

**Testimony of Christopher Midura, Acting Director, Office of Policy, Planning and Resources
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Before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight of
Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia
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Mr. Chairman, distinguished Committee members, I wish to express my thanks for your invitation to testify here today on "Smart Power and Reform of the Public Diplomacy Bureaucracy." Secretary Rice and Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs James K. Glassman look forward to continuing our close cooperation with the Congress to strengthen public diplomacy's role as a vital national security priority.

The timing of this hearing investigating the relationship between "smart power" and public diplomacy is especially appropriate as we begin to make the transition between administrations. Under the direction of Under Secretary Glassman, we are reviewing, improving, and modernizing public diplomacy structures and programs in the State Department to build upon the government-wide public diplomacy leadership role assigned to the Under Secretary by the White House.

The term "smart power" implies two points of particular significance in this process. One is that the exercise of public diplomacy is indeed a show of power. It reflects the power of our culture, the power of our values, the power of our ideas. It is not merely a series of programs intended to convince foreign publics to like us, although that would certainly be optimal. Along with the "hard power" exercised by the military, the "soft power" of public diplomacy, as practiced by State, USAID, and strategic communications professionals at the Department of Defense, is an essential support in advancing U.S. interests abroad. The other implication is that, to be effective, the "soft power" of diplomacy must be carefully and intelligently applied to meet our foreign policy needs. That's the "smart" part.

Under Secretary Glassman has emphasized in several articles and interviews, as well as testimony before Congress, that we are engaged in a war of ideas with violent extremists who seek to attack the United States and its allies and to recruit others to do the same. Public diplomacy professionals are being called upon for a renewed commitment to ideological engagement, designing programs and spreading messages to directly confront the ideology of violent extremism as practiced by al Qaeda, the FARC in Colombia, and other organizations. We wish to amplify credible voices of moderation and to discourage potential recruits from joining terrorist movements. In the words of noted smart power proponent Professor Joseph Nye, "We cannot win unless the number of people the extremists are recruiting is lower than the number we are killing and deterring." We can do this by combining our programs and

technology to help build real and virtual networks among groups in affected societies who reject the terrorists' worldview, with a special focus on young people.

Under Secretary Glassman has sought to re-orient public diplomacy toward these ends. Perhaps most visible has been his coordination of strategic communication in the interagency through his chairmanship of the Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC). The PCC comprises civilian and military communications leaders from the Departments of State, Defense and the Treasury, the National Security Council, the Intelligence Community, and other agencies.

As a complement to the work of the PCC that he leads, another of Mr. Glassman's interagency initiatives has been the creation of the Global Strategic Engagement Center (GSEC), which serves as a subject-matter advisory group for the Under Secretary and members of the PCC on topics relating to the war of ideas. The GSEC also coordinates with the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) and produces a daily Counterterrorism Communications Alert. GSEC staff are active-duty military and civilians from the Departments of State and Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Director is a Senior Foreign Service Officer.

Since Under Secretary Glassman joined the State Department in June, he has convened the PCC three times, and has formally established four sub-PCCs, whose activities are coordinated by the GSEC. The four are "Harnessing and Connecting Expertise," "Research and Intelligence," "Metrics and Polling," and "Countering Violent Extremism at the Grassroots." Through the work of the PCC and its sub-PCCs, we are strengthening cooperation among government agencies to coordinate our messaging and take maximum advantage of available resources.

I would like to highlight here the increasingly sophisticated and coordinated way the State Department employees are working with their Defense Department and military colleagues around the globe. Perhaps in the distant past it was possible to separate and isolate the tasks of the military from those of the diplomat; today the emblematic projection of American government abroad is the Provincial Reconstruction Team – a flexible mix of military capabilities with our civilian-directed development, public diplomacy, information, education, economic and social tools. And if you looked in the door at the State Department earlier this week, you would have seen the first-ever worldwide synchronization conference – hosted at State and organized by the two departments – for the combined State and DOD strategic communication leadership. I think it is a glimpse of the future.

The Office of the Under Secretary has expanded two of its existing programs to increase our available public diplomacy resources and the reach of our messages. Our Office of Private Sector Outreach for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs recently conducted an innovative "U.S. Marketing College" with the participation of private-sector marketing experts from top U.S.

companies such as eBay, Novartis, and Kraft. This intensive four-day course, hosted by the Foreign Service Institute, equipped officials from across the interagency with relevant marketing strategies to employ in the war of ideas and for other public diplomacy programs. Reviews of this program were so successful, we plan to hold a second U.S. Marketing College in January 2009.

We are also creating new regional media hubs in overseas media centers. In addition to our hubs in London, Dubai and Brussels (the former two serve pan-Arab media located in those cities, the latter serves pan-European media in the EU capital), we are currently opening a smaller hub in Johannesburg and planning to open a full-scale hub in Tokyo during the next fiscal year. Others are under study. These regional hubs enable the quick dissemination of information to foreign correspondents based in international media centers and facilitate communication between U.S. officials and multiple foreign media outlets.

One of the most prominent recommendations in the 2003 report of the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, which was chaired by Amb. Edward P. Djerejian and of which now-Under Secretary Glassman was a member, was that public diplomacy needed to establish a “new culture of measurement ... within all public diplomacy structures.” This criticism was echoed by the General Accountability Office soon thereafter. The Department has since made major strides in establishing rigorous performance measurement and evaluation standards. The Evaluation Division of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) has been a leader in this field for several years by demonstrating the impact of exchange programs in building mutual understanding between Americans and people around the world.

In order to bring evaluation and measurement for the rest of public diplomacy up to ECA’s high standard, the Under Secretary recently established an Evaluation and Measurement Unit (EMU) charged with developing performance measurement instruments and executing detailed evaluations of the implementation and effectiveness of all State Department public diplomacy programs overseas. The Mission Activity Tracker, a comprehensive database employed by our overseas posts and domestic bureaus to record outputs of public diplomacy activities, enabling us to better evaluate PD programs, is already in widespread use. We intend to boost our investment in the work of the EMU, enabling us to document the value of public diplomacy programming to the Department, OMB, the Congress, and the American taxpayer.

Winning the war of ideas depends on getting the right information to the right people using the right technology. Our Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) has been a leader in taking public diplomacy to the Internet through its America.gov website. This site features six language versions (Arabic, Chinese, French, Persian, Russian and Spanish), discussion groups, video content, and special events such as the Democracy Video Challenge, in

which foreign citizens are encouraged to upload their own video creations to complete the phrase, "Democracy is...." The Digital Video Challenge is also a good example of public-private cooperation; among our partners in the venture are NBC Universal, New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, and the Motion Picture Association of America.

IIP's Digital Outreach Team blogs extensively on U.S. policy and society in Arabic, Persian and Urdu, giving us a voice in the growing realm of on-line conversations. The bureau has also revamped infocentral.gov, a "one-stop" source of information for U.S. foreign affairs and security officials working with the public. The bureau is now expanding into diverse areas such as on-line professional networks, social media, virtual worlds, podcasting, and mobile technologies.

In addition to its traditional public diplomacy role of briefing and arranging programs and media events for foreign correspondents in Washington, our Bureau of Public Affairs (PA) runs our Rapid Response Unit, a 24/7 global media monitoring office that analyzes how the U.S. is being covered in foreign media. The Rapid Response daily report highlights media trends on hot issues and provides quick messaging to officials in Washington and overseas. PA's Foreign Press Center in Washington has organized an innovative program embedding 50 prominent foreign journalists with U.S. media outlets covering the U.S. elections. The Washington and New York Press Centers have also organized reporting trips for over 1000 foreign correspondents to several major primary elections and caucuses and both political conventions. They will host journalists for the four presidential debates and visits to several election battleground states.

While global ideological engagement has necessitated greater focus on expanding and updating our information programs, we also remain committed to maintaining the excellence of the programs managed by our Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, which have for years formed the heart and soul of U.S. public diplomacy efforts. The Fulbright Program remains the unchallenged world leader among academic exchange programs, while the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) brings to the United States each year approximately 4,000 foreign professionals in a wide variety of fields for invaluable exposure to our culture, our society, and our policies. IVLP alumni have included 277 foreign heads of state. We will be looking to expand ECA's English teaching and youth scholarship programs in the coming months to target successor generations of youth, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds and/or countries of strategic priority for the United States.

As most of our resources are invested in people, the Under Secretary's office takes a direct interest in the career development of our public diplomacy personnel. In order to ensure that we are putting the right people in the right public diplomacy jobs, we have raised our profile in the Foreign Service assignments system. In cooperation with the Bureau of Human

Resources and the regional bureaus, the Under Secretary was recently given the authority to approve all public diplomacy assignments worldwide.

To be effective, our people must also receive the right training: The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) offers public diplomacy training to between 1,250 and 1,500 students a year in Washington, overseas, and on-line. These courses prepare State personnel for public diplomacy positions overseas; assist others in better understanding public diplomacy and the importance of outreach to foreign audiences; and provide training and professional development for Locally Employed Staff in our overseas missions. FSI has developed four new public diplomacy distance learning courses in FY-07 and FY-08, with five more planned for launch in FY-09.

To conclude, the modernization of public diplomacy structures and programs is a top priority of the Department and Under Secretary Glassman. We particularly look forward to welcoming our International Information Programs and Educational and Cultural Affairs bureaus to Foggy Bottom next year when they move to newly constructed space across the street from the Truman Building. We are also working in ever-closer coordination with our interagency colleagues, particularly our strategic communication colleagues at the Department of Defense. With the support of Congress, we will continue to expand, carefully target, and rigorously evaluate our public diplomacy activities to meet the challenges of global ideological engagement. Thank you for your attention, and my colleagues and I would be glad to answer your questions at this time.