

French Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Visits the United States

Bernard Kouchner, French minister of Foreign and European Affairs, visited Washington, D.C., from September 19 through 21 for a series of discussions with high-level US officials. It was also an opportunity to meet with members of Congress, the think tank community, French expatriates, and representatives of Jewish-American organizations. Minister Kouchner later joined French President Nicolas Sarkozy in New York at the opening of the 62nd session of the U.N. General Assembly from September 23 to 28. The minister's first official visit to the U.S. since taking office underscored the age-old friendship between France and the U.S. based on the shared common values of freedom and democracy, in the context of a renewed transatlantic relationship.

One of the highlights of the minister's visit to D.C. was a lecture he gave on September 20 at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) on the United States, France, and Europe in the face of major international challenges. Discussing the fruitful and complex relationship that unites France and the United States, Mr. Kouchner emphasized the vital importance of dialogue between the two countries. He lauded U.S.-French relations, stating that the renewed relationship provides an excellent opportunity "for all of us, here and now, to really take stock, to take a fresh look at the issues high on the global agenda with this friendship and sincerity in mind. With one simple question: To what use will we put this renewed friendship?"

Shifting his focus to the geo-political landscape, Minister Kouchner addressed several crises facing the world, including the Israel-Palestine peace process, and the situations in Lebanon and the Balkans. On the subject of Iran, the French minister explained: "We have absolutely no intention of giving up on dialogue. The door remains open. We must, time after time, explain to the Iranian regime that its current policy can only lead it to isolation, insecurity and economic stagnation. That if it can seize the opportunity



Bernard Kouchner discusses French foreign policy at CSIS.

that is presented to it by the international community, Iran and its people will have a chance to find the place that they deserve in the region and the international community, given their great history, their unique civilization and their potential. And in that case, Iranian youth will enjoy the future it deserves."

Mr. Kouchner also characterized global warming as a challenge affecting the world order and called on the U.S. to play a role in combating it: "A great nation like the United States has a duty not to impede efforts to combat global warming, one of the major challenges of this century. On the contrary, a great nation like the U.S. has a duty to take the lead in those efforts, because the fate of all humankind depends on them. We therefore wish to remind you of your responsibilities, and stress that reducing greenhouse-gas emissions and investing in renewable energy sources will not happen without Washington."

The French minister also reiterated the importance of developing the European Security and Defense Policy and how such a policy would be mutually beneficial to Europe and the U.S. "A stronger Europe is absolutely not incompatible with the transatlantic relationship. On the contrary, the two reinforce and complement each other," he stated, adding that the European Security Strategy "will help forge a common security culture."

Later that day, Minister Kouchner went to Capitol Hill for meetings with the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees. Discussion in those meetings ranged from Iran and Kosovo to Iraq, Darfur and France's Muslim population.

Also that day, Minister Kouchner held various press meetings surrounding France's foreign policy. During an interview with National Public Radio, as well as during another media engagement later that day with CNN's Wolf Blitzer, Minister Kouchner addressed the situation in Iran and in Iraq.

On September 21, Minister Kouchner met with his American counterpart, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who had recently visited him in Paris. Following their discussions, the French and American ministers hosted a joint press briefing at the State Department during which they issued a joint communiqué on Lebanon. Bernard Kouchner also met with Secretary Gates, and National Security Advisor Steven Hadley.

Following his two days in D.C., Kouchner paid a visit to the Embassy of France's Cultural Services headquarters in New York to award the 2007 Calder Prize to New York-based Lithuanian artist Zilvinas Kempinas before joining President Sarkozy in the halls of the U.N. General Assembly.

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French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Human Rights Rama Yade Visits Washington, D.C.

Rama Yade, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Human Rights, visited Washington, D.C., on October 3 and 4. Her stay was primarily focused on the situations in Haiti, where she made a trip in mid-September, and Burma.

During her visit, Yade held discussions with several high-level US officials as well as several members of Congress.

Yade also met with Dr. Haleh Esfandiari, Director of the Middle East Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

Before leaving Washington, Yade presented at the Brookings Institution, a non-profit public policy think tank, the main conclusions to be drawn from the last presidential campaign in a speech titled "Breaking the Lines: Sarkozy's Presidential Campaign."



Secretary Rama Yade addresses the Brookings Institution in D.C.

TREASURY SECRETARY PAULSON VISITS FRANCE



Courtesy: Patrick Maulave
Secretary Paulson meets with Minister Lagarde in Paris.

U.S. Secretary of Treasury Henry Paulson visited Paris September 17 to meet with French President Nicolas Sarkozy and Christine Lagarde, minister of the Economy, Finance and Employment, to discuss issues ranging from the world's financial markets to French-American relations and the state of the global economy. Paulson characterized his visit as a sign of "a new, very positive era of American and French relations" and lauded President Sarkozy for undertaking regulatory changes aimed at increasing economic growth. Paulson also voiced his support of the then-EU candidate for the post of chief of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), former French Finance minister Dominique Strauss-Kahn, who has since been appointed to head the IMF. According to the Treasury secretary, both men recognize the need to reform the IMF so that it can continue to play a role in the worldwide financial system, reflecting an outlook discussed in a recent New York Times article.

FRANCE UNVEILS NEW COUNTER-ESPIONAGE AGENCY

French Minister of Interior Michèle Alliot-Marie announced the creation of a new counter-espionage agency September 13, known as the *Direction Centrale du Renseignement Intérieur* (DCRI). The new office groups together two police intelligence services: the *Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire* (DST counter-terrorism service) and the *Renseignements Généraux* (General Information Office). In early 2008, approximately 4,000 agents will come together under the auspices of DCRI to address such matters as counter-espionage, counter-terrorism, economic intelligence and analysis of socio-geographic movements. The two units will remain essentially the same in their makeup and are uniting so as to present a stronger front against potential threats. "It is in this way that we can strengthen, and consolidate, the quality of the fight against terrorism in France," Alliot-Marie told reporters at the project's unveiling.

French Physicist Wins Nobel Prize

French physicist Albert Fert and his German colleague Peter Grünberg were awarded the 2007 Nobel Prize in Physics October 9 for their simultaneous discovery of "giant magnetoresistance" (GMR) in 1988. GMR is a quantum mechanical phenomenon that significantly affects electrical resistance in presence of a magnetic field, and is observed in thin film structures composed of alternating ferromagnetic and nonmagnetic metal layers (e.g., alternate small strips of iron and chromium), yielding practical applications ubiquitous in everyday life. The two physicists will be awarded the medal and a \$1.5 million prize, which they will split, from the Royal Swedish Academy of Science at a ceremony to take place December 10 in Stockholm.

The physicists' discovery has been applied to develop very high capacity hard disks (based on new read head designs, taking advantage of GMR), and MRAM memories.

The significant development in terms of hard disk capacities revolutionized the electronics industry, including, not only the computer industry, but also the music and video industries. Large capacity



Albert Fert won the Nobel Prize in Physics.

(HD based) MP3s and Ipods would not have been created without it, and this omnipresent technology can also be found in computers, washing machines, and cars. The impact of their achievement continues to ripple throughout different fields of technology and even manages to amaze the physicists themselves. Fert stated in an article by the International Herald Tribune that "these days

when I go to my grocer and see him type on a computer, I say, "Wow, he's using something I put together in my mind."

Currently, Fert is a professor at Université Paris-Sud and the scientific director of Unité Mixte de Recherche en Physique Commune Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS)/Thalès. This occasion marks the tenth Nobel Prize to be awarded to a French physicist.

New Fund to Promote Transatlantic Academic Cooperation

The Embassy of France to the U.S. recently launched a new public-private partnership called Partner University Fund (PUF) to promote innovative collaborations in research and education between French and American institutions of higher education. As both countries strive to strengthen their academic ties for cultural as well as economic and scientific purposes, the generosity of private donors and contributions from the French government make it possible to support a new generation of transatlantic partnerships.

With a budget of 1.4 million USD allocated for its first call for

projects, in the Fall 2007, PUF funds up to 30% of a partnership on a three-year period. Partnerships include joint initiatives in research and publication, postdoctoral mobility as well as joint and dual degrees at the master's and doctoral levels.

Under the auspices of FACE (French American Cultural Exchange, a non-profit foundation located in New York City), PUF is managed by an executive director, Pascal Delisle, who also serves as Cultural Attaché for Higher Education within the Embassy of France in D.C. More information is available through the Web site: www.facecouncil.org/puf.

French Army Exhibits in D.C. the Latest Innovations in Infantry Combat

The 2007 AUSA (Association of the United States Army) Annual Meeting and Exposition was held from October 8 to 10 at the Washington, D.C. Convention Center. At the event, the French Army presented the FELIN (*Fantassin à Équipement et Liaisons Intégrées*) infantry combat system, which is an ensemble of clothing, gear, and weapons outfitted with sophisticated technology. The



Amb. Vimont shakes hands with U.S. veteran from Iraq during AUSA meeting.

system includes a portable computer, a voice and data radio, new combat clothing with body armor, and a new ballistic helmet. Beyond the traditional presentations of innovative Army equipment, the exhibit was also honored by the presence of French Ambassador to the U.S. Pierre Vimont, who had the opportunity to meet four American veterans of the Iraq War.

Arianespace Orbits Satellite for U.S. - based Intelsat

On October 5, Arianespace, a launch service and solutions company headquartered in Evry, France, orbited two communications satellites: Intelsat 11 for the U.S.-based international operator Intelsat, and Optus D2 for the Australian operator Optus. The mission was carried out by an Ariane 5 GS launcher from Europe's Spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana.

Intelsat is one of the largest providers of fixed satellite services worldwide. The Intelsat 11 satellite was built by Orbital Sciences Corporation at its plant in Dulles, Virginia, using a Star 2 platform. Weighing about 2,500 kg at launch, the satellite is fitted with a hybrid payload comprising 34 high-power transpon-

ders, including 16 C-band and 18 Ku-band units. It offers 3.5 kW of electrical power and will host Latin America's première video programmers and the region's largest DTH platform. Since 1983, Arianespace has launched 47 satellites for Intelsat. This marks the second successful launch for Intelsat following last May's launch of its Galaxy 17 satellite.

Optus D2 was also integrated by Orbital Sciences Corporation in Dulles using a Star 2 platform. Optus D2 has a design life of 15 years and will provide direct TV broadcast, Internet, telephone and data transmission services for Australia and New Zealand.

Philadelphia and D.C. Celebrate French American Friendship

In the wake of the 250th birthday of the Marquis de Lafayette on September 6 (see NFF 07.10), various cities throughout the U.S. and France celebrated this historical incarnation of French-American friendship. With numerous festivities taking place throughout the year, 2007 has aptly become known as "the year of Lafayette." Philadelphia, often described as the birthplace of America's independence, and nearby Chester, were no exception, as the anniversary also lent itself to the occasion for these cities to celebrate other revolutionary personalities who encompass the spirit of the French-American alliance.

The events in the two cities concurrently commemorated the 225th anniversary of the U.S. Congress' review of the victorious French and American armies in September 1782. Through the support of the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route (W3R), the two Pennsylvania cities commemorated the allied French and American march from Newport, RI, to Yorktown, VA, in 1781. Parades were hosted in Philadelphia and Chester on September 1 as well, in honor of the triumphant return of the troops after defeating Cornwallis.

Passing through Independence Hall, the City of Brotherly Love's parade featured the color guards of the Philadelphia-Continental Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, accompanied by several Fife and Drum Corps, trumpeting sounds reminiscent of the era. Parade participants and friends were treated to a colonial lunch at the historic City Tavern, once frequented by Founding Fathers Washington, Adams and Jefferson. Special guests to the procession, among others, included Parade Grand Marshall General Rochambeau, W3R-PA President Win Carroll and *Consul Honoraire de France* à

Philadelphie Michael Scullin, who arrived to the tavern by horse-drawn carriage.

Chester County's Avenue of the Americas was graced with the presence of re-enactors portraying Benjamin Franklin, who addressed the crowd and thanked the French for their support in the war effort, and Generals Washington and Rochambeau, who laid a wreath on the grave of John Morton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence.



Courtesy: Michael Scullin
(From left to right): John Welch as General Rochambeau, Dean Malissa as General Washington, Hon. Consul of France Michael Scullin, participated in the events in PA on September 1.

As a testament to the spirit of French-American camaraderie several weeks later, The Meridian International Center of Washington, D.C., hosted a two-day symposium titled "Le Marquis de Lafayette and the Spirit of the Revolution" that explored the life and legacy of Lafayette, as well as the evolution of French-American relations.

The symposium featured five sessions, which covered themes such as: *Le Marquis de Lafayette and French-American Relations in the 18th Century*; *Ideas of Freedom and Liberty: The philosophes of the French Enlightenment*; *Hard vs. Soft: A Comparison of the French and American Revolutions and Lessons for Today*; and *21st Century Challenges: the Future of the World's Oldest Alliance*.

The panel of experts hailed from around the world and included, among others, two-time Pulitzer Prize winner Jim Hoagland, former French Ambassador to the U.S. Jacques Andréani, Senior Fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies Reginald Dale, Harvard Professor Patrice Higonnet, Former Director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars James Billington, Affiliated Brookings Scholar Justin Vaisse, and co-founder of the French Congressional Caucus Amo Houghton. For more information, please visit: www.meridian.org.

Fall Is the Season of French Cinema in D.C. and the Sunbelt



With Fall brining a chill in the air, Francophiles are warming up this season with a series of film festivals taking place throughout the country. In San Antonio, the fourth annual European Film Festival took place from September 17 to 20, featuring a selection of about 20 recent movies from Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Greece and France. The festival was created by two Frenchmen: Joel Savary, former Cultural Attaché in Houston and John Collet, Honorary Consul in San Antonio. Each year, the event, for which there is no admission charge, attracts more visitors than the preceding one: attendance, just 700 spectators in 2004, exploded to 6,500 this year. The French films at the festival were "*Toi et Moi*," "*Bled Number One*," "*La Trahison*" and "*Ma Vie en l'Air*." Additional information on the event is available on the festival's Web site: www.europeanfilmfestival.org

In Miami, organizers are preparing to host the third edition of the city's yearly French film festival, "French Cinema Miami," from November 9 to 11. Ten French cinematic masterpieces released this year will be shown at the AMC Theater Cocowalk, located in Coconut Grove, a neighborhood in Miami-Dade County. The festival's Web site (www.francecinemamiami.com) offers an online

movie quiz in both French and English and awards prizes, such as free movie tickets and DVDs, to the winners. In addition, those who purchase online tickets before October 30 will receive a 10 percent discount.

Francophiles outside the Sunbelt can also enjoy French cinema in the Washington, D.C.-area, where the Embassy of France and the French-American Cultural Foundation will be co-hosting "*C'est Chic! New Films from France*." Academy Award-winning French director Claude Lelouch will preside over this year's edition as well as present the U.S. premiere of his latest cinematic masterpiece, "*Roman de Gare*" (Crossed Tracks). D.C.'s second annual French film festival will feature over 20 new French films from October 14 - November 1 at venues throughout Washington, D.C. For more information, please visit: www.cestchic.org.

FRENCH CULTURE SINGS FROM NEW YORK CITY TO D.C.

For the 2007-2008 season, Opera Lafayette will be gracing New York City and D.C. stages with the first-ever contemporary revival of the French opera "*Zélinde, roi des Sylphes*." The piece is part of a three-year project to present three American premieres of 18th-century operas to audiences in the two cities. Complementing the opera, the New York Dance Company will perform in period costumes (choreographed by founder Catherine Turocy). Tenor Jean-Paul Fouchécourt, one of the leading performers of French Baroque music, will play the role of Zélinde. The other singers are soprano Heidi Grant Murphy, baritone William Sharp and soprano Ah Young Hong. The opera-ballet was written in 1745 by François Rebel and François Francoeur, two directors of the Paris Opera. It chronicles the story of a fantastical meeting of the inhabitants of the earth, sea and sky. For more information, please visit: www.operalafayette.org.

EIGHT MEMBERS OF THE 44TH BOMB GROUP RECEIVE LEGION OF HONOR

France honored eight WWII veterans on October 6, by granting them its highest award, the Legion of Honor. French Ambassador to the United States Pierre Vimont received the eight members of the 44th Bomb Group at the Residence of France for a ceremony during which he bestowed upon them the prestigious award. The veterans were: Staff Sergeant Dale V. Lee, Lieutenant Colonel C.C. Spagnola, First Lieutenant George W. Temple, Colonel Raymond E. Hamlyn, Staff Sergeant Perry Morse, First Lieutenant Arlo F. Bartsch, and Captain Edwin M. Lavitt. Although Lieutenant Colonel Edward J. Serbin, was absent, his contributions were still recognized. Ambassador Vimont opened the ceremony by extolling the upstanding courage and virtue of these men, asserting "[the French] will never forget what you did to restore our freedom." The 44th Bomb Group completed 344 air missions against the Axis powers in Europe. While each man came forward to receive his award, his accomplishments in combat were described, all of them having, at a very young age, performed extremely dangerous missions over France, Germany, and other parts of Europe. Some members of the group had survived being shot down or being incarcerated in a Nazi prison camp. For more information, please visit: www.ambafrance-us.org, and www.8thAirforce.com

France Takes Action With Environmental Initiatives

Le Tricolore can now add green to its repertoire as France takes environmental action on all fronts; from the boulevards of Paris to the United Nations General Assembly, environmentally minded initiatives are taking root and making headway both within France's borders and abroad.

On September 24, French President Nicolas Sarkozy visited New York City to attend the 62nd session of the U.N. General Assembly. He joined on this occasion over a dozen leaders from around the world for a summit on climate change. He declared the environment to be a top priority for France during his speech. The French president called upon other countries to help shoulder the burden, reminding representatives that "the climate challenge is collective [...] we must set objectives for reducing greenhouse-gas emissions—if we don't set ourselves an objective, we won't do anything. The target of a 50 percent reduction in emissions by 2050 is an absolute priority to prevent global disaster."

"Doing nothing would be nothing short of criminal *vis-à-vis* the planet's future, regardless of the continent," Mr. Sarkozy asserted, adding that "we, the industrialized countries, have a special responsibility; France will set the example by setting harsher rules for itself than those laid down in a multilateral framework."

In his speech, Mr. Sarkozy outlined three main goals to combat climate change. He first underscored the need to implement "clean growth." "The technologies for 'cleaner' growth exist," the French president emphasized, noting that "we haven't got to choose between saving the planet and economic growth. We need to have growth and save the planet, so we need



French electricity generation is more than 90% decarbonized as a result of "clean growth."

a growth that consumes less energy and fewer raw materials." Such growth advocates the use of technologies such as "Hybrid and electric vehicles, carbon capture and sequestration, the new fuels, and of course, all the 'low carbon' energies, including nuclear." Indeed, it seems that clean growth in France is already well underway as it manages a consistent population

increase and economic growth while still being one of the developed countries with the lowest emissions per capita—the average for industrialized countries is 13 t_{eq}CO₂/cap, with France only emitting 9 t_{eq}CO₂/cap.

His second goal centered around the need to protect the world's forests. "Deforestation and forest degradation account for 20% of greenhouse-gas emissions," Sarkozy stated. Citing Gabon in particular, President Sarkozy stated that countries striving to safeguard their forests must be supported. "They are contributing to world balance. It's a service they are performing for all. Financing mechanisms should also be expanded. We must think about ways to include

forests in clean development mechanisms."

The third goal explored the question of how to finance clean development mechanisms. Sarkozy referenced the market, stressing great hope for a carbon market in particular, and public funding as indispensable sources of financing. "But the approach must in the future be by sector, and no longer only by country. There must be a strong expansion of clean development mechanisms allowing 'polluting' companies to invest in the ecological development of the emerging and development countries," Sarkozy asserted.

A History of Environmentally Friendly Policies

Since the 1990s, France has been making climate change a high priority, enshrining environmental protection into the French Constitution (March 2005). It has also been introducing policies and measures at the national level to reduce France's contribution to global warming and keeping the country on track to meet its target under the Kyoto Protocol. In July 2005, France passed/set an ambitious "Factor 4" target: i.e., 2050 target - 75%, an energy policy act requiring a 75 percent reduction of emissions by 2050 in France, meaning on average a 3 percent reduction in greenhouse-gas emissions per year. Additionally, every year from 2007 on, a "transversal policy document on climate change" (*Document de Politique Transversal climat*) will be published and discussed by parliament. This "DPT climat" identifies all budget programs and actions contributing to climate change policy, and will serve to help keep climate change a priority on the French government's agenda.

In order to meet its environmental goals, France has adopted an all-encompassing plan that targets the following areas: Power generation, Energy saving, Transportation, Industrial processes and fluorinated gas emissions, Agriculture/forest, and Waste.

Instead of burning thousands of tons of coal, France has chosen to continue using nuclear power as a viable substitute. At present, it has 59 nuclear reactors with a net production of 425 TWh in 2006. Along with hydroelectricity, the reactors constitute a significant contribution to reducing greenhouse-gas emissions and as a result, French electricity generation is more than 90 percent decarbonized. Furthermore, the production of renewable electricity other than hydropower increased from 1.5 TWh in 1990 to 5.5 TWh in 2006, mainly thanks to energy recovery from incinerated waste and biomass.

In terms of energy saving, France is looking towards reducing final energy intensity by 2 percent per year. Savings would be mainly in the housing, tertiary and transport sectors. Beginning in May 2006, policies were enacted to strengthen regulations on energy consumption in new buildings, render tax credits to individual consumers, and supply public funding for renovation of 400,000 social housing units. In addition, all advertising from energy supply or service companies from 2006 on has to promote energy saving by including the message "Energy is our Future, save it!" in its publicity.

Transportation is another area in which France is seeking to conserve energy. France's Biofuels plan ambitiously targets a 7 percent rate in biofuel incorporation by 2010. To promote efficiency, France encourages eco-driving by raising awareness among drivers on fuel saving, through compulsory questions in the driving examination. High tax rates on fuel have also been implemented as well as a mandatory information label placed on new cars

that rates CO₂ emissions on a seven-color scale, thereby informing the consumer of the ecological footprint he or she will have as a result of their vehicle purchase.

The issues surrounding agriculture, waste, and deforestation were not left untouched by French legislation. Since as early as 1994, a program supporting improved management of nitrogenous fertilizer applications was installed along with a campaign for engine adjustments in tractors and other agricultural machinery, in order to reduce their fuel consumption. In 2004, the plan for wastes was announced with the intention of stabilizing the production of household waste by 2008, and improving recycling and acceptance of incineration. In the hope of preserving global forests, regulations in 2005 established a fixed ceiling regarding the amount of timber that can be used in certain buildings.

Le Grenelle Environnement: France Holds Conference to Find Environmental Solutions

France is currently engaged in a nationwide consultation called *Le Grenelle Environnement* (the name is a reference to the talks of 1968, held at *rue de Grenelle*, that resulted in the "*Accords de Grenelle*"), an Environmental conference launched by President Sarkozy on May 21 in hopes of restructuring French environmental policies and collectively developing new requirements for growth compatible with the idea of finite world resources. The consultative process opened on September 27 is based on six reports prepared by experts during the summer, respectively, on: climate change, the consumption of energy, the preservation of natural resources and biodiversity, the establishment of a healthful environment, as well as the adoption of sustainable methods for farming, fishing, and product distribution. Citizens are also encouraged to contribute online to the process (www.legrenelle-environnement.gouv.fr) which will be concluded by a large roundtable discussion at the end of October. The conclusions will be the starting point for the mobilization of all French society to set future legislative development in a sustainable perspective. France will use all levers to do this, including fiscal policy, regulation, public purchasing, transport policy, and the choice of infrastructure. However, it will draw on the huge capacity for innovation of business, professional groups, local authorities and the entire population. Based on the conference's conclusions, the government will make propositions for an updated national plan for the environment to the legislative branch (National Assembly and Senate) and push forward their fundamental principles at the European Union and international levels.

France's Dominique Strauss-Kahn to Head IMF

The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) selected former French Finance minister Dominique Strauss-Kahn on September 28 to serve as the IMF managing director and chairman of the Executive Board. Strauss-Kahn (or "DSK," as he is known in France) will succeed Spaniard Rodrigo de Rato for a five-year term starting on November 1, 2007.

Strauss-Kahn's candidacy was endorsed by the 27 EU Member States in July and presented by the IMF Executive Director for Germany, Klaus Stein.

De Rato welcomed the arrival of Strauss-Kahn as his successor, saying, "I know he possesses the experience, vision, and dedication to public service needed to successfully lead the IMF at this important juncture." The newly appointed IMF chief affirmed



Dominique Strauss-Kahn will be the new head of the IMF.

that he is "determined to pursue without delay the reforms needed for the IMF to make financial stability serve the international community, while fostering growth and employment."

Strauss-Kahn has served not only as Finance minister (1997-1999) and minister of Industry and International Trade (1991-1993), but also as a parliament deputy, corporate lawyer and professor. He has taught economics at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques (Political Studies Institute) since 2000 and has been a visiting professor at Stanford University.

As managing director, Strauss-Kahn will be the chief of the IMF's operating staff and chairman of the Executive Board.

Air France: Reaching Higher Altitudes with New Services



A computer chip will guarantee the accurate tracking of luggage.

Air France is introducing a number of measures to streamline air travel. In addition to the Paris-Seattle route that opened on June 11, Air France is implementing new technologies designed to enhance passengers' flying experience, beginning with "Hubway," a new express boarding technology for frequent flyers. The program, currently undergoing field testing, stores passengers' index fingerprints as biometric data on their "Smartboarding" cards, which replace traditional boarding passes.

Before boarding the plane, travelers, as of June 28, can check in and select seating up to 30 hours in advance with Web-enabled cell phones. Confirmation is sent by text message, and passengers can print their boarding passes at self-service kiosks in the airport. In the future, digital bar codes sent to cell phones and PDAs could be scanned at the gate in place of boarding passes. In-flight cell phone use may soon be taking off as well: Air France is considering allowing passengers aboard Airbus 318s to use cellular phones on an experimental basis.

As for their luggage, passengers can soon rest assured thanks to a new baggage tag equipped with a computer chip to guarantee accurate tracking of passengers's luggage from drop-off to the baggage claim. With the advent of such services and technology, passengers will soar well above "Cloud 9" with increased comfort. For more information, please visit: www.airfrance.com.

YEi Accepting Applications to Establish Startups in France

The Young Entrepreneurs Initiative (YEi) is currently accepting applications for U.S.-based entrepreneurs to establish a business venture in France. YEi is a non-profit program managed by the Office for Science and Technology at the Embassy of France in the United States. The aim of the program is to help entrepreneurs in the U.S. create startup businesses in France by providing up to \$600,000 in capital, access to a network of successful entrepreneurs already established in France, contacts with customers and business clusters, and mentoring throughout the establishment of their business venture. Laureates will benefit from various resources to help them study the feasibility of setting up their venture in France, the stepping stone to Europe.

YEi's long-term goal is to develop partnerships with American universities and top innovation centers, focusing on high-technology entrepreneurs who seek transatlantic growth. Applicants should be researchers or entrepreneurs residing in



YEi will provide \$600,000 in capital, and other resources to entrepreneurs.

the U.S. who wish to pursue a high-tech business venture in France (those in the fields of biotechnology, nanotechnology, materials and information technology are particularly encouraged). There are no restrictions on age or nationality. Applications for 2008 are open until November 30, 2007. For more information, please visit: www.france-science.org/innovation/yei.

TELEVISION TO APPEAR ON CELL PHONES IN FRANCE IN 2008



The French government authorized on September 24 the diffusion throughout France of "personal mobile tele-

vision" (TMP), television channels available on cell phones. The decision to implement the program was signed by Christine Lagarde, minister of Finance; Hervé Novelli, Secretary of State for Businesses and Foreign Trade; and Christine Albanel, minister of Culture and Communication. Beginning in 2008, the service will add the French to the ranks of millions of cell phone users around the world who already watch their favorite broadcast television programs in pocket-sized format, an initiative developed by Nokia and supported by the European Commission. Similar programs in Italy and Asia (South Korea and Japan) have already proven successful, boasting 1 million and 7 million subscribers, respectively. Before the end of October, the *Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel* (Executive Audiovisual Council) will start accepting bids from companies and networks that wish to be broadcast through TMP. Authorities have not yet decided how to fund the program, nor whether users will pay to have access to the service. Hopes are to debut TMP for the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing and ultimately offer the program on a wide scale by 2010.

PARIS'S NUIT BLANCHE GETS A "SECOND LIFE"

This year, Paris added a virtual dimension to its annual all-night celebration of art and culture, *Nuit Blanche* ("All-Nighter"), that took place from sundown October 6 into the early morning of October 7. *Nuit Blanche* features indoor and outdoor art displays at venues all across Paris free of charge. Events ranged from late night visits of the Louvre to an interactive multimedia platform where lights and sounds are triggered by movement. At the Hôtel Albret in central Paris, instead of finding the art itself, visitors used computers to explore an online collection of art in Second Life, a virtual world where *avatars* (virtual alter egos) live. The art was housed in a simulated building designed by architect Ignazio Mottola for the project, which was dubbed "Second Night." Throughout the night, participants were filmed and videos of them displayed live in the virtual art exhibit. At the same time, the collection was available to Second Life users around the world, making a portion of the art from *Nuit Blanche* accessible to those outside of Paris.

MUSICIAN GILBERT MONTAGNÉ TO TAKE ON OBSTACLES FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED



Gilbert Montagné will propose ways to facilitate the daily life for the visually impaired.

Frenchman Gilbert Montagné, a well-known blind singer and Knight of the Legion of Honor, has taken on a mission to help his fellow visually impaired citizens. Minister of Labor, Labor Relations and Solidarity Xavier Bertrand has recruited Montagné to further the progress made since the adoption of the Handicap Law of 2005. Montagné will serve as an emissary of the visually impaired and recommend ways to facilitate their everyday life (many of whom do not master Braille), building upon, in particular, resources in school, work, cultural activities and public transportation. After touring abroad and in France to develop a better understanding of the barriers the visually impaired face on a daily basis, Montagné will submit a proposal of legislative and service measures to the minister at the end of the year. Montagné is both a pianist and organist, as well as a singer.

PARIS RECEIVES "A+"

Three top rating agencies — Standard & Poor's, Moody's and Fitch Ratings — announced on September 28 that Paris had received the highest grade possible (AAA) for its financial management, the first time the city received the highest rating from all three at the same time. Despite the significance of the achievement, Paris's mayor, Bertrand Delanoë, considers the grade to be more of an encouragement than an expression of congratulations, especially since the city had already received the highest rating from Standard & Poor's in years past. The latter confirmed Paris's long-term standing, saying that the grade reflected the strength of the city's economy, low level of debt, high quality of management and potential. Moody's underlined its intention to keep an attentive eye on the city's social spending while Fitch Ratings applauded Paris's ability to face future debt.

Society

France Launches New Contraception Campaign

The French National Institute of Health Prevention and Education (INPES) recently launched a public health campaign on the use of contraceptives. The national campaign, titled "Choisir Sa Contraception" ("Choose Your Contraception"), began on September 15 and is reaching out to the public and to health professionals with the message "La meilleure contraception, c'est celle que l'on choisit" ("The best contraception is that which you choose").

According to INPES, two out of every three abortions in France are performed on women who reportedly used contraception, which indicates that many are unaware of correct usage. The Campaign aims to teach women and couples to use contraception more effectively.

Given the increasing variety of contraceptives over the years, the campaign encourages individuals to select contraceptive methods adapted to their personal situations, an idea supported by scientific research as being essential to ensuring effectiveness. To this end, some information in the campaign is aimed specifically at health professionals, enabling them to play a role in helping their patients make choices appropriate to their circumstances.

choisirsacontraception
La meilleure contraception, c'est celle que l'on choisit.



© www.choisirsacontraception.fr

The new public health campaign aims to raise awareness about the use of contraceptives.

Information targeted at the general public is distributed through a variety of different media: television and radio commercials, Web banners, brochures, a toll-free hotline, and a Web site. A brochure for adolescents addresses questions about health issues, including sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS. The campaign reaches as far as the French overseas departments of Guadeloupe, French Guiana, and Martinique. For more information about this program, please visit: www.choisirsacontraception.fr.

School's Out for the Weekend

As of next year, elementary school children in France will no longer go to school on Saturdays thanks to a September 28 decision by Xavier Darcos, minister of National Education. After the measure's implementation, a similar move may be made in secondary schools.

Schools will probably remain open on Saturday for athletic and cultural activities, as well as for students seeking extra academic help.

The new policy is designed to eliminate discrepancies in schedules that exist between different départements (administrative districts) in France. Currently, the national education calendar applies differently to schools, according to local conditions.

This decision seems to have been well received by all parties involved: according to a September 19 Opinion Way poll sponsored by the French magazine *Nouvel Observateur* and Play Bac (an organization that provides educational resources for children), 80 percent of parents and 59 percent of teachers in France are indeed opposed to Saturday classes. Opinion surveys demonstrate that parents are also in support of shortening summer holi-



© M.A.E / F. de la Mure

Elementary schools will no longer hold Saturday classes beginning *La Rentrée scolaire* in 2008.

days to make up for the lost Saturdays.

Studies show that French students are already putting in more classroom hours than their European peers. A typical student in France spends 936 hours in class compared to an average of 800 hours in the rest of Europe, as reported by the BBC.



**FORMER
FRENCH
PRESIDENT
LAUNCHES
BLOG**

Former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing entered the political blogosphere earlier this year with the creation of his own site dedicated to issues pertaining to the European Union. At 81, the former French president continues to be an active figure in national politics, serving as a de jure member of

the French Constitutional Council. Through his blog, President Giscard d'Estaing seeks to engage France's Internet navigators in an open debate surrounding those issues which have inspired his own political career. He provides prompt responses to comments and questions regarding European politics, creating a rich dialogue between himself and his readers. To participate in the dialogue yourself, please visit: <http://vge-europe.eu/>.



© photo: John Bruton

Former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing addresses questions surrounding the E.U. via his blog.

Architecture and Heritage Museum Opens Doors in Paris

In a city known for its wide avenues and beautiful buildings, a museum honoring France's architectural history and national heritage finally has its home at Paris's Palais de Chaillot after years of preparation. Just across the Seine River from the Eiffel Tower, this museum, *la Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine* (CAP, or City of Architecture and Heritage), was officially inaugurated by French President Nicolas Sarkozy on September 17, a day after 18,000 visitors got a sneak preview during the *Journées Européennes du Patrimoine* (European Heritage Days).

The 235,000-square-foot museum unifies three national architecture and heritage institutions: le Musée des Monuments Français (The Museum of French Monuments), l'Institut



© Cité de l'architecture & du patrimoine / Carole Lenfant
The moldings displayed in the Davioud gallery reproduce Gothic elements found in cathedrals in Strasbourg, Bourges and Reims.

Français d'Architecture (The French Institute of Architecture), and l'Ecole de Chaillot (The Chaillot School, where French architects are trained to work with national heritage buildings and monuments). Visitors can view centuries of French architectural history, as well as plaster casts of Medieval and Renaissance sculptures.

The inauguration also lent itself as an occasion for President Sarkozy to highlight his vision for the country's architectural future. He invited 13 prominent architects, including France's Jean Nouvel (designer of the recently opened Musée du Quai Branly in Paris as well as the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis), to lunch, where he described his vision of a "Grand Paris" and promised to breathe fresh air into modern French architecture.

France Takes a Bite Out of Chocolate Show

Chocolate *aficionados* are gearing up for a mouth-watering experience at *Le Salon du Chocolat* in Paris from October 19-22.

Since its debut in 1995, the annual salon, a trade show that draws chocolate producers and enthusiasts from around the world, has welcomed the public to explore (with their eyes and palate) the chocolate-making process, starting with the cacao bean and chronicling the metamorphosis it undergoes to reach its final product. The show, which has historically attracted more than 120,000 visitors each year, will include some 150 chocolate producers, including Nestlé and Mars Chocolat France. *Le salon* will occupy more than 130,000 square feet of space in the Paris exposition center at the Porte de Versailles.

The show lends itself as a forum to appreciate chocolate in a different, and perhaps more artistic, light. *Le défilé de mode* (fashion show), for example, is for some the visual highlight of the show. However, this is no normal catwalk: the dresses are actually made of chocolate. The show will also feature various conferences ranging from chocolate's health benefits

and natural properties to its origins.

For those who missed out on Paris's "tasteful" tribute to chocolate, not to worry: annual editions take place in cities around the world, including Tokyo, Peking, and Moscow. New York will be hosting its own Chocolate Show from November 9-11, with a preview and fashion show on November 8, as part of a larger "Chocolate Week" beginning November 4 in the Big Apple.

To learn more about *Les Salons du Chocolat* in Paris, New York, and around the world, please visit: www.chocoland.com.



Chocolatiers and designers unveil their latest creations at NYC edition.

Photo Exhibition in Paris Offers Snapshot of Native Americans



"Walk in Beauty" ran from Oct. 11-21 in Paris, and shares insight into Native American wisdom.

The city hall of the 5th district of Paris (located in the Quartier Latin) recently hosted a free photo exposition featuring images of the lives and landscapes of Native Americans. The exposition "*Marcher dans la Beauté*" ("Walk in Beauty"), which opened September 13 and ran through October 21, honored the sacred spirituality of the Apache, Sioux, Navajo, and Hopi peoples.

The exhibit is the creation of writers/photographers Michel Pascal and Djana, as well as Parisian Claude Dordis, a scholar in Native American cultures. Dordis is one of the few Europeans to have had unfettered access to these peoples because of his correspondence with an Apache tribe in Arizona that began in high school and continues to endure today.

Pascal, Djana, and Dordis are also authors of two books that share the knowledge they gained from their experiences with the Native American tribes. The two works, "*Notre Vie Est un Tipi*" ("Our Life is a Tipi") and "*Notre Travail Est un Tipi*" ("Our Work is a Tipi"), share insight into improving one's personal and professional life based on Native American wisdom.

The exposition is set to be shown in other locations in Paris and eventually in FNAC bookstores across the country. The exhibit will also be available internationally in Modène, Italy; Barcelona, Spain; Montréal, Canada; and Los Angeles. For more information, please visit: www.spirit-tipi.com.

SEVERAL MUSEUMS TO OPEN THEIR DOORS FREE OF CHARGE

Next year several national and regional museums in France are opening their doors free of charge with the aim of increasing visits to their permanent collections. The new French minister of Culture and Communication, Christine Albanel, announced that during the first six months of 2008 nine museums in Paris and its surrounding suburbs will participate in the initiative. Some of the museums to offer free admission include the National Museum of Archaeology in Saint-Germain-en-Laye and the Renaissance Museum in Ecouen. In 2001 Paris's city hall implemented a smaller version of the program, offering free admission to 14 of the city's museums, including the Musée Carnavalet, the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris and the Petit Palais. As a result, annual visits increased by more than 40 percent during the first four years of the program. The French government has estimated that additional museum funding for this new policy could cost between \$205-\$274 million dollars a year. Hopes are that this museum initiative will achieve the same success as similar programs in Great Britain, where funding is obtained for various heritage projects via the national lottery system. This new effort follows the successful precedents of Danish and British initiatives. Britain's national museum attendance has increased by 50 percent since its debut in 2001.

NEW BOOK EXPLORES FRANCE'S HISTORY

Award-winning British author Dr. Graham Robb has received praise for his new book, *The Discovery of France*, to be released in the United States October 29. A scholar of French Literature, Robb explores 18th- and 19th-century France through the eyes of the people themselves rather than those of the prominent figures who took center stage during the era.

A former Oxford academic and author of books on French literary icons including Balzac, Hugo and Rimbaud, Robb sought to underline the more sociological and cultural aspects of French history beyond Paris in his latest work. Through 14,000 miles of bicycling across the French countryside and 4 years of library research, Robb "discovered" France. By pedaling his way through the uncharted territory of France's past, the author leaves his readers with a sense of having gone the same distance to shed a different light on France's rich history.



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Houston Hosts Exhibition on French Photographer Jean Luc Mylayne

The Texan-French Alliance for the Arts and its presenting partner, The Levant Foundation in conjunction with Cultural Services of the Embassy of France are sponsoring Jean Luc Mylayne, the first solo exhibition of the French photographer in an American museum.

This exhibition, on display at Blaffer Gallery, the Art Museum of the University of Houston from September 8 through November 10, features some 20 large-scale, framed, color photographs and presents portraits of bluebirds, hummingbirds, juncos, and other species of birds in the habitat of Western Texas, an area where the migration paths of Eastern, Western, and Mountain Bluebirds converge.



Courtesy: the Artist and Barbara Gladstone Gallery

"January-February," is one of several pieces that comprise Mylayne's first solo exhibition in the U.S.

For more than thirty years, Jean Luc Mylayne has explored the intimate bond between subject and photographer through a non-traditional approach that combines exacting conception, visionary inventiveness, and infinite patience. A constant theme of the show is the reflection of the relationship between humanity and nature.

The mission of the Texan-French Alliance for the Arts is to promote artistic and cultural exchanges and educational programs between Texas

and France. In funding exhibitions by artists such as Jean Luc Mylayne, the alliance hopes to develop a broad audience and cultivate appreciation of different art forms, thus strengthening cultural awareness between Texas and France. For more information, please visit: www.hfac.uh.edu/blaffer.

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