

## Al Jazeera Forum: "Power, Media, and the Middle East"

By Solon Simmons, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty, [ssimmon5@gmu.edu](mailto:ssimmon5@gmu.edu)

When one thinks of a gathering of representatives of a satellite news channel, it is not common to imagine a heady academic debate about the role that media plays in the structure of power relations. But this is what made the March forum, hosted by Al Jazeera, so strange and exciting; as academics, political leaders and broadcasters gathered to imagine the ways in which the world is



Al Jazeera's Doha Newsroom. Photo: Wikimedia.

changing and to consider what roles opinion makers will play in bringing those changes about. It is worth thinking seriously about these issues and what the conflict analysis and resolution perspective has to offer the debate—all the more since such a perspective was generally absent from the proceedings.

The goal of the fourth annual forum entitled,

"Power, Media, and the Middle East," was to host a mix of journalists, analysts, and academics to discuss a provocative array of topics. The panels were held in a dazzling theater at the Doha Sheraton, festooned with technology, draped with blue-lighted cloth, and piping music reminiscent of Carmina Burana, just under the level of direct experience. The Gothic framework seemed appropriate in a part of the world where history appears as relevant today as does the news.

The speakers were an impressive mix,

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# CRDC Leads at ALLMEP Summit

By Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution Staff, crdc@gmu.edu

**O**n March 19, 2009, two weeks after the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution co-hosted a summit launching the idea of a \$200 million annual fund for Israeli-Palestinian peacebuilding organizations, the International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace (IFFIPP) Authorization Act of 2009 (H.R. 1065) was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. The introduction of the Bill was the result of the Alliance for Middle East Peace Summit, which convened on March 4th, at the Ronald Reagan Building in Washington, D.C., to consider the creation of the International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace.

The concept of the fund was borrowed from the very successful International Fund for Ireland (IFI), which has funneled \$1.6 billion into Ireland's civil society since its inception in 1986. The hope is that this public-private, multi-national fund, which is seen as an essential component of a holistic, long-term, and sustainable approach to conflict resolution in the Middle East, will deploy the resources and expertise necessary to grow peacebuilding efforts to a level where they have a chance of competing with the myriad violent and unjust alternatives available in the region.

ICAR second year Master's student, and newly appointed CRDC Managing Director, Scott Cooper, was part of the 10 member planning committee that designed the ALLMEP Summit. He facilitated a call in November 2008, which established the core structure for the Summit. With guidance from CRDC Director, Marc Gopin, and invaluable support from CRDC GRA and first year Master's student, Mutsuko Sugita, CRDC Senior Research Associate, Aziz Abu Sarah, and a dedicated group of ALLMEP volunteers, the next five months were spent coordinating the event.

The primary objective of the Summit was to



CRDC's Gopin, Cooper, and Abu Sarah in conversation with IFFIPP Fund stakeholders including Ambassadors from Morocco, Jordan, the PLO, and Director of IFI. Photo: ALLMEP.

“develop and build support for legislation authorizing the creation of the International Fund by governments worldwide.” During the Summit, 75 meetings were conducted on Capitol Hill, advocating the creation of the IFFIPP. In addition, Marc Gopin and Scott Cooper participated in a closed-door, ambassador-level meeting between ALLMEP leaders and chief Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian, and Moroccan diplomats to discuss the proposed fund. At one point during the conference, the Director General of the IFI, Alexander Smith, spoke poignantly of his hope for Middle East peace based on the successful Irish experience.

The purpose of H.R. 1065 is “to seek the establishment of and contributions to an International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace, and for other purposes.” To that end, the bill allocates \$50 million annually for Fiscal Years 2010 through 2014, as part of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. CRDC encourages the ICAR community to support the Bill by contacting their legislators. For more information or to get involved in the project, contact CRDC. ■

network

## ICAR Faculty and Adjuncts Gather for Joint Meeting

By Saira Yamin, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate, ICAR Adjunct Professor, syamin1@gmu.edu

**A** spirit of camaraderie pervaded the ICAR faculty meeting held on February 6, 2009, in the Truland Building. The joint meeting, representing both the regular and adjunct faculty, was the first such initiative organized to strengthen cohesion amongst the two branches of the teaching staff. Faculty members had an opportunity to mingle and exchange ideas with many of their colleagues over a light lunch. Subsequently, a round of formal introductions took place, and all present were invited to share their views. The gathering acknowledged ICAR's adjunct faculty as a valuable asset to the academic program, as their contributions to both the graduate and undergraduate programs were noted. A suggestion to have an adjunct faculty representative on the Faculty Board was welcomed by all. Members of the adjunct faculty shared stories of successful coordination with ICAR's regular faculty, while others expressed the desire to see more avenues of communication opened to promote a greater sense of community at ICAR. The meeting marked a renewed commitment by ICAR's teaching faculty to communicate, coordinate, and collaborate in their efforts. ■

# ICAR's Drucie French Cumbie Fellows Ph.D. Students Working Together "To Get There"

By Tetsushi Ogata, ICAR Ph.D. Student, togata@gmu.edu

The Drucie French Cumbie Chair was awarded to Dr. Andrea Bartoli in 2007, when he transitioned to ICAR from Columbia University where he was Founding Director of the Center for International Conflict Resolution (CICR). In his inaugural Cumbie Lecture at ICAR, Dr. Bartoli made his vision explicit:

"The Drucie French Cumbie Chair is the perfect environment for the growth of integration of theory and practice that will develop the field of conflict resolution further. Located at ICAR, the preeminent center of research in the field, the Chair has been served by a wonderful colleague, Chris Mitchell. I am honored to be working in this capacity and contributing to the study and practice of peacemaking."

"How can we get there?" I have been privileged to work with Dr. Bartoli as his graduate research assistant since he arrived at ICAR. He asks this question all the time. Not necessarily to me, but mostly to himself. In fact, he repeats it so often, with his wonderful Italian accent, that many readers may have heard him ask it.

Dr. Bartoli recognizes that the conversation to position (or reposition) ICAR as a leading force in the field of Conflict Resolution must be expansive, rigorous, and inclusive. To that end, we often speak about the need to integrate research, theory, teaching, and practice.

Dr. Bartoli understands that in order to get there, ICAR needs to foster a fertile environment for new and talented researchers to grow in the field. He sees that the source of ICAR's development in the present actually lies in cultivating the future. This understanding led to the formation of the inaugural group of Drucie French Cumbie Fellows, including Ph.D. students: Clement Aapengnuo, Maneshka Eliatamby, Vandy Kanyako, Martha Mutisi, Tetsushi Ogata, and Molly Tepper.

The creation of a group of Ph.D. students who not only think critically based on the foundational values that ICAR espouses, but also act as ICAR—or act in concert with one another as they represent ICAR at conferences and meetings—networking with scholars and professionals and bringing the fruits of that experience back to the Institute for further consideration, advances the goal of *getting there*. Through the



From left to right: Molly Tepper, Martha Mutisi, Andrea Bartoli, Tetsushi Ogata, and Vandy Kanyaku (not pictured: Maneshka Eliatamby and Clement Aapengnuo). Photo: ICAR.

collaborative work of the Cumbie Fellows, not just individual ICAR students, but ICAR as an institution can be *present* in the room, and it can be there with institutional intentionality.

The Cumbie Fellows are currently working with ICAR's faculty to compile a list of their scholarly accomplishments in 2008. The list will appear in GMU's "Celebration of Achievement," an annual publication cataloging each department's academic accomplishments. Through this project, students are partnering with the faculty, working as one institution. Whether this is "Italian style" or "ICAR style," the underlying idea warrants serious attention. The work of the Cumbie Fellows is stimulating an environment that fosters a broad, rigorous, and inclusive culture of conversation, collaboration, and exchange at ICAR. Possibilities abound as to what Cumbie Fellows can and will do in the future.

Although the initial group of Cumbie Fellows was formed spontaneously in order to jump-start the project, Drucie French Cumbie Fellowships are open to all currently enrolled Ph.D. students. The term of the Fellowship is variable, and applications may be submitted to the Chair throughout the year. It is Dr. Bartoli's hope that the Cumbie Fellows will continue to serve as a conduit of communication and facilitation at ICAR, blazing pathways for *getting there*—to ICAR's new era. ■

“The Cumbie Fellows will continue to serve as a conduit of communication and facilitation at ICAR.”

—TETSUSHI OGATA

initiatives

# ICAR Hosts Civilian Devastation in War Conference

By Daniel Rothbart, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty, drothbar@gmu.edu

## EVENTS

Caught in the wake of martial forces, civilians live a strange kind of existence. Cast as objects defined only in their relation to the activities and objectives of military campaigns, civilians are war's weakest participants who, simultaneously, endure the greatest degree of suffering. Military fatalities represent a fraction of those of civilians—their deaths in comparison are calculated at a ratio of one-to-eight on a global scale.

Seeking to draw attention to the plight of civilians in war, ICAR sponsored a conference on March 27, 2009, entitled "Civilian Devastation in War." Researchers, scholars, and practitioners addressed the scale of civilian casualties in war, the sources of such casualties, the current state of practices seeking to reduce civilian casualties, and alternative practices for civilian protection. The conference opened with a keynote address by Chris Hedges whose experience as a war correspondent provided the backdrop for explaining how "good people" at home can succumb to deep psychological instincts and strongly favor violence as a means of solving global problems. Hedges powerfully illustrated how war fosters a kind of religious vigilance in the name of a secular or religious god.

"Civilians are war's weakest participants who, simultaneously, endure the greatest degree of suffering."

—DANIEL ROTHBART

of civilians. Marc Garlasco, a senior analyst at Human Rights Watch, explained how his organization relies on such laws when confronting military leaders with cases of civilian brutality at the hands of their troops. Humanitarian peace operations also seek to address such suffering, as Georgetown's Donald Daniel demonstrated. Ira Houch, Chaplain in the U.S. Army, discussed how international laws and enforcement mechanisms around humanitarian issues can be strengthened.

The failings of international law to protect civilians in modern war are legend. In his riveting account of the war in Darfur, ICAR's Suliman Giddo recounted atrocities perpetrated by members of the Janjaweed

tribe, who work in concert with the Government of Sudan on an ideological mission to Islamize and Arabize Darfur. Their collaboration shows how inadequate international laws are in enforcing restrictions on state-sanctioned violence. Neta Crawford, professor of political science, characterized civilian casualties in state-sponsored wars as systematic, routine, and structural. Her research on U.S. military history revealed patterns of massive civilian devastation in U.S. wars.

Dr. Karina Korostelina offered an original conception of civilians in war, replacing the dualism of groups in enmity with a triplet model involving the ingroup in their relations to BOTH the enemy Other and the civilian Other. This new framing of conflictual relations was illustrated by Neta Oren's narrative analysis of testimony given by the Israeli leadership during an investigation of decisions made in the Second Lebanon War.

The conference concluded with accounts of two modes of practice. Sarah Holewinski, President of Campaign for Innocent Civilians In Conflict, summarized a project in which civilians receive compensation from military forces. Dr. Christopher Mitchell explained how zones of peace have been created to protect civilians who are engulfed by war's tumult.

The success of the conference has prompted ICAR to launch a new program—Civilian Devastation in War—which will serve as a forum for both research and practice. ■

## Upcoming ICAR Community Events

**Monday, April 20, 2009**

**Guest Speaker: Michael Bamberg**

*Dominant Positions: Conformity and Resistance in Narrative Politics*

12:00 pm - 2:00 pm, Truland Building, 555

**Wednesday, April 22, 2009**

**ICAR 5th Annual Undergraduate Program Lecture Featuring Sara Cobb**

*Radicalized Narratives: Immigration in the Shadow of 9/11*

4:30 pm - 6:00 pm, Fairfax Campus, Mason Hall, Edward Meese Conference Room

**Thursday, April 23, 2009**

**Celebration of Student Achievements**

6:00 pm - 8:30 pm, Truland Building, 555

**Saturday, April 25, 2009**

**3rd Annual Innovations in Student Leadership Conference**

*Conflict Resolution and Governance*

9:00 am - 5:30 pm, Location TBA

<http://icar.gmu.edu/events.htm>

## ICAR STUDENT OPINION

### U.S. Aid Should be Conditional on Laws That Protect Women

By Elizabeth M. Murray, ICAR M.S. Student, emurray3@gmu.edu



**A**fghan President Hamid Karzai effectively legalized marital rape last week by signing a law that allows Afghan Shiite men to demand sex from their wives every four days. The Shia Family Law, widely considered a strategic move by Karzai to gain support from conservative clerics for his reelection in August, also forbids women from venturing outside of the home without the permission of a male relative.

President Obama has decried the new Afghan law as “abhorrent,” and Secretary Clinton expressed her concern both in a private meeting with the Afghan president and in an interview with Radio Free Afghanistan. They were not alone in their condemnation; after worldwide government and civil society leaders expressed their vehement disapproval, Karzai agreed to place the law under review.

Under current policy, however, the firm statements by U.S. leadership will likely amount to little more than a slap on the wrist for Afghanistan. The Obama administration has made no indication that U.S. aid to Afghanistan would be affected if President Karzai were to implement the repressive law. In an interview last week, Vice President Biden made it clear that the United States’ main reason for engaging in Afghanistan is to protect our country from terrorist attacks by defeating Al-Qaeda.

Few Americans would disagree that keeping our country safe is of utmost importance, but many are justifiably outraged that our ally in Afghanistan has shown himself to have such repressive tendencies. Without a clear motivation from the United States to revise the law, it is possible that Mr. Karzai will merely delay its implementation until outcry from the press has died down. The United States should take a firm stance on women’s rights by making a portion of Afghanistan’s aid package conditional on the implementation of laws that respect and protect women. Moreover, such a policy should extend to other recipients of U.S. aid that are failing to do the same.

The plight of women in Afghanistan has been widely publicized in recent years, but Afghanistan is by no means the only country where women’s rights are denied and their abuse is condoned. Worldwide, one in three women will be a victim of violence in her lifetime, and the perpetrator is generally a man whom she knows, oftentimes her husband. Despite this, less than half of the world’s countries have instituted laws that specifically protect women from domestic violence. Many countries that do have domestic violence laws lack the mechanisms to enforce them.

A great deal of the billions of dollars in U.S. aid given every year is granted to countries that fall short of protecting women. This represents an enormous missed opportunity for the United States to promote a women’s right to live free from violence and repression. The Obama Administration, the Department of State, and Congress should move to make certain types of aid conditional on credible evidence that recipient countries possess and enforce laws that protect women, or are making steady progress towards this goal.

Aid that explicitly advances our strategic interests, like strengthening the Afghan military and police, should be exempt from these sanctions, as should aid for humanitarian purposes. In the Afghan case, if President Karzai were to implement the Shia Family Law, the United States should withdraw aid for certain infrastructure and economic development

### Recent ICAR Articles, Op-Eds and Letters to the Editor

#### Foreign Policy Maze Ahead of Obama

By David Young, ICAR M.S. Alumnus  
*Le Monde diplomatique - English edition, 4/13/09*

#### Bosnia's International Governor Needs to Flex His Muscles

By Masanobu Yonemitsu, ICAR M.S. Alumnus  
*The Wall Street Journal Europe, 4/7/09*

#### More Force in Afghanistan?

By Saira Yamin, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate  
*The New York Times, 4/3/09*

#### A Jihadist Worth Emulating

By Michael L. Owens, Special Assistant to the Cumbie Chair at ICAR  
PostGlobal on *washingtonpost.com, 4/2/09*

#### What the Middle East Can Learn From Southeast Asia

By Samuel Rizk, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate  
*Common Ground News Service, 3/31/09*

#### Can Washington Help the Palestinians Forming a Unity Government?

By Rawhi Afaghani, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate  
*Al Alarabiya, 3/19/09*

#### Turkey's Return to Glory

By Marc Gopin, ICAR Professor  
*Today's Zaman, 3/18/09*

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# ICAR Alumnus: Chad Ford

## Educator, Journalist, and Peace Player

By Lori-Ann Stephensen, ICAR M.S. Student, lstephea@gmu.edu



Chad Ford. Photo: BYU Hawaii.

Chad Ford is a multi-tasker by nature. In Spring, 2000, when he graduated with an M.S. from ICAR, he also earned a J.D. in International Law from Georgetown University and he hasn't slowed down since.

After graduation, life took an interesting turn when ESPN bought Sportstalk.com, where Ford was

Executive Editor and co-founder. Sportstalk.com became ESPN Insider and Ford stayed on as a Senior Editor, covering the NBA draft. Caught in the fast pace of professional media, Ford's conflict resolution training seemed sidetracked until NBA star, Dikembe Mutombo, invited him to South Africa in 2003. In Soweto, South Africa, he began to imagine an amalgamation of journalism and peacebuilding. Ford began writing and researching the role of sports in conflict resolution—traveling to the Balkans, the Middle East, and Africa—and ESPN became a forum for more than just sports. (See: <http://sports.espn.go.com/espn/eticket/story?page=playingforpeace>).

In 2005, Ford left full-time employment with ESPN and moved with his wife Joanie and their four children to Laie, a small town on the North Shore of Oahu, to accept a position as an Assistant Professor of International Cultural Studies at Brigham Young University Hawaii. He began teaching courses in intercultural conflict, and in 2006, was named Director of the David O. McKay Center for Intercultural Understanding. When BYU Hawaii was dedicated in 1955, its founder stated, "You mark my word, from this school will go men and women whose influence will be felt for good towards the establishment of peace internationally." Ford took the statement to heart and, in his capacity as Director, developed the Intercultural Peacebuilding Certificate in 2008. The Certificate program offers a multidisciplinary curriculum, influenced by ICAR, including 19 credit hours of course work and 20 hours of practicum.

Another important component of Ford's peacebuilding amalgamate was added in 2006, when he was introduced to the work of The

Arbinger Institute, which has developed a conflict resolution model that invites participants to consider, through narrative, the influence of their own self-deception in collusive cycles of conflict. He has used this model in his consulting work with PeacePlayers International, an NGO that builds the capacity for peace in areas of protracted conflict through youth basketball leagues. Ford has also incorporated the model in his work for the Shimom Peres Center for Peace in Israel and The Arbinger Institute, where he works with organizations, families, and individuals in conflict. Ford recently developed, "The Choice in Peacebuilding," an adaptation of the model designed for peacebuilding practitioners, and is currently working on "The Choice in Conflict Transformation," which is due out later this spring.

Ford recalls ICAR as, "an amazing experience! To be surrounded by so many different fields of academic expertise and to have them all focus on one subject—conflict—was unique. I felt like the variety of perspectives I got from professors and students, along with the experience gained from practice, opened up a whole new world and set me on the path toward what I'm doing now."

Regarding what he's doing now: it is spring and the Winter term at BYUH is winding down, the NBA draft is coming into full swing, a publishing deadline with Arbinger is approaching, and planning for the next trip to Israel with PPI is already underway. Regardless of which "hat" Ford is wearing—educator, journalist, or peace player he sports them all for one purpose—building the human capacity for peace. Chad Ford can be reached at [chad.ford@byuh.edu](mailto:chad.ford@byuh.edu). ■



Ford playing for peace in Israel. Photo: Chad Ford..

## Middle East Media Forum

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Solon Simmons is a professor of Conflict Resolution at ICAR. Photo: ICAR.

from Seymour Hersh and Ahmed El Sheikh, to Robert Fisk and Azmi Beshara. The conference opened with greetings offered by Wadah Khanfar, the Director General of the Al Jazeera Network, who spoke in Arabic but theorized in English with overt references to Samuel Huntington, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Joseph Nye.

The panels of the forum revealed an intriguing worldview, the key assumptions of which were that the world was becoming multi-polar, that regional power in the Middle East was shifting from the current Israeli-American hegemony to a new balance between Turkey and Iran, and that the lessons of history make clear that Afghanistan is the graveyard of empires. The problem with these assumptions, as they were employed, was not that they were wrongheaded or divorced from disinterested inquiry, but that they came off as more aspirational than analytical.

The most powerful speakers—like Abdul Bari Atwan, the Editor in Chief of Al Quds Al Arabi—developed incisive historical condemnations of American policy in the region, which relied on first order historical analogy with little situational empirical support. Atwan argued that, as fell the British, so fell the Soviets and so too will fall the Americans. In this instance, it took an Afghani voice to suggest that the current context in that country may differ in important ways from those precedents. Atwan's response

that the Taliban would return to power and that their problems with women's rights were exaggerated in a biased Western media, provided little comfort.

What became clear through the course of the proceedings was that while Al Jazeera had developed a powerful new global voice, it was, as yet, unclear about how to use it in conversation with its ever present American interlocutor. Media stars from the English and Arabic divisions of the channel led discussions in a balanced and respectful way, but what was striking to this American outsider was how eager the hosts were to interface with a generally Western and specifically American viewpoint, while they had so little success in doing so.

This is a fascinating problem and stands in analogy to the problem of resolution in the region. Well-meaning hosts struggled to wrest the microphones from dilating sheiks and pleaded for communicative action that would bring the moral frameworks of imperial and revolutionary forces into alignment; however, when a space opened for introspection, it was filled with cautious half reflections of salient Western self-understandings. Some were well

rehearsed, familiar and grounded, like of those of Seymour Hersh, Seumas Milne, and Robert Fisk. Others emerged organically as seasoned broadcasters sought balance by imploring any American at all to speak after some fiery invocation of Israeli or American brutalities. As one might expect, the typical reaction went something like, "I am rarely called on to represent my country, but I agree with everything you have just said."

The awkward preaching quality of the debate was no fault of the participants, but points to the challenges inherent in open discussion within the simplifying context of violent struggle. For all of the progress Al Jazeera has made in propelling open debate,

one still yearned for an Israeli moderate, an Obama Democrat or a Kurdish rights activist to break through the din and offer a constructive, if unpopular, perspective. In this atmosphere, it was almost possible at times to imagine that there was a consensus on regional policy and prospects for Arab unity, but that image quickly faded when the group was reminded that the rising counterpublics—Iran, Turkey and Pakistan—were non-Arab and in little agreement among themselves.

As a rallying point for critical journalists, the forum was a great success. I was struck by a question asked by an Al Jazeera journalist about how he should cover the upcoming war in Afghanistan, given the size of the country and difficulty of the terrain; it would offer nothing like the conditions that led to the brilliant coverage in Gaza with its tightly packed million and a half quasi prisoners. The audience and panelists offered pragmatic and thoughtful responses on the ways that media could be used to counter American initiatives. In the spirit of Jefferson, it made me tremble for my country to reflect that God is just.

As an intellectual affair, I was much less impressed. The careful and detailed framework of structural realities and historical continuities in the region, proposed by Michael Hudson of Georgetown, came off as a rare breath of fresh air. For

a moment, the conversation seemed less based on an abstract hope that America will fail and more on the harsh realities of the region. These may coincide, but probably not in the spirit of the gathering. To paraphrase the remarks of Claire Spencer of Chatham House, we may wish for a wiser America but perhaps not a weaker one. The odd problematic of the setting was to demand that participants pose as tough-minded philosophical realists, but act as expressive and committed idealists; the disconnect was disconcerting.

Despite the contradictions, there is something exceptional and inspiring about what this social movement with cameras is doing in the Middle East. As one of the participants observed, Al

“As a rallying point for critical journalists, the forum was a great success.”

—SOLON SIMMONS

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## Al Jazeera

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Jazeera has helped to create an Arab public sphere where none existed. With the critical acclaim of its recent Gaza coverage in English, there is ever more reason to pay attention to the next act of this absorbing drama—the crafting of Arab identity in a skeptical world—because now, that skeptical world will understand what the players are saying.

What may be yet missing from the Al Jazeera toolkit is a robust sense of how to find the intellectual depth to bridge cultures, how to align Arabic and English narratives, and how to imagine an emerging cosmo-Arabism that breaks the bounds and expands the scope of older reactive and confrontational pan-Arabisms. On a tour of the original and now historical Al Jazeera control room, I noticed a quote that seemed to capture the flavor of the organization and the event: “Reality is a disappointment so I live in dreams.” As this latest Al Jazeera forum made clear, it will be important to come to terms with the new reality that this Qatari news revolution creates for the world. However, from what I saw, dreams will remain important to those disappointed with the prospects for the region for some time to come, and they may weigh on the brains of the living like a nightmare. ■

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## Student Opinion

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projects. Defense aid, as well as projects to ensure food security and build hospitals, should remain unaffected.

Such a strategy should follow the model set out in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, first passed in 2000, and renewed in 2008, which mandates an annual study of countries’ progress in preventing, detecting, and punishing human trafficking. Countries found to be making unsatisfactory progress towards minimum standards are subject to sanctions that include withdrawal of non-humanitarian, non-trade-based aid.

Barack Obama and Joe Biden campaigned on a platform that emphasized the importance of creating equity for women both at home and abroad. Hillary Clinton has consistently advocated for women throughout the course of her career, and many celebrated her nomination to Secretary of State as an opportunity for women’s issues to be heard at the highest levels of government.

It is time now for the United States to live up to its ideals and uphold women’s rights by requiring that countries that receive U.S. aid take strong steps to protect women. ■



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