

THE CARTER CENTER NEWS

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THE
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Historic Trip to Cuba Seeks Improved Relations

During a historic trip in May as the first former or sitting U.S. president to travel to Cuba since 1928, former President Jimmy Carter called for the U.S. and Cuban governments to mend relations.

President Carter, along with wife Rosalynn, Carter Center Executive Director John Hardman, and Americas Program Director Dr. Jennifer McCoy, went to Cuba at the invitation of Cuba President Fidel Castro. The Carter Center mission sought new ideas on improving the relationship between Cuba and the United States, as well as a dialogue with President Castro and the Cuban people.

During his visit, President Carter called on the United States to end what he called an “ineffective 43-year-old economic embargo” and on President Castro to hold free elections, improve human rights, and allow greater civil liberties. President Carter made this plea during an unprecedented speech broadcast live on Cuban television and radio and open to international press.

President Carter briefed Congress and President Bush on the trip as part of his effort to find common ground within the United States on how to overcome the impasse in U.S.-Cuba relations. Still, the Bush administration later reaffirmed its political and economic ostracism of Cuba.

“I did not come here to interfere in Cuba’s internal affairs, but to extend a hand of friendship to the Cuban people and to offer a vision of the future for our two countries and for all the Americas.”

— FORMER PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER

“Every place we went Cubans expressed their desire for better relations with the United States,” Dr. Hardman said.

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Photo by Annemarie Poyo



President and Mrs. Carter enjoyed a warm welcome from Cuban citizens during a walking tour of historic Old Havana.

From the Executive Director

Building hope is the ultimate goal of the Carter Center's mission to wage peace and fight disease worldwide. We empower people to take control of their own problems by sharing with them the knowledge they need to build a more positive future.

Sometimes our efforts involve a broad-scale process, such as how to include all major sectors of society in preparing a national development strategy. Similarly, we work with political parties and governments before, during, and after elections to ensure fair rules of play so the final ballot count will reflect the voters' true choice.

People become empowered as individuals when systems are changed. I'll never forget the woman I met at a polling station in Mozambique, who had walked four kilometers to cast her first ballot. She said, "I know I can now decide about the leader of my country

and vote for someone who will make my life better."

Other projects teach individuals a specific set of skills, such as how to increase crop yields through proper use of fertilizers and crop rotation or how to use special filters to strain from drinking water fleas that carry the debilitating Guinea worm disease.

In Ethiopia, an extension agent described how life was renewed for farmers who now can feed their once-starving families and, for the first time, export maize.

The Carter Center also empowers people by giving our partners credit for the advances they make when we work together on a project. Acknowledging their achievements builds community pride, continuing commitment, and ongoing hope.

We give people a reason to believe the future will be better. We strengthen their technical capacity, so their spirits may soar. When you are part of the Carter



Photo by Julie Benz

John Hardman, M.D.

Center family, you are part of an effort not only to strengthen nations' social and political processes but also to change the lives of individuals, the real key to permanent progress.

Peace and Health Programs Collaborate in Sudan

Sudan, a country mired in a cycle of violence, poverty, and disease, has been a prime focus of the Carter Center's joint health and peace efforts for the last decade. The Center has tried to shine a beacon of hope on one of the world's longest internal wars, where armed conflict and rampant disease are continuing challenges.

The Center has helped re-establish diplomatic relations between Sudan and Uganda through the Nairobi Peace Agreement negotiated by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter in 1999, encourage Sudanese rebel armies to come to the negotiating table, return child soldiers to their families, and control debilitating diseases.

Two million people have died in fighting or through war-related famine in a 20-year civil war often described simplistically as a struggle for liberation by black



Photo by Ben Hoffman

Alex Little trains participants in conflict resolution skills at the Sudan Release and Rehabilitation Agency headquarters in Rumbek, South Sudan.

Christians in the south from Arab Muslims in the north. Another four million have

been dislocated, left homeless, or forced into exile. The Carter Center is one of few international organizations doing health work in areas controlled by both the government of Sudan and opposition forces.

Sudan represents the last great hurdle to eradicating Guinea worm disease and controlling blinding trachoma and river blindness. According to Dr. Donald Hopkins, associate executive director of the Center's health programs, Sudan is the most highly endemic country for Guinea worm disease, which has been reduced by more than 98 percent worldwide.

"We find it's very difficult to implement most of the health activities where peace does not exist," said Dr. Jeremiah Ngondi, the Center's trachoma data manager for Sudan. "Looking at all the organizations working in southern Sudan, The Carter Center is the most

aggressive on health and peace issues. The work the Center is doing is quite indispensable because we try to provide an 'extended package' in both peace and health initiatives."

The interdependence of health and peace efforts is clear in the Center's treatment of Guinea worm. In 1995, President Carter negotiated a six-month "Guinea worm cease-fire" in southern Sudan, allowing health workers to travel to the region and treat the most severe cases. Last June, the Center helped distribute almost eight million personal pipe filters throughout Sudan, one for every man, woman, and child at risk for Guinea worm disease. The pipe filters allow for nomadic and displaced peoples to filter drinking water wherever they go.

The Carter Center Trachoma Control Program and its partners in the Vision 2020 project are working in Sudan and other developing countries, where 90 percent of the world's blind live. Trachoma is the world's leading cause of preventable blindness.

Vision 2020 held a meeting in Khartoum in February on how to target the major causes of preventable blindness and coordinate future plans to:

- Increase awareness of blindness as a major public health issue
- Control the major causes of blindness

- Train ophthalmologists to provide appropriate eye care, and
- Create an infrastructure to manage the problem.

In addition, the International Trachoma Initiative, a collaboration of organizations working to control the disease worldwide and a member of Vision 2020, has earmarked even more Zithromax® pills for treatment in Sudan. The Carter Center helps the Sudan Trachoma Control Program to acquire the drug donation for distribution in infected communities.

Meanwhile, the Center's Conflict Resolution Program has made great strides in implementing the Nairobi Agreement, which calls for Sudan and Uganda to renounce the use of force, disarm terrorist groups, cease support to rebel groups, and return prisoners of war and child abductees to their families.

The countries have resumed diplomatic relations, each posting an ambassador in the other's capital. Sudan has stopped its support of the Lord's Resistance Army, a northern Ugandan

rebel force that has terrorized that area's Acholi community. Sudan also recently allowed Ugandan soldiers to fight the LRA inside southern Sudan, a gesture of increasing cooperation.

Since January, program staff have trained Sudanese government leaders and their adversaries in southern Sudan in negotiating skills and mediation techniques. President Carter, after opening an international Guinea worm meeting in



Photo by The Carter Center

Kelly Callahan, Carter Center resident technical adviser in Nairobi, educated people in communities in southern Sudan in the proper use of pipe filters that can help prevent Guinea worm disease.

Khartoum and meeting with government leaders, went to southern Sudan in March to open one of the workshops and meet with rebel leaders to assess the current peace process.

Over the past 20 years, two million Sudanese people have died in fighting or through war-related famine. Another four million have been dislocated, left homeless, or forced into exile.

"Sudan, for all its disease, war, and famine, showcases why The Carter Center has been successful as an international organization—its health and peace programs work collaboratively to address a country's needs," said Dr. Ben Hoffman, director of the Center's Conflict Resolution Program.



Photo by Alex Little

Conflict Resolution Program Director Ben Hoffman discusses training goals with Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement official Kuol Manyang.

continued from cover page

Cuba, cont.

"They would like to see more Americans traveling to Cuba and exchanging ideas."

During the trip, the Cuban government gave the Center mission *carte blanche* access to people and places. The mission met with religious leaders and human



Photo by Annemarie Poyo

President Carter and President Castro held a series of formal and informal discussions.

rights activists—people not usually granted a public forum for their opinions—including organizers of the Varela Project, a grassroots petition drive seeking a national referendum to guarantee freedom of speech and assembly and free elections. President Carter also met with Vladimiro Roca, who had just been released two months early from a five-year prison term for publishing documents criticizing the Cuban government, and with Cuban journalists seeking greater freedom of the press.

The mission also toured a biotech facility, a medical school, an AIDS sanitarium, a school for disabled children, and an agricultural production cooperative, where free enterprise thrives: Private farmers sell their produce alongside state-owned stalls in farmers' markets in the cities.

In full discussions with the Cuban government, President Carter noted

progress from its economic reforms and universal medical care afforded Cuban citizens but also presented his concerns on human rights issues.

Excerpts from President Carter's uncensored live broadcast to the Cuban people from the University of Havana:

I want the people of the United States and Cuba to share more than a love of baseball and wonderful music. I want us to be friends and to respect each other. ... Because the United States is the most powerful nation, we should take the first step.

First, my hope is that the Congress will soon act to permit unrestricted travel between the United States and Cuba, establish open trading relationships, and repeal the embargo. ... Second, I hope that Cuba and the United States can resolve the 40-year-old property disputes with some creativity. ... Third, ... many Cubans in South Florida remain angry over their departure and their divided families. We need to define a future so they can serve as a bridge of reconciliation between Cuba and the United States. ...

"We hope Cubans will continue this debate among themselves, as it is Cubans who must decide for themselves the future direction of their country," Dr. McCoy said.

Democracy is a framework that permits a people to accommodate changing times and correct past mistakes. ... Cuba has adopted a socialist government in which one political party dominates and people are not permitted to organize any opposition movements. Your constitution recognizes freedom of speech and association, but other laws deny these freedoms to those who disagree with the government.

It is gratifying to note that Articles 63 and 88 of your constitution allow citizens to petition the National Assembly to permit a referendum to change laws if 10,000 or more citizens sign it. ... When Cubans exercise this freedom to change laws peacefully by a direct vote, the world will see that Cubans, and not foreigners, will decide the future of this country.

For the full text of President Carter's speech, click on "Activities by Country" at www.cartercenter.org.



Photo by Annemarie Poyo

President Carter and Americas Program Director Jennifer McCoy met with human rights leaders in Cuba to hear their concerns and to discuss a petition movement called the Varela Project, calling for a referendum on freedom of expression, amnesty for political prisoners, and a chance for citizens to own small businesses.

Venezuela Calls on Carter to Initiate Dialogue

In an effort to help resolve Venezuela's political crisis following the ouster and then reinstallation of the president in April, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter met with the government and major opposition groups in Caracas in July.

Although the opposition was not yet ready to engage in direct talks with Venezuela President Hugo Chavez, commitments were obtained from the government to address certain concerns about press freedom, refrain from counter-marches during opposition demonstrations in July, continue dialogue with business and financial leaders over controversial decree-laws, recognize the newly reformed labor confederation, respect decisions of other branches of government, and work

harmoniously to designate new members for the national elections commission. In addition, the government agreed to revamp the dialogue process and seek support from the United Nations Development Program, Organization of American States, and The Carter Center.

"It remains my hope that the Venezuelan government and opposition groups will pursue constructive talks to settle immediate pressing differences and then set in place a long-term process that will include all sectors of society in healing the nation's wounds," said President Carter.

President Carter and Carter Center peace programs staff met with a wide range of actors in the crisis, including President Chavez, Vice President Jose Vicente

Rangel, cabinet ministers, news media executives, Catholic bishops, opposition political parties, civil society leaders, the Confederation of Venezuelan Workers, government political parties, the umbrella business organization Fedecámaras, National Assembly leaders, the international diplomatic corps, the OAS, and UNDP.

"Venezuela's problems are complex and divisions within the country are deep. Our goal is to initiate a long-term process that will lead to inclusive governance and ultimately strengthen the deep tradition of democracy in Venezuela," said Dr. Jennifer McCoy, director of the Center's Americas Program.

PROFILE: EDMUND J. CAIN

Shaping Nations' Visions Means Looking Beyond the Past

During his 30-year career at the United Nations, Ed Cain experienced some of the most devastating humanitarian crises in modern history — the events which led to Afghanistan's descent into chaos and despair, the flight of Kurds from northern Iraq into southeastern Turkey during the Gulf Crisis, the suffering of a collapsed Somali society, and the haunting aftermath of the massive genocide in Rwanda. Cain sees the root causes of all these man-made disasters in the failure of these societies to develop politically, economically, and socially.

Through it all, he retained the view that it is possible to avoid such human suffering and threats to world peace, a belief that attracted him to international service and, little more than a year ago,

drew him to The Carter Center as director of its Global Development Initiative.

The Initiative is the perfect instrument for someone driven by idealism, tempered by pragmatism. The program attempts to get countries to look beyond obstacles and differences that prevented them from developing to envision a society where all strive to work together peacefully to plan and implement common goals.

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Cain, cont.

KEY PIECE IN PEACEMAKING

“We’re probably the Center’s least understood program,” Cain contends. “Development is such an amorphous and multifaceted challenge. It is not easy to explain or see successes in sound bytes or snapshots. Sustainable development is a long-term process requiring sound policy planning that includes all sectors of society and effective implementation, which usually involves some form of capacity-building and facilitation to succeed. While resolving conflicts and ensuring free and

fair elections are important to achieving peace, sound country-owned development strategies are fundamental to preserving it. As President Carter once said, ‘Peace is not a piecemeal proposition.’ It takes all the work of our Center to achieve peace.”

Of course, that work also requires resources and resourcefulness like that demonstrated by a Development Cooperation Forum at The Carter Center in February, which helped stir response in the international donor community to the plight of the developing world. The forum brought together leaders of international development organizations and countries where the Initiative is actively involved.

“We timed our forum to precede the

Monterrey conference, with the hope of influencing issues we felt needed to be addressed there,” Cain says.

Forum participants pointed to disturbing trends in efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals endorsed by U.N. member nations two years ago. Those goals call for the number of extremely impoverished people—the 1.2 billion who live on less than \$1 a day—to be reduced by half by 2015, and for adequate education, health care, and environmental preservation worldwide.

SETTING A NEW COURSE

“We are nowhere near where we should be in moving toward these goals,” Cain says. “The world’s most powerful countries have been talking about these issues, at the G-8 Summit and the Davos Economic Forum, but they are not doing enough to generate the resources and support actions necessary to achieve these goals and, thereby, begin to reduce human suffering meaningfully.”

When President Bush announced plans to boost significantly the U.S. foreign aid budget days before the Monterrey conference, Cain saw it as a step in the right direction and attributes the decision in part to a recognition that the current results-oriented, businesslike approach to achieving targeted development goals is now worth investing in and that growing economic disparities in today’s world contribute to global insecurity.

“The Global Development Initiative is working with four countries—Albania, Guyana, Mali, and Mozambique—to try new ways to create a sound socio-economic environment necessary for sustainable development,” Cain says. “There is no one template that fits all. Each country puts its own imprint on the strategy, depending on its unique situation.

“We believe that as people see results from their plans, ethnic tension and equity issues will dissipate, and donor countries will see that aid really can create opportunity and hope.”

Following the Carter Center’s Development Cooperation Forum at which leaders said the world is not on target for cutting global poverty in half by 2015, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter traveled to the U.N. conference on economic development in March, where he called for urgent action on several fronts.

At the conference in Monterrey, Mexico, President Carter and Edmund Cain, director of the Center’s Global Development Initiative, discussed with finance and development ministers from some 60 countries how to achieve global human security by increasing development assistance and its effectiveness. They also urged fairer trade conditions for poor countries, increased debt relief and investment, and good governance in developing countries.

“A more just and fair world benefits all,” President Carter said. “Reducing poverty is in the national interest of all countries. Poverty weakens democracy and its institutions. We cannot have genuine human security for all until poverty and human suffering are more effectively addressed.”

The Monterrey conference capped the Global Development Initiative’s two-day forum at which World Bank President James Wolfensohn, United Nations Development Programme Administrator Mark Malloch Brown, the presidents of three developing countries, and other leaders from civil society and the private sector called on wealthy countries to commit more financial resources to combat poverty.

“The Carter Center’s forum called attention to the urgent need to move beyond rhetoric and put into action the resources necessary for a serious assault on poverty,” Cain said. “The Monterrey conference not only tested the political will of wealthy countries to help their poorer neighbors but also challenged developing countries to commit to sound policies that would attract increased resources.”

The target to cut poverty is one of seven Millennium Development Goals unanimously endorsed by the September 2000 U.N. Millennium General Assembly in New York. Other targets include decreasing by half the 1.2 billion people living on less than \$1 a day and ensuring all children are enrolled in primary school by 2015.

Sierra Leone Completes Election, Seeks Lasting Peace

Olayinka Creighton-Randall, director of the Campaign for Good Governance in Sierra Leone, had some reasons to feel satisfied with her nation's May 14 presidential and parliamentary elections. The incumbent president, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, driven out of the country briefly by rebels less than five years ago, won re-election by a large majority who believed that a vote

for Kabbah was a vote for more peaceful times. The Carter Center and other international observers hailed the Sierra Leone people for their commitment to democracy.

The Campaign for Good Governance in Sierra Leone published the only summary of all the party platforms distributed nationwide after the Campaign pressed the parties to articulate their views. These brochures will help voters hold their

elected officials accountable for something beyond vague promises. The organization also monitored controversial voter registration.

Beyond the importance of the elections, Randall sees a "Herculean" effort ahead in bringing true democracy and sustainable peace to her severely challenged land.

"If the issues that led to our wars are not addressed, such as corruption and human rights abuses, then peace here is very precarious," she said.

Leaders of past uprisings headed two parties on the ballot. One party is accused of killing thousands, severing the arms

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East Timor First New Nation of the Century

The island nation of East Timor celebrated its independence from Indonesia on May 20, 2002, the culmination of a three-year, Carter Center-supported process.

"The Carter Center was proud to assist the people of East Timor as they worked toward independence," said Rachel Fowler, senior program associate in the Democracy Program. "Especially considering the conflict-ridden history of the region, the country's leaders and its citizens are to be congratulated on a peaceful transition."

Carter Center involvement in East Timor began in 1999 when the Center monitored a referendum vote for independence, which was marred by excessive violence in the weeks after the balloting. The Center reported publicly on links between the Indonesian military and pro-integration militia in East Timor, who intimidated and harassed pro-independence supporters prior to the referendum. Subsequent steps toward independence, including the August 2001 election of a Constituent Assembly, the drafting of a constitution, and the April 2002 election of "Xanana" Gusmão as president, were peaceful. In its statement following the presidential election,

the Center declared successful balloting that clearly met international standards for freeness and fairness.

"While the new country has begun to create the institutions of democracy, the challenge remains to strengthen

government functions and build a vibrant civil society," said Fowler. "It is the responsibility of Timorese civil society and the elected government, with the full support of the international community, to work toward that end."



Alexandre "Xanana" Gusmão delivers his acceptance speech after the results of East Timor's presidential election were announced, with 82 percent of the vote in his favor.

Photo by Jeffrey Mapendere

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Sierra Leone, cont.

and legs of thousands more, and using thousands of children as soldiers.

“The people’s biggest fear was that these new party leaders would claim the election fraudulent and revert to past violent tactics,” Randall said. “International observers from The Carter Center and other organizations added credibility to the election results. But The Carter Center is unique in that it looks beyond an election to help determine what needs to be done to build democracy and lasting peace.”

Because neighboring Liberia’s leadership supported the insurgency in Sierra Leone, increased instability in Liberia also concerns Randall, particularly any influx of refugees from Liberia and cross-border raids on Sierra Leone diamond mines to finance war machines. The Carter Center’s 22-member observer team included six leaders of nongovernmental religious and human rights organizations in Liberia. In meetings facilitated by The Carter Center, they and two team members from Guinea worked with representatives of sister organizations in Sierra Leone to coordinate peace efforts.

“The Carter Center looks beyond an election to help determine what needs to be done to build democracy and lasting peace.”

— OLAYINKA CREIGHTON-RANDALL,
CAMPAIGN FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE
IN SIERRA LEONE

“The violent conflicts that have devastated these countries in the past decade are intricately related to each other,” said Ashley Barr, who organized the Center’s election mission. “Community leaders in all three nations have begun to interweave their efforts to enhance the likelihood of sustainable peace and respect for human rights in the region.”

Center Monitors Mali Elections

In April and May 2002, the presidential elections in the West African nation of Mali went to two rounds, with Amadou Toumani Touré emerging victorious amid allegations of vote-rigging, public protests, recounts, and legal wranglings. Carter Center observers present for the entire process witnessed some disturbing irregularities.

“During the first round of the elections, there were widespread problems with the distribution of election materials, including ballot papers, as well as reports of vote-buying and the illegal circulation of proxy votes. These irregularities were serious constraints on the successful conduct of the elections. We were even more concerned with the tabulation process at the national level and our inability to observe all aspects of this process,” said Senior Democracy Program Associate David Pottie.

The first round balloting on April 28

showed Touré (known popularly as “ATT”) and ruling party candidate Soumaila Cisse as the top two vote-getters, but neither got the outright majority needed to avoid a runoff. Moreover, several of the other 21 presidential candidates claimed that rampant fraud and mismanagement should have invalidated the first round. Although more than half a million votes were discarded due to irregularities in the count, Mali’s Constitutional Court decided the results were valid and the runoff would occur on May 12.

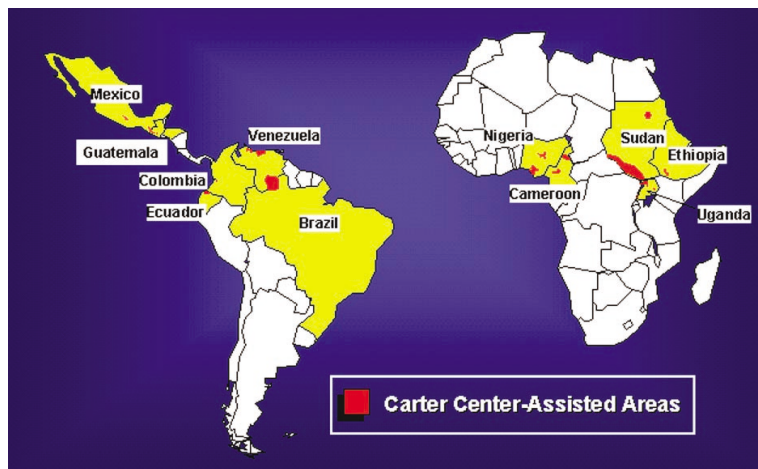
Turnout for that vote was far less than the 2.2 million who cast votes in the first round. Still, tabulating the runoff votes was a lengthy and questionable process. “The conduct of the elections during the second round was much improved, and the tabulation process was less complicated with only two candidates,” Pottie said.



With a U.N. peacekeeping official looking on, an election official displays a ballot so political party agents can confirm it is being counted for the correct candidate.

Photo by Ashley Barr

Conference Targets River Blindness Eradication in the Americas



Meeting at The Carter Center, more than 60 experts at January's Conference on the Eradicability of Onchocerciasis concluded that river blindness in the Americas can be eliminated with current knowledge and tools.

Their view reinforces findings of the Center's International Task Force for Disease Eradication, which independently evaluated results from efforts against river blindness in the six endemic countries and determined that eradication of this disease is possible in the region.

Eradication is defined as "interrupting transmission of the disease agent to the extent that the disease cannot recur even after specific control measures are ended."

The conference was funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and organized by the Center and the World Health Organization. Donald Hopkins, M.D., Carter Center associate executive director for health programs, co-chaired the

meeting with Maria Neira, M.D., of the World Health Organization. Attendees heard experts report on strategies against river blindness executed over the last 25 years in medicine, research, and social science. One emphasis was on mass

distribution of the safe and effective oral medication ivermectin or Mectizan®, donated by Merck & Co. for as long as necessary to bring about global control of river blindness.

"Onchocerciasis in the Americas strikes the poorest of the poor," said Dr. Mauricio Sauerbrey, director,

Onchocerciasis Elimination Program of the Americas, headquartered in Guatemala City. "The people who can benefit from the Merck donation live in small villages in remote rural areas. Delivery of the drug is difficult and hard to sustain. That is why it is so important to eradicate the condition completely: so it will never return."

The Center works in partnership with the Pan American Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Lions Clubs, and the ministries of health of the six affected Latin America countries—Mexico, Guatemala, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Brazil—to eradicate river blindness from the Americas. In 2001, the program progressed toward its goal of providing semiannual treatment to at least 85 percent of those in need.

"Onchocerciasis came to the Americas with Africans during the slave trade, and transmission of the disease was established in only a few areas of this hemisphere," said Frank Richards, M.D., technical director, Global 2000 River Blindness Program. "I hope we can use the momentum from this conference to get the resources we need to wipe out one of the remaining vestiges of slavery."

Mothers Join the Fight Against Guinea Worm Disease

In communities throughout the West African country of Benin, mothers are being enlisted in the war against Guinea worm disease.

Beginning in March 2001, three women with university training were recruited by the Guinea Worm Eradication Program and assigned to Mono, Zou, and Collines, the country's most endemic departments. These women, called social assistants, were the first of a future network of mothers in the most endemic communities. Each mother trains others to search

for cases of the disease, log cases in the village register, and apply occlusive bandages. They also inspect and distribute water filters, demonstrate correct use and care of filters, verify that ponds are treated monthly with the insecticide ABATE®, and encourage use of potable water, where available. The mothers make rounds twice a month among at least 25–35 households. Women leaders in the community also selected other women for training.

"Involving women more directly in the

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Mothers, cont.

eradication of Guinea worm disease has had a positive effect,” said Ms. Kelly McElmurray, technical adviser to Benin’s Guinea Worm Eradication Program. “Women are present in the village daily and can report cases quickly. Because mothers are responsible for obtaining water for household use, they take great care to note if people with Guinea worm are entering water sources to bathe or swim.”

Mothers played a positive role in stopping transmission of Guinea worm disease in Benin, where only 172 cases were reported in 2001.

With support from the villagers of Tchetti, one mother rallied against a negligent village volunteer when this man refused to report an outbreak of Guinea worm disease because he did not want to be embarrassed. The social assistant went to the local radio station, which routinely aired messages about preventing the

disease, announced the outbreak, and denounced the irresponsible behavior of the village volunteer. Her intervention allowed the Guinea Worm Eradication Program to take action immediately to contain the outbreak.

With the positive role these women played to stop transmission of Guinea

worm disease in Benin in 2001, where only 172 cases were reported, hopes are high. A fourth social assistant was recruited and trained. This unique network of village women volunteers will play a key role in stopping transmission of the disease in Benin during 2002.



Photo by Monique Petrofsky

Mothers in the community are an important human resource as they teach others how to eradicate Guinea worm disease.

Forum Unveils Georgia Suicide Prevention Plan

More than 200 experts and members of the general public gathered at the Rosalynn Carter Georgia Mental Health Forum at The Carter Center in May to witness the unveiling of Georgia’s first-ever suicide prevention plan.

The unfunded plan delineates steps individuals, agencies, and organizations can take to meet 10 specific goals, including improving awareness of the problem, links to services, and reporting. It was commissioned by the state’s Division of

Public Health and prepared by the Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network.

In Georgia alone, some 850 people take their own lives each year—more than die by homicide—and another 17,000 need emergency hospital care for injuries related to attempted suicides. Also according to the state, suicide ranks as the third leading cause of death—after unintentional injury and homicides—among those 15–24 years of age.

Other statistics show suicide rates are five times higher for males than for females

and two times higher for whites than for African-Americans. And three out of four suicide deaths in Georgia involve a firearm.

“We need to call attention to the issue, to let people know how prevalent suicide is.”

— FORMER FIRST LADY
ROSALYNN CARTER

The forum was highlighted by the touching personal stories of Iris Bolton, whose son Mitch committed suicide at age 20, and of businessman Larry Gellerstedt III, whose professional life

was forever altered when he courageously confronted his depression. Also on hand was Pulitzer Prize-winning author Art Buchwald, whose self-deprecating humor conveyed his own experience with depression and contemplation of suicide.

"For too long, suicide has been veiled in mystery and misunderstanding, feared

Speaking at the Rosalynn Carter Georgia Mental Health Forum, Suicide Prevention in Georgia: Healing and Hope, humorist Art Buchwald reminded listeners that people come out of depressions and there is light at the end of the tunnel.

rather than confronted. This refusal to think and talk about suicide actually prevents us from preventing suicides," said Kenneth Powell, M.D., Division of Public Health, Georgia Department of Human Resources, and a panelist for the forum.



Photo by Rob Galer

Satcher Joins Mental Health Task Force

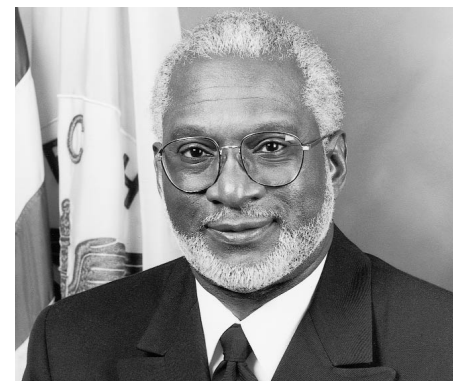
Former U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher, M.D., Ph.D., joins the Carter Center's Mental Health Task Force in September.

"Mrs. Carter and I share a vision for mental health in this country that centers on parity of access to mental health services in our health care system and the need to erase the stigma against mental illness," Dr. Satcher said. "I look forward to working with a distinguished and dedicated group of professionals who share the same goals."

This fall, he also will assume the post of director of the National Center for Primary Care at Morehouse School of Medicine.

As U.S. surgeon general and U.S. assistant secretary for health, he raised public awareness immeasurably with the first-ever report of a surgeon general on mental health. Dr. Satcher also has been director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, administrator of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and president of Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tenn.

Chaired by former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, the Mental Health Task Force identifies issues of major concern, convenes diverse constituencies, and develops initiatives to reduce stigma and discrimination against people with mental illnesses.



Center Names New Mental Health Director

Thomas H. Bornemann, Ed.D., M.S.W., senior adviser for mental health with the World Health Organization's Department of Mental Health and Substance Dependence, joins The Carter Center Aug. 1 as director of its Mental Health Program.

"We look forward to the leadership Thom can offer as we work to overcome stigma and the ignorance surrounding mental disorders, address public policy issues such as parity in mental health insurance coverage, and contribute to a positive shift in public sentiment toward people with mental illnesses," said Dr. John Hardman, the Center's executive director.

Dr. Bornemann has worked extensively with refugee mental health and other

humanitarian assistance activities. He has broad experience in mental health policy, both nationally and internationally, including the application of research findings to practice and policy. He formerly served at the National Institute of Mental Health and as deputy director of the Federal Center for Mental Health Services.

Among his varied activities, Dr. Bornemann helped develop the first Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health. Later, at the World Health Organization, he contributed to the World Health Report 2001, which focused on mental health. He recently retired from the U.S. Public Health Service as assistant surgeon general.



cartercenter.org Gets Makeover

Visitors to www.cartercenter.org will find a rocking new design and refined search features to keep audiences informed and engaged in the Center's mission to wage peace, fight disease, and build hope worldwide. Atlanta-based Web consultant DeepBlue Digital redesigned the site with input from a Center-wide staff committee.

"The new home page offers easier navigation to find information and puts a human face on our work," said Public Information Director Deanna Congileo.



Featured there are photo reels of the Center's partners

for peace and health worldwide, four boxes highlighting Center news, and a search function posted on every page that gives comprehensive results and specific descriptions of documents in the site's extensive archives.

Clicking on "Activities by Country" on the home page toolbar, users also can access an interactive map of projects by continent with links—either through the map or country names—to individual country briefings.

Newsletters, annual reports, and President Carter's trip reports are online in the "News and Information" section, and a library of downloadable publications, including older ones still in demand, will soon be on tap.



Center Hosts Supporters

The Carter Center's annual Executive Briefing and Presidential Reception on June 21 drew 280 members of the Ambassadors Circle and Legacy Circle for exclusive project briefings, an informal question-and-answer session with President and Mrs. Carter, guided tours of the facility, and special exhibits.

Members traveled to the event in Atlanta from 32 states, with one participant attending from Germany, and included some families with three generations of Carter Center supporters.

Founded in 1997, Ambassadors Circle honors donors who make annual gifts of \$1,000 or more to support the Center's general operations and programs. The 1,400 members of the Ambassadors Circle donated \$3 million in unrestricted funds to the Center's operating budget in 2001. The Legacy Circle, which totals 225 members, provides support through estate and financial planning.

For Bernard and Anne Attal of Brooklyn, N.Y., members of the Ambassadors Circle for three years, bringing their 10-year-old son Thomas was important. "We want him to know that not everyone in the world has the same chance he has," his

mother said. "We hope he will listen to the message that it is important when you receive something, you should give something in return."

Said Thomas, "It feels like I have brothers and sisters, and they're being helped by the Center. I think it's important to help other children in the world who are sick."

For more information on Ambassadors Circle, contact Seema Shams at 404/420-5134. For more information on Legacy Circle, contact Rhonda Schultz at 404/420-3868.

