

U.S. Intervention

U.S.A

Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Freedom of
Opinion and Expression

Thank you, Mr. President.

My delegation welcomes the report of the Special
Rapporteur on the Freedom of Opinion and Expression, Mr.
Ligabo.

This is another example of a mandate that my Government
considers essential.

We are gratified that the Special Rapporteur focused on the
urgent need for security and protection of media
professionals.

As Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice said on the occasion of this year's commemoration of World Press Freedom Day, we hail the courageous sacrifices made by journalists around the world to report the facts, even at the cost of their lives and their freedom.

In some countries, media professionals face crackdowns on press freedoms, including tightening libel laws, a concentration of media ownership, diminishing independent press outlets, and restricted Internet search engines.

In this regard, we also welcome the Special Rapporteur's recommendation that States take measures to guarantee the freedom of expression and opinion on the Internet.

The United States is determined to maximize the free flow of information over the Internet and minimize success by repressive regimes in censoring information and silencing legitimate debate. In particular, we oppose the efforts of non-democratic governments to misuse the Internet to restrict freedom of expression or to track and prosecute dissidents.

We urge other players, such as NGOs and especially the Internet industry, to take voluntary action to ensure that, as they spread the availability of the Internet around the world, they also take care to minimize its abuse as a means of political repression.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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U.S. Intervention on
Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Freedom of Religion or Belief
Thursday, September 21, 2006

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We strongly support the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Freedom of Religion or Belief, Ms. Asma Jahangir.

Since the promotion of religious freedom is a core objective of U.S. foreign policy, my government considers this mandate essential.

The United States seeks to promote freedom of religion and conscience throughout the world as a fundamental human right and as a source of stability for all countries. In so doing, it strives to assist newly formed democracies in implementing freedom of religion and conscience, assist religious and human rights NGOs in promoting religious freedom, and identify and promote changes in the policies and actions of regimes that severely persecute their citizens or others on the basis of religious belief.

We look forward to seeing continued work under this mandate in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.