

Economic and Social Affairs

Economic and Development Issues

Development Bodies and Programs

UN Development Program (UNDP)

Headquartered in New York, the UN Development Program (UNDP) is the leading development agency of the United Nations, with a presence in over 130 countries and territories. The United States is a member of its 36-state governing body, the Executive Board. The Secretary-General appointed Kemal Dervis, former Finance Minister of Turkey and former World Bank Vice President, to the Administrator's post in 2005.

Promoting democracy and prosperity around the world is a U.S. foreign policy priority. Through participation in the UNDP, the United States ensures that the organization's policies and activities reflect this priority. The UNDP's strategic framework for 2004–2007 included the following five goals: (1) reducing human poverty; (2) fostering democratic governance; (3) managing energy and environment for sustainable development; (4) supporting crisis prevention and recovery; and (5) responding to HIV/AIDS. The United States played a key role in adopting these goals to guide UNDP operations.

Democratic governance was a key UNDP activity. For example, in 2005, UNDP, in a partnership with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, engaged in a “Good Governance for Development Initiative” in the Middle East to promote reforms in administrative, financial, and judicial sectors. The United States supported this UNDP initiative.

The United States continued to encourage UNDP to improve its management and results-oriented programming. The U.S. delegation to the Executive Board meetings urged UNDP to report performance data of its country programs, clearly define key poverty alleviation programs, and improve the reporting of results in the implementation of the 2004–2007 strategic plan.

The Executive Board adopted decisions in 2005 directing UNDP to improve its work in the following key areas: compliance with audit findings, reporting results in the implementation of the strategic plan, and reviewing and approving country programs.

UNDP receives its funding through voluntary contributions. In 2005, the United States gave over \$108 million to the regular budget, which was over \$900 million.

UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), a permanent forum for discussions on trade and development issues, functions

through a variety of intergovernmental groups. These include its governing body, the Trade and Development Board, and Commissions on Trade, Investment, and Enterprise. Based in Geneva, UNCTAD has 192 member states. Supachai Panitchpakdi (Thailand) assumed his position as Secretary-General on September 1, 2005.

In October, UNCTAD held its 52nd annual session of the Trade and Development Board, at which the findings of its 2005 report were discussed. One of the findings was that market access preferences have had major positive effects for several least developed countries, which should be taken into account when negotiating accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). Also during 2005, the Commission on Trade in Goods and Services and Commodities held six meetings including its annual session; the Commission on Enterprise, Business Facilitation, and Development held four meetings, including its annual session; and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, serviced by UNCTAD, held its eighth session. At each of the meetings, delegates discussed the activities of the relevant Commission, including advisory and technical missions to developing countries (120 missions by the Commission on Trade in Goods and Services and Commodities); work on databases to provide information on tariffs, export markets, rules of origin, and other regulations; assistance in the creation of commodity exchanges; research and technical assistance in the areas of transport/trade facilitation; and joint work with the WTO on the Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance for the least developed countries.

The United States has been an active participant in UNCTAD since its founding in 1964. The United States believes free trade is a vital avenue for development and has strongly encouraged UNCTAD's work on trade and investment facilitation. In 2005, the United States joined other member states in urging UNCTAD to increase its technical assistance in areas that can help ensure that developing countries benefit from processes of globalization. The United States also supports UNCTAD's work in investment policy reviews and in development of databases that enable countries to find markets for their products and to search investment agreements and tariff data. For example, in 2004, in partnership with the International Trade Center, UNCTAD developed the Investment Map, an Internet tool to assist countries in identifying sectors or commodities for potential investment. The United States partially funded this tool in 2005 so that it could be expanded and widely disseminated to developed, as well as developing, countries.

UNCTAD's budget is funded through the UN regular biennial budget. In 2005, UNCTAD's budget was \$58 million and the U.S. contribution was \$12.8 million. UNCTAD's technical assistance activities, costing approximately \$31 million in 2005, were funded separately through trust fund arrangements established by individual donors. The United States contributed \$100,000 for the Investment Map in 2005. UNCTAD had 431 staff in 2005, of whom 22 were U.S. citizens.

Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)

In December 1992, the Economic and Social Council established the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) as a functional commission to follow up implementation of the Rio Earth Summit's goals. Based at UN Headquarters in New York, it is composed of 53 UN or UN agency members, elected to three-year terms. During its first decade, the CSD met formally four weeks annually to consider specific sustainable development issues and promote implementation of internationally agreed development goals. At the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, governments called for specific reforms of the CSD, including limiting negotiations in the sessions of the Commission to every two years, limiting the number of themes addressed at each session, and having CSD serve as a focal point for the discussion of partnerships that promote sustainable development, including sharing lessons learned, progress made and best practices. In this manner, the CSD directly supports advancing sustainable development, one of the four strategic objectives of the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

The United States has been a member since the Commission's inception. Following the WSSD, the United States worked actively to advance ideas for how the CSD could implement its reforms to serve as a stronger catalyst for action. (See <http://www.state.gov/g/oes/sus/csd/2003> for a series of discussion papers the United States produced in early 2003 regarding the future of the CSD.) At the CSD's 11th Session ("CSD 11" held April–May 2003), the United States worked closely with other CSD members to develop a multi-year program of work that addresses a series of "thematic clusters" and cross-cutting issues in two-year "implementation cycles." The first cycle (2003–2005) focused on water, sanitation, and human settlement issues. Each two-year cycle includes a non-negotiating "review year" to assess the state of implementation and a venue to focus on sustainable development partnerships and capacity building activities. The second half of each cycle will be a "policy year" to discuss policy options and possible actions to address the constraints and obstacles in the process of implementation identified during the review year.

The CSD produced some key results during its 2003–2005 water cycle. For example, over 70 new sustainable development partnerships were registered with the CSD Secretariat during the CSD water cycle. Examples included the UN Development Program's Shared River Basin Initiative, which supported dialogue among developing country decision-makers on shared rivers; the Partnership to Health through Water launched by the World Health Organization, the UN Children's Fund, and others, to reduce water-related diseases worldwide; and work through the Global Water Partnership to support the development of integrated water resource management strategies in 18 countries in 2005. In addition, Italy and Morocco hosted the first and second International Forums on Partnerships for Sustainable Development in 2004 and 2005, respectively.

The CSD water cycle produced a non-negotiated Matrix of Policy Options and Practical Measures in 2005, a useful toolkit for all implementation actors. In addition, these policy options were supported by a series of concrete case studies. The matrix, case studies, and information on partnerships were all available on the CSD website and remained a useful tool for continuing efforts on water.

Through the CSD Learning Center, 34 courses for over 1,000 CSD participants in 2004 and 2005 covered topics such as innovative financing and national planning, a training model since exported to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Course topics included Strengthening Governance to Protect Water Resources and Financing—Mobilizing Private Resources for Water and Sanitation.

Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky led the U.S. delegation to CSD 12 (2004) and CSD 13 (2005). The delegation included representatives from a wide range of U.S. Government agencies, including the State Department, USAID, Environmental Protection Agency, and the Departments of Energy, Housing and Urban Development, and Agriculture.

In May 2005, the CSD started its 2005–2007 Energy Cycle, focusing on the thematic cluster of energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere, and climate change.

UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

The UN General Assembly created the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in 1946 to meet the emergency needs of children after World War II. UNICEF has broadened its efforts to help children by providing both humanitarian assistance and long-term development aid targeted at children and families. UNICEF is active in 157 countries, with programs addressing children’s health, sanitation, nutrition, basic education, and protection needs, wherever possible through low-cost interventions at the family and community levels. In 2005, 89 percent of UNICEF’s budget went to program assistance. In humanitarian crises, UNICEF normally takes the lead in water and sanitation, data communications, supplemental nutrition, education, and protection issues.

As a respected authority on children and their well-being, UNICEF typically works through broad partnerships with developing countries, bilateral donors, and nongovernmental organizations. UNICEF programs target vulnerable and marginalized children and their families, and are intended to improve the capacity of national governments to respond to their needs. Although the United States in 2005 worked to ensure that UNICEF maintained strong operational capabilities to supply humanitarian assistance, a significant proportion of its work was tied to capacity building, piloting and disseminating best practices, and conducting research on the problems affecting children.

On May 1, 2005, the UN Secretary-General appointed former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman as UNICEF Executive Director. The United States supported this appointment. The United States has been a

member of UNICEF's Executive Board, now comprised of 36 members serving three-year terms, since the Fund's inception. The current U.S. term that began in 2003 runs until 2006.

UNICEF has capabilities to provide rapid and cost-effective delivery of medicines and materials in support of national and international efforts. UNICEF works to ensure not only the distribution, but also the development and availability of life-saving vaccines and drugs for children. For example, in close partnership with Rotary International, the World Health Organization, and the Centers for Disease Control, UNICEF achieved more than 99 percent reduction in the incidence of polio from an estimated 350,000 cases per year in 1988 to 1,906 cases in 2005; UNICEF and WHO have declared the Americas, Europe, and Western Pacific polio-free.

The primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination of humanitarian assistance is the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). Established in June 1992, the IASC involves key UN and non-UN humanitarian partners. In 2005, IASC established a "cluster lead" approach to improve the UN's response to humanitarian disasters. Under this approach, UNICEF was responsible for the water and sanitation, nutrition and feeding, and protection sectors. UNICEF was also an active participant of the UN Consolidated Appeal process, a mechanism through which humanitarian organizations planned, implemented, and monitored their activities as well as appealed for donor support of humanitarian assistance programs. UNICEF was strengthening its emergency response capacity including by reinforcing its Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies. The United States supported UNICEF's role in emergencies, particularly following the 2004 tsunami and the October 2005 South Asian earthquake emergencies.

In line with United States concerns, in 2005, UNICEF increased malaria prevention efforts and procured 17 million insecticide-treated bednets (up more than 100 percent from 2004). Educational supplies worth \$86 million supported UNICEF programs that reached 4.6 million students in Iraq alone. Re-establishing a learning environment using "school-in-a-box" kits is a central element of UNICEF's humanitarian response since gathering children in a fixed location facilitates complementary efforts in basic health and child protection, and contributes to a restoration of normalcy.

In 2005, the United States actively shaped the development of a new strategic plan for 2006–2009 by raising the issues of investments in basic health programs, the central role of the family in child well-being, and utilization of a results-based approach to programming. The draft plan showed marked improvement in these areas, and focused UNICEF on the areas of child survival, education, HIV/AIDS, child protection, and policy support.

The United States continued to push UNICEF to play a leadership role in efforts to harmonize and simplify UN development activities, particularly at the country level. In dealing with joint programming between UNICEF and other UN agencies, the United States succeeded in amending efforts by other members to encourage UN agencies to pool funds and

collaborate as an end in itself. Instead, UNICEF will take a more strategic approach toward working with its partners. Collaboration will be based on evidence of efficiency-gains in programming, will take account of the need to maintain distinct lines of financial accountability to donors, and will recognize the separate identities and roles of UN agencies.

In 2005, UNICEF's income totaled roughly \$2.8 billion, provided entirely through voluntary contributions. Of this amount, governments contributed \$1.5 billion. An additional \$1.2 billion came from private sources. The United States, the largest single donor, contributed \$124 million to non-earmarked resources in 2005 and an additional \$110 million in earmarked contributions. UNICEF employed 3,684 professional staff, 260 of whom were Americans.

UN-HABITAT

The UN General Assembly converted the 58-member UN Center on Human Settlements to a full program of the General Assembly, the UN Human Settlements Program (UN-HABITAT) in 2001. UN-HABITAT's work focuses on the development of sustainable human settlements with access to basic services, such as water and sanitation. UN-HABITAT is also the UN focal point for efforts to achieve the Millennium Declaration goal of significantly improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020. In 2005, the program had projects in over 50 countries.

UN-HABITAT is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, and is led by Executive Director Anna Tibaijuka (Tanzania), who was elected by the General Assembly for a four-year term in July 2002 after having served since September 2000 as Director of the Center on Human Settlements. UN-HABITAT's Governing Council meets every two years, most recently in April 2005. States are elected to the Governing Council through regional groups for four-year terms. The United States was re-elected in 2002 for another term by the Western Europe and Other Group.

UN-HABITAT's activities in 2005 were aligned with U.S. foreign policy objectives pertaining to economic freedom, good governance, democracy building (through decentralization of power to local authorities), gender equality, and the mobilization of domestic resources. The United States worked to clarify UN-HABITAT's role as a catalyst that advances work on human settlements through research and data-collection, and capacity-building work, supplemented by operational activities including pilot projects. Overall, UN-HABITAT performed its roll as a catalyst well, but it needed to focus more on consolidating many small programs, trust funds, and other mechanisms into a coherent whole.

At the April 2005 Governing Council meeting, the United States participated actively in negotiations which did the following:

- rejected calling for a voluntary indicative scale of contributions to guide member states' contributions;

- defeated a move to reopen the goals of the Millennium Declaration agreed by heads of state in 2000;
- instituted curbs on the Executive Director's authority to reallocate budget funds;
- called for development of a strategic and institutional plan; and
- requested a review of the organization's administrative arrangements, in order "to enable it to function more effectively and efficiently."

In order to assist developing countries in managing urbanization, UN-HABITAT gathers data on cities and promotes best practices in fields related to human settlements and the role of local authorities. Its technical arm works with local authorities and national governments to develop and decentralize services. For example, in 2005, UN-HABITAT, the United States and the Government of Uganda collaborated on a peer exchange on housing financing. This event was technical in nature with participants from Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania. This highly successful peer exchange covered analysis of the current housing financing situation in East Africa, emerging trends, viable tools, policy options, and future steps. UN-HABITAT and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development planned to replicate this peer exchange in West Africa in 2006.

UN-HABITAT also conducted global campaigns to promote improved urban governance, and to promote secure tenure of housing and land. These aimed to facilitate access to credit, and include advocating the rights of women to equal treatment, including property inheritance. These campaigns were conducted through advocacy, research publications, and technical cooperation on legislative and policy reform.

In 2005, funding for UN-HABITAT's work came from voluntary contributions to UN-HABITAT's programs (\$36.5 million), which was supplemented by UN regular budget funds (\$8.8 million). Additionally, UN-HABITAT executed technical cooperation construction projects worth \$64.4 million on behalf of other UN agencies and donor countries. In 2005, the United States contributed \$150,000 to UN-HABITAT's core program. UN-HABITAT employed 191 staff in 2005, six of whom were American.

Environment

UN Environment Program (UNEP)

The UN Environment Program (UNEP), founded in 1972, is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, and has six regional offices (Europe, Africa, North America, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and West Asia). Its Governing Council consists of 58 member states, one of which is the United States. The UN General Assembly elects members from the different regional groupings for four-year terms. Klaus Töpfer (Germany) was UNEP's Executive Director in 2005.

UNEP addresses environmental problems that transcend borders and potentially affect the health and prosperity of the world's citizens, including

U.S. citizens. UNEP also contributes to regional stability through work in areas affected by conflict. Active involvement in UNEP helps the United States promote sustainable development and protect the environment by combating global environmental degradation. Through UNEP, the United States also promotes the interests of U.S. industry, which is directly affected by evolving international environmental standards. Chemicals are an area of particular international interest. In 2005, the United States provided funding to support operation of the Secretariats of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, and the Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent. In addition, the United States has been the main financial supporter of the UNEP Mercury Program, which is aimed at helping countries reduce global mercury.

The United States strongly supports work done in UNEP core programs, such as early warning and assessment of environmental threats, the regional seas program, capacity building for domestic environmental governance in developing countries, and the global program of action to combat land-based sources of marine pollution. The United States values UNEP's monitoring, assessing, and publicizing of emerging environmental trends, especially in regional fora where national responsibilities do not take precedence.

In 2004, the United States was instrumental in the negotiations culminating in the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building, which includes U.S. priorities such as mainstreaming capacity building within the regular programs of UNEP. As a part of an effort to focus UNEP's programs on implementation, the United States encouraged UNEP to strengthen its linkages with scientific institutions and assisted developing nations improve their ability to monitor and assess environmental change. Paragraph 169 of the World Summit Outcome Document, developed and released in September 2005, set forth a plan for the United Nations to initiate a two-track review in 2006 to improve coordination and efficiency of its environmental activities.

In addition, the United States cooperated closely with UNEP on the following issues in 2005:

- Iraq: UNEP's Post Conflict Assessment Unit has been working closely with U.S. Embassy Baghdad on a variety of activities, most notably on efforts to help the Iraqi Ministry of the Environment develop environmental legislation. The United States participated in several UNEP Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics technical meetings on the Mesopotamian marshlands.
- Caribbean: UNEP's Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit (UNEP-CAR/RCU) located in Kingston, Jamaica, coordinated the Cartagena Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, working closely with the private sector, signatories to the convention and other governments, and

nongovernmental organizations. The UNEP-CAR/RCU program also facilitated the U.S.-initiated White Water to Blue Water partnership, which focused on the following four areas: sound marine transportation, sustainable tourism, integrated watershed management, and marine ecosystem-based management.

- **Indian Ocean Tsunami:** UNEP played an important role in the long term response to this disaster by providing expertise on coastal zone management and advising governments of the value of coral reef and mangrove ecosystems in mitigating loss to life and property threatened by natural disasters.
- **Clean Energy:** UNEP facilitated the U.S. Clean Energy Initiative by hosting the Solar and Wind Energy Resource Assessment database and by implementing initiatives submitted by the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles, a broad coalition of international organizations, industry groups, and governments, to foster the widespread use of clean fuels and environmentally sound vehicle technologies. Due to its work, 100 percent of the gasoline in Africa is now lead-free.

The United States made a voluntary contribution of \$10.9 million to UNEP and UNEP-related activities in 2005. UNEP's 2005 budget was approximately \$66 million. Twenty-seven U.S. citizens worked at UNEP at the end of 2005, out of a total of 762 employees.

Climate : UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) entered into force in March 1994. There are currently 188 parties to the UNFCCC. The United States ratified the convention in 1992. The UNFCCC promotes stabilization of atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases at levels that would prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system. The UNFCCC parties adopted the Kyoto Protocol in December 1997; the Protocol entered into force in February 2005. This Protocol requires developed nations to reduce their collective greenhouse gas emissions by an average of 5.2 percent below 1990 levels during the period 2008–2012 (7 percent below for the United States). However, because the Kyoto Protocol exempts developing countries, including some of the world's largest emitters of greenhouse gases, from binding emission targets and because of the harm it would cause to the U.S. economy, President Bush announced in March 2001 that the United States would not ratify the Protocol. This decision was consistent with the recommendation of Senate Resolution 98, approved in July 1997 by a vote of 95 to 0.

The United States engaged in extensive international efforts on climate change, both through bilateral and multilateral activities. The UNFCCC's 11th Conference of the Parties was held in Montreal, Canada, in November–December 2005. Framework Parties agreed to a series of up to four workshops to informally exchange views on the effectiveness of current actions as well as on future action. The UNFCCC continued work under the

Buenos Aires Program of Work on Adaptation and Response Measures, a program for advancing adaptation concerns under the UNFCCC. Continued U.S. participation in and support for the UNFCCC helped advance U.S. approaches to climate change issues.

The United States contributed \$3.9 million to the UNFCCC in 2005. Seven of the UNFCCC's 156 staff were U.S. citizens.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was created in 1988 as a joint effort of the World Meteorological Organization and the UN Environment Program. The IPCC conducts periodic assessments of studies on the science of climate change, its potential impacts, and ways countries adapt and seek to mitigate climate change. In 2005, IPCC accepted and approved two special reports, one in April titled, "Safeguarding the Ozone Layer and the Global Climate System," and the second in September on "Carbon Dioxide Capture and Storage." In addition, drafts of the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report (AR4), involving contributions from several hundred experts, underwent expert review. The AR4 should be completed in 2007.

Continued U.S. participation and support for the IPCC helped ensure that international actions to address climate change were informed by up-to-date, peer-reviewed scientific and technological information.

In 2005, the United States contributed \$2.1 million to the IPCC. A U.S. citizen chaired the IPCC's Working Group I on science.

Population

UN Population Fund (UNFPA)

The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) provides funding for population and reproductive health care programs in over 140 countries. UNFPA supports maternal, child, and reproductive health care and family planning programs worldwide and works on the issues of gender empowerment, child marriage, and violence against women. UNFPA provides assistance in the framework of three to five year country plans, which are developed jointly with the recipient country and approved by the Executive Board.

Thoraya Ahmed Obaid (Saudi Arabia), the Executive Director of UNFPA, was appointed in 2001 by the UN Secretary-General. The Secretary-General extended her tenure for another term, which will end in December 2008. The United States is a member of UNFPA's Executive Board and participates actively in the decision-making processes to safeguard U.S. interests.

In recent years, the United States has determined that UNFPA's support of and involvement in China's birth-planning activities has facilitated the practice of coercive abortions, and that, therefore, the Kemp-Kasten Amendment precluded U.S. funding for UNFPA.

UN Commission on Population and Development (CPD)

The UN Commission on Population and Development (CPD) advises the UN Economic and Social Council on population changes, including migration, and their effects on economic and social conditions. It is also charged by the General Assembly to monitor, review, and assess implementation of the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), held in Cairo in 1994.

The CPD held its 38th session in New York April 4–8 and 14, 2005. The theme of the session was population, development, and HIV/AIDS, with particular emphasis on poverty. The United States emphasized the importance of assuring that international assistance efforts, including in basic health, family planning, and education, reach the most disadvantaged. The United States joined consensus on a resolution on the theme, but made an Explanation of Position emphasizing that the United States did not interpret any language in the resolution or any of the documents it cited as promoting abortion. The Commission also adopted a resolution on the contribution of the ICPD to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the UN Millennium Declaration.

Regional Economic Commissions

The UN regional economic commissions include the Economic Commission for Africa, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. These bodies are charged with “raising the level of economic activity” within their respective regions and “maintaining and strengthening the economic relations” of the countries within their scopes, “both among themselves and with other countries of the world.” The regional commissions are funded through the regular UN budget, of which the United States pays 22 percent. Many of their activities are financed by extra-budgetary grants from bilateral and multilateral donors. The United States is a member of ECE, ECLAC, and ESCAP. U.S. participation in regional commissions addresses and safeguards U.S. foreign policy and commercial interests in these regions. While the United States engages to protect its interests, the U.S. Government has openly questioned the added-value to the UN system affected by these commissions.

Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)

The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), headquartered in Geneva, was established in 1947 to encourage economic cooperation within Europe and between Europe and other countries with close trade and business ties. At the end of December 2005, ECE membership consisted of 55 European nations, as well as the United States, Canada, Switzerland, Israel, and the Central Asian and Caucasian states of the former Soviet Union. Executive Secretary Marek Belka (Poland) was appointed by the UN Secretary-General in December 2005, replacing Brigita Schmognerova, who left in September.

The ECE is traditionally a standards setting and coordination body in many technical fields, such as in e-commerce, energy, environment, vehicle construction, road safety, timber and agricultural produce, border crossing, and statistical collection. Many ECE standards are adopted around the world. Many U.S. Government agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency and Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Energy, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, and Transportation, regularly participate in working groups and chair committees. The U.S. Chief Statistician is the chair of the Conference of European Statisticians, a group that coordinates statistical methodology across the region and serves as a forum for international harmonization in statistics.

At its 60th plenary, on February 22–25, 2005, the ECE agreed to terms of reference for an external evaluation report. A small team of representatives to the ECE conducted a survey of member states and issued their report on June 30. The report recommended convening a plenary session biannually instead of annually, starting in 2007, and simplifying the governance structure by merging two governing bodies into one, the Executive Committee. It also recommended changes to all of the ECE sub-programs. During the remainder of 2005, ECE delegates negotiated practical details for the implementation of the recommendations. The resulting Work Plan on Reform reviewed the mandates of sub-programs and presented the decision to eliminate two sub-programs (Economic Analysis and Industrial Restructuring) and to create a new one, Economic Cooperation and Integration. Members negotiated the re-allocation of staff and how to realign the sub-programs with their corresponding intergovernmental sectoral committees. These decisions were to be presented at the 61st plenary scheduled for February 2006.

In 2005, the ECE's budget was \$28 million; the United States contributed \$6.2 million. Out of the total Secretariat staff of about 200 at ECE headquarters, Americans held 14 positions.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) was established in 1948 and had 41 member states as of December 2005. The United States is a full member with voting privileges. ECLAC also has seven Associate Members, including the U.S. territories of Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands. The Commission is headquartered in Santiago, Chile, with two sub-regional offices for Mexico and for the Caribbean (Trinidad and Tobago). It also has offices in Bogota, Brasilia, Buenos Aires, Montevideo, and Washington, D.C. Executive Secretary José Luis Machinea (Argentina) has headed the organization since December 2003.

ECLAC's mission is to improve cooperation among member states and international entities to advance economic and social development in the region. Although it previously advocated closed markets and state-run economies, ECLAC has come to recognize some of the benefits of trade liberalization and privatization. In 2005, ECLAC produced a well-respected manual for post-disaster needs assessment that was useful in its coordinating

role in assistance to Guatemala after the deadly mudslides caused by Tropical Storm Stan in October.

Since ECLAC's plenary sessions are biennial, there was no plenary in 2005. ECLAC held a Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean in Mar del Plata on September 7–8; the United States did not attend. The United States sent technical experts to two meetings of the ECLAC Statistical Conference in 2005.

ECLAC's budget in 2005 was \$40 million, of which \$7 million came from the U.S. assessment. Out of 208 professional staff at ECLAC, five were Americans.

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) was established in 1947, and is headquartered in Bangkok, Thailand. Fifty-three nations are members of ESCAP and nine non-self-governing territories hold associate member status, three of which are U.S. territories in the Asia and Pacific region, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands. The United States is a full ESCAP member.

ESCAP provides technical support to member governments on a wide array of socio-economic development issues. ESCAP's activities include providing direct advisory services; training and sharing of regional experiences; and disseminating knowledge and data through meetings, seminars, publications, and inter-country networks.

Since his appointment in July 2000, Executive Secretary Dr. Kim Hak-Su (Republic of Korea) focused ESCAP on poverty alleviation, which was a dominant concern for many countries. Dr. Kim's institutional reforms went into effect in January 2003, outlining a new structure with the following three main thematic committees: Poverty Reduction, Managing Globalization, and Emerging Social Issues. The United States continued to be a strong supporter of these reform initiatives.

ESCAP met for its annual session in Bangkok May 12–18, 2005. The aftermath of the tsunami in late 2004 was a key part of the agenda. ESCAP and the UN Development Program co-chaired the taskforce set up to coordinate rehabilitation and reconstruction, and ESCAP was instrumental in setting up a trust fund to aid tsunami victims.

In addition to its \$33 million budget for 2005, ESCAP also received \$13 million in voluntary extra-budgetary contributions, primarily for its workshops and other technical assistance programs. The U.S. contribution for ESCAP's 2005 budget was approximately \$7.3 million. The United States also made a voluntary contribution of \$150,000 to an ESCAP narcotics demand-reduction initiative. Of the 155 professional positions in the ESCAP Secretariat, 14 were held by U.S. citizens.

Social Issues

Commission for Social Development

The Commission for Social Development is a functional body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) that meets annually to advise ECOSOC on social policies and issues. The 46-member Commission is the key UN body responsible for review of the implementation of the outcome of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen.

The priority theme for the 43rd session of the Commission, held in New York February 20, 2004, and February 9–18, 2005, was the “Review of further implementation of the World Summit for Social Development and the outcome of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly.” The Commission held a two-day high-level segment February 10–11 devoted to the 10-year review of the World Summit for Social Development and it adopted the Declaration on the Tenth Anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development.

The U.S. delegation was active in discussions on the topics of poverty alleviation, social integration, and full employment. The United States joined consensus to recommend that ECOSOC adopt a resolution on “Implementation of the social objectives of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD),” which stated that the Commission should continue to give prominence to the social dimensions of NEPAD in discussing future priority themes.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Since the beginning of the negotiations in 2003 on the draft Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities (Disabilities Convention), the United States has maintained that disability issues are within the purview of domestic policy and law; therefore, the United States had no intention of becoming a party to the treaty. Ralph Boyd, Assistant Attorney General, stated during negotiations: “Given the complex set of regulations needed to canvass this broad area, and the enforcement mechanisms necessary to ensure equal opportunity for those with disabilities, the most constructive way to proceed is for each member state, through action and leadership at home, to pursue within its borders the mission of ensuring that real change and real improvement is brought to their citizens with disabilities.”

In 2003, the U.S. delegation intervened during negotiations only to give technical advice on U.S. disability law and practice. In 2004, the delegation expanded its engagement to intervene on issues or articles in the draft text involving international law or practice. In the January–February and August 2005 negotiations, the U.S. delegation engaged other delegates on the following issues:

- Treaty issues such as establishment and functions of a treaty monitoring body, language on international cooperation among states, clauses on

treaty reservations, and proper language for affirming human rights treaty commitments;

- Support for the over-arching international principle of non-discrimination, including support for treaty provisions that embody an approach of non-discrimination and equality of treatment, rather than an approach of entitlements or the creation of new rights; and
- Providing technical assistance under U.S. law, including the provision of several written handouts on the American Disabilities Act and other U.S. disability laws and the sponsoring of an experts panel on domestic disability law.

During the fall of 2005, the U.S. delegation expanded the scope of its interventions by engaging on a broader set of issues. This engagement included supporting language on non-discrimination and equality of access to courts and to political and public life; supporting language on inclusion of parents in decision-making in all areas of their children's lives, including health-related decisions; advocating the necessity of informed consent for genetic testing, medical research and/or scientific experimentation; and supporting U.S. views on end-of-life issues.

The active U.S. role in the disabilities negotiations was aimed at advancing U.S. policy interests, including advancing democracy; promoting democratic values such as non-discrimination and equal treatment; condemning torture; and promoting health and U.S. values on social issues. Member states and the disabilities community welcomed the increased involvement of the United States.

During the fall 2005 General Assembly, member states adopted a resolution by consensus authorizing five weeks of negotiations on the draft Disabilities Convention, to be held in January–February and August 2006.

UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice/UN Office on Drugs and Crime

The UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (the Crime Commission) is the principal UN policy-making body on criminal justice issues. The 40-member Commission convenes annually at the UN Office at Vienna. Many decisions from these annual sessions are forwarded to the UN Economic and Social Council (or occasionally to the UN General Assembly) for endorsement. The United States is an active member of the Crime Commission and is highly engaged in the plenary.

The 11th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Crime Congress) convened April 18–25, 2005 in Bangkok. Held once every five years, the Crime Congress provides recommendations which serve as the basis for resolutions and other initiatives introduced at the UN Crime Commission. At the Crime Congress, the U.S. delegation achieved all of its major objectives. In particular, the United States successfully blocked attempts to insert language supporting the International Criminal Court as well as language exempting “national liberation” movements from the definition of

terrorism. The United States emphasized the need to implement fully the existing international anti-crime and terrorism agreements and worked to focus the Crime Congress' efforts towards this end.

The 14th session of the UN Crime Commission convened from May 23–27, 2005, in Vienna. The Commission adopted 10 resolutions, including a U.S.-sponsored resolution that encouraged member states to enter into bilateral agreements on asset sharing. The United States cosponsored three other resolutions supporting the work of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) against terrorism, combating organized crime, and preventing corruption. These resolutions directed the work of the UNODC towards areas where it has relevant expertise and that best complement U.S. bilateral assistance efforts.

During the Crime Commission session, the United States encouraged the UNODC to stay within its core areas of expertise. The United States voiced its strong support for the implementation and ratification of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) and the UN Convention against Corruption (CAC) as well as of the counter-terrorism instruments, and urged other states to join in contributing resources for this work. The United States also welcomed the introduction of results-based management and strategic planning to further improve the efficiency of UNODC.

Throughout the remainder of 2005, the United States worked closely with the Executive Director of UNODC, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa (Italy), to ensure that the resolutions passed at the Crime Commission were followed, and that the UNODC stayed within its mandate. Mr. Costa has been UNODC's Executive Director since his appointment in May 2002, which the United States supported.

During 2005, U.S. support of UNODC crime projects strengthened the legal frameworks of countries working to implement the TOC and CAC, and provided technical assistance to countries seeking to implement the counter-terrorism instruments.

Conference of Parties to the UN Conventions against Transnational Organized Crime and Corruption

The UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) entered into force on September 29, 2003. Pursuant to article 32 of the Convention, a Conference of the Parties (COP) to the convention was established to improve the capacity of participating states to combat transnational organized crime and to promote and review the implementation of this convention. Rules of procedure established that the COP would meet on an annual basis for the first three years after the TOC's entry into force and then biennially thereafter. The United States participated in the second COP in October 2005. On December 3, 2005, the United States became a full party to the TOC and its protocols on trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling. In 2005, the United States helped create an interim working group on technical assistance, which will facilitate increased dialogue between donors and

recipient countries. The United States lent strong support to the COP decision that the 2006 session should focus on bringing experts together in a workshop setting to discuss matters relating to the implementation of the TOC and its protocols. Such a setting, which is less formal by design, should be more conducive to addressing the issues at hand.

The UN Convention against Corruption (CAC), adopted in 2003, was the first anti-corruption treaty negotiated on a truly global scale, as well as the most comprehensive anti-corruption instrument in existence. The CAC entered into force on December 14, 2005, and its first Conference of the State Parties (COSP) was scheduled to convene within one year after that date. The COSP will likely have a similar role to the COP in monitoring CAC implementation and facilitating technical assistance. Although the United States had not ratified the Convention by the end of 2005, it played an integral role in negotiating the CAC and signed the Convention on December 9, 2003.

Commission on Narcotic Drugs/UN Office on Drugs and Crime

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Narcotics Control Board, both based in Vienna, support U.S. drug control objectives. The UN drug control conventions (the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and the 1988 UN Convention Against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances) provide the framework for international drug control. This framework includes initiatives prohibiting the cultivation of opium, cocaine, and marijuana; targeting drug traffickers and their proceeds; promoting national campaigns on drug abuse prevention and treatment; and regulating precursor chemicals used in the production of many illicit drugs.

Support given to UNODC by the United States during 2005 significantly impacted the operations and expansion of UN counter-narcotics programs and policy. UNODC used funds provided by the United States in its global programs to prevent money laundering and terrorist financing, enhance precursor chemical control, provide legal advice on treaty implementation of the UN drug conventions, support an international network of treatment and rehabilitation centers, and sustain UNODC's independent evaluation unit. Contributions from the United States also supported numerous regional projects, including strengthening precursor control in South, Central, and East Asia; increasing border control in Central Asia; monitoring illicit crops in Asia; and upgrading a law enforcement training academy in West Africa. In addition, the United States supported country-specific programs in India to enhance law enforcement response to trafficking in persons, in South Africa to increase awareness of HIV/AIDS, and in Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic to strengthen each country's respective drug control agencies.

The 53-member UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), of which the United States has been a member since 1946, is the central policymaking body within the UN system for dealing with drug-related

matters. The CND held its 48th session in Vienna, March 7–11, 2005. During the regular CND session, delegates reviewed the worldwide activities and management of the UNODC and were briefed on various aspects of the global narcotics situation by UNODC and member states. The thematic debate on “HIV/AIDS within in the Context of Drug Abuse” proved controversial, with many countries voicing their support for policies such as needle exchange, as well as other harm reduction policies that enable drug use. The United States emphasized its support for drug prevention and treatment programs as opposed to policies that do not seek to discourage drug use.

Delegates considered 25 resolutions, of which the United States ultimately co-sponsored seven, including resolutions on precursor chemical control, Afghanistan’s counter-narcotics plan, demand for and supply of opiates for medical and scientific needs, and women and substance abuse. The U.S. delegation supported efforts to merge related resolutions and urged several countries to withdraw resolutions that fell outside the scope of UNODC’s mandate.

The UNODC is funded through the UN regular budget. The 2005 regular budget for UNODC was approximately \$14.8 million, of which the United States paid \$3.2 million. In addition, the United States made a voluntary contribution of \$23.8 million for various counter-narcotic and crime prevention programs. In 2005, UNODC employed a total of 462 persons, of which 24 are U.S. citizens, or five percent.

International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)

The 13-member International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) is an independent quasi-judicial control body that has a mandate to promote and assist government compliance with the provisions of the international drug control treaties. The Board meets periodically to monitor the implementation of the drug control treaties and the international movement of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Retired Ambassador Melvin Levitsky, former Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, was elected to the Board in October 2003. Although Board members serve in their individual capacity, the presence of an American viewpoint is invaluable to promote U.S. policy interests.

The INCB presented its annual report to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in March 2005. The report highlighted the link between supply and demand, stressing that strategies addressing only one of the two components produce limited results. The United States praised the INCB report, mentioning in particular the problem posed by the extraction of pseudoephedrine from pharmaceutical preparations for use in methamphetamine production. The United States urged that countries exporting these pharmaceutical preparations use “rule of reason” in approving exports in order to ensure that the quantities approved are appropriate to the legitimate needs of the importing country.

Human Rights

Status of Women

The UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), established in 1946 as a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council, seeks to improve the situation of women in the areas of political participation, economic opportunity, social development, health, and education. The United States uses the annual CSW meetings to highlight U.S. Government activities to improve conditions for women throughout the world.

The CSW convened its 49th session in New York February 28–March 11, 2005, with a brief resumed session to wrap up business on March 22. This meeting coincided with the 10th anniversary of the Beijing Women’s Conference (Beijing+10). To commemorate the occasion, member states adopted a Declaration reiterating their commitment to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women, on which the United States joined consensus with an Explanation of Position.

Members adopted the following resolutions by consensus: “Situation of Women and Girls in Afghanistan,” “Women, the Girl Child, and HIV/AIDS,” “Eliminating Demand for Trafficked Women and Girls for All Forms of Exploitation” (introduced by the United States), “Advisability of the Appointment of a Special Rapporteur on Laws that Discriminate Against Women,” “Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into all National Policies and Programmes,” “Integrating a Gender Perspective in Post-Disaster Relief, Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Efforts, including in the Aftermath of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster,” “Strengthening of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women,” “Indigenous Women: Beyond the Ten-Year Review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,” and “Economic Advancement of Women” (introduced by the United States). The U.S. delegation, led by Ambassador Ellen Sauerbrey, introduced two resolutions at CSW 2005. “Eliminating Demand for Trafficked Women and Girls for All Forms of Exploitation” was the first UN resolution to deal with the demand side of human trafficking. It acknowledged the link between commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking in women and girls. Over 50 nations joined as cosponsors and the Commission adopted the resolution by consensus. “Economic Advancement of Women” urged member states to undertake legislative, administrative, and financial measures to create an enabling environment for women entrepreneurs and workers.

The United States called for a vote on a resolution on “Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women” and voted against the resolution. The United States opposed the CSW practice of annually approving this one-sided resolution that singled out Israel for criticism while ignoring the role Palestinians and Arab states play in prolonging the crisis. The resolution addressed a number of issues, including territory and refugees, which must be resolved by negotiations between the two sides.

The United States sponsored the participation of Afghan and Iraqi women's delegations in the 2005 session. Iraq's Minister Narmin Othman and Afghanistan's Minister Massouda Jalal participated in the women's political participation panel. The United States sponsored these officials and their delegations to travel first to New York to attend the CSW and meet with academics, and then to Washington to meet with Administration and Congressional officials and representatives from nongovernmental organizations.

The United States held two side events during the annual meeting. A panel on "Women and Political Participation" highlighted concrete ways in which the United States followed up on the fall 2003 General Assembly resolution on that subject. A second panel was held on "Women and Information and Communications Technologies." The United States also produced a publication on U.S. accomplishments for the Beijing+10 session, "Working for Women Worldwide," which highlighted U.S. programs for women around the world and success stories.

Commission on Human Rights

In 2005, the UN Commission on Human Rights (CHR) was the principal UN organ for achieving the UN Charter objective of promoting respect for human rights. It was composed of 53 members, each elected for a three-year term. The CHR held its 61st session in Geneva, Switzerland, from March 14 to April 22. Former Senator Rudy Boschwitz headed the U.S. delegation to the CHR. The Commission adopted 85 resolutions and 18 decisions. The Economic and Social Council adopted the CHR report and more than 40 resolutions and decisions dealing with human rights issues. The UN General Assembly adopted more than 70 resolutions on women's and human rights and social issues that were considered by the General Assembly's Third (Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Affairs) Committee. In addition, in a variety of other UN fora in 2005, the United States continued to call attention to specific situations of human rights abuses in various countries.

During the latter part of 2005, the United States supported the Secretary-General's initiative to replace the Commission on Human Rights with an action-oriented Human Rights Council. The United States asserted that the Council's mandate should be to address human rights emergencies and the most egregious human rights abuses, and that mechanisms must be established to ensure a credible membership.

At the 61st session of the CHR, the United States placed a high priority on obtaining adoption of a resolution on the human rights situation in Cuba. Ambassador Boschwitz made a statement urging members to support this resolution, introduced to highlight Cuba's failure to take steps guaranteeing even basic human rights for its citizens. He noted that Cuba had neither cooperated with Special Procedures, nor allowed a visit by the personal representative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 21 (U.S.) to 17, with 15 abstentions. The margin of yes votes over no votes was the largest since 1997. The United States also

introduced a resolution condemning serious human rights abuses in Belarus. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 23 (U.S.) to 16, with 14 abstentions.

Similarly, the U.S. delegation cosponsored a European Union resolution, adopted by a vote of 30 (U.S) to nine, with 14 abstentions, that expressed concern about the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The United States supported another resolution that was adopted by consensus condemning the violations of human rights occurring in the Sudan, calling upon the Government of Sudan to end impunity for human rights violators, and welcoming the involvement of the African Union in facilitating a peaceful conclusion to the conflict. In a statement delivered by Ambassador Boschwitz, the United States noted the need for improved security in Darfur, particularly for women and girls, and the strengthening of civil society institutions in Sudan as priorities for addressing the human rights situation in the country.

Cuba introduced a resolution, sponsored by Belarus, Syria, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Libya, and Venezuela, requesting the United States to provide access to its naval base in Guantanamo Bay to human rights Special Procedures. Specifically, the resolution called upon the United States to authorize an impartial and independent fact-finding mission to its naval base and provide special rapporteurs (on torture, physical and mental health, and independence of judges) access to the detention centers on the base. The resolution was ultimately rejected by a vote of 8 to 22 (U.S.), with 23 abstentions.

The United States continued to oppose, publicly and in diplomatic efforts, multiple unbalanced resolutions about Israel. Nonetheless, such resolutions passed by large majorities. Ambassador Boschwitz, in an explanation of the U.S. vote against these Israel-specific resolutions, criticized the unfairness of resolutions not accounting for Palestinian responsibilities and the criticism of Israel under multiple agenda items.

In an important vote, the United States voted against a resolution addressing the defamation of religion. In an explanation of vote, the United States noted that the resolution failed to address the situation of all religions and thus failed to promote religious freedom overall. Specifically, the U.S. statement underscored the need to include mention of the need to change educational systems that promote hatred of other religions, as well as the problem of state-sponsored media that negatively targets any one religion or person of a certain faith. In general, the resolution concentrated excessively on Islam and Muslims, while it failed to mention any other religions or their practitioners by name.

Another key issue discussed during the CHR session involved the question of UN reform. During this session, the United States welcomed the Secretary-General's report entitled, "In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All." The United States specifically endorsed the Secretary-General's emphasis on replacing the Commission on Human Rights with a smaller, more effective and action-

oriented Human Rights Council. While the United States contended this was properly the work of the General Assembly rather than the discredited and dysfunctional CHR, the Commission decided to convene a working group to “reflect coherently on the recommendations on human rights contained in the report of the Secretary-General with a view to contributing to the intergovernmental deliberations on the proposed reform of the United Nations in the General Assembly.” The CHR met for one day in June to confer on the subject, but produced no recommendations.

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

The High Commissioner for Human Rights is the principal UN official responsible for advancing UN human rights activities and is responsible to the Secretary-General. Louise Arbour (Canada), the High Commissioner for Human Rights, was appointed by the UN Secretary-General in 2004. Under the High Commissioner’s leadership, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) works to ensure the practical implementation of universally recognized human rights norms, including carrying out the tasks assigned by UN human rights bodies. The United States, through its mission to the United Nations in Geneva, has worked with the new High Commissioner to build a strong cooperative relationship.

OHCHR is responsible for staffing and supporting 42 field operations, including technical cooperation programs, and other field presences. It also must provide technical and professional support for 44 special procedures mandates, the six Geneva-based treaty bodies, the Sub-Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, and the Commission on Human Rights. The number of states party to treaties tripled in the past decade and the number of individual human rights complaints more than tripled in the past five years.

OHCHR’s field operations in 2005 included activities such as the establishment of an office in Nepal to monitor the situation of human rights and observance of international humanitarian law. OHCHR also deployed a Human Rights Adviser to Togo to assist with human rights and protection issues related to the country’s elections. In Uganda, OHCHR set up a country office to undertake human rights monitoring, training, capacity-building of local actors, and protection. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the OHCHR field office determined and administered grant funding and assessed national strengths and weakness in the promotion and protection of human rights. The United States worked to facilitate the faster deployment and greater efficacy of OHCHR human rights monitors in Darfur in 2005.

A key priority for the United States in 2005 was to improve on the credibility and utility of the UN human rights mechanisms; to do so, the United States advocated for the establishment of a smaller and more action-oriented Human Rights Council under the OHCHR to replace the Commission on Human Rights. The United States similarly argued that the OHCHR continued to be under-funded and pledged to fully support the High Commissioner’s plan for doubling its regular budget funding over five years

providing that the focus of the expansion was technical assistance in field operations. In the overall shift of emphasis from standard-setting to implementation of human rights, the United States views the OHCHR as the primary vehicle for achieving the gains from this re-direction to more technical assistance.

One of the most important mechanisms of the OHCHR is the use of “Special Procedures,” mechanisms to address either specific country situations or thematic issues. Examples of thematic procedures are special rapporteurs on freedom of opinion and expression and freedom of religion or belief. There are also country mandates, including, for example, rapporteurs, representatives, or independent experts dealing with Belarus, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Sudan, and Uzbekistan, among others. The special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus, Adrian Severin (Romania), expressed his deep concern for the Belarusian political prisoners and appealed to the government to take all necessary steps to secure their right to freedom of opinion and expression in accordance with fundamental principles as set forth in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The special rapporteur on Myanmar, Sergio Pinheiro (Brazil), expressed his deep regret over the prolonged house arrest of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been held hostage without charge or trial for over 10 years by the Government of Burma. The special rapporteur on the right to education, Vernor Munoz (Costa Rica), made a mission to Botswana September 26–October 4 to consider how Botswana was addressing the constraints to providing an education to all members of society.

From October 23 to November 8, the United States hosted the UN Independent Expert on the Question of Human Rights and Extreme Poverty, Mr. Arjun Sengupta (India). The purpose of the visit was to consider and learn from the experience of the United States in addressing the different aspects of extreme poverty, including issues of income poverty, human development poverty, and social exclusion. The Independent Expert will report on his mission to the Human Rights Council.

In addition, the United States cooperated with the OHCHR’s team of investigators studying the human rights situation of enemy combatants detained on the U.S. Naval Base in Guantanamo Bay. In October, the United States extended an invitation to three of the five independent experts conducting the investigation for a fact-finding mission. However, the investigators decided in November not to accept this invitation.

UN Democracy Fund

The UN Secretary-General officially launched the UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF) on July 4, 2005. The UN Democracy Fund is a U.S. priority that furthers U.S. interest by supporting the pluralism and openness that bolsters a vital democracy.

In conjunction with the September 2005 World Summit, President Bush and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh hosted a meeting of the heads of state of 30 democracies that were donors, potential donors, or

potential beneficiaries of the UN Democracy Fund. In an outpouring of support, the Democracy Fund received pledges or contributions totaling \$44 million from 19 member states in 2005. The United States and India each pledged to contribute \$10 million to the Fund during its first year of activity.

The United States worked closely with UNDEF's nascent staff in order to ensure that the focus of the Fund was to support the pro-democracy activities of civil society; one way in which UNDEF provided support was by helping to fill gaps in UN work to promote elections and good governance. This focus was reflected in UNDEF program concept papers that were developed with U.S. input and finalized by UNDEF staff in December 2005.

UNDEF's structure allowed for broad participation. The Board consisted of 17 members: six top donor nations (including the United States), five additional democratic states to ensure regional diversity, two nongovernmental organizations, three individuals selected by the UN Secretary-General for their expertise, and the head of the UN Fund for International Partnerships. A Program Consultative Group was established to provide advice and recommendations on all aspects of grant making. It is made up of seven representatives from UN elements most closely associated with democracy work (including the UN Development Program and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights). Additionally, the Donor Group was established as a regular mechanism to consult on programming with all donor nations.

Throughout 2005, the United States urged other democracies to support the Fund both financially and politically. The United States promoted the Fund with Secretariat officials, and with other countries in both senior-level and working-level meetings in Washington, New York, and the capitals of participants in the Community of Democracies.

Democracy Caucus

The United States believed that democratic nations must work more closely together in order to help the United Nations live up to its founding principles. Democratic nations share a common commitment to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms. The UN Democracy Caucus, a network of democratic nations working together, helped facilitate the advancement of the work of the United Nations in such areas as human rights, good governance, and the rule of law. The UN Democracy Caucus was composed of the approximately 124 countries that participated in the Community of Democracies. The Democracy Caucus was not intended to supplant long-standing regional or other groupings, but rather to provide an added mechanism for like-minded democratic nations to cooperate with one another. It served as a supplementary network that countries used to cooperate on resolutions and alternatives.

At the 2005 Commission on Human Rights (CHR) session, the United States increased the profile of the Democracy Caucus by holding a meeting of permanent representatives hosted by Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky for the express purpose of

discussing the caucus. During the CHR session, the United States co-tabled a resolution on democracy and the rule of law along with Romania, Peru, and Timor-Leste, which was cosponsored by a number of members of the Democracy Caucus. The United States also co-tabled, with the European Union, a resolution on the situation of human rights in Belarus. Chile, the chair of the Community of Democracies Convening Group, hosted meetings at the Ambassadorial level and issued positive statements on the Community's behalf during the session.

At the 2005 CHR, U.S. Head of Delegation Senator Rudy Boschwitz spoke at a meeting convened by Freedom House, the Democracy Coalition, and the Transnational Radical Party entitled "The UN Democracy Caucus: Its Role in Promoting and Protecting Human Rights." For additional information regarding support of nongovernmental organizations, see www.democracycaucus.net.

During the 2005 session of the General Assembly's Third Committee, Mali, the new Chair of the Convening Group of the Community of Democracies, convened a meeting of the Democracy Caucus. The United States sponsored a resolution, cosponsored by a number of members of the Democracy Caucus, on the role of the United Nations in supporting elections around the world. On November 15, 2005, the Community of Democracies, with the support of the United States, issued a statement encouraging the UN General Assembly to complete negotiations to determine the mandate, functions, size, composition, membership, working methods, and procedures of the new Human Rights Council. The statement welcomed the Outcome Document of the September 2005 UN World Summit and reaffirmed the commitment by the Community of Democracies to make the Human Rights Council a strong and credible body.

NGO Committee

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations (NGO Committee) is the UN body that adjudicates requests by nongovernmental organizations for accreditation to participate in ECOSOC and its subsidiaries' meetings. The 19 members of the Committee in 2005 were Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, France, Germany, India, Iran, Pakistan, Peru, Romania, Russia, Senegal, Sudan, Turkey, the United States, and Zimbabwe. The terms of Committee members are four years; the U.S. term will end on December 31, 2006.

At its regular session, which met January 5–14, 2005, the Committee had before it 144 applications for consultative status, including applications deferred from earlier sessions dating back to 1998. The Committee recommended 87 NGOs for consultative status with ECOSOC; 22 were U.S.-based NGOs. The Committee deferred 47 NGOs for further consideration, closed consideration of two NGOs, and reviewed 84 quadrennial reports.

U.S. delegates participated in discussions on both accreditation and deferral of applications to future sessions. In the case of the International Council of the Associations for Peace in the Continents (ASOPAZCO), Cuba

alleged the NGO had a “politicized profile” that was contrary to the UN Charter and to ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31, and requested that it submit a new application. ASOPAZCO is a Spanish NGO that was actively engaged in highlighting human rights abuses, particularly human rights abuses, that were committed by the Cuban government. Disagreeing with the Cuban description of the NGO, the United States engaged in efforts that resulted in ASOPAZCO’s not having to submit a new application, but rather submitting an updated application to be recognized as a consultative entity. The updated application will be reviewed at a future session.

The Committee also considered applications for consultative status from NGOs and other groups accredited to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002). The NGO Committee, in accordance with ECOSOC Decision 2004/212, decided that NGOs that had participated in the Summit that wished to participate in future sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development beyond the first two-year implementation cycle would be considered by the Committee following the rules and provisions stipulated in ECOSOC resolution 1996/31. The Committee recommended that seven NGOs be granted consultative status.

The NGO Committee held its resumed session May 5–20, 2005, in New York. The Committee reviewed 148 applications for consultative status including applications deferred from earlier sessions dating back to 1999. The Committee recommended 105 NGOs for status; 26 of these were U.S.-based NGOs. The Committee deferred 40 NGOs for further consideration, took note of 44 quadrennial reports, and upgraded the status of two NGOs.

The Committee also considered three complaints filed by member states. One of the complaints involved an NGO of particular interest to the United States, A Woman’s Voice International (AWVI). U.S. delegates fought vigorously to postpone action on a Chinese complaint against AWVI, which has cosponsored several parallel events at the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) to highlight the plight of North Korean women refugees in China and the Chinese government’s maltreatment of house church leaders. The Chinese complaint against AWVI stated that its delegate, the Reverend Bob Fu, activated a taser gun while giving a speech at the 61st CHR. The delegate did so to highlight his assertion of the kind of intimidating devices used by Chinese authorities against jailed advocates of religious freedom. China requested that AWVI be suspended for one year due to an illegal act, suggesting the use of the taser violated Swiss law and violation of UN regulations and procedures. U.S. delegates were unsuccessful in their efforts to convince fellow Committee members to allow AWVI more time to obtain the documentary evidence it needed to respond to the complaint, and AWVI was suspended for one year.

Humanitarian Affairs

World Food Program (WFP)

The World Food Program (WFP) is the UN's front-line agency in the fight against global hunger. In 2005, WFP distributed 4.2 million metric tons of food aid to 96.7 million people in 82 countries. James T. Morris (United States) became WFP's 10th Executive Director in April 2002. WFP's governing body, the Executive Board, has 36 members, including the United States.

WFP's Strategic Plan for 2004–2007 contains the following five strategic priorities: to save lives in crisis situations; to protect livelihoods in crisis situations and enhance resilience to shocks; to support improved nutrition and health status of children, mothers, and other vulnerable people; to support access to education and reduce gender disparity in access to education and skills training; and to help governments establish and manage national food-assistance programs.

In 2005, WFP helped the United States achieve its humanitarian and development goals, carrying out programs in Sudan, Niger, Guatemala, El Salvador, and several countries in South Asia, among other locations. Sudan was the largest single-country operation in 2005. In Darfur alone, WFP reached about 3.4 million people, despite enormous security constraints, with an operation totaling \$398.7 million. In Niger, WFP reached over 400,000 children, many acutely malnourished, and fed about 2.4 million people. WFP reached more than 1 million earthquake victims in South Asia, despite great logistical challenges, and simultaneously responded to the hurricanes in Guatemala and El Salvador.

In 2005, WFP had school feeding operations in 72 countries. Working with national governments, local authorities, and other aid groups, WFP used food to attract children to school in areas where enrollment ratios were lowest and where school feeding would have the greatest impact. WFP served as the implementing partner for projects funded through the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, which provides for donations of U.S. agricultural products, as well as financial and technical assistance for school feeding and maternal and child nutrition projects in low-income, food-deficit countries that are committed to universal education. For 2005, the McGovern-Dole Program made approximately \$91 million available to provide 118,000 tons of food to 3.4 million children in 15 developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. WFP is the implementing partner for McGovern-Dole programs in Bangladesh, Chad, Kenya, and Pakistan, which will reach over 1.7 million beneficiaries.

Throughout 2005, WFP continued to focus on ways to become more effective, efficient, and responsive. WFP continued to improve its internal business process review so that it can feed more people in crisis on time, strengthen its ability to assess vulnerability and emergency needs, and expand

its donor base by attracting new donors, including from the private sector. In 2005, contributions from 27 corporate and private donors totaled \$119.5 million in cash and in-kind gifts.

WFP increased its work with other UN organizations. In 2005, the UN Children's Fund remained WFP's major partner, collaborating on 140 projects in 68 countries, primarily in health, nutrition, and school feeding. The Food and Agriculture Organization was WFP's second most frequent partner, cooperating on 87 projects in 53 countries, primarily in agriculture and needs assessments. WFP also developed close working relations with the World Health Organization (on health, nutrition, and HIV/AIDS), and with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (to ensure the distribution of complete food rations for 2.1 million refugees, 8.3 million internally displaced persons, and 1.3 million returnees in 43 countries).

WFP's operational expenditures for 2005 were allocated among geographic regions as follows: Sub-Saharan Africa—75.1 percent; Asia—17.7 percent; Latin America and the Caribbean—2.9 percent; North Africa and the Middle East—2.8 percent; Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States region—1.4 percent.

WFP endeavored to raise funds for all approved programs in the 2004–2005 budget of \$4.8 billion. The budget, which was based on anticipated needs rather than on past commitments or projected donor funding, as previous budgets had been, was \$1.6 billion higher than the original budget estimate for 2002–2003. Because contributions to WFP are entirely voluntary, this increase did not affect the United States.

WFP operates exclusively from voluntary contributions of commodities and cash donated by governments and other donors. In 2005, 79 percent of its resources went to meet emergency and protracted relief humanitarian needs; nine percent went to development programs, and seven percent went to special operations. In 2005, WFP received \$2.8 billion in confirmed contributions. The United States remained WFP's largest donor, contributing over \$1.2 billion (44 percent). At the end of 2005, WFP had 10,523 employees with contracts of one year or longer, including 1,193 international professional staff, 116 of whom were U.S. citizens.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Established by the General Assembly in 1950, the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), based in Geneva, Switzerland, is mandated to coordinate international efforts to protect and provide durable solutions for the world's refugees. It also plays a key role in providing for refugees' basic needs, such as food, shelter, health care, and education. High Commissioner Ruud Lubbers (the Netherlands) resigned in February 2005. The UN General Assembly elected Antonio Guterres (Portugal) to replace Mr. Lubbers. Mr. Guterres took over on June 15.

By the end of 2005, the number of refugees of concern to UNHCR fell from the January 2004 level of nearly 9.2 million to 8.4 million, the lowest

total in almost a quarter of a century. However, the total number of “persons of concern” to UNHCR, which includes refugee returnees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons, and a portion of the world’s internally displaced persons (IDPs) increased from 19.5 million to 20.8 million persons, an increase of 13 percent. The increase was primarily a result of UNHCR caring for an increased number of IDPs, stateless persons, and others in a similar situation. UNHCR operated in 116 countries, with some 6,885 international and national employees carrying out these operations.

Afghan refugees and returnees remained a primary concern of UNHCR in 2005. In August 2005, Afghanistan acceded to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, paving the way for the establishment of a national legal framework for the protection of refugees and persons of concern in Afghanistan. By September 2005, nearly half a million Afghans had returned home, bringing the total to over 4 million since 2002. Due to continued repatriation, the number of Afghan refugees dropped by 21 percent during the year. UNHCR also continued to assist the over 1.7 million Afghan refugees remaining in neighboring India, Iran, and Pakistan.

UNHCR provided services to the more than 200,000 Sudanese refugees from Darfur who remained in Eastern Chad since 2003. In addition, UNHCR continued to assist another 380,000 Sudanese refugees in other countries who had fled their homes in earlier years. In Central Africa and the Great Lakes region, UNHCR facilitated the return of more than 106,000 refugees to their homes, primarily to Burundi, Angola, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. UNHCR was also actively involved in the return of refugees to Liberia; it assisted more than 38,000 Liberian refugees in 2005.

In the Balkans, UNHCR continued to promote solutions for the remaining displaced persons. In South Asia, over 100,000 Bhutanese refugees spent another year in Nepal as negotiations continued between Nepalese and Bhutanese officials. In Iraq, protection and safety issues continued to delay repatriation efforts, while in Colombia, UNHCR provided protection or a minimal level of assistance to some 2,000,000 IDPs.

The UNHCR Executive Committee (EXCOM), of which the United States is a member, approves UNHCR’s budget and provides policy guidance to the UNHCR. In October 2005, the EXCOM met to discuss protection and program and policy, management and oversight, finance, and human resource issues. The UNHCR made a strong plea for continued protection of refugees, and the approval for the creation of a post of Assistant High Commissioner for Protection to focus on advocacy with states on protection and durable solutions.

The U.S. delegation worked to advance a number of U.S. interests, including strengthening efforts by the international community to address protection and the pursuit of durable solutions for refugees; maximizing UNHCR’s operational performance; increasing coordination among UNHCR, its donors, refugee hosting countries, and UNHCR’s implementing and operational partners; and improving emergency preparedness and response

capacity. The United States also focused on security issues, the protection of refugee women and children, improving UNHCR's approach to durable solutions, management reform, emergency response and camp management, and clarifying UNHCR's role with IDPs.

In addition to the annual Executive Committee meeting, UNHCR holds three Standing Committee meetings each year. At all meetings and in bilateral negotiations with relevant governments, the United States reiterated the need for greater information sharing and transparency in areas of human resources, management, and operations. The United States requested greater efforts to integrate security considerations into all program operations, and called for increased donor support for the work of UNHCR.

The United Nations and its humanitarian partners in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) agreed in 2005 to a cluster lead approach to sectoral responsibilities in order to improve international response to humanitarian disasters, particularly for IDPs. Given its expertise with mass movements of people in crisis situations and the fact that the internally displaced are often in a "refugee-like situation," UNHCR has often provided protection and assistance, including return and reintegration when possible, to certain groups of IDPs. Following a review of the UN humanitarian response in 2005 and the introduction of the new cluster lead approach, UNHCR assumed responsibility for protection (including return), camp coordination, and emergency shelter under the UN system-wide response mechanism led by the Emergency Relief Coordinator. These new responsibilities will have serious financial implications for all UN agencies involved, including UNHCR. The U.S. Government has long advocated for improved predictability and accountability in the international humanitarian response to IDP situations. The United States fully endorsed and urged UN agencies to adhere to the principle that increasing responsibility for IDP needs will require additional funding in some key areas. While resources are one factor in improving IASC roles, it is vital that these attempts to fill gaps not divert attention or detract resources from agencies' core mandates and programs. The United States supports voluntary addressing of gaps and needs that had not been previously dealt with.

Since 2001, the relationship between the United States and UNHCR has been governed by a Framework of Cooperation, in which priorities and shared goals are laid out. In 2005, the Framework priorities included better protection of refugees, with special focus on women and children; the need to establish comprehensive management and oversight responsibilities that included strong accountability; development of a standardized registration system as a key protection and assistance tool; improved preparedness and emergency response capacity; and continued reliance on refugee resettlement as a key protection tool and durable solution. Other issues set forth by the United States included consistent use of internationally-accepted standards as the baseline for refugee care, reduction of morbidity and mortality rates among refugees, and improved standards of care in Africa.

U.S. personnel worked in concert with UNHCR field and headquarters staff to ensure UNHCR's effective and comprehensive execution of its mandate. The importance the United States places on refugee protection was reflected in its funding of UNHCR through its targeted support for the special needs of refugee women and refugee children, a Surge Protection project, and additional protection staffing.

In 2005, the UN regular budget paid for approximately 4 percent of the UNHCR annual budget of \$981 million; the remaining 96 percent came from voluntary sources. In addition, UNHCR issued supplemental appeals totaling some \$429 million for emergency assistance to Sudanese refugees in eastern Chad and some IDPs in Darfur; the return and reintegration of Sudanese refugees to Southern Sudan as well as Congolese refugees in the Democratic Republic of Congo; the Tsunami emergency; repatriation and reintegration of Burundian refugees; Western Sahara; the South Asia earthquake; and activities in Iraq. The United States donated some \$323 million, which constituted 22 percent of UNHCR's annual budget. Total income received by the agency in 2005 amounted to \$1.1 billion, a funding shortfall of \$290.3 million. As a result, some operations fell below accepted standards of care.

UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

Since 1950, the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has been providing education, health, and social services to Palestinian refugees and their descendants who reside in the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. These refugees now number over 4 million. UNRWA, which has improved its relations with Israel since former Deputy Commissioner-General Karen AbuZayd (United States) replaced Peter Hansen (Denmark) as Commissioner-General in late June 2005, has 27,069 employees, most of whom are teachers.

In 2005, UNRWA spent about 54 percent of its regular budget on education, including schools and teachers. Approximately 18.5 percent of its 2005 regular budget was devoted to health services, and another 9 percent on relief and social services. UNRWA spent nearly 31 percent of its budget in Gaza and 17.5 percent in the West Bank. The United States believes that UNRWA has done a good job under very difficult circumstances in providing for the basic human needs of Palestinian refugees.

In 2005, the United States continued to fund UNRWA's corps of independent inspectors, known as Operation Support Officers, established in 2002 at U.S. urging, to prevent the misuse of UNRWA facilities and report on violations of UNRWA's privileges and immunities. Also in 2005, UNRWA expanded its highly regarded tolerance education program from the West Bank and Gaza into Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. As a result, all 647 UNRWA schools participated in the agency's tolerance education, conflict resolution, and democracy training programs. Since Israel's disengagement from Gaza in mid-September 2005, UNRWA also played a leading role in reconstructing

shelters for displaced refugees whose homes were demolished during the second intifada. Following Hamas' unexpected victory in the January 25 Palestinian Legislative Council elections and the subsequent cutoff of international funding for the Palestinian Authority, Israel and the international community increasingly judged UNRWA as one of the most appropriate agencies for the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people. There was even discussion of expanding its mandate to cover the humanitarian needs of non-refugees.

On December 8, 2005, the General Assembly adopted a decision which expanded by 11 the membership of UNRWA's Advisory Commission and gave observer status to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the European Community, and the League of Arab States. The United States supported this outcome, arguing that it made sense for the PLO to participate on this Commission in the same manner that it does in the UN General Assembly. The expanded Advisory Commission resolved to adopt a work plan, tied to UNRWA's budgetary cycle, which would involve closer oversight of UNRWA's solicitations, expenditures, and operations.

The UN's Board of Auditors, Board of Examiners, and the Office of Internal Oversight Services scrutinize UNRWA's operations and fiscal practices to ensure accountability, and the most recent Board of Auditors audit (for 2005) revealed no major shortcomings in the integrity of UNRWA's operations. In 2005, in order to strengthen oversight, transparency, and the effectiveness of UNRWA's operations, the United States supported and contributed to UNRWA's Organizational Development initiative, aimed at improving strategic planning, resource management, and accountability.

In 2005, the United States contributed approximately \$108 million of UNRWA's total general and emergency budgets of \$547 million. This contribution included \$88 million to UNRWA's General Fund of \$361 million to provide relief and social services, health care, and education to Palestinian refugees. It also included \$20 million for food, shelter repair, health needs, and short-term employment in response to UNRWA's emergency appeal of \$186 million for the West Bank and Gaza. Finally, the contribution included a \$589,000 earmark for UNRWA's tolerance education program. Of the 132 professional UNRWA employees, 21 are American citizens.

Disaster and Humanitarian Relief Activities

In 2005, the United States and the United Nations cooperated extensively on disaster response and humanitarian relief activities. The United States provided leadership as a member of various UN agency governing bodies and support groups, including chairing the Donor Support Group for the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and advocating initiatives to reform the UN humanitarian system. The United States also provided substantial support to UN humanitarian operations throughout the world, including relief efforts in Sudan and the Horn of Africa.

Following the October 8 earthquake in South Asia, the United States provided substantial support to address the needs of those displaced by the

crisis, some of which was channeled through the United Nations. The United States responded to the UN World Food Program emergency and follow-on recovery operation with 7,270 metric tons of emergency food assistance, comprised of 6,790 metric tons of vegetable oil and 480 metric tons of wheat soy blend—with a total value of almost \$9 million. The United States also donated \$4 million to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to provide a secure camp environment for those displaced by the earthquake.

In January 2005, the United States attended the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan. The conference provided an opportunity for the international community to start discussions on new approaches to address disaster prevention, including the use of tsunami early warning systems on a global scale. The outcome document from the Kobe meeting, the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015, was developed to strengthen capacity and incorporate disaster risk reduction into sustainable development policies and planning, as well as into the implementation of emergency preparedness, response, and recovery programs. The United States and the United Nations collaborated closely to develop ideas designed to enhance the efficiency of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), housed within the office of the Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. With the ISDR, the United States and the United Nations worked to persuade nations to develop their domestic coordination and engagement of civil society on disaster preparedness.

The United States actively engaged the United Nations and its member states on a wide range of humanitarian and disaster related resolutions in the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The United States supported resolutions on improving the ISDR; strengthening UN coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance; improving the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of UN personnel; and several country-specific resolutions pertaining to humanitarian situations.

United States Participation in the United Nations—2005