



PROJECT
on **Middle East**
Democracy

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**Young Global Leaders Forum:
Democratic Development in the
Middle East and North Africa**

**Conference Representatives Report
U.S. Advocacy and Leadership Program**

Washington, D.C.
July 28-30, 2008

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Preface from the Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED) and Americans for Informed Democracy (AID)

Supporting the emergence of democracies in the Middle East means first and foremost listening to democratic reformers in the region. The *supply* of U.S. assistance and diplomatic support is important, but so is the *demand*: U.S. policymakers must pay close attention to the kinds of policies local activists want to see out of Washington. And their perspectives are changing – fast.

In the spring of 2008, the Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED) and Americans for Informed Democracy (AID) held their second annual series of Young Global Leaders Forums in Morocco, Egypt, and Jordan. At these conferences, 138 Middle Eastern and American participants jointly drafted, amended, and ratified policy recommendations on how to improve American’s impact on reform in the Middle East.

From July 28-30, we were honored to host six representatives elected by the conference participants to act as “voices” for the recommendations. These representatives came to Washington to present their conference policy recommendations to government officials, Capitol Hill staffers, and development organization leaders.

The views of these young people are important because of *what* they represent – a thoughtful guide for U.S. policymakers at a time when recent efforts have been stymied and U.S. credibility is low. As their policy recommendations indicate, young people in the Middle East and the U.S. support greater engagement, including increased people-to-people exchange and a heightened focus on the importance of free and independent media. Meanwhile, conference participants noted the sharply negative effects of U.S. policies toward Iraq, Iran, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

These recommendations are also important because of *who* they represent. Today, roughly two-thirds of all people living in the Middle East are below the age of 30. If governments cannot respond to that generation of young people, the future of the region is bleak. On the other hand, if state institutions can be reformed in such a way as to harness the energy and enthusiasm of the region’s youth, they have the power to generate a vibrant, productive, and democratic Middle East.

We invite you to study the recommendations from each of the three conferences. These outstanding young leaders have done U.S. policymakers a dramatic service by outlining what the next generation wishes to see from U.S. and regional leaders in their efforts to encourage reform. It behooves us all to listen carefully to their advice.

Andrew Albertson
Executive Director
Project on Middle East Democracy

Marceline White
President
Americans for Informed Democracy

Message from the Conference Representatives

As elected delegates from Global Leaders Forums held this spring in Morocco, Egypt, and Jordan, we represent a diverse group of 138 young American and Middle Eastern leaders who came together to discuss U.S. policy in the Middle East, and the challenge of encouraging democratic development in the Middle East and North Africa. We share a common conviction that the U.S. has a positive role to play in supporting political reforms, the democratic process, and the emergence of vibrant civil societies in the Middle East. However, we feel strongly that the U.S. must sharply reform its policies in the region and reconceptualize its approach to supporting democracy, if it is to have a more constructive impact on democratic development.

“[T]he U.S. must sharply reform its policies in the region and reconceptualize its approach to supporting democracy....”

This is a moment of great challenge for the Middle East. In their current form, some existing governments are unwilling or unable to respond to their people and to meet their basic economic needs. Elections have been deeply problematic, and have failed to create government accountability or spur reform. Meanwhile, the cost of basic goods, like gas and bread, is rising sharply. Broad swaths of populations are disenchanted with formal politics. Such an environment makes religious fundamentalism and radicalism increasingly likely.

Young people – representing 60% of Middle Eastern societies, and the future leaders of the region – represent a critical part of the solution, but they face serious obstacles that inhibit their capacity to engage in political debates.

- First, young people are frustrated and mistrustful of government, but many have also become dissatisfied with opposition parties.
- Second, dialogue about political issues is also stymied. Even as new communications technologies proliferate, young people are in effect prohibited from communicating about crucial matters. Online activists are intimidated or jailed, discouraging free speech. People are afraid to discuss politics, and so cannot advance debates, learn from each other, or arrive at consensus opinions. This challenge exacerbates other social divides – such as that between socioeconomic classes.
- Third, there is a lack of leadership, and an absence of viable and valued political projects. People demand change, but they do not know where to go. In such a context, a host of negative responses are made likely, including bitter resignation, emigration, or radicalization.

U.S. democracy assistance programs have had a positive impact and are appreciated, but a broader set of U.S. policies in the Middle East have made reforms more difficult. After 9/11, the U.S. turned its attention to the Middle East and signaled a desire to partner with

Middle Eastern societies to develop their countries and avert the spread of radicalism. Funding for pro-democracy programs, such as USAID, MEPI, Amideast, NDI, and IRI are good programs. Likewise, efforts to help with education and women's health have been much appreciated. But these have been overshadowed by negative U.S. policies. The invasion of Iraq and U.S. unconditional support for Israel made reform efforts more difficult, because they took the people's attention away from domestic reforms. At the same time, with the invasion of Iraq, much of what Middle Easterners admired about the U.S. evaporated. The president's rhetoric, tied to that war, led to disenchantment with democracy.

Instead of pushing Middle Eastern countries to transform quickly into American-style democracies, the U.S. should adopt a new approach to supporting reform in the region. Such an approach would recognize:

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- First, that issues of political reform are closely linked to other challenges the region faces, including ending the Arab-Israeli conflict, alleviating poverty, enhancing public health and education systems, meeting the needs of refugees, and reducing the threat of conflict. Efforts to support the emergence of representative governance should go side-by-side with efforts to resolve these other challenges.
- Second, it would acknowledge the need to approach the region as a willing partner, rather than a demanding power.
- Third, it would state clearly that only peaceful means are legitimate and effective for supporting democracy.
- Fourth, it would emphasize the role of constructive people-to-people dialogue, and cultural and educational exchange, for fostering better policy solutions and diverse partnerships for promoting reforms.
- Fifth, it would recognize the importance of media, including online media, for constructive public dialogue, and would encourage the emergence of free media through assistance programs, skill-building, and public support for reforms.

We believe it is not too late to salvage a productive role for the U.S. in regional reform efforts, but that can only be done in partnership with the region's people. The first step is listening to Middle Easterners' policy and reform priorities. Conferences between youth to discuss urgent issues, like this conference, are important ways to amplify Middle Easterners' voices. Dialogue between the two sides also helps Americans better understand the needs of Middle Easterners while bridging cultural and religious gaps and highlighting common priorities in the future of the U.S.-Middle East relationship.

By developing and ratifying these recommendations, and traveling to Washington to discuss them with government officials, we are taking the initial steps to establish a more respectful and fruitful dialogue about Middle East political reform and the U.S. role in it.

Sara Ait Imoudden
Rabat conference representative

Erika Spaet
Rabat conference representative

Tharwat Alazab
Amman conference representative

Emily Crawford
Amman conference representative

Mohamed Sabbah
Cairo conference representative

Dina Elshinnawi
Cairo conference representative



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Representatives of the Young Global Leaders Forums

Erika Spaet (American representative of the Rabat conference)

Erika will be a senior at Ithaca College in Ithaca, New York, this upcoming fall where she will graduate in June 2009 with degrees in both journalism and politics. While at school, Erika has used much of her time to be involved in campus media and has reported and anchored for a county-wide live news broadcast and written for campus magazines. However, she has found her true niche in the volunteer work she does both on campus and in the community, directing a local political talk-show and organizing service trips for her fellow classmates. Erika has grown up with a love of travel and has spent several years in Switzerland and continental Europe, a semester in Rabat, Morocco, and several summer weeks doing volunteer work in the Dominican Republic and Guatemala. After graduation, Erika hopes to pursue a career in international policy work.



Sara Ait Imoudden (Moroccan representative of the Rabat conference)

Sara is a Masters candidate at Al Akhawayn University in Morocco, majoring in International Studies and Diplomacy in the Middle East and North Africa region. Currently, she is working on finishing her thesis entitled “Promoting Participatory Approach Technique to Social Development in Rural Morocco: The Case of Dayet Ifrah”. Sara’s undergraduate studies culminated in a Bachelor of Arts degree on International Cooperation and Development, with a focus on Women Studies and Development in the Arab world. During these studies, she took part in a student exchange program at Haverford College, where she was often asked to talk about religion, women status and political status in Morocco; served as the Moroccan delegate to the “Education without Borders” international student conference in Abu-Dhabi; and participated in the 44th International Achievement Summit held in New York.



Mohamed Sabbah (Egyptian representative of the Cairo conference)

Mohamed Sabbah is a recent graduate of the College of Economics and Political Science at Cairo University and currently holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science with a minor in Economics. During his studies, Mohamed interned at the Al-Ahram

Center for Political and Strategic Studies in Cairo, a think tank investigating foreign policy and security issues. In 2006, under a program sponsored by The American Council of Young Political Leaders, Mohamed traveled to Washington, visiting different organizations including the International Republican Institute, the Middle East Institute, The Center for the Study of the Presidency, and the Arab-American Institute. Mohamed furthered this experience with an internship at the office of former Congressman Mr. Joel Hefley (R-CO). Mohamed has participated in such simulations as the Cairo International Model Arab League; the Cairo International Model United Nations; the International Model of European Union; the Model of Organization of Islamic Conference; and the Model American Congress at both the American University in Cairo, and Cairo University. Mohamed also participated in POMED/AID's 2007 *Bringing the World Home* conferences. Post-graduation Mohamed is currently anticipating a position with the Egyptian Foreign Service.



Dina Elshinnawi (American representative of the Cairo conference)

Dina Elshinnawi is a Master's student at the London School of Economics and Political Science, studying Media and Communications, and expects to complete her program in September 2008. She has a Bachelor of Arts from George Mason University in Government and International Politics. Dina's most recent employment was at *Air Force Magazine* in Arlington, Virginia, where she held the position of editorial associate. Prior to her employment at *Air Force Magazine*, Dina worked at a law firm in Maryland as a Legal Assistant.



Dina has traveled extensively in her life on five continents; some of her favorite spots are Gold Coast, Australia, Dubai, UAE, Marbella, Spain, and Vienna, Austria. She hopes to graduate this year and continue in the field of journalism with an emphasis on cultural topics, ranging from food and travel to religion and history. Dina was born in Washington, DC, and has lived in Northern Virginia all her life. Her parents are of Egyptian descent.

Tharwat Alazab (Jordanian representative of the Amman conference)

Tharwat has worked with USAID's Project ERfKE Support Project (ESP)-Shorouq since September 2007 as an administrator and financial assistant. Tharwat received Bachelor of Arts degree in 2006 in English literature, where she represented her university in 2006 while attending a Leadership Course with the United Nations University in Amman, Jordan. Before joining USAID, Tharwat worked as an environmental Education Officer for the Jordan Society for Sustainable Development and as an assistant at Aqaba Development Corporation. For the past three years, Tharwat has been a volunteer with the institute Quest Scope for at-risk children. She is also a member of the "We Are All Jordan" group for South Jordan. Tharwat has also visited the United States in a student exchange program in 2005, visiting DC, Texas, Seattle, and New York. As one of the students in an



exchange program titled, “Survival in Extreme Conditions”, Tharwat most recently visited Slovenia.

Emily Crawford (American representative of the Amman conference)

Emily Crawford graduated from the Whitehead School at Seton Hall University in 2007 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Diplomacy and International Relations and a minor in German language. Having completed a semester abroad titled "Jordan: Modernization and Social Change" through the School for International Training in the Fall of 2006, she returned to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan after graduation. Emily is currently employed by the British Council and the Greek Orthodox School system in the semi-rural Madaba area as an English teacher for students of all ages. Past work experiences in Jordan include working in an outsourcing call center, teaching conversational English for Jordanian government employees at the National Training Center, assisting the American NGO Voices for Creative Nonviolence (VCNV) in collecting stories from Iraqi refugee families living in Amman, and she has contributed several feature articles to local English-language magazines on a freelance basis. She is especially interested in civil society and organizational studies and interfaith dialog initiatives and hopes to continue her residency abroad for the 2008-2009 academic year before pursuing graduate studies in International Relations and Sociology.



U.S. Advocacy and Leadership Program Schedule

Monday, July 28

- Tour of Capitol & Office buildings, given by staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee
- Meeting with Office of Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)
- Meeting with staff, House Committee on Foreign Affairs
- Meeting with **Erica J. Barks-Ruggles**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor
- Meeting with **Kent Patton**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
- Meeting with Policy Planning staff, U.S. Department of State
- Meeting with **David McCloud**, Director of Middle East Affairs office, USAID
- Roundtable Discussion with Young Professionals in Foreign Policy (YFPF)

Tuesday, July 29

- Meeting at the National Democratic Institute
- Panel Discussion, Middle East Institute, moderated by **Ambassador Wendy J. Chamberlin**, President, Middle East Institute
- Meeting at Freedom House
- Meeting with foreign policy staff, John McCain 2008 Presidential Campaign

Wednesday, July 30

- Meeting with Office of Senator Harry Reid (D-NV), Majority Leader
- Meeting with Office of Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL), Assistant Majority Leader
- Meeting with Office of Congressman Trent Franks (R-AZ)
- Meeting with foreign policy staff, Obama for America 2008 Presidential Campaign

- Meeting with staff of Senate Foreign Relations Committee
- Meeting with foreign policy staff, Office of Senator Russ Feingold (D-WI)

U.S. Advocacy and Leadership Program Report

At conferences in Morocco, Egypt and Jordan, the American and Middle Eastern participants elected 6 representatives to serve as the participants' "voices." In the subsequent program in Washington, DC, the representatives acted as advocates for the policy recommendations that the participants approved in the conferences. To support the representatives' advocacy, POMED and AID organized several off-the-record discussions with Congressional staff, State Department and USAID officials, and nonprofit professionals, listed in the schedule above. In addition, POMED and AID organized a roundtable discussion with the Young Professionals in Foreign Policy and a public panel discussion at the Middle East Institute. Notes from those two events are included below.

Roundtable Discussion with Young Professionals in Foreign Policy (YFPF)

David DeBartolo, Director of Dialogue Programs at POMED, gave a brief introduction of the regional conferences, policy recommendations and representatives. The roundtable opened with the question: "How can the U.S. support youth-based initiatives?"

Erika Spaet responded by suggesting that the U.S. support more youth-focused conferences, try to create interest for youth groups, support age-based quotas in the government, create additional youth centers, increase opportunities for youth to become more involved in an official capacity, and promote education.



Sara Ait Imoudden discussed current U.S. programs in the region and explained that USAID, MEPI, and NDI, among others, are effective at what they do. An increase in funding to these programs will allow them to be even more effective. She also highlighted that projects that deal with new internet media are of most benefit to Morocco and the region. An example of such program could be a U.S.-Morocco joint initiative promoting journalism and media proficiency.

Dina Elshinnawi addressed how the U.S. communicates its values. She explained the current programs *Radio SAWA* and *Al Hurra* that attempt to influence thought by presenting serious news and current events issues. These programs are especially important to counterbalance the dominance of MTV and other popular culture programming. Another way to allow more "serious" values to grow is to focus U.S. efforts addressing censorship in regional media, mainly new media, which have provided the voiceless with a way to be heard.

Mohamed Sabbah suggested that in a region of the world where two-thirds of the population is under 30 years of age, the U.S. needs to focus its efforts on helping youth positively engage themselves in civic activism. Sabbah also suggested that the U.S. open talks with Hamas, Iran, and the Muslim Brotherhood, with Egypt adopting the role of mediator.

Tharwat Alazab also emphasized the need to focus on youth. She pointed to the need for the U.S. government to increase funding for cross-cultural exchange programs, citing the parallel need for such programs among Iraqi refugees and Jordanians. She suggested that the U.S. can lessen the detrimental impacts of Iraqi refugees on Jordan by promoting academic exchange programs with Iraqi refugees and initiating a census to provide an accurate estimate of the number of Iraqi refugees in neighboring states.

In the question and answer session, the first questioner asked the Middle Eastern representatives what their countries hoped to see in a new U.S. administration. Tharwat Alazab explained that, in her view, no one in Jordan expects anything. People wonder about Obama's chances of becoming president, and if his administration will actively pursue the stabilization of Arab/Israeli relations and the end of the Iraq war.



Mohamed Sabbah explained that people he has encountered are very interested and are paying a lot of attention to the U.S. presidential elections. He suggested that there is a hope that the next president would pursue more just, even-handed policies in the region.

The second questioner asked how Islam can be positively incorporated into the policy recommendations. Mohamed Sabbah explained that the U.S. should use its leverage to encourage a wider debate between secular and Islamist parties. Sara Ait Imoudden pointed out that in the Arab world the most successful parties are often Islamist.

Torie Partridge, Chair of the Young Professionals in Foreign Policy Middle East Discussion Group, offered the final comments, explaining that the U.S. needs a more nuanced approach to distinguish between Islamic fundamentalism and peaceful Islamic parties. She stated that Middle Eastern countries do not need U.S.-style democracy, and the U.S. should not advocate an American democracy. The U.S. can help along reform in these countries by simply pushing the right diplomatic buttons. U.S. and MENA countries will reach democracy differently; each will follow their own path of reform.

Middle East Institute: Recommendations from the Region

The public event titled *Middle East Reform: Recommendations from the Region* was held at the Middle East Institute (MEI). The event was moderated by **Ambassador Wendy Chamberlin**, President of the Middle East Institute.



Amb. Chamberlin, in her opening remarks, discussed how youth represent two-thirds of the population under the age of 30 in the MENA region. What makes the event and the recommendations so unique is that they were created and voted on by youth, unlike many other reports and studies that are published. She also outlined the three main points that she took from the conference policy recommendations as a whole:

- Political reform is very closely connected to other challenges in the region.
- A call for a more of a willing partner, looking for win-win situations rather than one-sided, hegemonic displays of power.
- The U.S. should focus on soft power diplomacy, which would have a greater impact rather than boots on the ground.

Erika Spaet explained that at the Morocco conference, one of the main topics raised by the participants was how to get more youth involved in their governments. One of the main solutions discussed by the participants was that the government set an age-based youth quota for each of the 33 parties in Morocco. This in turn results in the idea within Moroccan society that involvement in the political sphere is not simply a hobby, but can be a vocation. Another idea from the Morocco conference was to incorporate more civil education into the educational curriculum.



Sara Ait Imoudden discussed new media, one of the key points discussed at the Morocco conference. Blogging and online journalism allow people to communicate their ideas and voice their opinion freely. She explained that many blogs are published in three

languages (Arabic, French and English), and that recently, there has also been a rise in Berber blogs. She elaborated that the popular blogs are in French, the most critical ones are in Arabic, and the more liberal ones are in English. Ait Imoudden also discussed the importance of civil society in the political development of Morocco, suggesting that more funding go to this area. She also encouraged more cooperation between American and Moroccan civil society actors.

Dina Elshinnawi suggested that, acknowledging the long-standing relationship between the U.S. and Egypt, the focus of U.S. policy should be in future leadership, rather than the autocratic leader that has been in place for the past 25 years.

Elshinnawi provided a counter-argument to the statement that democracy might allow Islamic parties to take control. She suggested that it is a strategic imperative for the U.S. to help the Arab world reach its aspirations of freedom, democracy and economic opportunities. Some of the ways that the U.S. can accomplish such goals include engaging actors such as Hamas and Iran, using foreign policy muscle to request the Egyptian government to open up the space of debate and political access for such groups as the Muslim Brotherhood, and, finally, that the U.S. reduce its military foreign aid and increase its economic aid to Egypt.

Mohamed Sabbah discussed Egypt's role in the Arab world. He points out that, in the opinion of many Egyptians, their country's leadership in the Arab world has diminished. In 1952, Egypt started an independence movement that ushered in independence from England and was used by other Arab countries as an example to pursue autonomy. Today, however, he explained that the Egyptian decline is evident. For example, the current visit by Senator Barack Obama to the Middle East overlooked Egypt. Sabbah also explained that a main conference recommendation directed the U.S. to open the possibility of dialogue with Hamas and Iran.

Tharwat Alazab discussed one of the main themes of the Jordan conference: an increase in cultural and scholar exchange programs. She added that there should be many more such programs, citing the Fulbright program, and that there should be more opportunities for Arab students to enter U.S. institutes.

Alazab voiced one of the main concerns and heated topics of the conference: the Iraqi refugees' situation. She explains that Jordanians are extremely worried about the current situation, and fear a strain on social resources and a competitive job market that would follow the naturalization of large numbers of Iraqi refugees. Iraqis have never needed a visa to come to Jordan, but now, with the conflict in Iraq and an influx of refugees, a system meant to limit the numbers of Iraqi refugees has been put in place.



Alazab concluded her comments by explaining that the continuous, unconditional support of Israel, the current conflict in Iraq, and the continuing Israeli-Arab conflict made U.S. foreign policy unappealing, tarnishing its image to the Arab world.

Media Coverage

Middle East Reform: Recommendations from the Region was covered by Voice of America's reporter Mohamed Elshinnawi, who interviewed the 6 representatives as well as staff members of POMED and AID. The article along with an audio report can be found online at, <http://www.voanews.com/english/NewsAnalysis/2008-08-06-voa2.cfm>



The event was also covered by Al Hurra TV, which videotaped the discussions and interviewed the representatives.



“Find Your Voice” A Cross-Cultural Forum on Political Participation and Civic Activism

Rabat, Morocco
April 25-26, 2008

Conference Overview

On April 25-26, 2008, 25 American and 25 Moroccan students and young professionals came together in Rabat to explore pathways to youth empowerment through political participation, civil society activism, media and blogging. The conference was organized by Americans for Informed Democracy (AID), the Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED), and the *Institut National de la Jeunesse et la Démocratie* (INJD), an initiative under the Moroccan Ministry of Youth and Sports.

The two-day conference featured four panels which covered opportunities for youth in political parties, the role of civil society, media and democracy, and expression through blogging and citizen journalism. Each panel was followed by a series of small discussion groups in English, French and Arabic in which participants shared their ideas on ways to mobilize youth for change in both the U.S. and Morocco. Through these exchanges, participants formed policy recommendations which they ratified at the end of the conference.

Conference speakers represented a wide array of backgrounds; most were accomplished young activists in their respective fields. Among them were Scott Goodstein, the director of New Media for presidential candidate Barack Obama; Mbarka Bouaida, the youngest female member of the Moroccan Parliament; Houda Filali-Ansary, political correspondent for *La Vie Eco*; David Ranz, Press Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Rabat; Mark Parkison, Team Leader for Democracy and Governance programs at USAID Morocco; Gérard Latulippe, Representative of the Maghreb for the National Democratic Institute (NDI); and Sarah Zaimi, a blogger with the Middle East Youth Initiative.

The Moroccan participants included students, journalists and young professionals as well as emerging leaders in political parties. The Moroccans and Americans were treated to a host of social activities, including a reception sponsored by the Political Section of the U.S. Embassy. These interactions formed the basis for participants to work together in a series of follow-up activities planned for the coming months, including op-ed exchanges, blogging workshops, and mobilization campaigns. In addition, one American participant and one Moroccan participant were selected to present the conference's policy recommendations to legislators, policymakers and academics in Washington, D.C.

The conference received strong press coverage, appearing on the evening news program of State-run RTM television (Channel 1), as well as RTM radio during the day. Al Jazeera television also carried a 5-minute program on the conference Sunday, April 27, in the afternoon and during the evening Maghreb News Bulletin.

“Find Your Voice” Policy Recommendations

Rabat, Morocco
April 25-26, 2008

- 1) The Moroccan government should create an official space for youth to congregate and formulate unified measures that can be addressed and considered in the government, such as an elected non-governmental national youth council.
- 2) The Moroccan government should reform the political party law to increase decision-making abilities of youth in political parties. For example, a youth quota should be established.
- 3) The Moroccan government and NGOs should create educational programs that teach young people Moroccan laws, the importance of civic participation, and opportunities to participate in civil society.
 - a. Examples include online, televised, and mandated in-school civic education programs for primary through secondary school levels.
 - b. Promote and increase communication between schools and civil society actors and organize simulations and training sessions on rights and duties.
- 4) Moroccan political parties should promote and increase internship opportunities for youth to deepen their experience with party operations and the political system.
- 5) The Moroccan government should provide incentives for civic participation, including creating grants at the university level to encourage involvement in civil society projects and instituting a community service requirement as part of the university curriculum.
- 6) The U.S. government should increase funding to support Moroccan university students' participation in civil society programs.
- 7) The Moroccan government and political parties should promote debates and town hall meetings between party leaders and constituents, to ensure an ongoing dialogue.
- 8) The Moroccan government should increase collaboration between local associations and local authorities.
- 9) The Moroccan government and media bodies should clarify and publicize media laws and journalism ethics.
 - a. Inform the people of their right to public information
 - b. Publicize Moroccan media law, including rights of journalists
 - c. Promote and stress the importance of international media ethics
 - d. Extend above media laws and ethics to new media
- 10) We applaud the U.S. efforts to support independent Moroccan media. We think the U.S. government should continue to provide funding to train Moroccans interested in media/journalism, including:
 - a. International exchange programs
 - b. Trainings in Morocco and in the U.S.
 - c. Scholarships to attend journalism schools, workshops, or take part in internships

- d. Focus on independent journalists engaging in new media.
- 11) Moroccan media bodies should provide more funding to train Moroccans interested in media/journalism, including:
 - a. More international exchange programs
 - b. Grants to journalists and independent media for education, training, and internships
 - 12) The Moroccan government and civil society should increase funding for and training on computer and media literacy to promote civic and political participation. These trainings could be conducted via:
 - a. Internet cafes
 - b. Local NGOs and associations
 - c. Youth centers
 - d. TV programs
 - e. Primary and secondary school programs
 - 13) Moroccan and international NGOs in Morocco should conduct a comparative study to learn from the experiences of foreign governments how they have developed laws to address the expansion of the internet, with the purpose of using the study as an educational tool at the secondary school and university level.

Beyond Borders: An Egyptian-American Dialogue

Cairo, Egypt
May 2-3, 2008

Conference Overview

The *Beyond Borders: An Egyptian-American Dialogue* conference was held on May 2nd and 3rd, 2008 with the participation of 27 Egyptians and 21 Americans. The conference was organized by The Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED), Americans for Informed Democracy (AID), the American Studies Center at the American University in Cairo, and the Annual Conference for Engineering Students (ACES) at Ain Shams University.

Conference speakers represented a diverse range of fields, including professors at Egyptian universities, researchers at local think-tanks, journalists, and civil society activists. Among them were Heba Saleh, BBC Correspondent based in Cairo; John Groarke, Deputy Mission Director of USAID in Egypt; Ethar El-Katatney, staff writer at *Egypt Today* and *Business Today*; Dina Shehata, researcher at Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies and Special Adviser for the Muslim World Initiative at the United States Institute of Peace; Ashraf Swelam, Executive Director of Egypt's International Economic Forum (EIEF); Ahmed Samih, Director of Andalus Institute for Tolerance and Anti-Violence Studies; and Lucas Welch, president and founder of Soliya (www.soliya.net).

The participants of *Beyond Borders* came from a wide variety of backgrounds, including students from Ain Shams University, Al Azhar University, and the London School of Economics. The participants also included Fulbright Fellows, civil society activists, journalists, young professionals, and a district attorney from the Egyptian Ministry of Justice. The participants conducted in-depth small group discussions where they explored the mutual misconceptions between Egyptians and Americans, which resulted in a lively but friendly debate. The participants also enjoyed a dinner on the Nile sponsored by the American Studies Center.

The conference was covered by the Euro-Arab Press (www.eapress.eu) and the popular social-political magazine, *Rose Al Youssef*, whose reporters interviewed conference participants and engaged in the dialogue activities. Blog posts on the conference were written in AlJazeeraTalk.net.

“Beyond Borders” Policy Recommendations

Cairo, Egypt
May 2-3, 2008

Media and Social Activism

- 1) Encourage non-governmental organizations in Egypt to provide training on how to use media for advocacy.
- 2) Recommend that the U.S. apply pressure on the Egyptian government to cease censoring Egyptian domestic media, including the banning and blocking of internet sites and journalists’ access to information.
- 3) Encourage Egyptian state institutions to provide widespread training in technological literacy.
- 4) Encourage the creation of programming to engage illiterate Egyptians with new types of media and increase their ability to access a range of viewpoints.
- 5) Encourage the creation of popular televised media programs that accurately represents a range of Arab lifestyles to American audiences.

Dialogue of Civilizations

- 6) Increase federal funding for domestic public diplomacy tours in rural, suburban and urban areas as well as high schools in the U.S. Tour delegations will be comprised of American and Arab delegates from diverse national, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.
- 7) Cultural awareness workshops for policy makers in the U.S. focusing on cultural diversity in the Middle East.
- 8) U.S. schools should offer Arabic as a "second language" choice in American public elementary, middle, and high schools. Arabic programs shall be optional and shall be supported by separate federal funding unrelated to any other source of funding, including other federal funds. Therefore, it will be specifically earmarked for Arabic only and may not be used for any other program. Studying the language will help Americans understand more about Egyptian and Arab culture and subsequently eliminate the negative stereotypes Americans have about Egyptians.
- 9) Invest more money and energy to support translation because it is the first step towards establishing a successful and strong dialogue between Egyptians and Americans.
- 10) Create an academic dialogue between professors and students in both Egypt and the U.S.
- 11) Recommend that the U.S. and Egyptian governments and civil society actors support more cross-cultural exchange programs, especially at the high school and university level.
- 12) Arabs in the U.S. need to establish organizations to represent themselves to the American society in a more organized way.
- 13) Encourage the Arab world, especially wealthy Arab states to establish Arab cultural centers in the U.S. that are publicly accessible and represent the full spectrum of the Arab experience.

- 14) Encourage dialogue between Jewish and Muslim Americans, especially in regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- 15) Highlight the importance of strengthening Arab-American lobby groups.

Egypt's Role in the Arab World

- 16) Recommend that the United States encourage Egypt to become more involved in current regional crises such as Darfur and Iraq while recognizing that the pursuit of joint US-Egyptian policies will benefit both parties. We also recommend that Egypt find a greater balance between drawing attention to both domestic and foreign policies.
- 17) The US should open diplomatic talks with Islamic groups like Hamas and with countries like Iran to allow for credible negotiations between all sides.
- 18) Egypt should make use of its role as a mediator in the peace process between Palestinians and Israel.

U.S. Foreign Aid to Egypt

- 19) Encourage the implementation of labor reforms including raising the salary of Egyptian governmental employees to a level sufficient to meet basic needs, as much as possible.
- 20) Encourage U.S. foreign aid to Egyptian society to support the establishment of local non-governmental organizations (working on election transparency, freedom of expression, political participation and, more generally, establishing NGOs for human rights).
- 21) Recommend that the U.S. encourage the Egyptian Ministry of Education to reform the Egyptian education system so that it encourages critical-thinking and problem solving skills, productive student-professor dialogue, and the utilization of modern technology in the classroom.
- 22) Encourage the full reinstatement of economic and social funding by USAID with
 - a. A larger portion of the funds going directly to non-governmental organizations instead of official agencies and/or government institutions.
 - b. Removal of earmarks and tied funding for USAID development projects.
 - c. Redirection of funds to projects based on community-identified needs as determined by research performed by these same non-governmental organizations to assist projects that are addressing community identified needs, rather than USAID determined projects.
 - d. Specific allocation of funds to projects directed at public education, local governance, healthcare, and poverty reduction in Egypt.

“We Are Connected, But Are We Communicating?”
American Foreign Policy and Jordanian Society: A Dialogue

Amman, Jordan
May 29 - 31, 2008

Conference Overview

Twenty-two Americans, 16 Jordanians, and two Iraqis gathered from May 29-31, 2008 in Amman to attend the conference “We Are Connected, But Are We Communicating? American Foreign Policy and Jordanian Society: A Dialogue.” The conference was organized by Americans for Informed Democracy (AID) and the Project On Middle East Democracy (POMED), in cooperation with Leaders of Tomorrow (LoT) and the Center for Strategic Studies (CSS). The participants came from a variety of backgrounds and professions, including social and political scientists, doctors, engineers, and language professionals and students.

The conference was web-casted live by Jordan Days (www.jordandays.com), as well as an online television station, Press TV. A reporter from the Jordan Times (www.jordantimes.com) was present throughout the conference.

Over the course of three days, the participants listened to and engaged with a diverse group of speakers who were experts in their respective fields. The panels featured Osama Alshurafa, Director of Qasid Institute for Classical and Modern Standard Arabic; Zainab Al-Suwaij, Executive Director, American Islamic Congress; Professor Marc Lynch, from the Elliot School for International Affairs at George Washington University; Esra’a Al-Shafei, Director of Mideast Youth; Kathryn Stevens, from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID); and others. The participants then developed and ratified policy recommendations in small group discussions. Forty recommendations were initially developed, narrowed down to 19 and ratified.

“We Are Connected, But Are We Communicating?” Policy Recommendations

Amman, Jordan
May 29-31, 2008

- 1) The U.S. Department of State should double funding for international exchange programs between Jordanians and Americans, earmarking funds specifically for middle school, high school, and university levels. These international educational exchanges should include summer internships, semesters abroad, academic fellowships, and other related programs.
- 2) The U.S. Department of State should publicize funds available for international exchange in the pursuit of increasing socioeconomic diversity in those programs. Such an effort should include a media campaign specifically targeting disadvantaged youth. Similarly, the Jordanian Ministry of Education should make a deliberate effort to increase socioeconomic diversity in programs that send Jordanians to America through a publicity campaign in government schools to increase awareness of available programs.
- 3) The U.S. government should modify funded cross-cultural exchange programs to allow Iraqis living in Jordan to apply from Jordan and participate in these programs apart from the seats allocated for Jordan.
- 4) The governments should collaborate to connect twenty Jordanian and twenty American schools with each other through a sister-school program. Video conferencing technology should be included in this effort to facilitate dialogue about international affairs and cultural issues. If this program is successful, it should be implemented on a larger scale.
- 5) The U.S. government should earmark money for Arabic language instruction in public primary and secondary schools. The Jordanian government should create an independent committee to evaluate the effectiveness of English language instruction in government schools, and act on its recommendations. Both governments should encourage and create programs for language teacher exchange.
- 6) Congress should pass a joint resolution expressing the urgency and necessity of addressing the needs of Iraqi refugees in Jordan.
- 7) The U.S. and Jordanian governments should work with NGOs in Jordan to reduce tensions between the Iraqi refugee population and their Jordanian neighbors by promoting community building activities, such as neighborhood discussion forums and youth events in places where these populations come together.
- 8) The United States and the Jordanian government should advocate for the creation of a United Nations commission responsible for developing an accurate and comprehensive census with the specific aim of capturing the number of Iraqis living in Jordan. This commission shall also develop policy recommendations to meet the needs of this displaced population.
- 9) Congress should continue to allocate appropriate funds to the Jordanian Ministry of Education to alleviate the budgetary burden resulting from the influx of Iraqi refugees in schools. Moreover, each fiscal year the Government Accountability Office will be responsible for issuing a report that details the application of funding.

- 10) Congress should increase appropriated funds to the Department of Homeland Security/Citizenship and Immigration Services (DHS/CIS) for fiscal year 2009. Additionally, DHS/CIS should increase the number of special immigrant visas allocated to Iraqi refugees.
- 11) Jordan's Ministry of Information and Technology (MOIT) should increase the number of "Knowledge Stations" throughout the Kingdom by donating used government computers and linking more of them to the Internet. In addition, the MOIT should work with private Internet providers to expand Internet access to traditionally underserved communities.
- 12) The Jordanian Ministry of Education should:
 - Increase the scope of computer training for teachers to include Internet skills;
 - Hold free computer and internet courses for the general public at community centers, libraries and universities around Jordan.
- 13) The State Department Human Rights Country Report should more accurately reflect the reality of free speech on the Internet in Jordan.
- 14) U.S. cultural and educational exchange programs should incorporate cyber activism into alumni activities.
- 15) USAID-funded Jordan Media Strengthening Program (JMSP-IREX) should:
 - Be expanded to encourage citizen journalism;
 - Support online journalism courses at Jordanian universities;
 - Clarify internet press freedom laws in Jordan.
- 16) USAID and the Jordanian Ministry of Education should coordinate to bring about a partnership program between high schools in the U.S. and Jordan whereby they bring video conferencing events to high school-aged students.
- 17) USAID should recognize the existence of mistrust towards USAID programs and policies among the Jordanian citizenry. Thus USAID should place more importance on Jordanian perceptions of how aid could better suit their immediate needs. For example, USAID should strengthen ties with local community leaders in order to promote and demonstrate long-term sustainability and cooperation at the local level. Additionally, USAID should work to improve its program by:
 - a. Creating a directory of volunteering opportunities for young people in Jordan, as well as programs that foster dialogue;
 - b. Increasing the transparency of local proposals and post-project audits to limit fraud.
- 18) Assuming that illicit interference in Jordanian elections, such as vote-buying and meddling with polling stations, exists and may continue to proliferate, we suggest that USAID should increase election-monitoring training programs, which focus on the aforementioned obstacles that are present in the Jordanian electoral process.
- 19) Noting the void present between the allocation of aid among diverse social classes:
 - a. USAID should review the distribution of funds for sponsored programs and target vulnerable and often neglected populations of Jordanian society;

- b. Upon completion of said review, USAID must consider, and perhaps reallocate funds, that will help those neglected populations.

Methodology

Participants who demonstrated interest in U.S. policy in the MENA region were selectively chosen through a short application process, with particular attention to ideological and socio-economic diversity. Participants were students and young professionals, ages 18-28, from a variety of backgrounds and professions including social and political scientists, doctors, engineers, language professionals, and students. Approximately 50 participants attended each conference, half American and half Middle Eastern or North African. Travel grants were provided for selected participants who would otherwise be unable to attend.

The conferences were held in Rabat, Cairo, and Amman. The conferences were 2-3 days in length and consisted of four expert panels followed by small discussion groups that drafted policy recommendations. Each panel focused on themes relevant to the host country. Policy recommendations were debated, ratified, and voted upon at the end of each conference. The conferences included onsite simultaneous translation, to facilitate genuine representation and participation of all viewpoints.

Additionally, each conference provided skills-building workshops that provided participants with the tools necessary to advocate in their own communities in the Middle East and the U.S. through traditional media, international dialogue, social networking, citizen journalism, and town hall discussions.

Staff Biographies

The Project on Middle East Democracy

Andrew Albertson, Executive Director

Andrew is the Executive Director of the Project on Middle East Democracy. Prior to that, he served as a Congressional Fellow in the office of Congressman Steve Israel, and directed the membership program at the Truman National Security Project. In addition, he worked on Capitol Hill for Congresswoman Shelley Berkley and Congressman Tim Ryan. Prior to moving to Washington, Albertson spent two years as a technical advisor in Guatemala in work focused on municipal governance and decentralization. While in Guatemala, he organized an election monitoring mission of international volunteers, in coordination with the Guatemalan human rights ombudsman, the Procuraduria de los Derechos Humanos, to observe the 2003 presidential contest. Originally from Cincinnati, Albertson received a B.A. from Taylor University and is currently a student in the Master of Science in Foreign Service program at Georgetown University.

David M. DeBartolo, Director of Dialogue Programs

David M. DeBartolo is Director of Dialogue Programs for the Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED). As a Fulbright Fellow for 2006-7 in Jordan, he conducted research on the Iraq war's impact on economic growth and inflation in Jordan. DeBartolo is a joint J.D. / M.A. in Arab Studies candidate at Georgetown University, where in 2005 he received the Oxtoby Prize. After graduating in 2003 from Harvard University, where he was editorial chair of *The Harvard Crimson*, DeBartolo worked on Palestinian political party development in East Jerusalem and Ramallah for the National Democratic Institute. He also worked for Amideast, teaching English to Palestinian scholarship recipients, as well as for Dr. Marwan Awartani of Birzeit University. In 2002, he attended the Anti-Defamation League's Finkelstein Memorial Study Mission to Israel for college journalists, and he later spoke at the ADL's national convention. As a recipient of a Weissman grant, DeBartolo also worked for Fraser Kemp MP in the British Parliament.

Stephen McInerney, Director of Advocacy

Stephen is Director of Advocacy for the Project on Middle East Democracy. He has six years experience in the Middle East, including graduate studies of Middle Eastern politics, history, and the Arabic language at the American University in Cairo and the American University of Beirut. McInerney has spoken on Middle East affairs with media outlets including MSNBC and CBS News, and his writing has been published by the *Daily Star* (Lebanon), the *New Republic*, and the *Washington Post*. He recently authored a report for the POMED and the Heinrich Boell Foundation, "The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2009: Democracy, Governance, and Human Rights in the Middle East." McInerney originally developed an interest in the Middle East while teaching mathematics in Qatar after earning an M.S. in mathematics from Stanford University.

Mohammed Loraoui, Associate Director of Dialogue Programs

Mohammed is Associate Director of Dialogue Programs at the Project on Middle East Democracy. He is a 2006 graduate of the University of Colorado at Boulder, where he majored in international affairs with a focus on the Middle East. He studied abroad at the American University of Cairo in 2004, and has traveled widely in the Middle East, as well as North and West Africa. Mohammed is also a consultant for the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), where he works on NED's Arabic website al-Nafitha, helps to administer NED grants, and translates, analyzes, and summarizes grant proposals for consideration by NED's board.

Americans for Informed Democracy

Marceline White, President

Marceline is the President of Americans for Informed Democracy (AID). Marceline brings more than seventeen years of experience in management, fundraising, advocacy, and organizing. She is an expert in the fields of international trade, gender and development, labor rights, environmental justice, non-profit management, and youth engagement. She is committed to grassroots organizing and to empowering citizens to engage with policymakers to achieve a fairer world.

Prior to joining AID, she served as the Deputy Director of the Greater Access to Trade Expansion (GATE) Project funded by USAID's Office of Women and Development, where she developed and led trainings to integrate gender into the USAID/Bangladesh and USAID/Peru Economic Growth programs. She was the lead author of "Pro-Poor Growth, Gender, and Markets," a report which was disseminated to incoming Peruvian government officials. She provided comments on USAID's Economic Strategy, which led to incorporation of gender considerations in the final government strategy. Marceline came to the GATE project from the Women's EDGE, where she served as Director of the Global Trade Program. She was also instrumental in ensuring that Department of Labor trade analyses included a gender-specific review and in securing the appointment of a gender and development expert to the ACTPN. Marceline's other leadership experiences include serving as Board President for the Fair Trade Federation; as Director of the International Population Campaign at the Sierra Club; as a Development Associate at the Institute for Women's Policy Research; as the Vice-President for Development for the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador; and as Environmental Organizer with MASSPIRG. Marceline received her Masters from the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and her Bachelors of Journalism from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Marceline is also a published poet and visual artist. When not writing poetry and creating art, Marceline enjoys spelunking and chasing her son around playgrounds and pools.

Vicente Garcia, Program Director, Global Peace and Security

Vicente is the Program Director for Americans for Informed Democracy's Global Peace and Security Program and Hope Not Hate initiative. Vicente organizes summits and provides trainings throughout the United States and several European, Middle Eastern, and African regions that engage young people to influence U.S. foreign policy through grassroots campaigns to organized advocacy. This includes topics such as democracy development, nuclear nonproliferation, US-Muslim relations, role of civil society, peacekeeping, etc. Trainings include workshops on facilitating dialogue, grassroots organizing, framing conversations, and outreach. Vicente received his BA degree in Government and Philosophy from Georgetown University and MA degree in International Conflict Analysis, with a concentration on US and European foreign policy in the Middle East and North Africa, from the Brussels School of International Studies (BSIS). Before AID, he worked at the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office in Brussels, Belgium, that served as a platform of peacebuilding organizations to the European Union, and contributed articles on EU-MENA relations. He has US policy experience interning for Congressman Solomon P. Ortiz in Washington, DC, and speaks Spanish and French.



Our Vision

Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, there has been a growing recognition that democratic reform in the Middle East should be viewed not merely as a development objective, but also as a strategic priority. However, despite the Bush administration's dramatic rhetorical shift towards a "forward strategy of freedom," U.S. policies in the Middle East have changed only marginally over the past seven years. Much worse, by linking military-led regime change to democracy, the administration has undermined support for "democracy promotion" in the Middle East and the U.S. alike. Today, the challenge of encouraging better governance in the Middle East remains as pressing as ever. And yet, U.S. credibility for supporting democratic development has been seriously undermined, and the foreign policy community has become divided on the subject. There is a compelling need to rigorously examine America's actual and potential impact on political reform in the region; to foster constructive dialogue among academics and activists, policymakers and practitioners, Americans and Middle Easterners; to identify clearly the parameters of legitimate, constructive democracy support in the Middle East; and to empower the coalition of actors supporting policies consistent with those principles.

Our Programs

The Project on Middle East Democracy was created to meet these needs. Through Research, Dialogue, and Advocacy programs, we work to strengthen the broad coalition of actors and organizations who advocate U.S. policies that consistently and peacefully support democratic development in the Middle East.

✓ **Research:** We provide accurate, thorough research by writing country and issue background papers and budget analyses; publishing our "Weekly Wire," which highlights U.S. legislation and policy toward political reform in the Middle East; and supporting innovative research on key issues.

(For more information, contact Shadi Hamid at shadi.hamid@pomed.org)

✓ **Dialogue:** We foster dialogue between and among Americans and Middle Easterners by organizing young leaders conferences in the region on political reform and U.S. policy, and conducting panel discussions in Washington bringing together experts on reform in the region.

(For more information, contact David DeBartolo at debartolo@pomed.org)

✓ **Advocacy:** We support a consistent and credible pro-democracy foreign policy toward the Middle East by organizing informational briefings and events for members of Congress and their staff; discussing the consequences of legislation with lawmakers; working together with our allies to highlight key issues; and empowering advocates of consistent, peaceful U.S. support for democracy in the Middle East.

(For more information, contact Stephen McInerney at stephen.mcinerney@pomed.org)

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In the first half of 2008, POMED has:

- Held **conferences** in Cairo, Amman and Rabat bringing together young American and Middle Eastern leaders to discuss political reform and jointly develop policy recommendations.
- Launched a **monthly briefing series** for congressional staff, "Rethinking Democracy Promotion," on peaceful policy tools by which the U.S. can support progress toward democracy.
- Released **major publications** analyzing American and Middle Eastern views of U.S. democracy promotion efforts and examining the president's annual budget request as it relates to democracy and governance in the Middle East.
- Held 5 **public events** for the Washington policymaking community to discuss U.S. policy and Middle East reform.



OUR MISSION

Americans for Informed Democracy empowers young people in the United States to address global challenges such as poverty, disease, climate change, and conflict through awareness and action. We promote just and sustainable solutions at the campus, community, and national level.

OUR VISION

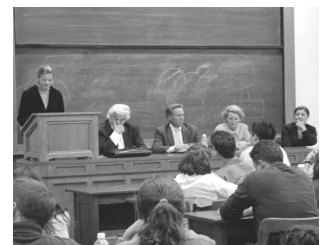
Americans for Informed Democracy empowers young global leaders to create the world of tomorrow. We seek to inspire young people to take up today's global challenges -- such as poverty, disease, climate change, and conflict -- as the special mission of their generation. Our network includes more than 20,000 student leaders on over 1,000 university campuses, as well as several thousand young professionals in hundreds of cities. We offer leadership training and financial support that equip these young people with the skills and resources they need to engage their communities in international discussions and campaigns.

OUR STRATEGY

We offer an innovative approach to engaging the next generation of leaders in global education and advocacy. We host weekend summits that educate young leaders about the interconnectedness of our world, connect these leaders with global experts and campaigns, and provide them with a comprehensive package of leadership and messaging guides that train them to be effective organizers and advocates in their communities. We then support these empowered leaders as they coordinate local campaigns and host town hall forums and videoconferences that connect their communities to global issues.

OUR PROGRAMS

AID has four program areas: global health, global development, the environment, and global peace and security, including US-Muslim relations. Each program has accompanying events and campaigns, and we invite students to become involved in these campaigns. Or use us as your jumping off point for your own innovative ideas to bring the world home. Just in the last year, we have brought together more than tens of thousands of students across the United States for videoconference dialogues with peers in over fifty foreign countries and for town hall meetings with top leaders, including Bill Gates, Sr., Co-Chair of the Gates Foundation; Gareth Evans, President of the International Crisis Group; and Timothy Wirth, President of the U.N. Foundation.



We have worked hard to engage diverse constituencies in our work, including students from the Bob Jones University to Berkeley and celebrities from Seinfeld actor Jason Alexander to Pakistani rock star Salman Ahmad. Our work has appeared in more than 500 media outlets from sources that cover politics and global affairs such as the New York Times, C-SPAN, CNN, and Washington Post to unexpected sources such as Marie Claire and the Montel Williams Show. We have also been very successful in moving students beyond dialogue to constructive action. We have convinced city governments to sign on to the Urban Environmental Accords, engaged thousands of students in the ONE Campaign, and convinced hundreds of students from more than twenty states to fundraise to help end malaria.

For more information, please contact Vicente Garcia at vicente@aidemocracy.org

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MEPI PROGRAM EXAMPLES

Democracy and Civil Society

- In Morocco, trained party members from 11 political parties on constituency building and media outreach.
- In Egypt, supporting civil society organizations in domestic election monitoring, training youth to develop advocacy skills and voter education in anticipation of fall elections.
- In Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian territories, and Tunisia, training journalists and new media outlets on journalistic standards and techniques for covering elections.

Economic Reform

- In Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco, trained 1,000 bank staff on providing capital to small and medium size enterprises.
- In Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the U.A.E., assisting to reach compliance with international obligations in agriculture, labor, intellectual property rights, customs, etc.

Quality Education

- Beginning in Bahrain, Jordan, and Lebanon, providing over 5 million children's books translated into Arabic.
- Throughout the region, providing English-language scholarships with the goal of reaching more than 13,000 disadvantaged youth.
- In Jordan, developing new interactive technology solutions to large-scale education problems.

Women's Empowerment

- Provided more than 200 Arab women with political campaign skills.
- Provided 42 young women internships in U.S. businesses and law firms. Five alumni have now started their own businesses.
- Building networks among activists across the region who are working for women's full legal, political, social and economic empowerment.

MEPI FACTS

- **225 programs in 14 countries and the Palestinian Territories.**
- **Supporting over 70 civil society organizations from the Middle East.**
- **Of the total received, 22% increase in proposals from indigenous organizations.**
- **Over 75% of MEPI funding supports civil society and non-governmental organizations. The remaining MEPI funding supports country reform technical assistance.**