill development with employment opportunities; particularly in areas with high youth unemployment are another priority for the region.

INCREASING ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION: ACHIEVING RESULTS

In order to respond to the multifaceted educational challenges confronting the region, USAID supports a variety of education programs which include both formal and nonformal education efforts. Support for improving the formal basic education system spanning preprimary to secondary school and which also encompasses literacy and training programs, are the primary focus of USAID's support. Increasingly, school-based efforts linked to employment, and higher education and univer-

sity programs are also critical components of our overall approach to provide technical skills and expand cultural understanding in the region.

To increase access to education opportunities, particularly for vulnerable populations, USAID supports scholarship programs, nonformal education activities, and school construction and rehabilitation. For example, in Pakistan, more than 2,873 literacy centers have opened and in a project cofunded by the Japanese, 130 schools are in the process of being rehabilitated to improve school access for children in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Frontier Regions (FR) which are remote and border Afghanistan. In Iraq we have rehabilitated over 2,400 schools. In Yemen we are working with the government on school construction and renovation, equipment and supplies for teachers and children, and teacher training in remote areas. These have been promising strategies for attracting out-of-school youth to classrooms.

In key post-conflict programs, there is demonstrated success in school enrollments; for example, over 170,000 students (56 percent girls) are enrolled in accelerated learning classes in Afghanistan. These kinds of programs are highly visible and well-received as they flexibly address immediate needs, and provide a full primary school cycle in 3 years. They also target those who have been historically neglected by the primary school system. In Pakistan and Yemen, helping to provide improved schooling systems in the most isolated communities and involving community members in the rehabilitation and management of schools have been successful.

In Afghanistan, 10,000 students, largely out-of-school children and youth, will be trained in sustainable literacy, numeracy, and life skills through the Afghan Literacy Initiative & Community Empowerment Program. The programs often combine literacy skills with relevant labor market needs.

Teacher training is one key area for quality improvement. USAID education programs work with teachers to provide both in-service and preservice training that modernizes teaching methods so that they impart critical thinking and democratic values. Training often integrates content with introducing more active learning and child-centered methods. Over 15,000 teachers in Pakistan have received this type of training, as well as 33,000 teachers in Iraq. We have also printed and distributed 27 million primary and secondary textbooks in Afghanistan, and 8.7 million revised math and science books in Iraq. Finally, radio-based teacher training in Afghanistan has been received positively by teachers in 17 provinces.

Integral to the success of an education program is to make quality improvements and increase the relevance of the educational content to socio-economic realities. In Jordan USAID is enhancing the curriculum for a new Management and Information Stream track in secondary school to prepare youth for the workforce.

Preparing learners at an early age for education is important. USAID support will enable innovative "Sesame Street" series in Bangladesh and Egypt to reach large audiences in quest of this goal. As many as 4 million preschool-age children will watch Sisimpur in Bangladesh, which premiered on April 15, Alam Simsim reaches 86 percent of rural Egyptian children and 45 percent of their mothers. Program themes include learning to be tolerant, practicing good hygiene, and getting a head start in school. Furthermore, early childhood development programs increase parent involvement in the child's education and school involvement. In Jordan, underprivileged families now have access to kindergartens, and in Pakistan 47,500 children and their parents have benefited from an early childhood project in the FATA district.

Quality is also improved by strengthening involvement of the local communities in their schools (ex. training community school management committees) and making parents and students more responsible for their education (ex. developing school improvement plans). School management is improved at the local level, and experiences in various regions have influenced the way host country decisionmakers view solutions for the education issues. Such initiatives are underway in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Egypt, Morocco, and Yemen. Also, in Jordan, merging Information Technology and curriculum reform has been successful. This program has also brought private sector involvement into the area of curricula reform so that it better provides students with an education that links to market demands and needs.

As mentioned earlier, the growing population of uneducated, unemployed youth is severely straining government efforts in all countries to provide adequate education and employment opportunities. USAID recognizes the importance of linking access to quality education to the 21st century workforce demands. In countries such as Pakistan, India, Jordan, Egypt, and Morocco, USAID is linking education to the real needs of the job market, by giving students the adaptable and portable skills needed to confront the changing workplace, especially information and communication technology (ICT) training. Jordan is developing e-Learning curriculum

modules and upgrading teachers' skills in support of teaching and learning to improve the transition of gaduates from school to a work career.

USAID fosters cultural understanding, openness, tolerance, and critical thinking with education exchange programs and scholarships. In Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon, providing scholarship support to students from disadvantaged social and economic backgrounds to enroll in American education institutions have been successful. By the mid-1990s, more than 3,000 Jordanian students had won USAID scholarships to study at United States universities and the American University in Beirut. Many of them are leaders today. Five of Jordan's Cabinet Ministers in 1987 and three Ministers in the 2002 Cabinet had studied under these scholarships.

Furthermore, in-country post-secondary education programs support institutions to meet international standards and educate young people and academic professionals so that they can participate in the global economy. We support linkages between American universities and universities. These range from university linkage partnerships, such as the five United States-Iraqi higher education partnerships currently underway, to supporting the establishment of the American University of Afghanistan, a private, independent university.

Finally, programs that model best practices in education on a small scale in order to demonstrate the positive effects of change has also proven successful. Pilot programs mobilize support from the public and from within the ranks of the local and national government officials who are charged with administering and delivering education services. Egypt's New School Program in Upper Egypt was a pilot that proved effective in increasing girls' enrollment. The lessons learned are being used to "scale up" models of quality primary education with an emphasis on girls and learner-centered teaching methodologies. The models will be applied nationally through the new USAID-supported Education Reform Program. These positive experiences tend to galvanize support for broader change and have the potential to impact the educational system beyond the local environments in which the projects operate.

MEASURING THE IMPACT OF OUR PROGRAMS

Despite the growing security challenges, our education programs have brought about substantial and measurable results. USAID measures program impact and success in a variety of ways, commensurate with its diverse portfolio.

One validation of our success happens when we see many of our "models" adopted and brought to scale by host countries, relying on local, other donor, and private sector resources. Unfortunately, the capacity to do that across the region is constrained. Our recent education initiative has increased the U.S. commitment to education but much more needs to be done.

At the project level, USAID measures the impact of providing education and training opportunities to out-of-school youth and vulnerable populations through student enrollment. Access and equity measurements include the number of students completing primary and secondary school, and increases in the percentage of girls and women enrolled in USAID-funded schools, literacy, and life skills classes. Using baseline data as the starting point, gender disaggregated enrollment numbers in USAID schools are tracked on a quarterly basis by the implementing partners on the ground. USAID has enrolled over 170,000 students (56 percent girls) in our accelerated learning program in Afghanistan.

Many of our programs are aimed at nonformal education programs aimed at improving literacy, especially for women, and training opportunities for out-of-school youth. USAID gauges enrollment increases and differentiates between students participating in programs as opposed to completing the required courses. In Pakistan, 69,214 students are enrolled in USAID funded literacy courses and 17,850 have graduated from USAID's literacy centers. This process enables us to gauge not only enrollment increases and completion rates, but also dropout and repetition rates.

Different measures are used to gauge nontraditional programs; success in measuring educational television programs is gauged by viewership: A 2003 study in Egypt concluded that Sesame Street (Alam Simsim) reaches 86 percent of rural Egyptian children under 8 years of age and 45 percent of their mothers. In Bangladesh, where Sisimpur aired on April 15, viewership will be regularly monitored and reported.

In response to the poor quality of educational facilities and the need to provide quality alternatives to radical madrassahs, USAID tracks numbers of schools constructed and rehabilitated, and nature of the effort. This process differentiates between USAID's work in building stand-alone schools as opposed to rehabilitating a single classroom in any given school. In Egypt, for example, since 1975, USAID has tracked the construction of more than 2,000 new schools and 4,000 classrooms; in

Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA), USAID will be tracking new school construction, the surveys and designs for 112 of which have been completed. In addition to infrastructure, USAID also provides students with textbooks and learning materials to increase retention and enrollment. USAID tracks both the production and dissemination of materials to ensure that numbers of textbooks delivered are commensurate with numbers printed; in Afghanistan we have thus far printed and distributed 27 million textbooks.

USAID's teacher training and curriculum development programs are aimed at promoting tolerance, building democratic values, and fostering critical thinking in students and teachers. Measurements of educational quality include indicators of teacher quality, system efficiency, and learner achievements. Learner achievement can be measured by the number of basic education students who acquire critical thinking and problem-solving skills by administering pre- and post-achievement tests. In Pakistan, teaching methodologies improved by 97 percent (based on classroom observation by experts), and student attendance is 10 percent higher, on average, in participating schools. Monitoring data suggest that teachers are using materials effectively 95 percent of the time.

USAID tracks enrollment and successful completion of teachers in training classes in both in-service and pre-service programs. In innovative teacher training programs, such as the radio-based teacher training program for Afghanistan primary school teachers, teacher training is tracked by numbers of teachers enrolled in the class; currently 10,000 primary school teachers have enrolled for this radio-based teacher training. USAID measures and tracks progress in this area through enrollment and completion numbers and qualitative assessments that include interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observation.

In Morocco indicators such as percent of target beneficiaries employed post-intervention, percent of graduates with portable and adaptable skills, and replication of school-to-work modules in areas beyond the immediate target are used to monitor learning improvements.

Finally, another indicator of impact is the adoption by Ministries of Education of USAID-supported efforts for countrywide expansion. This has happened in Jordan with early childhood education programs, and in Egypt, with modeling quality schools including using learner centered teaching.

By supporting public participation in education through NGO development and community-elected trustee boards, USAID's education programs encourage democratic activities. To measure the impact of these programs, USAID tracks community satisfaction with the performance of USAID-supported community-based organizations and the number of decisions made and implemented at the community level.

By improving the quality of education, and making it more accessible and relevant to the workforce, USAID's education interventions improve the employability of youth, lay an important foundation of support for economic growth and development of democratic institutions, and ensure a more equitable distribution of education.

ADJUSTING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

USAID has adjusted its education strategies to create a healthier learning environment for children, youth, and adults in the Near East and South Asia on the basis of feedback from the most successful programs in the region.

USAID recognizes that Information Technology (IT) is one way to change the way that students learn and teachers teach. There are now more efforts to link IT to schools and curriculum. Internet access is limited in the Arabic speaking world, resulting in a knowledge gap that negatively impacts both economic and political development, making Arab populations less competitive in the world economy. By providing future leaders and adults with increased access to the Internet, these students are exposed to many more ideas and increases cultural understanding. Teachers can use IT in the classroom to encourage critical thought and democratic values. Technology also helps to reach larger audiences, as in the radio-based training for teachers in Afghanistan and Sesame Street episodes in Egypt and Bangladesh.

ANE has also learned that public-private partnerships are important to support education programs. USAID/ANE has committed $10 million to a regional Education and Employment Alliance which involves Egypt, Morocco, Pakistan, India, Indonesia, and Philippines to increase private sector participation in education. Activities mainly include working with local and multinational organization to provide resources to upgrade schools and provide technology inputs for schools. These activities aim to give children and youth a higher quality basic education and an education that leads to livelihood skills and gainful employment. As of January 2005,

outreach activities continue with multinational companies, including Cisco, GE, Intel, Lucent, Microsoft, Nokia, Pearson, Unocal, and First Data Western Union.

USAID has also been more directly working with host governments to make comprehensive reforms to education systems. Holistic changes have a broader impact in that they reach all levels from the students and parents, to administrators at the local and national levels. This systemic approach for improving education with Ministries of Education will lead to long-term improvements that can be sustained.

Finally, USAID continues to refine programs to reach the most vulnerable populations. Those who have been marginalized from the education systems are primary targets for our programs. In the Near East and South Asia regions, illiterate adults, out-of-school youth, and marginalized children are the most vulnerable to the messages of terrorists. For this reason, USAID works closely with the State Department on the Broader Middle East and North Africa initiative.

COLLABORATING WITH MEPI

Under the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), managed by the State Department, USAID administers a variety of activities across the MEPI pillar areas of economic reform, political reform, education reform, and women's empowerment. The MEPI education pillar supports education systems that enable all people, especially girls, to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in today's economy and improve the quality of their lives and that of their families. MEPI and USAID have similar education goals: Access, Quality, and Skills Development which makes coordination between USAID and MEPI programs both essential, and synergistic.

USAID has collaborated with MEPI in a variety of projects to jointly fund programs to establish United States-Middle East university partnerships to strengthen programs in such areas as education, business/economics, journalism, and information and communications technology.

In fiscal year 2003, USAID/Egypt completed the integration of the MEPI strategy into a new program design that was launched in 2004 to support the Egypt Government's education reform initiatives. USAID also began implementing its first MEPI book project by distributing supplementary reading materials to 3,000 classrooms in Alexandria.

In Jordan, MEPI is funding e-Learning modules for the English as a Second Language and Civics for the Jordan Education Initiative and the USAID mission monitors and manages some or this entire program in country.

In Morocco, MEPI's literacy initiatives complement current USAID efforts to improve the quality of schools. The literacy program consists of two parts: A 10-month basic literacy training program for 2,000 women that also includes health and nutrition literacy; and a 6-month "post" literacy training program for a selected number of participants (approximately 80), that teaches simple business skills as a basis for income generation activities. The program also includes assistance and coaching for the creation and initial management of small businesses.

In Yemen, USAID works closely with MEPI and the Public Diplomacy Office of the United States Embassy to design and implement an Internet communication and collaborative learning network for 20 high schools through Yemen with each other and with schools in the United States.

With the development of a new education strategy, the USAID education team ensured that its new strategy aligned with MEPI pillars. Additionally, the education team participates in strategy and planning meetings and provides technical comments and assistance for the review of MEPI education proposals.

USAID is also working with the MEPI office to support key tenets of the G–8 partnership with countries of the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA). Several initiatives have developed under this partnership, one of which is on improving literacy in the region. USAID is providing policy and programmatic direction for this BMENA literacy initiative and coordinating its efforts directly with MEPI and the U.S. Department of Education.

In conclusion, I would like to reassure the committee that education will continue to be a high priority in the region. While our current education approach responds to the overall goal of moderating radical intolerance and anti-Western ideologies, we also recognize that education needs to be complemented by a multisectoral strategy that fosters socio-political stability and economic growth. To build upon our current successes and take our existing programs to scale, we have launched a public-private partnership initiative focusing on creating training opportunities for youth employment in the workforce. While we will continue to monitor developments to ensure that we are ahead of the curve in addressing emerging issues, we will not rest

on the laurels of our successes—it is far too important to the well-being of our Nation.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Kunder.

Let me make a comment, based upon an Aspen Institute breakfast that occurred a couple of years ago. An author and participant in U.S. Government a while back, Jessica Stern, had written a book about her experience interviewing some male students at madrasa schools. One of the comments that she made at the breakfast, and, likewise, that she portrays in her book, is a chilling revelation, but maybe has a great deal of truth. She was asking, Why do young men in Pakistan—these are the people that she was dealing with—contemplate suicidal conduct? What happens to somebody, who is very young, who, at least from our standpoint, has decades of life still to live?

At least, from the interviews with these young men, some of them, she gained the impression that some come together, and it's almost a fraternal experience in the madrasa schools, in which they come to a conclusion there really is no hope for them in this life. They see no prospects, in terms of political expression, no prospects of jobs, no prospects, really, of much education, beyond whatever they happen to be involved in. And along come—not into every one of the madrasa schools, but into some—persons who suggest, "The next life will surely be better. As a matter of fact, we have an answer for you in a new world. And, as a matter of fact, a very important action method of getting to this may very well be your own willingness to give your life, a suicidal mission in behalf of that faith that will sustain you and bring you something else."

Now, for many Americans, this may seem farfetched and extreme. We find it hard to contemplate. But, on the other hand, Ms. Stern was making the point that—not very many people, but if a percentage of persons even contemplate such conduct because of despair and total hopelessness, why they have a problem, but we also have a problem. And all of the educational attempts that we've been describing this morning are not addressed to a very minute percentage, perhaps, of young males in Pakistan who might contemplate suicidal conduct and try to work it out under the guidance of whoever. But, at the same time, Americans do need to come to, I think, an understanding of the vast amount of pessimism, despair, and difficulty among so many young people. As we've heard today—whether it's the age of 25 or 21 or 18—well over half of the country may be in many of these bleak situations.

Therefore, what we are involved in has a strong humanitarian quality. It should, and always has, as American educators, American Government has reached out. But one of the reasons why we have been reaching out more vigorously is the whole change in our foreign policy after 9/11. We thought the seas were big enough to protect us. And we found they were not. But young people who had valid visas—some of them, sadly enough, educational visas—were involved in 9/11 activities in this city and in New York. And the world changed.

Now, I make this point because we have reacted. And the programs that you have outlined today are comprehensive in scope. But again and again in this committee, as well as elsewhere in the Congress, we will find some colleagues who will say, quite rightly,

that we have a lot of work to do here at home. We're debating our educational budgets now. What should be the Federal component of that? Or what should be the governmental component at the State and local levels? How are Americans doing? And so forth.

So, we come, and we point out what we must improve in this country. No Child Left Behind. You mentioned Secretary Spellings and her advocacy, which has been remarkable. The President's. And yet this is a struggle for us, as we disaggregate statistics in our own country of students who are African-American, students of Hispanic backgrounds, students of color in other backgrounds.

I mention this because in this committee there's a compatibility, in talking about students abroad. There is, perhaps, a compatibility in some other committees as well. But the case, in part, is national security; in part, humanitarian. But then, in part, it comes back to something we were discussing earlier on with the first panel, and I would like your reflections on, too. And that is, regarding our exchange programs, or other opportunities available that require visas. In the past, many foreign students and researchers were admitted, for example, to Purdue University in my State, to engineering programs, and to NIH programs—we heard from those authorities on April 4 at our student/research visa task force roundtable—and these students enriched our society enormously.

Now, many of these young people, students and researchers alike, at some point return to their home countries and they offer leadership within their own education systems, such as the Minister from Jordan whom we heard from today, as well as fully three-quarters of the Jordanian Cabinet. So, if the United States is not participating fully in these programs—because of national security concerns—where are future leaders gaining the inspiration, if not with an experience here that they find to be a good one? And how will we ever succeed in public diplomacy without having public diplomats who are Jordanians, Pakistanis, and the like?

These seem to me to be issues that are really gripping this committee. Let me share, anecdotally, as I attended the trustee meeting at Denison University—my alma mater—over the weekend, the admissions office claimed that last year at Denison, a small college of 2,100 students, that there were 90 applicants from India 2 years ago, but last year there were only 26. Now, it could be that, for some reason, Indians decided that Denison was not the place for them, all in 1 year. But the fact is, without going tediously through the statistics country by country, the discouragement level has been profound. Even though, on the aggregate side, we've heard, in our task force, that student enrollment worldwide is off only maybe 3 percent, as you add up everything; clearly, the dropoff is severe.

Now, we have security problems. I mentioned the other side of the coin. Students had visas, and they came and bombed the United States. On the other hand, in trying to change that situation, we have, I think, radically changed the picture, so that even as we have the output of programs and moneys that you suggested today, the personnel in the countries, the indigenous leadership that may carry it forward, we may be faltering, unless we are thoughtful about this.

How do we invigorate the exchange programs, or create more of them? How important are they? Have you both been working on

these visa problems? You can't do it all by yourselves, but, clearly, within the administration, some changes are occurring in rule-making and in provisions so that times of inspection or examination or various other processes are not being entirely removed, but they're being modified so that a more user-friendly situation is being created. Can you describe, with any optimism, how this whole business might be going?

Ms. Cheney, do you have some thoughts?

Ms. CHENEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I share, completely, your view, and the administration shares your view, that exchanges are critically important and that, whether you look at the military-to-military exchanges we've historically undertaken, or the exchanges through our colleges and universities, and down to the high school level, it clearly helps to build friendships, and those are very important as we, you know, pursue our foreign-policy objectives.

I think that the situation has improved. I think that in the immediate aftermath of September 11, for, as you noted, completely understandable reasons, we, you know, were faced with the need to clamp down and to review our system and to ensure that we had a better system in place so that the people that wished us ill were not able to get into the country. In the process of doing that, there were, you know, numerous examples of students who had gone home for the summer, weren't able to return, people who were caught in that.

I think that, as I have traveled the region and talked to people, there is still concern about it. I do think that it's improving. And I do think people understand that our intent is never to cause offense, it's never to prevent students from studying in the United States—we recognize how important that is—but we have to maintain, obviously, our own national security concerns.

One of the things that Maura Harty, who handles consular affairs for us at the Department, has been very effective in doing is traveling across the region, and she's very interested and willing to go into these countries and have large meetings with groups of nongovernmental organizations, the governments, to talk about what the new processes are. And I would be happy to come back to you with more details on, sort of, specifically, the improvements we've made. But I do think it's very important that we have exchanges.

One of the issues we deal with on exchanges is, sort of, What is the balance? Given that there are limited resources, as there are for everything, determining whether it makes sense to put those resources into providing scholarships for 4 years or for post-graduate study for a small number of people, or looking to do more scholarships for a shorter period of time for a larger number of people. And I don't think we have, sort of, scientifically determined what the right balance is. I think we're trying to do both.

I think that one of the reasons it's so important for us to reach out with—sort of, to larger numbers of people with shorter time periods spent in the United States goes back to this issue that you began with, in terms of, How do you get to those people that are the most likely recruits for the terrorists? And in many cases they're people who perhaps don't have English, who have not com-

pleted secondary school, or clearly, are not in university, and I think those that are the people that need exposure to the United States. And it's why we've started a range of new programs we're calling microscholarships, which provide English language training and then enable them—give them the skills to compete for other programs we're funding so they can be student leaders, be student interns to come to the United States, but so that we reach out to a broader range of people.

The CHAIRMAN. That's true. How many people might be involved in those programs, the microscholarships?

Ms. CHENEY. We'll have to get you the numbers.

The CHAIRMAN. If you would, that would—that's——

Ms. CHENEY. I think it's very important.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. I think, an insight that we haven't heard about before, and I——

Ms. CHENEY. Well——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Think that's very important.

Ms. CHENEY. We are also expanding it significantly. It's a program—it started just last year as a pilot program——

The CHAIRMAN. I see.

Ms. CHENEY [continuing]. In a couple of the Near East countries, and it's been very successful and very effective way for us to reach people we wouldn't, otherwise. So we're going to be putting more money into that from the Partnership Initiative this year, and we'd be happy to come back up with the specific numbers we've reached already.

The CHAIRMAN. Great.

Ms. CHENEY. One final point I think is, when you talk about the issue of the attraction of terrorists and the attraction of extremists for young people, in a number of countries in the region you have a phenomenon where political activity has been banned on campuses, but religious groups can operate on campuses. And it's something that I think we all need to work to, to open up that system. You know, now, in a number of countries, if you're 18 years old, and you're a university student, and you feel, like most university students do, that you want to change the world, your outlet for doing that is the Islamist groups, and that's clearly not a healthy situation for those countries or for us. And so, it's why there is such an important synergy between our political reform efforts and our education efforts, so that we can help expand the groups that those people can have access to and can give a voice to.

The CHAIRMAN. This may not be a useful analogy, because, obviously, Germany is a wealthy country, but in 1983 when the United States was attempting to diplomatically work with the Germans to support the NATO resolution to put Pershing missiles in Germany, I was one of those that was sent to Germany to do some missionary work of that sort with German institutions. The late Senator John Heinz, was very, very helpful when I got back, in introducing legislation that created the Congress-Bundestag Exchange Program, which commenced in 1983 as a part of that diplomacy, but it continues, with well over 10,000 students—they long ago passed that mark, and are now heading toward 20,000—from both sides, about 500 a year, from the grassroots of Germany and the United States go to the grassroots of the other country for 1 year. It's a high

school program, as opposed to post-graduates or something of this variety. Even after you have 20,000 Germans and Americans over the course of time, this is a small percentage of either country, but, nevertheless, just getting to your point, the microbusiness, here are people who suddenly, on both sides, have to begin thinking about another language, about living with families, about the hinterland, not the capitals. Perhaps other countries could not match this level of exchange that we now have with Germany. Just take Jordan, which we've been talking about today. Jordanians might say, "Well, we'd be hard-pressed to support American exchange students in Jordan, in the same way you might support Jordanians in the United States."

I don't want to make too much of a stretch of this, but I'm wondering whether that model, the Congress-Bundestag Exchange Program, offers some possibilities so that this is perceived, literally, as one from each of the congressional districts. And that was one of the ideas of Congress-Bundestag. We have 435 districts and 100 Senators, so, ipso facto, about 500-and-some Americans ought to be eligible to go to Germany, and they have districts and so forth.

I'm intrigued by what you're saying. I wonder whether somebody is stimulated to ask that question or to ask you to study what might be in the cards, so that we will have individual programs tailored to each country and there would be individual responses from countries. Perhaps we have become equally excited about their initiatives, as with Millennium Challenge. We're offering incentives. I have found, I'm sure, as you have, in my travels, that countries want to get on the list, they want to be a part of the 16 countries chosen to participate in the Millennium Challenge program, or, at least, on the waiting list. That may be totally improbable, because they sort of understand that this is a remarkable way of sharing, without giving up sovereignty, of using indigenous resources and leadership, and still meeting what we think are important standards—freedom of the press, enterprise, women's rights, things of these sorts.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Chairman, I think that's exactly right. And I think that it's very important—we have focused on having students from these countries come to the United States, but I think that, too often, it's true that we, in the United States, view all of these countries—we call it "the region," or "the regions," and we talk about it as though it's a unified whole, when, in fact, each country is very different.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Ms. CHENEY. And I think that having American students visit these countries and study in these countries really helps to improve our knowledge base about what's happening in each country.

When I was in Morocco, last week, there was a group of American high school students there meeting with a group of Moroccan high school students, you know, doing, basically, a model United Nations, talking about ways that we can move forward on reform and on the peace process. And, on both sides, when you get to meet somebody face to face, it really does help to destroy the stereotypes that exist. So, I think it's——

The CHAIRMAN. Terrific.

Ms. CHENEY [continuing]. Very important.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Kunder, with USAID and the budget and the organization that you have, are you able to identify to Members of the Congress the mission that USAID is performing? I do not necessarily seek to break it out from everything else that you are doing, but, at the same time, there is certainly a constituency of interest in what we're talking about today. Your charts are helpful in giving the objectives, but do you also have statistics, data, that you would give to Members who wanted to inform themselves more comprehensively about what you're doing? Without violating administration tenets, could you give some hint as to, if we were to invest more money, where would it be wise to look? What kind of things should we be discussing in this committee as we try to gain a constituency of consent with our Members in the body, as a whole?

Mr. KUNDER. As you might well imagine, sir, we probably have more data than you can possibly want, but I think what might be useful is, we do have a country-by-country breakdown of the types of initiatives we're doing in each country in the education and training field. We'd be glad to provide that to the committee. And then if there are some issues of interest we could focus in on and provide more in-depth information. So the information is definitely available.

I just want to thank you for saying what you said about the United States humanitarian interest in the region, because, naturally, we've focused in on the issue at hand today, which is combating terrorism, but I think the American people do honestly care that men and women, and boys and girls, succeed across the Asia and Near East Region. That's what makes us the kind of country that does invite people to come here and learn something about our values, and I think that's the kind of message we want to send, as well.

But we have the information available. We'll make that available initially, a breakout of our country programs, and then if you want to focus on more detail, we'll be glad to provide it.

[The information referred to follows:]

EDUCATION INITIATIVES BY COUNTRY

Education initiatives are designed to meet the needs of the people and overcome the various challenges within each country context. Below is a chart that describes the complexity of improving education in the ANE region in three specific areas of access, quality, and relevance.

COMPLEXITY OF THE EDUCATION CHALLENGE

Access	Quality	Relevance
• Large numbers of out-of-school children and youth. • Insufficient access to quality schooling alternatives. • Low literacy rates, especially for women. • Lack of early childhood education opportunities.	• Poorly trained teachers and administrators. • Lack of systems to assess and monitor education. • Inadequate community and parental involvement in schools. • Pedagogy focuses on role memorization, leading to lack of critical thinking skills.	• Outdated and inappropriate curricula for the job market. • Large numbers of underemployed youth without skills needed for workforce. • Inadequate links and training opportunities for global market. • Inadequate links with private sector for market-driven training.

Within this challenging context, education initiatives have had many successes. Below is an illustrative overview of some of the ways USAID has had regional im-

pact in moderating terrorism through education. Below are the results to some key education indicators organized in the same three-prong typology as above.

Illustrative Regional Overview

Access	Quality	Relevance
• Built or rehabilitated 15,000 schools in 10 countries. • Currently, there are 720,000 students in Accelerated Learning programs in Afghanistan and Iraq. • 165,000 women, girls, and boys now literate in Afghanistan, Egypt, Morocco, and Pakistan. • 4,000 literacy and/or community centers opened in Afghanistan, Egypt, Morocco, and Pakistan. • Sesame Street reaches over 8.5 million children (not including parents) in Egypt and Bangladesh. • Support for early childhood education reaching approximately 120,000 students in Bangladesh, Jordan, and Pakistan. • 5,500 students from 10 ANE countries were provided scholarships for long-term study in the United States and other countries.	• 120,000 pre-school, primary, and secondary school teachers trained in 8 countries. • Approximately 50 million textbooks printed in Afghanistan and Iraq. • 50,000 back to school kits distributed to teachers in Afghanistan and Iraq. • In 7 countries, Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) support and development used to better monitor education-related progress. • 1,100 ''Model Schools'' to exemplify the importance of girls' access to education, technology improvements in schools, relevant curricula, and active teaching methods in 6 countries. • 40,000 professionals provided support for short-term training opportunities from 8 ANE countries. • 25 higher education partnerships (American Liaison Office) established in 7 ANE countries.	• 110,000 students with access to technology in classrooms and/or schools in 7 countries. • 70 centers supported to bridge links between school and work in 5 countries. • Life skills training provided for 100,000 participants in 9 countries. • 250 public-private partnerships established to support various education activities in 7 countries.

In addition, there are three regional education initiatives that USAID undertakes:

- A Regional Education and Employment Alliance was launched last year to increase private sector participation in education. This Alliance provides innovative solutions to improve education and enhance opportunities for gainful employment. USAID has committed $10 million over 2 years to the program. Its initial phase will focus on six priority countries: Egypt, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Pakistan, and the Philippines.
- Jobs for the 21st century aims at matching education and training with labor market needs through a variety of approaches that combine job-relevant education, trade initiatives, and private sector engagement.
- The Arabic Book Translation Project begun this year, assesses the feasibility of a regional, demand-driven program to make modern, affordable textbooks available in Arabic and English for the Middle East by creating partnerships among U.S. and Middle Eastern publishers and universities and building a more coherent regional market.

The following chart is a closer look at the country-by-country breakdown of education programs in the Asia and Near East Region. The table displays the total amount of funds provided for education initiatives from fiscal year 2002 through fiscal year 2006 with some illustrative highlights of accomplishments in the field.

ILLUSTRATIVE COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY RESULTS

[Budget, fiscal years 2002–2006 ($000)]

Access	Quality	Relevance
AFGHANISTAN—$317,242		
• Trained 6,800 teachers and enrolled 170,138 students, of which 58% are girls, in the Accelerated Learning (AL) program which has expanded to cover all 17 provinces. • Establishing the American University of Afghanistan, a private American-style university in Kabul. • Rehabilitating the Kabul Women's Dormitory to accommodate 1,100 women from mainly rural areas who will attend university in Kabul. The first students arrived for the new academic year in March 2005. • Built or refurbished 315 schools, primarily in remote areas, since 2002. An additional 184 schools are under construction.	• Launched Radio Teacher Training in 2003 in three pilot provinces, and expanded it to all 17 provinces in 2004. This program currently reaches 65,000 teachers by radio and 7,479 additional teachers through face-to-face training. • Funded three technical advisors to the Ministry of Education to improve overall quality and strengthen ministry capacity. • Funding three technical advisors to the Ministry of Higher Education to strengthen and develop higher education policy and strategic planning.	• Begun the establishment of an International School in Kabul to provide modern American-style curriculum to expatriate and Afghan children. • Funding a U.S university consortium in 2005 which will support Balkh University Faculty of Agriculture (BUFA) in Mazar-e Sharif, in their efforts to modernize curriculum, teaching technologies and techniques. • Training 8,000 students around the country in functional literacy, economic self-reliance grassroots democracy and women's rights through the Literacy and Community Empowerment Program. • Teaching 5,500 women to read and write, qualifying them for further training as community health workers or midwives. • Established the Women's Teacher Training Institute in Kabul in 2004 as a central resource for government and agencies to access training, materials, and modern pedagogical approaches that support practical and sustainable literacy, numeracy, and life skills.
BANGLADESH—$14,321		
• Sisimpur (Sesame Street) debuted on April 15, 2005; potential audience of 8 million children. • Establishing 1,800 pre-schools across the country, parent and child-to-child learning and reading group.	• Training 1,800 pre-school teachers in new interactive teaching methodologies.	
BURMA—$8,000		
• Education opportunities provided to over 2,500 student and adult learners. • 50 special education students now attending classes.	• Science instructional materials supplied to the schools for 6,000 middle school students to access.	• Close to 200 students were trained in adult literacy classes, which were taught in 7 different languages.
CAMBODIA—$11,750		
	• Activities starting in all 22 provinces, in all 18 provincial teacher training colleges and in 6 regional training colleges.	• Curriculum and standards being developed (including life skills) and teacher training.

ILLUSTRATIVE COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY RESULTS—Continued

[Budget, fiscal years 2002–2006 ($000)]

Access	Quality	Relevance
EGYPT—$254,700		
• Since 1975, USAID has constructed more than 2,000 new schools and 4,000 classrooms. • 170 multigrade classes were established with community contributions and support resulting in the enrollment of over 30,000 new students (80% girls) previously out of school. • 3.5 million children view Alam Simsim (Sesame Street), often with their mothers.	• Training and technical support was provided to 4,000 educators.	• More than 45,000 girls and young women have received scholarships and literacy, life-skills, and health information and training.
INDIA—$29,858		
• 250,000 children mainstreamed and/or retained in schools through transitional bridge programs, back-to-school camps and improved quality of education.	• Over 2 million primary school children are receiving radio instruction from this school year (2005–2006).	• 690,000 children will benefit from the program; health and hygiene concepts issues incorporated in the curriculum and teachers, Village Education Committees and Children's Cabinets trained in these concepts. • Through public-private partnerships, the effective use of Education Technology to enhance quality and relevance of education and skills training will be promoted.
INDONESIA—$85,511		
	• $157 million DBE initiative launched in April 2005 to work in 100 districts with 4,500 schools, 4 million students, and 55,000 teachers. • Improved local government and community management of schools in 20 districts in East and Central Java through MBE pilot program. • Working with 2,600 teachers, and 70,000 students in 200 schools (20% are religious-based). • 900 other schools have adopted USAID models developed under MBE, using their own resources.	• USAID and Chevron signed a $10 million public-private alliance supporting vocational education for men and women in Aceh.
IRAQ—$165,783		
• 2,529 schools rehabilitated. • 84 model schools established. • 10,000 out-of-school youth enrolled in an Accelerated Learning program. • Early childhood learning television series developed and broadcast. • 10 students given scholarships to study for Masters degrees and Ph.D.s in U.S. universities.	• Printed and distributed 35.7 million textbooks for grades 1–12 in both Dari and Pashto since 2002. An additional 6.2 million have been printed and are ready for distribution. • 130,000 primary and secondary school teachers and administrators trained. • More than 8.7 million math and science textbooks edited, printed, and distributed. • Education Management Information System (EMIS) developed for Ministry of Education.	

ILLUSTRATIVE COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY RESULTS—Continued

[Budget, fiscal years 2002–2006 ($000)]

Access	Quality	Relevance
	• Hundreds of thousands of desks, chairs, chalkboards, teacher supplies distributed. • 2.9 million school bags and supplies distributed. • 5 U.S. university consortia developed partnerships with 10 Iraqi higher education institutions. • 43 computer labs and spcialist science (e.g., cell biology, soil science, GIS/remote sensing) labs renovated and provided with state-of-the-art equipment. • More than 1,500 faculty have attended refresher courses, seminars, workshops, and conferences in Iraq, the region, and the United States. • 23 specialist libraries (e.g., law, agriculture, public and environmental health, archaeology) refurbished and provided with more than 20,000 books and given access to online resources.	
JORDAN—$31,640		
	• 40 supervisors and all 258 teachers were trained on the first national curriculum for kindergarten. • 400 teachers and 42 supervisors were trained on IT content knowledge and pedagogy.	• School-to-Careers Programs are being piloted in 12 public schools. • 5 Cisco Networking Academies have been established. • Basic life skills have been promoted in 100 schools.
LEBANON—$19,300		
• Support more than 1,000 students coming from financially disadvantaged backgrounds with scholarships.	• Higher education support to 4 colleges and universities.	
MOROCCO—$31,996		
• 100 young Moroccan women from various parts of the country are enrolled in CISCO CCNA training, thanks to the WIT scholarship program.		• Literacy and numeracy classes provided to some 4,000 women. • Over 180 poor rural girls are in the program today, enjoying safe and conducive environment for life-long learning. • A public-private partnership provides job readiness training (with a focus on women) to 12 Moroccan institutions. • 700 students (40% women) are attending Cisco Certificate programs combined with job-preparedness training.

ILLUSTRATIVE COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY RESULTS—Continued

[Budget, fiscal years 2002–2006 ($000)]

Access	Quality	Relevance
NEPAL—$1,595		
	• More than 7,500 children in 14 districts received NFE and psychosocial counseling.	Approximately, 8,000 women gained knowledge and leadership skills, increasing their participation in key leadership positions by 23%. • More than 1,300 families received vocational education for income generation.
PAKISTAN—$197,876		
• 2,873 adult literacy centers were opened, graduating 17,850 out-of-school youth and adults.	• 7,004 school management committees are developing school improvement plans. • 765 teachers provided early childhood education training benefiting 25,500 students. • 109 master teachers and school administrators trained in the United States. • 234 schools were rahabilitated, and enrollment for 5- to 9-year-olds increased from 25–50%. • Education Management Information System (EMIS) developed for Ministry of Education.	• 63 local NGOs were awarded small grants to conduct literacy classes, train teachers, and organize parent-teacher association. • 24 public-private partnerships established between corporate Pakistan and the education sector in support of school improvement.
PHILIPPINES—$22,360		
• 58,842 children from grades 1–3 now have access to better learning systems in math and reading. • Social mobilization and advocacy led to new enrollments of 3,000 at the elementary level. • Alternate Learning System provided for 10,500 children and out-of-school youth. • 100 community learning centers constructed or improved in school-less barangays.	• 1,500 elementary and high school teachers trained to improve teaching of English and ICT. • 13 model schools for increasing teacher, parent, and community involvement in activities. • 14 private madaris adopted Department of Education curriculum. • 120 schools equipped to use Educational TV. • Over 1 million new textbooks and learning materials donated.	• 6 private-public alliances established, matching USAID resources at more than a 1:1 ration.
SRI LANKA—$9,625		
	• Emglish language amd IT training.	• Skill development for unemployed youth. • Vocational school development in tsunami area for construction and tourism skill development.

ILLUSTRATIVE COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY RESULTS—Continued

[Budget, fiscal years 2002–2006 ($000)]

Access	Quality	Relevance
WEST BANK AND GAZA—$24,700		
• 1,500 scholarships to vocational and technical students. • 476 talented and financially challenged undergraduate students (199 male and 277 female) received scholarships. • Awarded 160 scholarships for master's degrees in U.S. universities. • Modernized computer labs at 20 community colleges to improve internet access.	• Conducted 8-month needs assessment survey of higher education. • Improved efficiency of Ministry of Higher Education by providing staff training in Project Cycle Management, Communication Skills, Human Resources, and Strategic Planning. • Funded Higher Education Management Information System assessment. • Provision of access to and training for electronic journals for all universities in West Bank/Gaza; provision of 5 computers for each university.	• Provided state-of-the-art skills training for 5,000 students at 20 community colleges.
YEMEN—$33,667		
	• Identified 77 schools for renovation. • Training of trainers conducted. • Teacher and student kits for the more than 540 students and 37 teachers in grades 1–9 developed for dissemination.	
ANE REGIONAL EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT ALLIANCE—$17,175		
		• Discussions have begun with six priority countries: Egypt, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Pakistan, and Philippines. • Several corporations have been identified as participants including Shell, Nike, Nokia, and Microsoft.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me just ask a specific question. And this may be a university with whom you've not had contact. But I've been intrigued in the progress at Forman University, in Pakistan, in large part because the president of the university is now an American, Dr. Peter Armacost, who was president of Eckerd College, in Florida, prior to this calling. He is a very close friend of mine, and this is why I've admired his going to Pakistan. That university was attended by President Musharraf, so there's a certain high-profile quality when the President of a country has an interest in it. But the mission there is to try to have a student body of several thousand students who are Christian, Muslim, and of various other religions, under the same tent and with a curriculum and faculty that are devoted to this interdenominational or multifaith situation.

Now, to say the least, creating more university opportunities of a more liberal arts character in Pakistan is a challenge. Doing so with Christians, Muslims, and others, comingling and so forth, is even more so. But it strikes me that this is an important innovation, even if a small one, in a country of 150 million people, as we heard earlier today. Because it does have the knowledge of the President of the country, and the support, I would direct the atten-

tion of some of your associates in that area, not specifically in behalf of Forman, but to find if there are other innovations of this sort, because it does bring a coming together. In this particular case, the denomination within the United States that is supporting Dr. Armacost is the Presbyterian Church ministry, which has a good amount of contributions worldwide. But all of this is not going to occur only through the U.S. Government, as we've heard earlier—but also through NGOs, religious groups, and other actors aiding the humanitarian situation. In this particular case, the Presbyterians, as I understand it, are not there in an evangelical capacity, specifically; they really are attempting to open up a degree of religious diversity and tolerance in the area.

All of this coexists together. I'm wondering how USAID manages resources, U.S. Government responsibilities, but, at the same time, keeps track of the NGOs, and religious institutions, such as the Presbyterians, in this case, as well as others. For that matter, how does USAID work with Ms. Cheney and the State Department people? Are you on the same page? So you have regular meetings? In other words, how much coordination is there of this block activity? When I asked the Pakistani gentleman, earlier on, What part of the 4 percent, say, if that's the goal, of GNP?—and he said about 1 percent might come from outside gifts—ours, from other countries, NGOs, and so forth. I'm curious about the coordination of that one, quite apart from its coordination with the other 3 percent of the Pakistanis. Do you have any comment about this convoluted question that I've asked?

Mr. KUNDER. I do. First of all, on the question of the college in Pakistan, higher education is an area that I think we didn't——

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. KUNDER [continuing]. Touch on in great detail. But, of course, we do have a number of U.S. Government-supported institutions across the region. American University of Beirut, American University——

The CHAIRMAN. Yes——

Mr. KUNDER [continuing]. Of Cairo, and——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Of course.

Mr. KUNDER [continuing]. So forth.

The CHAIRMAN. Right. Well known.

Mr. KUNDER. And so, we do recognize these types of institutions as important components.

I think, back to Deputy Assistant Secretary Cheney's comments about the cost-effectiveness issue, we can't bring everybody here for a 6-year graduate program, so to some extent we've got to look at short-term training, we've got to look at institutions in the region. So we do try to take a look at the full range of tools in the toolkit, if you will.

The question of coordination of resources, trying to get the maximum impact for the taxpayer dollars, is something we try to pay attention to. I can't say we do it perfectly, because the subject matter is so vast, but we do try to pay attention to what the governments themselves are investing in, what the international financial institutions are investing in, the other bilateral donors are involved in, and, of course, the NGO community. Now we have this new

partner that we're trying to leverage, the private-sector institutions, especially American firms, investing in the region.

So across the region—we try to take all these things into account, and that's why I said earlier that we believe our niche is to develop innovative model programs, and then attempt policy dialog with the governments to try to roll these programs out.

From my perspective, we work extraordinarily well with the MEPI program and our State Department colleagues. Of course, with the vagaries of organizational structure, the Asia/Near East Bureau of USAID overlaps with three State Department bureaus, but especially in the Middle East, both with MEPI and then, more broadly, on Middle East peace issues, we are working very closely together. Because we have invested, as a nation, in having USAID missions on the ground, U.S. professional employees on the ground, at our Embassies, and aid missions across, at least, 19 countries of this region, we have a focused venue in which to do that coordination so that Liz's team and the MEPI folks and our team are talking through what's the best policy in Jordan or Egypt or anyplace else in the region. At least that's my perspective on it.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, let me just indicate that unhappily, 11:45 a.m., has come, and so has a rollcall vote. The buzz that you just heard signals that Senators will be doing their duty in a different forum.

But let me just thank both of you, again, for the tremendous preparation you made for this hearing in your testimony, as well as the publications you have shared with us. Our invitation to provide more are sincere. And, as you provide this data, we will make it available to all members of our committee and others in the Senate who, we pray, will have an interest in this subject. But you've contributed substantially to a good morning of thoughtfulness for Americans.

And, having said that, the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:45 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL PREPARED STATEMENT AND QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. LINCOLN CHAFEE, U.S. SENATOR FROM RHODE ISLAND

There is no question how important education is to combating the spread of terrorism. It is my strong belief that many of the conflicts and problems in the world, and particularly in the Near East and South Asia, could be lessened by strong investments in education.

I have always been a strong supporter of funding for programs that bring students to the United States, knowing that international exchange plays a valuable role in decreasing the use of stereotypes and allowing students from other countries to experience American culture. It is also important to support fledgling programs in the Near East and South Asia. While many of these programs are small, these students tend to stay in the region and work as advocates for freedom and democracy.

The situation in the occupied territories is a poignant example. With unemployment high and investments in the infrastructure of everything including education very low, it leaves little option but extremism for many. However, there are success stories. Take, for instance the American Studies Institute at Al-Quds University in the West Bank. Dr. Mohammed Dajani, the program founder, and a visiting scholar at Salve Regina University's Pell Center for International Relations and Public Policy, recently visited my office to share the hope he has in the good a small, and

growing, program is accomplishing. The value of a program run primarily by Palestinians, for Palestinians, in the West Bank about American culture and values is unmatched. These students have begun to open their minds to a world far removed from their own, without leaving their homes, which is necessary due to the high cost of schooling abroad and the difficulty in traveling.

It is inspiring what a small program with a strong leader like Dr. Dajani can accomplish with very little resources. Programs like this should be held up as a model for others in the region.

RESPONSES OF PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ELIZABETH L. CHENEY TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD LUGAR

Question. Please provide more detail on the number of participants in micro-scholarships in the Broader Middle East and North Africa. What does it cost to fund each participant and what are your future plans for this program?

Answer. The English ACCESS Micro-scholarships program was launched and funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) in fiscal year 2004. It provides English training to nonelite high school students and helps prepare them for potential participation in future exchanges with the United States while giving them skills that will lead to greater economic opportunity. Three thousand six hundred students from 39 countries are participating in the English ACCESS Micro-scholarship program worldwide.

Department guidelines indicate that approximately $1,000 should be budgeted per student for up to 2 years of instruction. In the chart shown below, the programs in countries covered by the Bureau of Near East Affairs (NEA) and Afghanistan paid for 1 year of instruction per student with these funds. ECA-administered ACCESS Micro-scholarship programs in other countries with significant Muslim populations, including Turkey and Pakistan and 22 other countries in the East Asia and Pacific, Africa, and South Asia regions will run for 2 years.

In fiscal year 2004 the ECA Bureau provided a total of $1,947,565 to fund English ACCESS Micro-scholarship programs for 1,724 students from the Broader Middle East and North Africa at a cost of circa $1,130 per student. In other words, more than 47 percent of the total number of students funded by the program came from the Broader Middle East and North Africa and more than 54 percent of the total funding available to the program was spent on this region. The table below provides the most detailed data available from the field on the manner in which these funds were spent.

In fiscal year 2006, the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural affairs plans to spend $4 million on the English ACCESS Micro-scholarship program and plans to spend at least half of this total amount on the Broader Middle East and North Africa.

MEPI staff and ECA staff are discussing ways in which MEPI funds can be used to expand this ECA-administered micro-scholarship program.

BMENA MICRO-SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS AND FUNDING

[1 year of instruction in all countries, except Pakistan and Turkey which have 2 years]

Country	Cost	Students	Cost/student
Afghanistan	$20,000	20	$1,000
Algeria	80,000	80	1,000
Bahrain	84,600	45	1,880
Kuwait	135,000	75	1,800
Lebanon	212,685	200	1,063
Morocco	108,600	100	1,086
Oman	250,000	106	2,358
Pakistan	93,000	90	1,033
Qatar	52,560	40	1,314
Saudi Arabia	100,000	50	2,000
Syria	148,000	140	1,057
Tunisia	101,800	100	1,018
Turkey	100,000	185	541
UAE	100,000	100	1,000
West Bank	198,000	198	1,000
Gaza	135,000	135	1,000
Yemen	48,320	80	604

BMENA MICRO-SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS AND FUNDING—Continued

[1 year of instruction in all countries, except Pakistan and Turkey which have 2 years]

Country	Cost	Students	Cost/student
Total BMENA	1,947,565	1,724	1,130

Question. Please provide more details on the amount of time students and prospective exchange participants have to wait in order to receive a visa for travel to the United States. What measures are being taken to improve visa wait times for students and exchange participants?

Answer. The table below compares the current amount of time students and exchange visitor program participants have to wait in order to receive an appointment for a visa interview with the time required for all other visa applicants in the Broader Middle East and North Africa. Islamabad issues visas for both Pakistan and Afghanistan. The amount of time required to process a visa from the time of the appointment to the final judgment varies with individual cases, although the majority of applicants receive visas within a few days of application.

As shown in the table, in order to expedite the processing of visas, students and exchange participants receive priority treatment. As a matter of policy, if a student or exchange participant can show a need to obtain an earlier visa interview appointment in order not to miss the opportunity to study in, or travel to, the United States, such requests are granted. Appointment wait times are updated by our posts on a weekly basis and vary depending on workload, resources, and time of year. For example, some posts give higher priority to students the closer they are to their program start times. A student applying 3 months before they intend to travel might wait longer for an appointment than a student whose program of study begins in a week. We are committed to ensuring that no student misses the start of classes due to a delay in being interviewed.

BMENA VISA WAIT TIMES

[All visa applications vs. students and exchange participants)

Post	Appointment wait time	
	F&J visas	All visas
Abu Dhabi	Same day	1 day.
Algiers	2 days	2 days.
Amman	40 days	40 days.
Cairo	2 days	17 days.
Casablanca	Same day	14 days.
Damascus	2 days	2 days.
Doha	Same day	Same day.
Dubai	1 day	5 days.
Isalamabad	Same day	25 days.
Jerusalem	1 day	12 days.
Kuwait	2 days	52 days.
Manama	Same day	Same day.
Muscat	Same day	Same day.
Riyadh	7 days	14 days.
Sanaa	2 days	2 days.
Tel Aviv	22 days	22 days.
Tunis	Same day	Same day.

Note.—Amman and Tel Aviv have special designated dates for students once a week, so the appointment wait time is shorter than indicated above; it is usually a week or two.

Question. Would you support the creation of a program similar to the Congress-Bundestag exchanges for the Broader Middle East?

Answer. We review our portfolio of exchange programs on an ongoing basis to ensure that they are helping to achieve the Nation's foreign policy goals and will give active consideration to a program of this type. My staff would be happy to consult with the committee's staff on the details of this program in order better to understand the benefits of a similar program targeted at the Broader Middle East.

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